

**NPR-A  
Integrated Activity Plan  
Environmental Impact Statement**

*Scoping Meeting*

**Fairbanks**

**1997**

NPR-A INTEGRATED ACTIVITY PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
SCOPING MEETING  
FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA  
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1997  
5:00 P.M.

(Begin tape 1 side one)

ANNE MORKILL - BLM: ...obtain comments and information from the public on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. BLM, Bureau of Land Management, has initiated a planning process and the first step in that process is to hear from the public what your issues and concerns are about this area. And we'll incorporate those issues and comments into the Environmental Impact Statement that's being developed. So this is our opportunity to listen to you and record your comments and I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Dee Ritchie, he's the Northern District Office Manager and he's going to give an overview of the process. As people kind of wander in, you might take a step back and introduce them to some of the process, but we'd like to hear from you folks.

DEE RITCHIE - BLM: Appreciate the opportunity, I imagine that's to be recorded, this meeting is by the way being recorded and also your comments will be jotted down on the flip charts and we'll take them home and look those over as the process continues. Just a little bit, as I talked around to some of you, some of you are here for various reasons, but some of you are here to just listen to get a little more information on what's happening and then we'll try and do that, but it's going to be very little information to you unless you have some questions about process that we can help you with or answer questions about, and we know about a broad range of knowledge about this particular area we're talking about. But let me introduce that area to you at this time so you know that we're talking about. The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, which is on the North slope and there's several maps on the wall about that. Let me just refer you to this map, particularly, is the whole reserve, that's 23 million acres of public land as far north in Alaska as you can go and it is 23 million acres, about in that reserve and you can see the boundaries of, the boundaries are from the Colville River, the villages of Nuiqsut, Anaktuvuk Pass, down here, Barrow, Atkasuk, Wainwright and Point Hope, Point Lay here on down the coast. The Brooks Range, the mountain tops in the Brooks Range makes the southern boundary through here. And that's about the geographical ... (inaudible) ... this is in, the study area that we're going to talk about tonight and are concerned about at this particular time is the area, you'll see it on that map and the map of it right next to there with this red line down the side, and you can look at that throughout the evening if you want, but this is kind of, Mike Kunz said he had this

put together cause he can't do anything unless we color some maps for him. This is kinda his rendition of some of the areas that are involved, important area within that particular area is the Colville River, a Special Area, the Teshekpuk Lake is a Special Area, and at least at this point in time. This particular area is 4.6 million acres, about, or one fifth of the total area in NPR-A. Most of this is the coastal plain, with the exception of this little jog right up into here. If you look at this map, better than any of them you'll see the water bodies that we're talking about and working with. So it's an important area. A lot of people have said, there's been three questions asked at many, many of the meetings that we go to and so I'd like to at least attempt to answer some of those before you ask them. But if I don't answer those questions, well we have people here tonight who can do that. Why are we planning this right now, what's the emphasis behind this. Well, there's several answers to that and let me try to give you two or three why. We were asked to first of all by the Secretary of the Interior, who is acting with the Governor of the State too for an opportunity to lease on the North slope, additionally and in order to do that we need to analyze, look at that area, first of all we want to look at all the resources, in what we're going to call an integrated activity plan, and with the environmental impact statement also. So the other, another reason, and the reason they were asked to look at that, there's a little interest, more interest now from the oil industry, one of the reasons we are interested from a resource management level is that, you know the Alpine Field is not being developed yet, but it was discovered and they're underway in starting to develop that. Now the Alpine Field is in the Colville delta region in Nuiqsut, it's right here and the Alpine Field's about right here. This is the Colville delta, and this land is primarily owned by the A

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation. That discovery is really 8 miles from the boundary of the National Petroleum Reserve. It seems logical to us that if development was going to come west from Prudhoe Bay, that we really ought to know something about the resource more, and start to plan for those resources and perhaps an oil and gas lease in the Petroleum Reserve, should there be oil and gas reserve there. We need to know more about that also. So those are a couple of reasons why we're into that at this time. Another question that came up is why are we, didn't plan for the whole area, the whole 23 million acres. And that questions been asked a lot, and we had that same question among ourselves, for a long time we thought we needed a strategic plan in the Petroleum Reserve, to kind of tie this all together to get the cumulative impact idea and so, but this area was really designated, told us from the department that we're going to study this area and time will be allotted in the future to continue that study and I think that has to happen, so we're not going to take the whole reserve, however, as many of you know the caribou herds that use that area don't just stop within Teshekpuk Lake or this 4.6 million acres, they in fact, use most of the total area. So, we still have to be aware of that and move through this planning process with those things in mind. We're, I can't remember the third question, thank you Dave, this process is going to be done in the next 18 months, so the question comes up, why such a fast track? It seems like there's enough interest, enough importance here that an EIS process takes a great deal of time. Tom Allen, my boss and State Director, says, well what's life without a little challenge, but more than that, we think that first of all there's a political reason for that and everybody needs to be aware of that, first of all, that we were asked to do that by the department, and is that realistic? As we talked about that, we think that it is, there's a lot of data already generated for the reserve, there's some new data that we have, and so we're going to move into that with the 18 month time frame. I think that will be perhaps the biggest challenge here. But we have the people on board that can make this happen. That means that this should be ready to propose at least for a record of decision for oil and gas leasing, if we decide to do that, in the fall of 1998. So with that in mind we're going to do, again, an integrated activity plan and an environmental impact statement in that time frame. At the end of that time frame we expect to have the alternative

developed and everything that goes into an environmental impact statement and the process completed and be able recommend for oil and gas leasing process. Now there was an oil and gas leasing program in this particular area in 1980 and 1984, in the early 1980's and there was some lease tracts leased and then they were given up and the third lease sale never did take place, authorized for five. The fifth one didn't take place and that was interesting and so the emphasis, we never have put any emphasis on doing it, until now, again. We do have information from the old EIS that can be used. There's a lot of people who didn't think those were adequate but we'll use what they had, and some of the new and put it together in a document that I think will be a really good product. In addition to that, there's going to be a science symposium, where we're going to bring in those scientists from around this country and around this state, that know about arctic science, are interested in arctic science and this science symposium is going to be conducted in April, the middle of April, and so you might want to watch for that. That's also going to be part of the information base that we're going to use on this process, and then the other information based on the, what you folks, the public give us in 5 meetings that we're going to have around the state. One in Barrow, we've held, one in Atkasuk, we've held, one in Anchorage, we held the night before last and this one tonight as we hear from you if you'd like to comment, and the last meeting will be held in the village of Nuiqsut on the 3rd of April. These are called formal scoping sessions and those scoping sessions are from, that period, scoping period, ends on April the 4th and the comments should come in as soon as, and if you have any written comments get them to us before that time or as quickly as you can. Let me see, what else would you like to know about the process. We have an interesting organization put together to accomplish this and I wanted to just talk a minute about that, we have, in fact I'd to introduce those people who are going to work on this primarily. There are a lot of people here tonight that are going to have a hand in that and they can answer any of your questions that you may have. First of all we have Curt Wilson, who is our planner, BLM planner from the state office in Anchorage, Curt has the responsibility to learn all he can about integrated activity planning and put that together. We have working close with him, Ray Emerson, Ray is from the Minerals Management Service and has been involved in assessment kind of work for a long time and he has with him a team that knows how to do this sort of thing, and these two will bring that integrated activity plan and an EIS together for completion. Some of the people working on that with them will be Dave Yokel, wildlife biologist and expert on the north slope, and becoming more all the time, expert. He knows my definition of an expert and we have with, there are a few that aren't here tonight, but let me tell you some of the others that are here working on this team, Dick Roberts is working with that group, Mike Kunz will be working with that group, Don Meares will be in the planning, and Anne Morkill you'll hear a lot from tonight, depends on what you have to say, but Anne is, will facilitate the remainder of this meeting and take your comments. Gene Terland is the project coordinator, and he'll get blamed for everything that goes wrong throughout the next 18 months, so we had to have somebody to be the fall guy and Gene will be it, we're glad to have him aboard to kind of coordinate everything. That's the people working on this, there are others. I'd like to also let you know that BLM has worked out agreements with personnel from the North Slope Borough that'll be working at the table with these folks that I've introduced to you. They're not here tonight, they've been at all the other meetings with us, there's Tom Lohman who is in Anchorage, works for the North Slope Borough and Arnold Brower, Jr. who's in Barrow and works for the North Slope Borough. In addition to that, the State of Alaska has been asked to the table with their specialist to coordinate the State's input into this process, the Fish and Wildlife Service will also be working on this project, and other state and federal agencies will be working as required for the various inputs, Corps of Engineers, and I've mentioned Fish and Wildlife Service and several others. In addition to this group, there's a group working on the tract evaluation, tract evaluation for oil and gas resources and they're going to pull that all together and bring it together with us for the final evaluation on this plan. So that's kind of the organization, that's kind of what we're about, we have a large job ahead of us, and I think there's a lot of interest in this, a lot of excitement about it, it's kind of a new, an integrated activity plan's a new adventure for us and so we're going to work at it. We'll have the traditional knowledge from the North Slope Borough that they organized their communities to help us provide that, along with the many, many concerns of subsistence in Alaska, the subsistence users, perhaps those are the concerns that we've heard. The other meetings have brought those up, their opportunity to continue a subsistence lifestyle, we need to know something about those areas that are important to them. And then as soon as we finish these

meetings, we're going to develop some alternatives on how to, based on all that knowledge and input from the agencies, to help analyze the use and allocation of resources for that very important area. I'm just wondering, we really would like this session today, as the other sessions have been, to be a session where you provide the input and your concerns that we need to look at, or may need to look at. And so with that in mind if we those that are here tonight, if you wouldn't mind sharing with us here your interests and concerns and ideas about the management or the resources or anything that you have that you think that we might need to conduct, to complete the product. We'd like to listen to those tonight, we're not going to challenge anything that you say, we'll take that and use it, and if you wouldn't mind being as frank and open as you can be in this listening session and we'd be glad to answer some questions but we'd really like to hear from you tonight. So thank you, thank you for being here, they'll be others come in, one group told us their going to try to be here at 7:00 to make some presentations, so I suppose Anne, if people would come to the mike and speak, this meetings being recorded and you can talk into this little product and tell us what you feel about ... (inaudible)... thank you.

MORKILL: Thanks Dee. In terms of process, a lot of times these public meetings are run where the public comes up and gives public testimony with about a 10 minute limit. We'd like to diverge from that process a little bit and provide you an opportunity to give us your comments without the formalities. We're recording in a couple ways, as Dee mentioned we're tape recording this and those tapes will be transcribed for the public record, so we will be able to capture all the information and the issues that you bring up. I'm also going to try to capture them on the flip charts so that everybody in the audience can see what's been said and we can talk about those and try to work through a dialog. A couple of things before we get started, I just wanted to point out, part of this scoping we also would encourage written comments, and you can provide those in two ways, either through the mail or to the home page that BLM has developed. That home page includes information about the NPR-A project and it also provides a place for you to actually write in comments, so those, we'll accept comments through those two forms, through April 4th and important of this scoping is that the week following that the NPR-A planning team will be getting together and developing alternatives and we would like those alternatives to reflect the number, diverse issues that the public has about the National Petroleum Reserve. So it's important that if you do have some issues, if you have some information that you'd like to provide, we would like to obtain that information by April 4th. There'll be another opportunity of course for the public to participate in this process and that's in the fall when we submit a draft environmental impact statement and the public will have opportunity to review that document and provide us additional comment at that time and additional information can be incorporated as well. So keep that in mind, this is only the first opportunity of several more to come. After that draft environmental impact statement has gone through the public review process, as Dee mentioned, we're looking at probably July of 1998 to come out with the final environmental impact statement, to give you an idea of the time frame. Is anybody interested in starting off the process? Any comments, concerns, any information you'd like to provide about the National Petroleum Reserve? Questions? We have such a large crowd today we can be as informal as possible (laughter).

FRANCES MANN: I have just some questions, O.K., the Teshekpuk River area is one of the ... (inaudible)... for EIS, just that 4.6 million acres in the northeast corner. O.K., I assume, well I guess I'm trying to figure out how can you determine what the impacts might be or you know ahead of time or is the whole area up for grabs. I mean it's, when you think of where the oil's located or particular areas, I haven't looked at that map up there, but there's one that's lime green versus the orange, do those have anything to do with potential sites that might determine the impact, or is the whole area, you just don't know at this point?

MORKILL: There's a couple of processes that are going on, in addition to the scoping process. There was a notice of intent for nominations of interest from the

industry, and that notice of intent presented the entire 4.6 million acres.

FRANCES MANN: How come?

MORKILL: The environmental impact statement process, and planning process and the issues that we scope at these meetings will help us identify if there are areas within that 4.6 million acres that have particular values, whether it be oil and gas, recreation, subsistence, wildlife, so those will be identified. What this map shows is some of the areas that were delineated in the 1983 environmental impact statement process and also those areas that were designated by the Secretary as Special Areas. The Teshekpuk Lake Special Area which is this black outline, and the Colville River Special Area and those were identified in the late 1970's through the National Petroleum Reserve Production Act as having special values. The Teshekpuk Lake for black brant, and the Colville River for peregrine falcons, and of course since that time we've identified other resource values that are important in these areas, including caribou. These purple areas, through the environmental impact statement that was prepared in 1983 additional areas were identified.....

(End of tape 1 - side 1)

(Begin tape 1 - side 2)

MORKILL: ...do not stand today as they are, the Special Areas do and so those, that process that the team went through in 1983 is what we'll again do through this process. So we may come out with certain high resource values, but that's what we still need to identify. Does that answer your question? Do you have any concerns about the process, or these particular areas that you'd like us to make note of?

FRANCES MANN: What was the integrated activity plan? I mean, I'm not familiar with that process.

MORKILL: That's a planning process that's, rather than take a look at one particular resource program, what we're doing is looking at the integrated program that BLM has management responsibility for, so that may include oil and gas leasing, it may include wildlife and fisheries inventory programs, recreation programs, Native allotment certification, entitlements for remaining village selections, so it's integrating all those particular programs that BLM's responsible for, and also taking a look at where we might have conflicts between programs rather than having a management plan that only addresses one program and then a couple years later you develop another plan and find that there's conflicts. We're trying to resolve those by taking an integrated approach.

CRAIG GEORGE: You say you're planning to have a science symposium in April? How do you intend to use that information, or is it intended the information that comes from the symposium will be used in the EIS session ... (inaudible)...

MORKILL: Yes that's exactly, and maybe I can have Ray talk about that, it's a procedure that Minerals Management Service has gone through before and it's to gather that information from the body of research. Any comments regarding our science symposium?

CRAIG GEORGE: Where is it going to be?

RAY EMERSON - MMS: It'll be in Anchorage. The 16th, 17th, and 18th (*of April*) at the Sheraton Hotel. We'll try to contact the researchers that have published various resource topics that are relative to these decisions and we're contacting most of those people and we have confirmations signed from ... (inaudible)... not yet still it's still in the formative stages, But the plan is a two and half day conference, there'll also be representatives from the communities presenting new points on traditional knowledge of their particular villages as part of that symposium. If there's any particular researcher that you're interested in having be there or interested if they are on the attendance now, I'll send you a copy of that and get you the draft agenda although it hasn't been firmed up yet.

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION... (Inaudible)

MORKILL: Again our objective is to listen to you tonight, so if you have any concerns or information you'd like to present in this forum....

CRAIG GEORGE: How many opportunities will there be to look at the draft before for it's finalized?

MORKILL: Before it's finalized? Well, the draft environmental impact statement will be published in October of this year, October, 1997 and the public will have 60 day review period. And during those 60 days, about the middle of November, we'll hold public hearings again to receive comments in that forum as well as in writing and from that process we'll incorporate the additional comments and information.

CRAIG GEORGE: Do you envision specifying any research or is it just basically gonna be a literature search for this EIS process?

MORKILL: Your question is, would we conduct research for the purpose of attaining additional information for the EIS? Yeah, I think the, I think the time frame may not allow that, but I think the process of developing an integrated activity plan, so that if management actions will be implemented as a result of the plan may in fact be research. So if there are research needs to be identified through the process, those could easily be implemented but not fully in that period, because we're talking about this summer is the only window of opportunity for research, so it's going to be incorporating in the research that we have available in a few months, from every and any source, so if you have some sources that we might not know of, we'd appreciate

that input. Is there some information needs that you're aware of that might be critical to the EIS process?

CRAIG GEORGE: Well, ...(inaudible)...the only thing that comes to mind initially is ...(inaudible)...lake inventories, survey inventories of lakes south of Teshekpuk...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: ...(inaudible)...waterfowl, or hydrology?

CRAIG GEORGE: I was thinking of fish, and the state did a fair amount of work back in the late '70s, early '80s, they only did a small portion of those lakes...(inaudible)...impossible to get all of them of course but ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: The other thing to keep in mind with this process is we're talking about 18 months to develop integrated activity plan and environmental impact statement, but any activities that might take place as a result of the decision that's made from that EIS, won't be implemented in the 19th month, in particular oil and gas leasing, that's going to be a long process. And as the areas, if there are areas that opened for leasing then we go to another stage and obtain proposed actions by applicants and we go through another environmental assessment process. So through that process ...(inaudible)... Any comments? If you'd like to take a look at the maps, you don't have to keep sitting either, we can get around and mingle. There's also coffee, tea, and some refreshments in the back room and you can eat them out here if you grab something.

CRAIG GEORGE: Are there currently any development scenarios that, has anyone proposed how it might be ...(inaudible)...the Colville, you know that sort of thing, that makes it easier...

EMERSON: Yeah, there's a, we call it development scenario being proposed as to how the area would be developed as far as a certain amount of expected resources, what the geologists think is out there at this point, and that would be a pipeline for oil connecting up with infrastructure on the present Prudhoe Bay system. That's kind of what's driving some of this decision process it seems to be at the door now of NPR-A...(inaudible)...

CRAIG GEORGE: There was some very extensive seismic work and ...(inaudible)...do they have a reasonably good idea...

EMERSON: ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: There is, there's currently there's seismic within the reserve itself ...(inaudible)...

DON MEARES - BLM: ...(inaudible)...

CRAIG GEORGE: ...(inaudible)...are there any significant reservoirs...

MEARES: ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: Don, can you speak up so that people on this side can hear you too?

MEARES: There are several known fields that are small ...(inaudible)... and there are a majority of the early seismic exploration was done on a very large grid ...(inaudible)... if you look at the area or the outline ...(inaudible)...there are a number of instance east of the Colville...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: This sheet mentions that there's some concern about calving grounds for caribou herds, where is that in relation to the industry's interest, do you know?

DAVE YOKEL - BLM: Well first I should say that we don't know exactly where industry's interests is really, we don't have that information. But Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd calves generally in this area that's orange here, but that calving, for the last 10 years at least, has been concentrated primarily in this area here.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: How big of a herd are we talking about?

YOKEL: Well the history that we have of the herd only goes, in terms of population, or even the fact, you know, recognition as a separate herd only goes back less than 30 years. And the early estimates were 3,000 to 4,000 animals, and it has grown through that time to about 27,000, over the last 2 or 3 years it appears to be relatively stable at around 25 to 27,000.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: Is it fairly sedentary, doesn't move a whole lot?

YOKEL: That was the opinion early on, when the herd was small and when the only means of monitoring it was VHF radio collars, that means you actually have to go fly over the animal to find out where it is. At that time it was considered to be a resident herd it stayed in this general area year round. The herd has grown and also starting in 1990 we started putting satellite collars on these animals so that we could get, and when I say we, I mean this is cooperative program between ADF&G, the North Slope Borough and BLM, so we could get positions on an animal every other day. Since that time there have been some years when the herd was for the most part resident around the lake, there have been years when we've had animals down by Anaktuvuk Pass and in the mountains here and we've had animals over by the Sagavanirktok River over here, we've had animals down on the south side of the Brooks Range, close to the Seward Peninsula and this year about 80% of the herd headed out to Point Hope and then kept going south, and that's down by, in the Seward Peninsula area which is generally the general wintering area of the Western

Arctic herd. So there's two things that have gone on since we originally considered them a resident herd. The herd is growing in size and more animals do need more space and we have better techniques of finding where they are in the winter.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: Well, can't you go get them back, that's 80%...(laughter)...

YOKEL: This winter there's a fair bit of hunting success going on in that wintering area, there's also some natural mortality. Certainly some of the animals are not going to come back. But that's true every winter, we can't say at this time....

ALAN JUBENVILLE: But is that an unusual move for that herd, then? With what you know that 80% of them should move that far?

YOKEL: Well, we're talking about caribou here...

ALAN JUBENVILLE: I understand...(laughter)

YOKEL: ...but, yeah, that's an unusual move for what we know about that herd, but it, unusual moves may not be all that unusual for caribou. They will come back, I'm fairly certain, because that's the one thing that's pretty consistent about caribou is where they calve in the spring. And that's in fact how we define herds, by where they calve.

UNKNOWN: ...(inaudible)...Western Arctic herd

YOKEL: I think there's more than one, but there have been some female caribou that we collared after the calving season in this area here. And so because we collared them here we say these are Teshekpuk caribou and there have been a couple instances of some of those females going over to the calving grounds in the Western Arctic herd in southwestern NPR-A the following year. I don't know that the incidence of that happening is any higher than for any other herd though. I didn't mean to keep the floor.

FRANCES MANN: Anne, I want to recharge my earlier question now that I have a chance to look at the map ...(inaudible)... So the dark line is the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area and the Colville River Special Area, those are going to be maintained as special areas?

MORKILL: Yes, those are designated by the Secretary of the Interior as a result of this...

FRANCES MANN: So does that mean leases couldn't occur here, what comes with a special area? Leases would be excluded for the animals or just recognized space?

MORKILL: It's recognized as being a special area and those values could be protected in a number of ways and that's one thing that's being looked at. And that's what they did in the 1983 EIS is there were some areas where they did in fact decide that one way to protect those values was deleting it from leasing and other areas special stipulations and mitigation measures...

RITCHIE: I'd like to know if they shouldn't remain that way, we have an opportunity through this planning to do whatever you think you gotta do.

MORKILL: We have an opportunity to evaluate those black boundaries and adjust them if necessary given new information or new issues that the public gives us, so that's one thing that we're trying to scope is if people think those boundaries are adequate or not, if they need to be extended, or how might the resources within those areas be protected.

FRANCES MANN: Like that green line for example, in 1983 was in fact oil and gas leasing ... (inaudible)... so that's, that's no longer true of oil and gas leasing within that colored area.

MORKILL: Right, no it's still not open as a result of this planning process. It would be reconsidered again.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: What will the format for your science symposium? Are you going to be questions and answers, and questions to the scientists? Are they, it seems that you'd want to pick their brains. If they're reasonably knowledgeable about the arctic environment, they're going to have a lot better input than somebody sitting out here in the audience.

MIKE KUNZ: The way we anticipate this being a science symposium is that we're trying to get all scientists who are on the cutting edge of research that's been going on up there in the recent past. What we want from them is to bring us up to date in a summary sense, what's been done and the knowledge and information that exists. And then we also want to hear from them, what we need to be especially concerned about visa ve whatever resource they may be discussing. In terms of the possible actions that may occur in there as a result of the integrated activity plan and the EIS, so that we will hear from them directly the things that we need to be especially cognizant of as we go through this process.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: Will you have scientists, like petroleum engineers and this sort of thing on this scientist team? Because it seems it's going to be probably through technology and, you know, this sort of thing that would also affect how you would, you know, if you decide to open things up, how you would write stipulations and this sort of thing, so you'd understand the interaction between petroleum development

and the resources.

MIKE KUNZ: The way we have it set up right now and as Ray said a little while ago, and this is not finalized, but primarily we will start off with some representatives from industry to bring us up to date, for example, the latest techniques that are being employed in the seismic, the latest techniques that being employed in exploration and the latest techniques that are being employed in development. And with that start we will then get into the various resources concerned, or I should say the various other resources that exist in the area. We're talking about habitat, we're talking about wildlife, fisheries, waterfowl, we're talking about coastal resources, subsistence, sand, gravel, water, these kinds of things, so that we plan this to address all the areas of concern.

MORKILL: A lot of information to assimilate I guess in one evening, if you haven't heard about the project before....

FRANCES MANN: Are there any copies of the 1982 document available...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: I think so, is that something you'd be interested in taking a look at? There was also some studies that were done in the late '70's, early '80's the 105(c) studies, some additional information...

JIM SCHWARBER: Will the draft EIS be available at your net web site? Will you have that on line for people to view or download so you don't have to use paper?

MORKILL: That's a good question, in fact I think I'll make a note of that because I don't know the answer to that and I think that's one thing we'd like to hear from the public is alternative forms. I think it could be, in fact I've heard in other parts of the country they're starting to do that.

JIM SCHWARBER: The state government has quite a bit of it's current activity available to the public through web services on the Internet and I think a project like this could be usable if you already have a site up to try to find a way to integrate the information you're producing on ongoing basis and perhaps other related materials for people to be able to review.

MORKILL: Yeah, that's these NPR-A reports we plan on issuing these not only hard copy but on the Internet and kind of updating the public on what the process is at that time, I think that's a great idea...

CURT WILSON: Anne, Jim and I talked about that and he may have already followed up on it, so you might start with him.

CRAIG GEORGE: Have you had any response yet from the community of Nuiqsut?

Any comments?

MORKILL: We received written comments from the Kuukpik Corporation, the village corporation, although we have a public scoping meeting next Thursday night in Nuiqsut.

(End of tape 1 - side 2)

(Begin tape 2 - side 1/2)

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DAVID VAN DEN BURG: ...understand ...(inaudible)... this process all over again.

EMERSON: I'll just tell you that, suppose the Alpine project and the sale 86-A are assumed activities that will go forward in terms of our analysis, they're far enough along that incorporated into the cumulative analysis.

MORKILL: I'm just going to briefly, since we've had some people join us in the last half hour, we had a number of people here that will be responding to questions and concerns and you might want to know who they are. The Northern District Manager, Dee Ritchie, here in the back...

RITCHIE: I just wanted to make you aware that I did talk about why now, and how come only a fifth of the area and I talked about the 18 month time frame, I'll be glad to talk with you about that, appreciate that.

MORKILL: Gene Terland is with the BLM, the Alaska State Office, and he's the project coordinator for the National Petroleum Reserve project; Ray Emerson, he's with the Minerals Management Service and they are assisting BLM in producing Environmental Impact Statement; and with Ray is Dick Roberts also with Minerals Management Service; and Curt Wilson is a planner from the Alaska State Office, BLM, and he's on the planning team; and our district resource specialist, Dave Yokel, wildlife biologist; Mike Kunz is an archeologist and he's also the Northern District Office project coordinator; and Don Meares, our local historian, oil and gas, computer, etc. specialist. So we have a number of people here this evening to provide you some information and answer your questions, and I want to emphasize we're here to listen to you if you have comments that you want to make.

SYLVIA WARD: I wanted to follow up on the last point that was made. Sir, your name again?

EMERSON: Ray Emerson.

SYLVIA WARD: Mr. Emerson, I believe you said that's incorporated into the cumulative, cumulative assessment that you've already completed or....

EMERSON: It will be incorporated.

SYLVIA WARD: It will be incorporated, what about the entirety of the north slope?

EMERSON: All of the project stuff will be incorporated that are either ongoing, or decisions have been made including the north slope infrastructure, Prudhoe Bay and that sort of thing are part of that cumulative analysis. I recognize your concern about the ...(inaudible)...

SYLVIA WARD: Yeah, I would appreciate that was noted, but thank you for putting that together.

MORKILL: That's an issue we've heard resoundingly on the north slope and we expect to hear Nuiqsut on this coming week, it's an issue they've brought up as well as what we've heard in Anchorage a couple of nights ago.

BRIAN LAWHEAD: I've got a question regarding the, and maybe this was addressed earlier, the lack of the Teshekpuk Lake as a special area being shown on the call map, is that all considerations or size, you're just soliciting interest from industry and leasing? And then you'll overlay on the Teshekpuk Special Area. I guess I'm a little confused as to what the status for a special area is, does it have some legal standing from 20 years ago, is that correct?

MORKILL: The special areas which are on this map, indicated in black were designated by the Secretary of the Interior, and those do still stand. In the nomination, call for interest, it just included the boundary of the 4.6 million acres and that is a process that we'll go through in the integrated activity planning, and alternative formulation is weighing those resource values and determining where there can be compatible uses and where there are conflicts and how to resolve them.

BRIAN LAWHEAD: Is there going to be additional field work done, the information base for a number of species is kind of old, will there be new work done or does the schedule not allow this?

MORKILL: The answer to your question is that the schedule does not allow it for this process, but if you're concerned that we don't have sufficient information to do accurate.....

BRIAN LAWHEAD: I just was asking that, someone must of made that determination...

MORKILL: A short window of time, and we talked a little bit about that before. From our perspective an integrated activity plan, that is an activity that we will consider if we find that there data gaps of information, this plan will guide BLM's management of that area in the future, not just how we'll be looking at the oil and gas leases but it would be a tool to identify those information needs.

BRIAN LAWHEAD: So in a sense this is a programmatic EIS beginnings of that, and that specific leasing would be pursued separately under a planning process once industry is gauged, is it programmatic or...

MORKILL: In the sense that in this EIS, one of the decisions that may be made is should leasing be allowed and in what areas within the 4.6 million acres. Then the anticipation is that further actions as a result of that decision would require additional environmental analysis.

MIKE DALTON: So what are you doing in this EIS that is different than the one that was done in 1979?

MORKILL: The previous environmental impact statement was done in 1983 and it was determined that there's been a lot of new information gathered and also that that had a particular focus, and so we're taking on a new process to integrate all the programs that BLM has responsibility for and also updating information. And is was too much to just supplement an EIS which is one process that you can do, so we're developing a new environmental impact statement.

MIKE DALTON: So, I don't understand what you're saying, you just added to....

MORKILL: We're developing a new environmental impact statement.

MIKE DALTON: It's a new one, you're not building on?

MORKILL: No, we'll be using information that was collected for that environmental impact statement but we're developing a new one in addition to everything.

MIKE DALTON: I understand that, but why? Was it incomplete?

MORKILL: Do you feel that '83 assessment was....

MIKE DALTON: Well, the one I have is '79 and there were three lease sales after that so wondering why, I'm just curious...

CURT WILSON - BLM: There are some technical flaws in the old EIS, there are some problems, like there was no, no action alternative, there are some additional endangered species have been identified since the '83 EIS and one of the endangered species has been dropped off of the list, there's just been, there's much

more cumulative impacts now than there were in '83 so we would need to a new cumulative impact assessment. The biggest problem is, is that it's been 13, 14 years since the last one was done and a lot of things have changed since then, plus the technical flaws in the document.

EMERSON: Geological information has been updated also and additional seismic

MIKE DALTON: What are you using for you geological conditions ... (inaudible)... you say more recent geological information.

EMERSON: Yes, that's been the companies, private companies that are contracted by industry to take a look at the infrastructure, and that technology has changed, rather it's improved, there's different seismic methods now that are ... (inaudible)... it's still an ongoing science is the definitive word and it's going to be a continuing process we're getting better and better at finding where the resource actually is. We'll make an assumption based on the old information as to what we think they will find at this point in time ... (inaudible)... and if those assumptions remain true... (inaudible)...

RITCHIE: Mike, I thought one of the things that, your question is really, really important to us because we questioned that very same question in our own minds. But one of the things that's different at this go around that I think everyone needs to know that is this is an integrated activity plan, first of all evaluating all the resources, the land uses and the land resources. We didn't do that in that last one, there was a decision that we were going to do an oil and gas lease and that's what the EIS was based on.

MIKE DALTON: Could I follow-up on the geology? Are you using any USGS data? I know a man in Menlo Park, he's retired now, he spent his 50 year career with USGS on the Pet-4 National Petroleum Reserve. I'm just asking, are you using that kind of resource?

EMERSON: The U.S. geological survey information is available to all the companies, but then there's also that which they contract privately and they pay for and that's there insight into why or why not they might want to participate in a particular lease sale if indeed it occurs. That's an expense that helped them decide, they hire their best geologist and so on from different companies, that's part of the process, the information that they collect though is proprietary just as the tract selection that they offer that says we are interested in these particular areas and say this is where we might bid, and that's also proprietary.

(End of tape 2 - side 1)

(Begin tape 2 - side 2)

MIKE KUNZ: Were you asking that...(inaudible)...the people doing the geological evaluation, and tract evaluation, if they felt that a historic perspective that George might have, people like that might have ...(inaudible)...

MIKE DALTON: You assume that but you don't know that...

MIKE KUNZ: I don't know it because I'm not involved in that ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: Do you know who she's referring to, do you have the name?

MIKE KUNZ: Certainly...

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION ...(Inaudible)...

CRAIG GEORGE: How do you plan to collect the traditional ecological information, who's going to do it and how's it going to be recorded and how will you integrate it with the EIS. This is sort of a new process...

MORKILL: That's one important role of the North Slope Borough, they're a partner in the sense that they have staff who work with the local elders and they have a lot of information, and we've also had elders give comments at the public meetings that we've had already, and that was provided in Inupiat and we did translate it and vice versa, we translated English into Inupiat so that the local people could understand clearly. We consider the information that they presented at those meetings that was related to their uses of resources as traditional knowledge and so that's incorporated into the public record. Minerals Management Service has been incorporating it into some of the more recent environmental documents and so they ...(inaudible)... has that been a concern in terms of previous assessments?

CRAIG GEORGE: I guess it a relatively new item, it's been used in the North Star EIS. I've been out of the loop for awhile, so I don't know how successful it is to integrate it in with scientific information.

MORKILL: They're also going to be at the forum in the middle of April, there are some local residents that we've invited to participate in that process.

EMERSON: Some the updated information on the description of some of the resources is North Slope Borough and the villages that will be participating in that thought that the traditional knowledge concept could be applied to update the survey information.

CRAIG GEORGE: There are some real old timers that know virtually what's in every one of those lakes around Teshekpuk.

WILSON: When we were in Atqasuk, Tom Brower got up and talked for quite a while, Tom Brower, Jr. got up and talked for quite a while about lakes around Teshekpuk.

ALAN JUBENVILLE: There was one thing that you didn't answer, developing to these questions was, how you're going to integrate it because it's not a normal integration process, how you going to integrate traditional knowledge with the scientific knowledge in terms of decision making.

CRAIG GEORGE: And what weight do you give it ...

EMERSON: If there's a difference let's say between the traditional knowledge and the scientific knowledge then we treat it equally, and in other words we're not going to say one is wrong, one'S it right, what we do though is recognize the disparity, the difference and that lends itself to, in one particular case, possibly a monitoring program, where we would watch and see now where is the answer, it's probably somewhere in between. So we'll allow though hopefully the decision to progress and be adjustable to this initial information and the case that we have one group of people that are representatives from the village, from the North Slope Borough, from the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission and so on are part of a committee to let's say, where is the distance of which bowhead whales will begin to retract or move off shore from certain disturbance activities and there's quite a difference of opinion, not quite a difference but there is a difference of opinion. So we've identified the range of difference and lets say we look now to see where is that difference and there's probably going to be a variance in that, but the idea is that management is flexible to accommodate that, and we recognize both databases on an equal basis.

MORKILL: Either comments or issues, information you'd like to present, we really want to see this as a brainstorming session where we can collect your concerns.

MIKE DALTON: I have a concern about what Secretary Babbitt really does mean, because in September of '95 he did a teleconference with all western states and organized resource advisory councils. And in that conference he, I have a tape of that, he said that he's bringing people in the western states together so any land issues or land decisions are made by consensus, and after sitting there 2 days I asked the council and the State Director, Mr. Allen, if they were addressing this, there's 23 million acres up there, are they involved in this planning process, are they forming a consensus to report to BLM. No. So why, why is he saying that on important land issues the western states, specifically here, and then he issues a directive in January to expedite this thing, even going to the point of saying in his memo that some of the duties of some of the people will be set aside so we can get it done, There's a real dichotomy here, he's talking out of both sides of his mouth, I don't know.

MORKILL: So you're concerned that for some issues he's seeking consensus from the western states on lands issues, but he hasn't even sought that consensus on this particular issue.

MIKE DALTON: I guess not, he said no, I'm not looking at it they're fighting over whether a miner can pitch a tent on the Forty-mile River, he's been on that issue for months and months and months and months, and they haven't solved it. And here's 23 million acres in the arctic and they're not even thinking about it, they haven't been asked for their comment, or their input, other studies. I don't understand it. That should be asked of Secretary Babbitt.

MORKILL: Yeah, I certainly don't think we have an answer, but we're going to note your concerns. It's a very good point.

MIKE DALTON: It's quite obvious, if you look at that tape, and everybody who went to that meeting was subjected to it whether they wanted to or not, and I got a copy of it and listened to it again to make certain that he said what I thought he said.

MORKILL: Any comments? Please remember to speak up so that we can have you on record.

RICHARD FINEBERG: Yes, can you tell me how you're going to integrate in the performance at Prudhoe Bay and within oil field development, is that part of the EIS process?

MORKILL: So your question is how will we consider the development at Prudhoe Bay in our decision making?

RICHARD FINEBERG: How you will review it ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: Part of the environmental impact statement process will be doing a cumulative impacts assessment and that will take a look at what oil development has occurred on the north slope and what the cumulative effects of that been.

RICHARD FINEBERG: Will that include a view through time as to what the original guidelines were, what the estimates were of acreages...(inaudible)...compared to what the actual development is today.

EMERSON: I don't think that will go into that level of detail, what will appear is the effects as we have identified today, and not go back and try to look at a miscalculation. We, at the time that projection was made, that impact statement was sent out with the best available information at that time. So as time proceeds on, and we do get better information and I don't think it's, well it might be constructive to go back and see how bad we did, or how well we did...

RICHARD FINEBERG: On the specific context in the terms of the smaller footprint which would be the shorthand for the newer technology, I'm fully referring to and part of the reason for updating the EIS, I think we could also look at the land use and find that that smaller footprint is over a much larger area than originally anticipated, so that it might neutralize the, it might tend to counter the smaller footprint. It depends on how you cast the questions.

EMERSON: I think the issue is how accurate are these *core tests*....

RICHARD FINEBERG: In terms of what land would actually be used so that, let's say, just looking at the map, we'd put a yellow line around Teshekpuk Lake, if you can see that over a 20 year period the land use has expanded beyond what was anticipated it might be a larger buffer around Teshekpuk, just theoretically, I don't know, presume 2 extra fields...(inaudible)... I'd also be concerned about, and I don't know how that's going to fit it but I do, claim some knowledge and concern now of the condition of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and I'd be very concerned that oil development should consider whether the pipeline is a viable transportation conduit for an extended period of time and additional oils. Rather than assuming it is, address it....(inaudible)...

SYLVIA WARD: I had a question about the pipeline coming across the Colville delta, being constructed this next winter by ARCO. Is anyone aware of whether that's a shared pipeline, I forget what those are called, or whether it's for their exclusive use, cause it seems like ARCO is driving this freight train in and it's just too much to ask that a public resource be turned over to one international corporation. Does anyone know about the status of that pipeline, what kind of designation it might have? It seems relatively important to figure into the discussion, on one hand the public doesn't have access to the bids or even the starting amounts that BLM would have, so if there's a bid placed on it, whether that's sufficient, and Tom Allen, the head of the Alaska BLM was raising this, I think with, I forget which newspaper it was, at any rate the concern was that he wouldn't want to let the leases go for too little, and that's a good public spirit, all right. Well, what's too little, and he can't say, and so his pocket price that the companies have to bid above in order to get it, is not available for the public to consider. And then the information that goes into creating that pocket price is also not available for the public to consider. This is all very secret and so the issue being that ARCO is the one that stepped across the Colville, they have a real opportunity to get special consideration because they're one of the few companies that is in a good position to bid on it. And so I'm real concerned that we're allowing ARCO to set the price for a public resource. The sealed bid prices, the pocket price that the agency would have really jeopardizes the public interests even if all we want is money out of this.

MORKILL: So you're concerned in terms of the confidentiality of the process and

that it's not part of the public review?

SYLVIA WARD: Absolutely, I look at other, here, when I sell a car, I advertise the price that I want and I trust the free market system to bid that price up and you know, if I want to get a price and get a higher bid, or a timber sale, they have a competitive bid price, they set the market price out there for the public to look at and the various operators to review and bid it up, and if there's a competitive process, we're going to get it bid up, but in this case, not only do we not have necessarily multiple corporations really ready to go up there, so there's not likely to be a whole lot of competition, but we also don't have any opportunity to review the pocket price or the actual bids themselves. So it just seems like we're really endangering ourselves, I believe in the free market principle, but you gotta let the free market work and this is set up in a way that that's actually in great danger it would appear.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: Yeah, I'd like to echo that, I assume that the scoping process is a two-way street, it's an opportunity for us to provide you our concerns, but it's also an opportunity for you to provide to the public some information in the document, the draft will provide, some information that we can use as a basis to decide that the agency has made a decent, that they made a good decision as well. And Tom Allen his quote is, we don't want to have a lease sale unless the bids are acceptable. I think that he's just now elevated that to a real standard of acceptability, and I think the public needs to know. I have no sympathy for ... (inaudible) ... industry retaining some confidentiality on what is a public resource. There are other values that they will eclipse if they get in there under some confidentiality for bids, so again, I would like to see that, that minimum bid be a part of what you present to the public, and if you don't, please explain to us why, why you haven't in some excruciating detail why you reserving the industry's right of confidentiality.

DON MEARES: By regulation, the oil industry has set the minimum bid that's established by the Bureau... (inaudible)... each bid is reviewed by the Department of Justice based on economic models. There has been concern voiced by some individuals that... (inaudible)...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: If it's going to be leasing, if it's going to be in the bid factor, why can't it also be in your draft?

DON MEARES: ... (inaudible) ... established for each individual tract...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: So in other words, you're gonna, the EIS is gonna recommend leasing, then you prepare what you think that's worth... (inaudible)...

DON MEARES: We have petroleum products that look at what's made available through the planning process, what industry is asking ... (inaudible)...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: What's this that, parallel leasing process that being prepared as we go through this scoping, I understood that mean you would be, you would know ... (inaudible)... set the price around in October of '97.

DON MEARES: There's a parallel process of developing the development scenarios, but individual lease tracts value would result from the lease sale.

GENE TERLAND: The parallel process that they're doing right now is an evaluation of what is there, they're trying to identify the areas as to what, basically to get the information in order to be able to make a minimum bid determination. We don't have that information at the present time, so as we're going through this EIS process, we have our folks doing an evaluation process on the oil and gas potential as well.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: And that evaluation won't be in any conclusive form by October 1997?

GENE TERLAND: By the time the draft is out it will not, they will not be in position to be able to make the minimum bid determinations, and I don't believe that we'll have the actual tracts, I don't think will be identified by then either.

DON MEARES: We may very well have more than one lease sale... (inaudible)...

EMERSON: The free market value is somewhat determined by the highest bidder that gets the tract and that's a secret, although at the same time ... (inaudible)... There is a minimum bid which these companies will submit on the idea that possibly nobody else is interested and they might look at it and they might not. What they put forward though in terms of offering up for the lease sale is non-refundable, if they don't find anything, you know, you don't get your money back and so in many cases the information may not have been that good and they have quite an investment laid out and nothing's happened, and nothing was found. That's part of the game.

RICHARD FINEBERG: In that same scenario, is there any possibility that any federal regulations in terms of disclosure of what the lessee finds I have a problem as a citizen with, well I guess the *tight hold* policy ... (inaudible)... you have access to what is there but nobody else does, then the second lease that company has an advantage. I can understand the reasons for it, but I think in terms of public policy and trying to weigh land values and broader public values is very difficult to do while allowing for confidentiality of both sides of ... there. I guess the trade-offs to me do not produce values, public policy over the long term, I don't know what the right answer is....

MORKILL: Is that, I'm trying to understand, is that a trade off between the resource

of oil and gas versus other resources?

RICHARD FINEBERG: Yes, that trade-off then gets askew when we don't know what the results are. Now I don't know why I would want to pay for the right to drill if I had to tell everyone what I found. At the same time, I don't know if I want to trade the habitat of thirty-three thousand black brant for 6 barrels of oil, but I may be willing to trade for a billion barrels, and someone else may not be, we can't have the dialog when they have the *tight hold*...(inaudible)...but I'm not comfortable with...(inaudible)...so the question is, are there any provisions to mitigate ...(inaudible)...as to what the discoveries may or may not be.

(End of tape 2 - side 2)

(Begin tape 2 - side 2a)

UNKNOWN: ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: We have, in Barrow and Atqasuk and there was some people there who had spoken to some people in Nuiqsut. They did talk about voicing their concerns for cumulative impacts, it's in the development *marching list* right on their doorstep, but that's one of, that's definitely one place we decided we needed to go to was Nuiqsut.

RITCHIE: I think the one thing for sure about Nuiqsut and that is they're certainly right in the middle of this, all that's going on and so we need to ...(inaudible)...

CRAIG GEORGE: Yeah, that's really critical...

MORKILL: I guess they're not picking us up on the tape so we're going to have to get a little bit formal and folks are either going to need to project or come up to the mike.

SHARON WILSON - BLM: Unfortunately this room isn't wired for sound and we're using a table mike and this tall mike is wired so if people want to give comment, so if you stand up the sound bounces off that table into that ....

MORKILL: For those folks who've come in, we're just in the process of listening to your concerns and information that you have to present on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. We had an overview of the planning process, if there's any questions on that, we had thought about 7:00 o'clock maybe if there's another flush of public coming in we might review some of the information.

DAVID VAN DEN BURG: I just wanted to ask, does Congress need to approve development, if leasing proceeds after the EIS, does Congress need to do something to take some action ...(inaudible)...I need to get some water (laughter)

MORKILL: We're not going to have a formal testimony process, this is how we're going to be, we want to make it informal, and that's a good cue, why don't we take a 5 to 10 minute break, there is coffee, tea, and refreshments in the back room and you don't have to crowd back there to eat it and drink it, you can come out here, and go use the restrooms, and we'll get started back in 5 minutes, I'm going to say 5 cause I know you'll take 10. (laughter)

(BREAK)

MORKILL: ...that people like to express...

DAN RITZMAN: I guess I'll express my biggest concern and that's the piecemeal planning process, why just focus in on a small part of the NPR-A, why not focus on the whole NPR-A, and why not look across the north slope in general to cumulative effects, and I guess on the back of this page you answer a little bit as to why aren't you planning the whole NPR-A but I think that that's a fairly weak argument, it says that you're not doing it because it would be time consuming and difficult. So my point would be that this is a really important place and important process and that it would be worth taking the extra time to do it and to do it right, do you think that it really is important to look at the bigger picture, the cumulative effects, that it's worth taking that extra time and sort of the last sentence in there that, basically it says that you plan on doing the plan piecemeal, which is a little bit here and a little bit there and address each little bit, and that's a concern...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: So take a comprehensive look at the reserve itself...

MIKE DALTON: You haven't yet answered the question what I was going to bring up, what you voiced, why it's 6 million acres and not 23 million acres, cause the ducks don't stop at the border, it's an integrated system there, now I'm not a biologist, but at least I know that moose and caribou migrate, not the moose so much, but caribou and ducks and geese

MORKILL: You agree there's a concern then that we're not dealing with it comprehensively and even beyond the boundaries, I mean the entire area boundaries are arbitrary, given migrations of caribou....

TED SWEM: Yeah, really this whole process is done on the environmental impact statement, so we're trying to look at the impacts to the environment, and it seems that by subdividing it what we're really doing is, we're just looking at the oil resources, it's very easy to subdivide the land in terms of surface area as it appeals to an oil developer, but in terms the environment that makes it very difficult to do a thorough and well-reasoned overall impact analysis, and it was mentioned by someone else, that it would appear that we've decided what the time schedule is and then decided how to review, and that seems backwards and rather first you

decide what's involved in review, what would be the wise way to do a meaningful review and then you determine what the time schedule is.

UNKNOWN: Also I mentioned this, along that line too, my question is how does the national energy policy even show that there's any kind of a need to develop any part of the NPR-A, you know, we don't have a comprehensive long term plan that's been real well thought out that shows any kind of need for any development in the NPR-A maybe for the next 50, 100 years. I mean we don't know, we just haven't got that type of planning done. Hey, this type of involvement is, looks like it's just accommodating three oil companies that would like to do some exploration, and it seems ridiculous, it seems really backwards, it seems like there's the oil companies that have a need to find another place to go and exploit resources rather than the people of the United States and the people of Alaska ... (inaudible)... looking at how and where we should develop.

MORKILL: So the issue, the need for additional resources, oil and gas resources should be driven by a national energy policy and we...

UNKNOWN: I think that's the whole idea of the National Petroleum Reserve, I mean the name in itself pretty much tells that to me, and if there isn't a national need for oil, I would say that the north slope of Alaska, would be the last place that you would go to develop a resource, because of the sensitive nature and the wilderness aspect that you just won't find anywhere else in the world. To me, there's oil resources in a lot of other places much easier to obtain and probably already exploited or partially developed that will fulfill the needs of the United States and people of Alaska and North America in general, without going into the National Petroleum Reserve. I just don't see, I think it's backwards thinking, I really do.

MORKILL: Are there some values, you mentioned wilderness and remote values, that you'd like to highlight in terms of providing...

UNKNOWN: Well it's right next door to the wildlife refuge, it's, if you look at the map, you see all the nesting areas for waterfowl, it's presently roadless and pretty much undeveloped at this time, it's wilderness, but if oil exploration occurs, I mean there'll be activity all over the place and the wilderness aspect, to my mind, in great jeopardy.

SYLVIA WARD - NORTHERN ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER: I heard a couple different folks name why, and there must have been a request. Has there been a written request to engage in leasing activities? I know that there's the call map, we have it posted on the wall of our office, we're looking at it everyday so that's gone out for the oil industry to indicate what they would like, but before that was put together, the call map, what identified that there needed to be a leasing program perhaps, was there a letter from the Governor? Did ARCO send a letter?

There must be some sort of written request, I was wondering if I could get a copy of that.

GENE TERLAND - BLM: If there was a written request, it would of probably been between the Governor and the Secretary of the Interior. I have not seen a written request. I do know that they, the Governor was in Washington and they did have meetings with the Secretary and what was discussed in those meetings, I don't know. I have not seen a written request.

SYLVIA WARD: He was actually sleeping in the White House...It seems like that would be at the beginning of this document, that there has to be some sort of request for an action. Otherwise we're spending a lot of people's time and money and consideration of something. It must have had it's origins somewhere, I just heard some whys and I think there must be an explanation for this or we wouldn't be here today. So I think that should be included as, it should be explained in this EIS document. I mean I'm looking at the explanation here, some commonly asked questions, why are you planning for the northeast corner and it identifies Alpine, what will it accomplish, why aren't you planning for the whole NPR-A, it doesn't say because somebody asked for this, and I know it wasn't me.

MORKILL: I'd be interested to hear, we started to talk about some of the resource values for people find important in this particular part of the National Petroleum Reserve. I'd be interested to hear some more input on that, again part of this process is not only hearing your concerns, but gathering information from the public as to what you see as important for these areas...

DAN RITZMAN: Well you hit some of my major concerns, such as general wilderness and character and value, but I think, I picked this up on the way in, it's from the Fish and Wildlife Service, but it seems to do a fantastic job of identifying some other species of concern and talks about the potential impacts on the caribou and other wildlife, so it does a really nice job, much more than I could summing up some of these concerns.

MORKILL: So you share some of the concerns that, those values that Fish and Wildlife Service presented.

SYLVIA WARD: Ray Cameron has done quite a bit of research on the Central Arctic herd and it indicated that a drop in productivity of that herd and possibly correlating with maybe the oil field development and certainly it used to be an important calving area for the Central Arctic herd, they displaced to other areas by and large, and this area is real important for Teshekpuk herd, so it just seems like that has such serious implications. I was real glad also to see Mr. Martin's comments here, cause there does seem to be a rising level of data that's says, heads up, this doesn't create a situation that's actually help promoting for wildlife

populations, there could be serious impacts. Also the brant, there's a lot of indications on how disturbance can really mess up the brant, and maybe you've heard that from some of the elders up there already, but that seems like a population that would be greatly at risk and it's an important area for the molting black brant. And it seems as though there's no real compatible way you can have oil development and caribou herds, especially their calving areas, and it doesn't seem to be a way you can have black brant molting compatible with low overflights or ground level disturbance, it's just kind of, you got to pick and I'd rather not have to jeopardize wildlife populations for oil field development, especially when there's no crushing national need. This oil would be exported directly and we will not see it, it would do very little to benefit the economy of the state or our national energy use.

MORKILL: There's a lot of issues just in these few statements that you made there....

SYLVIA WARD: Are you going to take public testimony tonight or are we just going just keep on...

SHARON WILSON - BLM: You are being taped right now....

SYLVIA WARD: I mean are you gonna, do you want people to read their prepared comments or how do you....

MORKILL: This is an open forum and so our idea is to have it more informal than that, but if people have prepared then.....

(End of tape 2 - side 2 A)  
(Begin tape 3 - side 1)

MORKILL: I'm not saying come on up and read testimony, but I don't want to preclude people from doing that if that's the type of forum that they would like.

SYLVIA WARD: Another wildlife species that I don't believe was mentioned, there's some research that wolverine tend not to be populated in an area, but of all areas that this area might have a pretty high density of wolverine, maybe that areas further south of the NPR-A, probably. But wolverine are real easy to disturb as well.

SARA CALLAGHAN: It doesn't seem like there's much information out there on wolverine, and I was wondering if you're planning on doing any more studies on some of the wildlife populations out there, would they be further studied? It seems you've got some great information on brant particularly around the Teshekpuk area, it's really important place for the brant, but wolverine in particular, I haven't seen much information on wolves, I was wondering if there's any consideration wildlife management plans that could answer?

MORKILL: That's part of, this is an integrated activity plan is what the Bureau is developing and an environmental impact statement is developed to assess that plan. And that's exactly one of the, some of the management actions that will be taken is looking at our wildlife and fisheries management programs, the need for any inventory, monitoring or research, cultural and historical values, recreation. Even our lands management program will be certifying Native allotments, so that will be addressed in our integrated activity plan. And the level of management will depend on the alternative decisions that are made as a result of the EIS.

SARA CALLAGHAN: I've another question in relation to the Colville River and the special management area that was designated, this planning area doesn't include the entire special management area and I was wondering how the BLM was planning on ... (inaudible)... if you're possible planning on extending the area, it ought to include some of the values of the Colville that obviously will travel past the arbitrary line that was drawn here.

MORKILL: That's an issue that we've noted before, but in dealing with the planning area boundary and creating special area designations and one of the things could be, one of the decisions that can be made is whether or not those boundaries should adjusted for the special areas, so we'll consider that. And your basic concern is that the boundaries are, are arbitrary and don't include all the other special areas.....

SARA CALLAGHAN: It's another indication that the line's drawn, even more for the oil industry that anything else in the area, that it seems clearly biased.

TED SWEM: I have another question, does this process in anyway resurrect consideration of any of these rivers as wild and scenic rivers?

MORKILL: Yes, I would say, to the extent that we're reviewing the values.

GENE TERLAND: Yeah, we're currently looking at what has been done, you know, up on the north slope as far as wild and scenic rivers, and what that status is and what responsibility we have as far as wild and scenic rivers and how we're going to address those values

TED SWEM: Have you considered any other rivers like the Kogosukruk, that I don't think were originally considered in the first go through?

GENE TERLAND: Is it within this planning area?

TED SWEM: Yes sir, it's the, of the two tributaries that come in from the left on the Colville, it's the south one of those two.

TERLAND: So your concern would be that that should be looked at?

TED SWEM: Yeah, I just wondered if you considered it at all, yeah, that would be my concern.

MORKILL: In addition to the Colville River as well?

TED SWEM: Yes.

MORKILL: Any comments, did anybody come prepared to give a statement that, you're welcome to read those, providing we have the time, I'd encourage you to present your written comments as well.

CRAIG GEORGE: I don't have a prepared statement, but I'm trying to pull together some thoughts here on the, I think this symposium is a good idea, especially if it's structured properly, and I'm thinking in terms of the Endicott Development Project, the review of that project was taken over by the North Slope Borough in 1988 or something, and I think we came up with a reasonably good approach to doing the environmental assessment at least, and the way that worked was if you have people that are familiar with the resource come up with a kind of issue based approach and then basically formulate hypotheses that are testable and then you conduct the research and you have an independent review panel look at the research, rather than agency people because, I don't know who was involved in the Endicott project prior to when the Corps (*of Engineers*) administered it, but every agency brought their own agenda to the table and very little constructive, very little was accomplished. Once it, you know, was reviewed by a panel of scientists, that just reviewed the work on it's scientific merit, things progressed pretty quickly, we were able to knock off issues and get some consensus agreement that, you know, that issue was satisfactorily addressed. I don't know how that could be applied to this process, at least a start would be at the symposium, to try and come up with some sort of, maybe you can help me here, Ray, but some sort of, you know, articulate some issues that are in a succinct manner, that are then, make it testable. You know, come with hypothesis that are testable so that if there is a monitoring program done, it's not sort of a haphazard approach, but very focused and the studies have some reasonable, through power analysis or something, some, you know, there's some reasonable success. If they are doing these studies, that can be integrated into the planning process...

EMERSON: I believe the intent right now for the symposium is primarily to update the information that depicts the environmental resources. I don't think our intent at this point was to step into testable hypotheses regarding that particular relationship, so tier into those type of studies, I don't think that's the agenda, this is primarily, the charge is to describe adequately the resources in the entire ecosystem, how were

going to define that, I think that's part of the symposium also, but mostly descriptive nature of the environment, that should bring us up to date. Following that we could generate another type of panel that hadn't been talked about to much, following like that month or so, or two months or so whatever the timeframe would permit, could be something that you're talking about, that would be related to, if I understand you right, testing hypotheses and studying issues involved, right now I don't think that's the intent of this particular, um, you want to tackle that, Mike?

KUNZ: Well, that's certainly not the direction we have for this first go around on this science symposium...

EMERSON: But it's good thought and I think it's noteworthy as something that could be followed up...

CRAIG GEORGE: So, the objectives again, of the symposium, are just sort of a broad characterization of this area?

EMERSON: Right, people that are published in the area, and their ongoing research, and their insights into what their characterizations are. And that way we look to see what the potential effects are involved.

CRAIG GEORGE: So you'll make that determination or will the scientists that attend will they have an opportunity to give their opinion? On or about sensitive areas or....

EMERSON: Oh, yeah.

KUNZ: Absolutely, they ...(inaudible)...

EMERSON: They're characterizing the habitat, they're characterizing the environment, and that characterization...they wanted that group to project the potential impacts with respect the various planning processes, but we do want to get the the habitat and the environment characterized as fully as possible. Along with that goes the input from the communities on their traditional knowledge. The question was a good question worthy of further discussion.

MORKILL: Just briefly, I, something, I neglected to say earlier and we haven't been taking names when you've been speaking, obviously, and if you have an interest to have your name associated with any comments, feel free to grab a pen and scribble on the sheet so you can make any corrections in fact to your comments if we misinterpreted them in any way.

*(Note To Reader: The facilitator subsequently reviewed the tape recordings and made note of the speakers whose voices she recognized, where possible in these transcripts.)*

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: So what next after leasing, what next after this, maybe the question is, is the scope going to be broad enough to look at development after leasing? Or is this just a political question of leasing without looking at the question of pursuing the development issue?

MIKE KUNZ: You mean within the document that we're preparing? There will be scenarios done for reasonable foreseeable development, that has to be figured into it, but as far as this document goes, it doesn't necessarily promulgate acknowledgment, this is only looking at, do we want to lease, are we able to lease, and do we want to lease. Certainly as part of that, we have to have some idea of what development might ensue, or we can't really assess the impact. But as far as the development itself goes, that would be a totally different process and it would require further environmental analysis.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: But at that point, you'd be dealing with an EIS, and this gets back to my earlier point about congressional action, we've done a bunch of exploratory work and spent a bunch of money learning what's up there, what's not up there, and then we go to the question of development, they're separate questions, they're dissociated questions, one's leasing, can we and should we, and the second one would be can we and should we develop. But as a very important part of that is preceded, that second question is they spent a whole lot of money to learn what's up there and I really feel that this says, if we go to leasing, if that's affirmed at least, then we're going to go to development, at that point the EIS, you ought to call it something else, because it's a foregone conclusion. So my concern is what's next after this? Now I'm not satisfied that other public interest can be adequately addressed or protected or have any room for it if there's, if they're still going to drill there.

KUNZ: I'm not sure that I understand your question, I'm not sure that I understand your comment. I mean were you asking or were you just making a comment? I understand what you're commenting on but I don't know if there's a question in there for me to address or not.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: I'm not sure if there is either, I was stating, that as I see this, the sequence of things rolling along, that there are two separate questions, and I'm trying to make this as a concern, that I'm concerned for what the next step is, and I don't think that it can be a non foregone conclusion. If that makes sense. The reason I don't think that that can be so is if you decide to lease, and industry spends a lot of money, they bid on whatever they spend, and whatever they spend on the winter drilling, what have you, and analyze what's down the hole, they're going to have spent a lot of money, and presumably if they want to get a development stage, they then know that something else is there. And if it were and environmental impact statement, which is supposed to have no foregone conclusions, then I'm just simply not confident that there would not be a foregone conclusion because industry

has invested a lot of money. I don't think it's fair to them to put something right in front of them and then snatch it away.

KUNZ: I think it depends on a lot of things that would follow whatever the decision is that comes out of the document. If you look back to the sales in the 80's, I think, and Don you can correct me on this if I'm wrong, but I think that we received roughly \$84 million dollars in bids and bonus bids and so on for those lease sales and there was never any drilling, there was never and development, I take that back, one well was drilled as a result of that, but, all those, and those leases are limited to a 10 year life. All of those leases have long since expired, the industry paid the government \$84 million dollars and nothing happened.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: But you never got to the, there was nobody pushing for the development question.

KUNZ: Well, the companies, there will never, will probably not be a development question until exploration occurs, and the companies did not even go forth into exploration on those leases. What I'm saying is, and I understand your question, and I see what your concern is, but there are variety of factors that are involved in going beyond leasing, it's not just a foregone conclusion, because there are a number of things that have had to happen to have industry be interested in going beyond that.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: Like finding oil...

KUNZ: Exactly.

RITCHIE: I think it's, you need to logically think this through, as you have, I mean if you're going to lease sale, the next logical step is development, that's what you said, and that's right, and you're right on. The only thing you need to, we need to be aware of there is, is we start this up front, we start this process, that's where it's going to lead you, it's going to lead us all there, perhaps. But the next step after this process that we're going through, if there's a lot of questions answered to a lot of people's satisfaction, I suppose, and there'll be a lot of people that isn't answered to their satisfaction, but nonetheless there could be a development program after this, and what we need to be aware of at that point it that is a site specific environmental analysis on whatever is found there, so I, maybe that helps, I don't know, there's quite a few unknowns yet. You do have to get to an oil patch somehow.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: Don just explained, and I overheard Don explaining that the reason why you're not taking entirely the NPR-A is because there is some internal discussion, that they didn't seem to feel that you could an adequate job with the entire NPR-A, 22 million acres, is that right? I don't mean to get you in trouble on this, but that's the explanation that I heard. Well it's a concern to me that we're

not taking up the entire 22 million acres, or 22.4, whatever it is, at this time, that's a concern. I think that piecemealing it's probably not the way to go, piecemealing the NPR-A, and I think it's telling, you didn't just choose a planning area and call it a planning area, it's the northeast planning area, which implies there's going to be a southwest planning area and a northwest planning area, and you know, basically the four corners of the NPR-A, so I'm wondering where this is going and that's why I'm asking the question, what next, after the leasing and we get to the development, so forth. So why are we piecemealing, and these are things, every question that I've raised tonight, if anything's put up there as a concern, I for my own education would like to know the answer, but I think these are also important things to have answered in black and white in a leasing document, I'm sorry, in your draft, these issues, and maybe that's just me thinking that what is in my head is important, but I think it is. And that's one of them, is what are you gonna do with the other three quarters, and he's handing me this like I should read this...

MORKILL: No, I think it's a good point, and we're gonna take note of it is, what's the next step after the environmental impact statement.

EMERSON: Let me just add, from our focus, the area is, in terms of trying to predict central impact in development activities. The smaller the area is, the better your chances are of being accurate on. The more you expand it the bigger the area, the greater the assumptions and your projections are that much more difficult to..., the fellow back here was talking about the accuracy of predictions, the bigger the area the harder it is to make a call.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: But the bigger the area, the more critical areas you're able to evaluate that need special protection, as well.

EMERSON: Well, those would be any place the additional areas like, outside of this planning area, that would come to be another planning area, another area, those areas deserve the same consideration, in other words there's 50 special areas in an additional lease sale, and I would expect there would be, so the challenging question also is the subsequent steps which could follow from this lease sale, and that we don't have a good handle on...(inaudible)... projections on those.

MORKILL: I'm sorry, I've got somebody back there doing all sorts of signals and it's rather distracting and I want to make sure...

EMERSON: I don't think the action is carrying back to that room, he needs to be out here...(laughter).

MORKILL: Again we talked about earlier that some of the other decisions, the only decision that's going to be made is not, to lease or not to lease, but also how to deal with some of the special resource values in the area and that includes those that

have already been recognized in the existing special areas and whether or not those boundaries are adequate, given the current knowledge, or if they should be adjusted, or if there's other values to be recognized, so we'd welcome your input on that, and we've heard a little bit about the wilderness qualities, and wild and scenic rivers, if there's any other additional information that you'd like to present...

DAN RITZMAN: Well I guess it's sort of along that line, but not really, the, I'm hoping that within your, EIS, the scoping process, you can begin to get at the impacts that oil development that's already on the north slope that's had on the areas where it's at, the Prudhoe Bay area and the big sprawl throughout Prudhoe Bay and somehow take a look at what's happened there and even one of the, you know, how many spills, what kind of and amount of toxic sludge that's produced per year or whatever, and take that and place that in context with that level of development in a pristine place ... (inaudible)... I mean I guess there's not, to me there's, I'm not really sure that when we look at this we really think about the types of impacts that oil development is gonna have, and I think it's important that that be brought up more.

MORKILL: So, given current and past development, there's information out there that we need to take a look at and how it'd affect the other resources and integrate it into this plan? Well, we're here till 9:00 p.m., so we're happy to get some more information...

RICHARD FINEBERG: If we didn't have the separation of church and state we could turn this into a silent meeting (laughter).

MORKILL: We appreciate everybody coming and sticking to it too. We could take another coffee break. We are basically here till 9:00 p.m. in case anybody else shows up, if, we don't need to sit in our chairs, we can move around and look at the maps and ask more specific questions if you like....

(Break)

(End of tape 3 - side 1)

(Begin tape 3 - side 2)

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION: ... (inaudible)...

SEAN MAGUIRE: My name is Sean Maguire, 351 Cloudberry Drive, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709. I guess I'd like to start by just saying that when you look around the world, I think one of the main, for many people a real criteria to judge a nation is what they've done with their natural treasures and I really think that one of the great things the U.S. has is that they have had the foresight to set aside areas and protect areas and natural populations, wildlife, and I think, you know, we have a bed and

breakfast here in town, and we deal with a lot of Europeans and Asians, and one of the things that they, one of the positive things that they feel about the U.S. is that we do have these natural areas that we have, I think, done a pretty good job protecting, both here in Alaska and the lower '48. And I think nations that don't protect their natural treasures and their wildlife are viewed in a very negative light and you see this in Africa, in the Soviet Union, in South America, it's an indication that if a nation doesn't take care of it's natural wonders, it's sort of an indication that they really are a second rate nation. And then just to follow that, with the NPR-A, you know, I don't think people are going to oppose all oil drilling, but I do think it's really gonna be important that we try to protect some of the special areas in that National Petroleum Reserve. It seems like this could be a model, if it's planned long enough in advance and some of these areas like the rivers and lakes are protected, I think this could probably be a model for future. So I guess with that, it's just, you know, let's see if we can really get some of the special areas protected. Thank you.

MORKILL: Can I ask for, just some clarifications, and that's just part of the process we're trying to do here tonight, when you talk about a model for the future, do you feel that the planning process that we're going through now would be a model to show that we can provide for protection of areas while also providing for other activities...

MAGUIRE: Well, in places that are designated for drilling, like the NPR-A, yeah, I think if some of these areas that are important for wildlife habitat get protected, I think it would bode well for, you know, just general, that something can be done well and still protect it all. I don't necessarily, I don't think, there are certain areas I think should be off limits all together, I'm not saying we should, if they do this right that means they can go anywhere, but for areas that are designated for drilling, if this is done well, yeah, I think that'd be a real positive step.

MORKILL: Special areas is some of the jargon we have, capital S, capital A, for Teshekpuk Lake Special Area, and Colville River Special Area, are those the ones you're referring to or do you have other areas....

MAGUIRE: No, those are the ones. I really don't, haven't followed the actual details, but just in a general sense.

MORKILL: We do have a map of information, the black outline is special areas that were designated by the Secretary, and those will be considered in the planning process.

MAGUIRE: O.K., thanks.

MORKILL: We appreciate your input...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: I, you know, getting back to my concern that what is in this document, what is in your scoping document is actually, is not only of use to the agency to proceed with your own work, but is of use to the public to use as a resource to determine if the agency has made good decisions, or to kinda just understand, it's gonna be the anthology. I think a useful thing in there would be to please document, written documentation, date, author, all that stuff, of where the interest came from. I see this as coming out of Knowles and ARCO and maybe ARCO through Knowles, but I think it'd be real enlightening to know who has actually expressed interest. Something else, and this is something I raised a little bit earlier that I want to say it again, maybe in a different way, is that when you're looking at cumulative impacts, I see that as different from cumulative opportunities on the north slope, and so I urge that you look at not only just the expansion and what it means for cumulative environmental impacts across the north slope, dredging and filling and pipelines and roads and so forth, but just how many, how much opportunity is there up there now and why this Fed's feel like they have to contribute to that opportunity, and I'm speaking specifically of Alpine, of North Star, of Badami, and what is developing over in the canyon with Wart Hog and Sourdough. I think there's a phenomenal amount of activity, of big expansion, out of the traditional core are of Prudhoe, and I think you need to look that cumulative opportunity, why does the federal government need to contribute to that at this time. I think, it seems to me that gravel would be a problem up there, if they're going to do conventional style development and Colville's got some huge, huge, gravel bars and I would like to see them...you know this whole pipeline that's going underneath the Colville, I could be wrong, but wasn't the Colville designated as study area for wild and scenic? It doesn't really matter, it's a phenomenal place and to have a pipeline that has had essentially had no more oversight than Joint Pipeline Office, coming up to it, diving under and coming up again, I don't know if that's going to afford the kind of protection I'd like to see for the Colville, because, that's state jurisdiction, I think that the federal government been your power sphere for, to protect, to minimize the disturbance on Colville, and that includes excavating for gravel. And also the maximum, but not considering wild and scenic river now, but it's maximum protection for the Colville, for the planning area, as stringent as it can be. I've actually, I was up there this summer, I did a long trip, and I cut some things out of my journal that I wanted to read tonight, I don't know if I will but it's from the delta, just an amazing place. The other place is Teshekpuk Lake, and I've heard that there's sand dunes out there somewhere, and I'm fascinated by sand dunes, I don't know how ecologically important they are, but ascetically they're pretty impressive, so protect those areas. Protect meaning no leasing.

MORKILL: No leasing in Teshekpuk?

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: Or in the Colville and, you know, make sure that they're not gonna, that industrial activities aren't going to disturb what's there on the Colville.

RITCHIE: You mentioned the sand dunes too, and there are sand dunes there, it's quite an interesting area. I've looked at those.

MORKILL: You were talking about the extraction of sand and gravel to the Colville and how that might affect the other values and what impact that would have? I'm just curious, those sand dunes, are they in the delta area?

YOKEL: Those are the Pik Dunes, south of Teshekpuk Lake.

MORKILL: Are those within the planning area or the special area boundaries?

YOKEL: I'm not sure....they're on the map...

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION: ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: Does anyone want to continue with any comments or concerns?

YOKEL: If we have a pause, I can try to answer his questions on the Colville River wild and scenic. ANILCA withdrew the Colville and three other rivers for study, withdrew from certain activities for study as wild and scenic rivers. I'm not sure about the legal status of that withdrawal, but the assumption in 1983 was that Congress let that lapse and it ended. However, in 1980 when that was written in ANILCA, the Colville was inside the NPR-A. Following a lawsuit later, the Colville River is now outside, just outside of the NPR-A, so I don't believe we can study the Colville River for wild and scenic river status, however we can certainly and should analyze the impacts of anything that we would do inside of the planning area on the Colville River outside of the planning area.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: That's exactly what, I'm not suggesting that it should be studied for wild and scenic rivers at all, I was just using that to illustrate that other people have noted it as an exceptional place.

TERLAND: It has been studied and was recommended, Congress didn't act, and to the best of my knowledge, the withdrawals have been lifted.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: So, the river bed, is the river bed navigable waters and therefore the state's, or is this PLO whatever it is, PLO-82 or...

MEARES: It's state selected

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: And conveyed? State selected and conveyed?

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION: (inaudible)

MEARES: I think the Colville River was navigable to the delta, so it's, well, either way, it's a...

YOKEL: The court case addressed what the boundary of NPR-A was, and...(inaudible)...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: : So in other words, the federal government does have jurisdiction over the northwest bank above the high water mark...the highest mark...

YOKEL: Wherever that is...(inaudible)...

EMERSON: I think it would be fitting, we're approaching the close, if you'd give us a reading from your journal.

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: : O.K., thank you. Just to, I came here with a testimony, so I'm sorry that I've taken up so much time, cause it would have been more succinct but given the time to just go, I to. But I, last summer, I went from the Noatak National Preserve, up in the head waters, in early May, waiting for break up, and down the Noatak River lined my canoe up the Nimiuktuk and portaged over into the Nuka River. So at the pass, I was now in the NPR-A. So I went down the Nuka to the *Pelly?* Fork and portaged into *No Luck?* Lake and floated down, paddled down Meridian Creek to the Colville, and all the way out the Colville to Nuiqsut and spent 10 days in Nuiqsut, by accident really, and then paddled the canoe to Prudhoe Bay and took out at West Dock. I think that the delta was one of the hot points without a doubt. I was born and raised in Florida and have always been around flat country, but it's always had a lot of trees on it and so to be in prairie, the best thing I can compare to what prairie is, is something completely new. The outposts of progress I found at No Luck Lake and at Brady are sinking into the earth and it seems to me that this is the light to shed on what you're proposing up there, or what may be proposed and that's the reopening, the reinitiation, the resumption of a leasing program and in wild country. Everything I saw, with the exception of around Umiat and the villages, it's pretty wild, there's signs of people around for sure, but it's not, it's different from ...(inaudible)... The Colville River is unique, no where in Alaska have I felt so awash in the land, no where in Alaska have I felt such deep solitude. The dramatic stretching out in a way of all this country really soothes me. The river course from Umiat to the coast is exquisite and I'll never forget paddling in the calm at midnight beneath those sun struck bluffs and listening to the chirping of the raptors. I'll never forget standing on sand dunes in the delta, looking west or north and feeling as though I was glimpsing infinity, looking out over the sea or across the stretch of land to the west. Yet every time in twilight that I felt the cool wind on my face, and welcomed its gentle and erosive force on my skin, I raised my eyes to see a derrick on the eastern horizon, and as I approached Prudhoe Bay, the trip was really over. Prudhoe's a large area organized for a sole purpose, a sense of

personal exploration and discovery does not reside there. And that's it, just the transition from wild country to Prudhoe.

MORKILL: Thanks for sharing that, I'm sure it's an appropriate closeout for our comment session. And if you had something, a prepared statement, that you want part of the public record, we have it on tape, but you can also present it in writing...

DAVE VAN DEN BERG: I'll have some more time to work on it and I'll send it out, I'll just mail it by April 4th.

(End of tape 3 - side 2)

Meeting Adjourned