
From: Hayes, Miriam (Nicole) <mnhayes@blm.gov>
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2019 6:43 AM
To: coastalplainAR; Amy Lewis; Chad Ricklefs; Sean Cottle
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] NSB Comments on Inupiat People and Culture
Attachments: Comments on Coastal Plain Draft EIS--Section 3.4.2.docx; Comments on Coastal Plain Draft EIS--Section 3.4.4.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Nicole Hayes
Project Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management
222 W. 7th Avenue #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513
Desk: (907) 271-4354
Cell: (907) 290-0179

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kevin S. Fisher** <Kevin.Fisher@north-slope.org>
Date: Fri, Apr 5, 2019 at 10:24 AM
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NSB Comments on Inupiat People and Culture
To: Hayes, Miriam (Nicole) <mnhayes@blm.gov>

Hello Nicole,

Attached are some additional ANWR comments concerning the Inupiat people. I hope these can still be incorporated in some fashion.

Thank you,

Kevin Fisher

Assistant Borough Attorney

North Slope Borough

Department of Law

P.O. Box 69

Barrow, Alaska 99723

Phone: (907) 852-0300

Fax: (907) 852-5678

E-mail: kevin.fisher@north-slope.org

A number of important references appear not to have been consulted. The term “historic” is used to refer to sites that post-date Euro-American contact. It would be preferable to use the term “post-contact” for such sites. Simply because history is not written does not mean it is not history.

Specific comments:

Pg. 3-153, para. 1: The bullet list is an extensive verbatim quote from the referenced USFWS report. However, it leaves out graves, which certainly do exist in the program area, not necessarily in conjunction with any residential site.

Pg. 3-153, para. 2: The tables referred to here (in Appendix L) need to be updated prior to finalizing the EIS. There are a number of sites with new or updated information collected at recent NSB TLUI workshops which does not appear to be correct in the AHRS as of 3/2019.

The TLUI table (Appendix L, Table L-2) suffers from what appears to be issues with conversion from Inu fonts to whatever is used in the table, resulting in multiple misspellings. This can be remedied by getting a PDF of the output from a source with Inu fonts installed, and manually entering the correct spellings. If Inu fonts are not installed and used, a digital transfer will not work correctly. There are no Bs or Fs in Iñupiaq.

Pg. 3-154, para. 1: Although the coastal erosion in the program area is quite rapid, it is not the case that all precontact sites near the coast have eroded. There are areas that are protected or even accreting. If the area has not been subject to systematic survey, the possible existence of intact eligible cultural resources should not be ruled out.

Pg. 3-155, para. 2: Additional information has been collected at NSB TLUI workshops, but it was clear at the time that there was a great deal more information out there unrecorded. It should either be made much more clear that much work remains to be done (since it often doesn’t seem to be clear to readers of final EIS documents) or additional efforts need to be made at this point.

These comments pertain primarily to sections that deal with the Iñupiaq people and culture.

In general, the descriptions appear to be based primarily on materials that predate 1990, with a few exceptions. They also seem to rely heavily on other environmental documents which appear to suffer from similar problems. A number of key references are not cited, and do not appear to have been consulted. One would expect a thorough literature review, including grey literature, for such a significant and wide-ranging undertaking. This does not appear to be as much of a problem with the Gwich'in.

Specific comments:

Pg. 3-179, para. 2-3: The Tagiugmiut vs. Nunamiut distinction, while not completely incorrect, is a somewhat dated way of describing the sociocultural systems of the Iñupiaq communities with ties to the program area. Although the document cites Spencer to this effect, it then goes on to use that lens to describe the settlement pattern.

Pg. 3-179, para. 3: Since the Inupiat have previously been described (table 3-25) as spanning the period from 400 years ago to the present, it is hard to understand how Iñupiat/Athabaskan trade at Nuiqsut (presumably at one of the prior locations) and Kaktovik could have maintained connections between the interior and coast for millennia.

Pg. 3-179, para. 4: There is no mention of the effects that introduced diseases (e.g. measles) had on populations, which led to need for replacements from inland groups to keep up whaling crew size. There is also no mention of the negative effects of introduced items such as alcohol.

Pg. 3-179, para. 5-6: These two paragraphs both deal with changes in settlement patterns. However, there is no discussion of the post-whaling dispersion for fox trapping and reindeer herding, the collapse of the fur market and consequent moves to more central coastal locations, or the decline of reindeer herding. Although education was compulsory where there was a school, not all families were living in such places, nor were they forced to move (many families appear to have done so because they were told it would benefit their children. Anaktuvuk Pass did not get a trading post or post office until the early 1950s, and the school was first built in 1960.

Pg. 3-180, para. 1: This appears to imply that Kaktovik was merely a trading center until it was “permanently settled by Euro-Americans” after Tom Gordon established a trading post. This represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the traditional coastal Iñupiat settlement pattern. People generally had a primary winter residence, but also had other locations where they habitually hunted or fished, and where they might have secondary residences. In addition, they might travel to visit relatives and be absent for an extended period. Winter houses were not suited for occupation in the summer, so people often were elsewhere hunting or fishing.

There were several well-established settlements on Barter Island well before Tom Gordon established his trading post, as can be seen from archaeological evidence. There appear to have been small settlements along the coast throughout the period, based on reports (none of which are referenced) from several scientific expeditions which worked in the area of cabins belonging to various individuals. The population of Barter Island itself was growing since the 1930s. People were not drawn

back to Kaktovik for jobs, since the construction of the DEWLine hangar and runway in 1947 resulted in the bulldozing of almost the entire settlement, and the forced relocation of the entire population.

Pg. 3-180, para. 2: The permanent settlement of Kaktovik did not occur in 1951. See above. This needs to be corrected.

Pg. 3-181, para. 3: Whaling is a year-round endeavor. Crew members (male and female) are involved in activities organized by the captain and/or his wife (depending on the activity) throughout the year. It is not just something more-or-less ad hoc during a whaling season.

Pg. 3-183, para. 7: The Iñupiaq trade networks had a very extensive reach. They did not only move large quantities of subsistence commodities (pokes of seal oil, caribou hides), but also preciosities (beads, rare raw materials, iron) across the North American Arctic and beyond. Trade clearly crossed the Bering Strait, with items like Chinese horse brasses and Venetian glass beads being found in pre-contact archaeological sites.

There could be multiple umialiks in a community. It has always taken considerable wherewithal to outfit a whaling crew, but individuals also had to be trusted by others as leaders, since whaling is a very dangerous enterprise.

Pg. 3-184, para. 1: The trading network included trade fairs at Sisualik in Kotzebue Sound and even locations across the Bering Strait. Many of the traders at Barter Island came from the east, and appear to have been trading with peoples even farther to the east. Soapstone lamps clearly came from the east.