

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

Scoping Meeting

Anchorage

1997

NPR-A INTEGRATED ACTIVITY PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SCOPING MEETING
BLM - ANCHORAGE DISTRICT OFFICE, CAMPBELL TRACT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
MARCH 25, 1997
5:00 P.M.

(Note to Reader: Due to problems in recording equipment and sound, there are several points in which the discussion on the tape recording was inaudible. Notes from the flipcharts kept during the public meeting are attached to supplement these transcripts.)

(Begin tape 1 - side 1)

ANNE MORKILL - BLM: ... (inaudible)... NPR-A, National Petroleum Reserve, Alaska, public scoping meeting. My name is Anne Morkill, and I'm on the NPR-A planning team and I'll be facilitating the sessions tonight. If you haven't already, we do have some sign up sheets we'd appreciate you signing and also you can indicate on there if you want to receive additional materials throughout this process. One of those materials includes a newsletter which is going to be produced throughout the next 18 months to update the public and the agencies on the progress of the integrated activity plan and the environmental impact statement. And this particular newsletter you'll see on the back page, there's opportunity for you to write written comments, which you can do tonight and leave it with us or you can mail it to the addresses indicated. And the date on here says March 31st, 1997, but you have a one week extension of the scoping date to April 4th. A couple of housekeeping things, maybe you can correct me if I'm wrong, if you need restrooms, the ladies' is out this door to the left and the men's is out this door to the left. We're scheduled to go until 9:00 tonight so lets fill up the next 3 hours, ... (inaudible)... I'd like to introduce Dee Ritchie, he's the Northern District Manager for BLM in Fairbanks.....

DEE RITCHIE - BLM: Welcome to the offices of, to this scoping meeting. Now some people might say, what's a scoping meeting? To us it's a listening session, and so we want to, we're glad to come out tonight to share your thoughts on this project. We hope that this will be a positive experience for you and for us and it'll be positive if we hear your comments and your concerns, and I want you to know right now that there's been no decisions made about the integrated activity plan or the oil and gas development and how that will be done. And so we think we have a pretty open field here tonight to talk to. We've had two previous meetings like this one at Barrow at a community south of Barrow, Atqasuk and this meeting tonight, and there's one more on Thursday night in Fairbanks, and then an additional one on April the 3rd in Nuiqsut and you're welcome to attend all of them if you'd like to. We're hoping that we can learn some things tonight from you, the public, who really owns these lands, and should be concerned about them and share your knowledge with us, that would be really, if you know about that, the scientific knowledge or the

traditional knowledge that you may have, and if you care about it in your day to day life. This project, this area that we're talking about, has an effect on Alaskans and it'll have an effect on the United States, so now and in the future, and we appreciate the seriousness of that. As I said in the beginning, the staff that's here tonight, and I'm going to introduce those to you in a few minutes, are looking for your thoughts and this is will be a listening session for them, they will, we'll answer any questions that we can about this, but we don't want this to be just a dialog and that's it, we want a discussion between you and take down notes, and do as much as we can on that listening part. What we're about there, is to develop an integrated activity plan and an environmental impact statement on the north slope in the National Petroleum Reserve, Alaska. This is a map that shows the total area of the Petroleum Reserve, this is a 23 million acre block of land and you can see the boundaries, this is the Colville River and this is the Beaufort Sea and this is the Chukchi Sea, and the Bering Sea off down that side, and the area that we're going to be talking about tonight and the next 18 months is this area that's right in front of you, this is the Ikpikpuk River and then this follows, this boundary follows the township line back down to the Colville River. Well, that area is blown up on this map in the back and you're welcome to look at those anytime you want. This area is about 4.6 million acres or one fifth of the area in the National Petroleum Reserve. That's the area of concern ... (inaudible)... Nuiqsut and Barrow's up at the top just off the map, for those of you that don't know their Alaska, Barrow, the top of the world, and Atqasuk, the village here that we visited the last time, or last meeting. This is Prudhoe Bay, there we've got an idea of what we're talking about. I'd like to introduce the staff that's working on this project to you, so when I get finished here, you can talk to them, cause they really know what's happening here and if they don't, they will after you get finished with them. Let me introduce them to you, Curt Wilson, ... (inaudible)... Curt Wilson is our planner, the lead planner on this project, he also works for the State Office of BLM, here in Anchorage; Dave Yokel, Dave Yokel is a wildlife biologist from our Fairbanks office here on the planning group; Ray Emerson, Ray Emerson is the, he's an analyst and in charge of the analyst team that will be working primarily on the environmental impact statement and Ray works for us but MMS is his home, we're glad to have him with us. And with him to night is Dick Roberts, we're glad to have Dick here. Ed Bovy on the back table is a member of the public affairs and analyst team, and he's here in the Anchorage office, we also have with us Tom Lohman from the North Slope Borough, and he's been with us at all these meetings and will be with us in the meetings, we have a few people working from the North Slope Borough intimately with us on this project, and another one is Arnold Brower, he isn't here tonight, but they'll be working with us through out the project. Anne Morkill has been on this project from the beginning and we met her, she introduced the meeting and she'll be back in a few minutes to take notes, and listen to your comments. I have a couple others, I'd like you to at least know who they are and my boss, Sally Wisely, the Associate State Director for the Alaska BLM; and Deborah Williams, Deborah Williams, the Secretary's (of Interior) representative in Alaska, glad to have them with us, there are a group of people coming in that I know and I'm not going to introduce them all but I am going to let you know about Gene Terland, Gene's that quiet person back there that just came in, Gene Terland will be working with us on this project. We have a lot of people working on it to get it done. The key point is we're on a fast track, 18 months is pretty fast, but we think we can get it done. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Anne, and she's going to facilitate and conduct the remainder of this meeting, and thank you again for being here.

MORKILL: (inaudible)... and we have a web page and you can get more information from it as well as submit your comments. Let me introduce Curt Wilson, who's a planner in our state office, he's going to explain what the planning process is and answer any questions that you may have.

CURT WILSON - BLM: I'm not going to take very long here but I'm sort of the technical person, keeping track of the schedule and stuff like that, so I thought what I would do is just tell you, give you an overview that basically this planning process is designed to come up with and integrated activity plan and what that means is what it says, this plan is intended to integrate a management plan for all of the resources that BLM manages. That includes such things as cultural resources, land, wildlife, subsistence resources, habitat, in other words, although often times we seem to bog down in discussions of oil and gas development and that seems to be the focus that we see from the public information we get out there, we think of it as an integrated activity plan, more interested in planning for all the resources that we manage up there, so we're asking you when you make your comments to please keep that in mind. If you've got comments on things others than oil and gas we'd love to here it. O.K., the second thing today is Anne mentioned that we'd extended our comment period to April 4th, I just wanted to emphasize that, that was necessary because we had to change the date of the meeting at Nuiqsut at their request and we therefore extended that date beyond our meeting on the 3rd at Nuiqsut. So we extend that for everyone here, that gives you another week to give us written comments. O.K., and rather than actually try to take you through a detailed discussion of the planning process what I'd like to do is just bring your attention to some of the key dates where we'll have major milestones accomplished and where we'll, for most of these we'll be looking for input from you for additional input, we have our alternative drafted internally by May 2nd and then we turn them over to MMS who will do the assessment of impact on those, and there will be a draft available of the plan and EIS on October 24, and at that time the public comment period opens, during that, that's 60-day comment period, during that period we're going to hold public meetings, right now they're scheduled from November 3rd to November 14th. So the 60-day public review and comment period closed December 23rd, and that's 1997. After it closes we revise the document based on the public input and input from other interested agencies, other interested parties, on June 26th, 1998, we come up with a final EIS, and then there's a 30 day waiting period and we publish the ROD, the record of decision on July 31st, 1998. So anybody who's ever been involved in this business knows that that's a very ambitious schedule, but we're committed to getting it done, so that's about all I really wanted to say and emphasize the fact that we would like to have comments on all of the resources that we manage up there and just to give you this brief summary of the schedule and I'm available for additional questions on the planning process if anybody has any.

RITCHIE: ...(inaudible)...

TOM LOHMAN - NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH: My name is Tom Lohman with the North Slope Borough, for those of you not familiar with the North Slope Borough ... (inaudible)... we'll start out by saying obviously we are more concerned about this probably than anybody, we also, we think, know more about this area than anybody, as Dee and Anne also said we've conducted these kinds of meetings in Barrow already ... (inaudible)... outside the planning area that are affected by activity in the area. There's still the one in Nuiqsut which is the area obviously ... (inaudible)... we expect that meeting to be fairly interesting. As you know, ARCO is engaging in a development project in the Colville delta ... (inaudible)... called Alpine. ... (inaudible)... I'll start out by saying I think they're doing a good job. The borough comes to this project with that background, we think that this activity, oil and gas leasing ... (inaudible)... if we do our work well now. We are engaged in the process, hopefully at some point if it happens ... (inaudible)... familiar with that process, we at the borough want to be at the table, we are the group that's been invited to the table, there are other groups on the north slope that are equally concerned, ... (inaudible)... the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, we hope to the best of our abilities to represent their interests in the process as well as our own. Also ... (inaudible)... It's good to see such a broad range of folks, I know a lot of you in the room tonight, in our community ... (inaudible)... teleconference radio show from Barrow following our Atqasuk meeting, where we included ... (inaudible)... but it's going to be good from other facets of the community besides our local ... (inaudible)... again, I'm involved in the process hopefully from the beginning to the end, we're going to try to get that in 18 months, our primary objective is to quality, I think we certainly can do that, we need as much input from all of you, as well as the folks on the north slope ... (inaudible)... there may be times when various of us ask a question of people who are talking, because this is like we said a fast track process, and if people express concerns, I may jump up and ask a question ... (inaudible)... my door is always open, I'm in the phone book here in Anchorage, if anybody wants to talk to me, they can talk to me as well as the folks at BLM, you have all of their addresses. Again I'm the contact here in Anchorage for the borough, Arnold Brower, Jr. up on the slope in Barrow, contact at the North Slope Borough. ... (inaudible)... to hear your comments.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: As you may have read in the paper, there are some issues over the revenues that will come out of this from the get go, and those are being resolved and that's not a dispute, it's a discussion that's ongoing between the borough and the state at this point. As far as on the ground facilities, the borough has tax authority over anything within our boundaries, so we would have property tax authority over any facilities that were developed following the lease sales.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: All of Prudhoe Bay, all of that's, yes.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: In something less than the last 20 years the people of the north slope have come from essentially impoverished conditions to conditions now which most of us take for granted. When people talk about developing the North Slope Borough I really think that's sort of a ... (inaudible)... we now have facilities that people took for granted ... (inaudible)... and it can take a lot of money to maintain them in situations where large villages are spread out. We've been talking about 3 villages, we have other villages as well, Wainwright, over here is in the NPR-A, we have Point Lay and Point Hope, all of our communities are impacted by the resources that use NPR-A, focusing now on this area. But it's expensive to maintain the infrastructure in these areas, we're looking to, one of our concerns here in Atkasuk, was the concept perhaps if there's development close to a community if there would be some consideration of bringing energy to the community. In association with that thought, those are the kind of things we're looking out for in this process, to try to maintain the environment for subsistence lifestyle around the communities, protect the archeological and cultural resources and maintaining the economic base of the North Slope Borough. Arctic Slope Regional Corporation is the Inupiat ... (inaudible)... all of us want to maintain the environment and the area and see what we can do to maintain the economy of the area as well. O.K., who are you by the way?

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

MORKILL: (inaudible)... public hearings where the audience gives testimony to the people up front ... (inaudible)... and we'd like to go in a different direction, we'd like this to be a work session in a sense and have a dialog, again we want to focus on listening to you, but we want to have a dialog ... (inaudible)... and answer questions you might have in response we might ask you some questions and try to get as much information as we can. Another thing that's very different about this particular meeting is we're not recording this meeting so we won't have word for word transcripts, I'm going to do my best to record the key points if not complete questions and statements on the flip charts, that will become part of the public record, that will be transcribed. Another way you can get your input into the process is with written comments and that will also become part of the public record ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: O.K., I would assume that you would keep the same kind of public record for all the meetings, I ... (inaudible)...

(Note to Reader: tape recordings were subsequently provided by an APRN reporter,

from which these transcripts were produced)

MORKILL: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: (inaudible)... Barrow, who submitted written comment or read written comments and then handed out written documents, we have those on the record as well, and we'd be happy to make them available, I would be happy to make them available ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: (inaudible)... Inupiat translator, she translated all of the English ...(inaudible)... any other questions or concerns? Is there anybody here that came prepared to read a statement or give testimony and perhaps is not able to stay for the whole meeting ...(inaudible)... yes...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... I guess my question for BLM is, if this area is leased, is there part of the process that covers how it's managed by the lease holders ...(inaudible)... cause I'm interested in making comments on how the activities are arranged, managed, ...(inaudible)... if it is leased, I'm wondering ...(inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

MORKILL: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: Again, if I could also ask people to identify themselves, just for my own purposes ...(inaudible)... the North Slope Borough also has independent planning and zoning codes, so we will be going through a borough permit process for any development that occurs within this planning area as well as NPR-A. ...(inaudible)... there's some question whether the borough ...(inaudible)... program applies to NPR-A, we would like an ...(inaudible)...

(End of tape 1- side 1)

(Begin tape 1 - side 2)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... so as of right now, we don't have the authority to really plan for mineral development or open the area up for ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: The problem, well I guess it should if we could go back to congress and get them to change their direction. That's what's limited us from really considering that right now, is that, we just don't have the authority to do it right now.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... it's going discussed ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

JOHN SCHOEN - AUDUBON SOCIETY: I'm John Schoen, from the Audubon Society, and I think that everybody's talking about the fast track here and I'd just like to raise that as a flag, we have a concern that although we're talking about going into the reserve and demonstrating how we can really do it right, we all know that there are many resources there of very high value. And I'm referring particularly to the fish and wildlife resources. I think that an 18 month fast track will really short circuit our ability to view a very comprehensive biological inventory, so right from the onset we have some concerns about our ability to view the quality inventory that will be necessary to plan for this area in a way that is going to minimize any impacts.

LOHMAN: Anyone want to tackle that? ...(inaudible)... response.

WILSON: I don't know whether I have a real response to that, I feel pressure every single day, let's put it that way, but we were asked to get it done in 18 months and we're committed to doing that, a good job, as good a job as we can possibly do, I would point out that the last time we did an EIS it was done in 15 months for the whole area, so, and we walked around and discussed the length of time with other agencies that done large plans in the west, and yes 18 months is very, very fast but it's been done, it's been done before.

SCHOEN: (inaudible)...one in a very inaccessible area, one of the concerns I have is that I understand the Alaska Department of Fish and Game will not be participating in any substantive way here other than more of a cursory review, they won't actually be on the team providing data.

UNKNOWN: ...(inaudible)...

SCHOEN: I think that they certainly would be a real key player here in terms of some of the wildlife and fisheries values and I would encourage you to do whatever you can to get the Department of Fish and Game involved in this in a substantive way.

SALLY WISELY - BLM: (inaudible)...everything that we can do short of paying for the ...(inaudible)...

LOHMAN: John, I, the North Slope Borough ...(inaudible)... ongoing with ADF&G and to the extent we're partners in those efforts we're going to be partners in providing that information to the process, also maybe just a slight correction, you referred to it as an inaccessible area, our folks have well over 100 cabins and

probably more than 200 semi-permanent camp sites in the area, so our folks use this area all the time and I think that a point that had mentioned that we had some testimony, particularly from a couple of elders in Barrow, who in a very short 15 minutes of testimony gave evidence of very detailed knowledge of every little lake and pond and area that they've used for decades. What we're doing through the borough to tap into all of that information, again, if we find that areas are not suitable for leasing we are not going to be shy about saying that. If we think there's not enough time, we won't be shy about saying that either. But right now we're proceeding on course, we're doing the best to develop information we can in the time frame allowed and we'll see where we are when those different dates that Dee talked about are reached, I'm sorry, Curt talked about the dates, and at each one of those stages we'll take a look and see if we think we're doing that good of job, and if you think about it, not just the borough, but BLM, MMS and the rest of the agencies involved are looking for a quality document, and nobody wants to move forward when something isn't quality. So...

SCHOEN: Certainly we're looking for a quality document too, and we'd like to provide input along the way, if at some point we feel that we need some more time, is that a possibility? You know if we get down the road 6 or 12 months and feel that 18 months is just going to push us to the point that we can't maintain that quality, do we have that option?

WISELY: (inaudible)...the state has been invited to the table, the state wants to be ...(inaudible)... I just wanted to straighten that out.

SCHOEN: I'm confused because I talked with one of the ADF&G's scientists last week who said that they didn't have the funding available to be a full participant in the planning process.

WILSON: I can add, that Fish and Wildlife Service is involved and we will have input from them as far as migratory birds ...
...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... do you think there are hard rock and mineral issues within the study area? Or was your point primarily directed to hard rock and mineral resources outside the study area?

GREGORY BEISCHER: Primarily outside, but I think there's also a potential for hard rock minerals within the area we got going now.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

JIM ADAMS - NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION : I should tell you first off that my name is Jim Adams with the National Wildlife Federation. Will this scoping procedure consider how petroleum or products taken out of the NPR-A will be taken to market? ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: There will be a scenario develop, a likely scenario develop, that we will use to do the assessment on, I think maybe Ray would be the best person to ask.

RAY EMERSON - MMS: We can see by the flagpole connection right now in the infrastructure that's in place ...(inaudible)... pipeline that's ...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)...another possibility would be to run a road, maybe to Barrow or in the opposite direction, in any case, if that is something that actually is going to happen it seems fairly essential that this process consider effects ...(inaudible)...

EMERSON: If we know that, that's news to me as far as this planning process goes, but if we were to even entertain that as a possibility there would be an assessment done ...(inaudible)...

LOHMAN: What we're looking for, or I'm looking for in the process, and I think the kind of comments the borough is likely to feed into the process are very specific in terms of what kind of conditions we'd like to see placed on any activity that occurs, for instance the borough in our permitting in Prudhoe Bay - Kuparuk has a set of standards stipulations that we have, dealing with tundra travel, and buffer zones around ...(inaudible)... and so on. If it ...(inaudible)... it's going to be our goal, I would expect, to try to get those kind of conditions attached now rather than at our permit process down the road. It just makes common sense for us to try to get that in the process, so to the extent anyone has ideas in terms of specific mitigating measures that you want to see based on activities, ...(inaudible)... we can talk about that now and I've found everybody ...(inaudible)... are very open to those kinds of suggestions and again we've talked to Fish and Game in our partnership with them in some of our fish studies and caribou studies, and migratory bird studies that we've done, ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: I just want to point out that this is an integrated activity plan ...(inaudible)... but it's not the end of the process, when specific proposals, if the area is leased and there's potential for exploration and development ...(inaudible)...

PAM MILLER - TRUSTEES FOR ALASKA: (inaudible)... and I'll start right off with that, and mention that we are very concerned about the fast track that this process is on and the ability to gather the scientific information together in a way that's defensible and in looking back to the process of 1983 was a pretty superficial, shoddy EIS and in fact was taken to court by the State of Alaska and the North

Slope Borough and some elders from the north slope, so looking back at it, it's not the quality the Interior Department puts together now and I think the time frame is part of the problem, the expediency factor, we are concerned that this process doesn't seem to be putting in ... (inaudible)... on how this will meet out national energy needs, especially considering all this oil can be exported to China or wherever now and this is like a savings account, the National Petroleum Reserve and this process should be trained in those terms. More specifically, certain areas over the years, throughout the entire NPR-A have demonstrated such extraordinary natural values that they should never be leased, and within this study area there are two of those areas. The Teshekpuk Lake special area, and the Colville River area and this is an integrated management plan and we don't see that any alternatives should consider leasing in those areas, the management plan that's proposed should talk about what's done in those special areas as far as the management, and that's a legitimate process that we shouldn't even have on the table, that there should be leasing in those two key areas. Starting from that I agree that certainly any leases need to have strong stipulations ... (inaudible)... of the lease and there's provisions for that and regulations for this area, and if the analysis is assuming that you're going to have certain mitigating measures, those need to be firm in the leases by, just as an overall way of looking at this area, that those two key sites are so extraordinary, but with the right management planning we should go forward with this process. I'll just mention a couple other things for the management in these areas, greater management protections are needed, for example in seismic explorations to be considered and with new scientific information, boundaries might need to be expanded in order to adequately protect the watershed and so on, most of the area within the Teshekpuk Lake special area to the south is apparently within the watershed and that's, it indicates why that area is ... (inaudible)... tremendous Teshekpuk Lake ... (inaudible)... and we need to make sure that we protect that. ... (inaudible)... important and with this fast track, getting scientific information on the table before alternatives are really analyzed is going to be pretty important ... (inaudible)... and we think it's absolutely vital that the scientific information be pulled together as well as possible, migratory goose information and water bird studies need to be linked with habitat information and I know that that's an area where there's probably new studies that need to be done and it may take some money. Also because the hydrology is so different, especially like the Teshekpuk region is so flat that the hydrological studies need to be done and we can't assume that the things that were done in Prudhoe Bay are necessarily going to work the same way in, if we were to lease outside the Teshekpuk area ... (inaudible)... Then I'll just mention one other thing, that as far as the scientific information, I think ADF&G's involvement is pretty key and I think also the information on the past, what waste and toxic dumps are still out there, what reserve pits, there's one at Teshekpuk Lake that's eroding into the lake, that's a shame. There's no reason to move forward without cleaning up the old messes, and ... (inaudible)... I will ask one question about scientific information, I understand there might be a symposium to pull together some information, it seems pretty vital that workshops for a group of scientists that got together ... (inaudible)... the way to go, and I just wonder how your procedure ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: I think several of us have pieces of your answer, Gene, you have the dates on the scientific symposium.

GENE TERLAND - BLM: We've been pulling together a bunch of scientists or specialists with different expertise and variety of topics and we'll be holding that on April 16th, 17th, and 18th, in addition to that we're setting up a process where we will have pre-review of the document as we're going through, and we're in the process of setting that up with all of ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: What, is there an open process ... (inaudible)...

TERLAND: Right now we're in a process of going through and inquiring from different sources as to who the experts should be that we invite. ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: Ray, is that meeting going to be open to the public?

EMERSON: Certainly.

UNKNOWN: ... (inaudible)...

TERLAND: I'm not sure at this point ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: ... (inaudible)... give some presentation first?

EMERSON: ... (inaudible)... on the basis of their research that they've done in the area, we want scientists there that have published ... (inaudible)... documents, that sort of thing, we're also having representation of what's now important besides western science and that's traditional knowledge from the communities. ... (inaudible)... that will be representing viewpoints on their insights into that same information base. There still is some openings if there are key people that might be on your list as people considered for that process ... (inaudible)... we're pretty well along though in the planning right now in terms of individuals that we've contacted. ... (inaudible)...

MORKILL: ... (inaudible)... special areas ... (inaudible)... Teshekpuk Lake special area, also the Colville special area, are those the two that you are referring to?

MILLER: I want to mention (*Colville River Special Area*) was established largely for the peregrine falcon, but it is a remarkable area for other ... (inaudible)... these birds of prey which are really outstanding in this state, which deserve protection in their own right, there's also a lot of ... (inaudible)...

LOHMAN: (inaudible)... she's been able to capture what he said, and if not, do you have notes that you can provide us with or write it up?

MORKILL: (inaudible)... plan for Teshekpuk Lake, are you aware of other areas?

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... normally passed out by the state but they were pretty much left as is, all of them had at least one characteristic that excluded ... (inaudible)... they're just left out there. A number of them will be in this study.

UNKNOWN: What I was wondering, how much scientific research has been done on this area, as far as wildlife, you keep coming back to the fast rate, this process of being fast track, and if there is not enough scientific data, within 18 months you don't have enough time to do the proper research, I was wondering what's out there, I mean, what do you have to look at?

DAVE YOKEL - BLM: In 1976, Congress directed the Interior Department to do a 2-year study for surface values of all of that area and there was a great deal of work that was done in 1977 and '78 in through this area it would include raptors along the Colville River and caribou, the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd, all of the waterfowl, water birds, in the area, a little bit of work on the wolves and brown bear populations, those are the most important ... (inaudible)... also the fish in that area, there are a few other species that were included. Since then and before then, of course, caribou research has been ongoing in the area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does annual surveys of waterfowl and water birds, the have been ongoing annual surveys of the peregrine falcon and other raptors on the Colville River. We're beginning to do some work with passerines on the Colville River and with the listing of the Spectacled eider a few years ago, there's specialized surveys to look at ... (inaudible)... that kind of sums up the bulk of it.

WILSON: (inaudible)... I might add that both BLM and the borough are working hard at getting all of the literature sources we can on the scientific studies, and that includes both the actual published stuff and those of you do any kind of research yourselves know that there's a lot of gray literature out there that really isn't published and we're trying to get a handle on that as well.

SCHOEN: Can you, just very briefly, give me some idea of where DU and BLM are on some of their surveys?

YOKEL: What you are talking about, I assume, is a land cover classification for NPR-A, and that process is almost complete. It was a 3 year project, we've finished the 3rd year of field work last summer and image processing is ongoing now and it is complete for half, the northern half of, the northern, eastern half of the NPR-A a year ago and the southern, south western part will be finished up later this spring.

UNKNOWN: So that data will be available for the EIS process?

YOKEL: We have right now the data for all of the planning area except for the, I think that southwestern corner down there by the headwaters of the Ikpikpuk and so we're ready to go with that now, but we'll have that corner filled in within a couple weeks.

DEBORAH WILLIAMS: (inaudible)... to make the list available ... (inaudible)... from the scientists that are doing work to be involved in the process ... (inaudible)...

MORKILL: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

EMERSON: We haven't, like I said, it's still in the formative stages, but we could give an idea of where we are right now. And the ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: (inaudible)... western scientists, as well as subsistence specialist from the North Slope Borough ...(inaudible)...

EMERSON: The representative that Jane (??) asked to make a presentation from each of the villages that are Nuiqsut, Barrow and Atqasuk. And that information is ...(inaudible)... not only traditional use but in some cases can be helpful in updating some information that western science has, we consider those two as totally independent but they can actually be complimentary so ...(inaudible)...

LOHMAN: (inaudible) we're also now initiating an additional process where we're doing maps out in the communities using employees we have out in the communities, and those maps have Native names on them to further identifying or find some of the traditional land use sites.

ALLEN SMITH: I'm Allen Smith of the Wilderness Society, rather than get into repeating some of what John Shoen and Pam Miller have talked about, they have raised some of the same concerns that we have, and I'm going to focus on a couple of particular related concerns that those too, some of the questions they raised that also raises additional questions. In particular, I want to know if, I have a number of questions here, the first one is, does this process, can the integrated plan and EIS, deal with making the justification for what the compelling need is that we're doing project now. We don't see what the compelling need is to do this project right now and we want to know if the EIS and integrated activity plan intends to deal up front with why we need to be addressing this right now. At the same time recognizing that there's a petroleum reserve, as Pam says, we feel very strongly that this is like an energy savings account, so what ...(inaudible)... now. We want to see that addressed in the integrated activity plan and in the EIS process. At the same time, as you're going into doing this process, we also, the second question we've got, is how do you intend to deal with the identification and the values that should be protected in those protected areas and in this instance we've got Teshekpuk and the Colville River protected areas and consideration also of wild and scenic rivers ...(inaudible)... within this study area and how do you intend to deal with that. I think I'll stop at that point and ask, make that ...(inaudible)... one question how do you plan to deal with ...(inaudible)... and two, how do ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: There is a section in the EIS that will explain what the purpose, the need and purpose of the action and at that time we'll explain why we're there. I think probably the best way to answer it is that we're looking in an area now where there's more and more encroachment, closer and closer to the boundary and we can either sort of stonewall it and just pretend like somehow or another that boundary is ...(inaudible)... or else we can start appraising what is there and see if we can come

up with a logical leasing program.....

(End of tape 1 - side 2)

(Begin tape 2 - side 1)

WILSON: ...possibly take would be a leasing program, as part of our assessment we would develop ...(inaudible)... help to develop a scenario of what a development might look like, what oil and gas development might look like up there, and then our resource specialists would give us an environmental assessment of the impacts possible with that kind of a scenario, so yeah, we don't just work, we don't ...(inaudible)... where we support totally the implications of possible indications of what that development might be like. In fact the scenario development studies is one of the more difficult steps we have to complete because we like to try to make it as realistic as possible and as up to date as we can based on current oil industry capabilities to do a development.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

EMERSON: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

RITCHIE: (inaudible)

WILSON: Well and I think also if a future date does change ...(inaudible)... selling the gas then there would have to be some sort of ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: Somebody asked that question before ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

RITCHIE: That this is being looked at now, as we start to look at an area for development, and we said we're not going to develop this but I think Deborah Williams explained to you that what follows after a leasing program is usually development so, so that ... (inaudible) ... it takes a long time and the time to start to plan is today, till the time we develop, which could be 10 years from now, and so there is indication to the government that there's interest in that area. ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... last year they approached the North Slope Borough ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... was saying that oil discovery, seismic tests in that area, Alpine, and then the ... (inaudible) ... NPR-A on the outside, ... (inaudible) ... everything's just moving that way and ... (inaudible)...

MORKILL: (inaudible)... near Prudhoe, certainly not to the intensity as what we see here, ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: I sometimes find it instructive when I'm sitting at a red light in Anchorage to watch the cars that are going the other way, and see how many of those cars have 2 or more people in them going someplace, right? The point is this country has a tremendous appetite for energy and that energy has to come from somewhere and this is one of the places that it may have some potential. Maybe in an ideal world, maybe we should all be in a car pools, and maybe we should live our lives differently than we do but we make choices, right? And one of our big choices is we want the freedom that comes from having our energy and so far there's been not a whole bunch of ... (inaudible) ... so that's a pretty philosophical answer but I think, that's what I think about when I sit out there at a red light, in my car, by myself, watching all those other people go by in their cars, by themselves it helps me

understand why I'm working on this project.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... beginning in the early 1950's ...(inaudible)... in Barrow, the research varieties and specifics of the north slope ...(inaudible)... more recently in 1976 when the jurisdiction of the Petroleum Reserve was transferred to ...(inaudible)... and given to BLM to manage the number of studies ...(inaudible)... and since that time, the North Slope Borough has been very forward with conducting research ...(inaudible)... so there is at present a very good body of knowledge that relates to that area, which is not to say that no more work needs to be done but there is quite the body of data available to us ...(inaudible)... there is quite the body of information right now ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... go back to the old studies and what's been done is an awful lot of ...(inaudible)... so it's a different situation ...(inaudible)... but if we were to put in a major facility in the central part of this planning area ...(inaudible)... we wouldn't have adequate data and wouldn't by the time a proposal ...(inaudible)... and that's where I'm pretty skeptical and ...(inaudible)... and so that's where I'm real concerned with the short time frame to deal with this data ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

RITCHIE: ...and I suppose that of anybody in this room that I've probably been involved in more EIS's, planning than, I think I have, the same thing you talked about, right now, is the same thing that's involved in every, every effort. I wouldn't down play that at all, and I appreciate your comments very much, but I also know that if you stop things in time and take a look at them for, to do an analysis, that we never have data to satisfy everyone, as a matter of fact, I doubt we have enough data to satisfy very many people, so what you suggest is absolutely very important for, in planning an environmental assessment to work. And you have to recognize that there's not, there is not enough data and to get the critical kind of things that you need to get, sometimes you don't even know what that is, so while I really appreciate your comments, I hope you also understand, you've been involved in this a lot and know that sometimes we don't have enough to satisfy everyone, but what we do have is the value of experienced people in these areas, and that's a tremendous advantage and I think that ...(inaudible)... it's called the value of experience with planning, and we do have a lot of that, and we'll do our very best on all of this, but I hope that we have, and we have some of the best scientific data that's ever been wrote down ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: I might also add for the planning team, that I've been involved in a few plans, and I've never seen people that are, people are kind of psyched about this, people are really kind of excited about this process, and right now I'm, I know as well as anybody sitting in this room how short 18 months can be, but I'm pretty optimistic and I think Mike back there is pretty optimistic still, that we can do this. And when we get to the point where we don't think we can do it, we will probably tell the people that we think need to hear that, that we don't think we can do it. So, but right now I still am optimistic that we can come up with a good product in the time that we've got to do it and I haven't heard anybody on the team, and these are the people that are doing the work, no one has said to me yet, we can't do this.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

YOKEL: (inaudible)... we have pretty good caribou data and pretty good waterfowl data, and we have ...(inaudible)... and you had asked could we protect the population, with caribou, I'm certain ...(inaudible)... along with waterfowl ...(inaudible)... depending on what change you might have ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

MISCELLANEOUS CONVERSATION: (inaudible)

EMERSON: (inaudible)... I think the key is the items that are on the wall here ...(inaudible)... that's basically

UNKNOWN: Do we have data on ...(inaudible)... this is a huge wild area ...(inaudible)...

EMERSON: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

EMERSON: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: We're not as concerned about the scoping deadlines in terms of our ability to provide some of that information to the process. It takes us a little longer to generate some of the traditional knowledge information of land use and resource base, we'll feed into the process beyond the April 4th date, there's a multitude ...(inaudible)... but we're committed to doing it, we'll try to get it done, if we can't we'll express that as well, we have more time because ...(inaudible)... than perhaps other folks may have.

MORKILL: (inaudible)... as a result ...(inaudible)... but to the management actions

and ...(inaudible)... cultural programs, any of the programs, May 8th ...(inaudible)... so we anticipate that as a result of this plan ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: We're talking about managing all of our resources up there for the next few years, so there will be management action in an EIS that will be sort of acting management of a variety of resources ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: Then the North Slope Borough, I would say has more information than any other area, rural area in the state, ...(inaudible)... the borough has spent millions and millions of dollars on studies ...(inaudible)...

(End of tape 2 - side 1)

(Begin tape 2 - side 2)

LOHMAN: ...again we have a good working relationship with the agencies we deal with, and a good working relationship with the oil companies we deal with, and definitely don't always agree, but like I said, everybody is being open and honest and dumping everything that we have on the table at this point, ...(inaudible)... it's making sure we're all talking and putting everything on the table ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: I might also add that we heard a fair amount of concerns when we were up north ...(inaudible)... so the folks up there are definitely concerned about ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

EMERSON: (inaudible)

MILLER: (inaudible)... of such importance that other special areas may be ...(inaudible)... talking about pre-existing situations and right now there's no oil leases in NPR-A, so we have a planning situation, we probably will never ...(inaudible)... they went ahead and leased right in the Teshekpuk area without any, I guess with starting point, the existing boundary is a starting point. With the scientific information that's commissioned ...(inaudible)... that lake, just because there are some people here who may not be that familiar with what Teshekpuk Lake is, it's a ...(inaudible)... area for molting brant, 22% of the world's brant population come there each year and molt, ...(inaudible)... so it's really an international significant place.

WILSON: I don't think that it's really fair to say that we leased in Teshekpuk Lake with no concerns for the resources that were there, but I honestly don't have a handle on exactly the way we, exactly the way we handled it but I don't think we were quite that cavalier about it. Mike, do you remember the details?

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: Were there additional stipulations beyond the regular stipulations on the other lands in the Teshekpuk Lake area, do you remember? I just don't.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

MILLER: All I know it the process is really disappointing to many of the people both in the state government and conservation groups and so on, that precaution was not the ...(inaudible)... only a small proportion of the total ...(inaudible)... the kind of caution ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

JIM BROWN - ALASKA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY: (inaudible)... various speakers, I'm Jim Brown ...(inaudible)... (laughter) but the other thing, it seems to me, ...(inaudible)... at least to a certain extent with what EIS, according to regulations, we're dealing with a number of different alternatives and ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: The alternative basically is as you can see will be the management, there will be alternative management plans and we have no idea how many yet but we....

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... protection, no leasing for an area ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: Well we might have one alternative that would open area A to leasing, another alternative might open that area with no summer occupancy, another alternative might open it with no surface occupancy, does that help?

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: Well, we would use input we get from them to make, to get some idea of where their interests lie, then we will sort of use the alternative formulation process to try to reconcile any conflicts that might exist between the areas where their highest interests is and areas where there are high biological or other resource areas that would have conflicts, that's sort of the intention of the process, that we'd ...(inaudible)... so you know the idea is to go through a conflict resolution process while you're putting the EIS together. That's our intent, is to try, you can't maybe necessarily, totally resolve all of the conflicts, but you can try to come up with a solution that seems to work, and that's what we're trying to do.

EMERSON: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: It would be helpful for me, especially for the folks from the conservation community, if you make your comments, can you perhaps separate them into ...(inaudible)..concerned over exploration and development, very often we, our

attention focuses on the ... (inaudible)... be there 10 or 15 years down the line, rather than what's most likely to occur immediately after leasing which is exploration, and we've been very successful in the borough with conditions of explorations so that the impact is minimal. ... (inaudible)... those kinds of activities, we're very confident we can control in a way that will have minimal impact on the resources which we do have some continuing concerns very much in Barrow about the impact of seismic activities on the subsistence activities, but again that's as much an oversight problem on our part as it is a stipulation problem, we need to get out there, we're doing a better job now of enforcing our stipulations and controlling some activities that occur during seismic we didn't like to see, like leaving the waste behind and so on. Ray mentioned monitoring, ... (inaudible)... concerns from the borough about identifying monitoring as a solution to a concern we raised at a lease sale. Again with discussions of monitoring I've heard in these meetings has not raised those concerns, I think there's a sincere effort to focus in and do the kind of monitoring which will avoid impact and provide some proof behind it, so that if something was discovered, something can be done about it. And getting to the issue of cumulative impacts, I talked about some of the things the borough may be considering, first I think that in any operator's plan, plan, operational plan, basically ask to identify or recognize the impact of their activity in combination with ongoing activities that are occurring in the area. Which is something we've discussed with MMS in the context of offshore leasing, and have added some language to the most recent sale to address that concern, second we're arguing, not arguing, we're suggesting that there formed, and this comes out of the ARCO, Alpine activity, some kind of subsistence monitoring panel, I don't know what we'll call it, but ... (inaudible)... where the local people either on a regular basis or on an emergency basis as needed can address cumulative impacts of any activities that go on as a result of these lease and other activities that occur and third, ... (inaudible)... and then you're left with a formal record that you've discussed things ... (inaudible)... but again, we can get some of these ideas from agencies and get some on our own and we get some from industry and we can improve on all of them and hopefully ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

SCHOEN: I guess I would have made this suggestion to BLM before but, I would really encourage you to begin the big picture look at NPR-A, I realize that you're focused on this northeast section, and that's fine, but as we get into the biological assessment I think it would be a good time to start looking at the big picture, so as we get through this 18 month process, we've already begun the process of looking at what potentially the next step in NPR-A would be. Because once we commit ourselves some of those efforts are irreversible and we lose some of the conservation on it, so I think just having the big picture and figuring out how we can get that started now makes a lot of sense.

RITCHIE: (inaudible)... and that needs to be recognized at this point and certainly, I've said that this process is now underway and I don't know when it's going to stop. ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: (inaudible)... well, I don't know how it will be put in the new...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: I think, I don't know how it will work, we'll fill you in up on the web site, those of you who don't know, we do have a web site that ... (inaudible).. an expert at it, but it works pretty good.

LOHMAN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: Yeah, there are questions of confidentiality too.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: One way to go about it, is if you the area that you've identified as high interest, that you have greatest concern over, ... (inaudible)... if there's some way BLM and the other folks offering documents can generally characterize interest in that area in the same way ... (inaudible)... again, all I'm interested in doing is ... (inaudible)... Teshekpuk special area is zero, I think it needs to get out there quickly, early in the process. If it's more that zero, there's a way to characterize it, ... (inaudible)...

WILSON: Well you know, you have to overlay, it's just the same old ... (inaudible)... you take a map with oil potential, and you take a map with resource potential and overlay them and you identify areas of conflict and you start trying to make decisions about where to go from there.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... why reinvent the wheel and start out with conflicts in those areas, when ... (inaudible)... and once the oil company owns a lease they can develop that lease ... (inaudible)... so to be realistic ... (inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

MORKILL: (inaudible)... take a 5 minute break, if you want to stretch.....

(BREAK)

MORKILL: ...back to point about this being an integrated activity plan, just to give you an idea of some of the other management actions that BLM is ...(inaudible)... there's Native allotments in this area, some of which have yet been certified and surveyed ...(inaudible)... so there's some real broad spectrum of programs. There are also some well sites out there that ...(inaudible)... of hazardous materials ...(inaudible)...

APU STUDENT: (inaudible)... I don't know about any timber or anything like that, (laughter) I'd assume that there's not really any timber resources, it's still just barren wasteland out there....

LOHMAN: Wasteland, I don't know about that....

APU STUDENT: O.K., not barren wasteland, just in the wintertime, but why is it that ...(inaudible)... oil and gas is it more expensive to use the ...(inaudible)...

WILSON: As far as we know, we're way short of any kinds of decisions about, first of all whether we'll even actually going to develop the area for oil and gas, secondly, where the oil would go we're way beyond thinking about that.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: I suppose because by law right now it could be, but that's, if we open it up for development and if they find any, but that's way down the line as far as we're concerned.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: Well I think right now what we're interested in doing is to, just doing some exploration to find out what might do that, I know that these constant discussions about rainy day ...(inaudible)... right now we're just simply looking at a leasing program to try to get some idea about what might be there, ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

WILSON: That's a good point, we get careless about that but ...(inaudible)...

MORKILL: ...(inaudible)... resoundingly in Barrow and Atqasuk ...(inaudible)... the local communities would like direct access to those resources, if ...(inaudible)...

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

LOHMAN: (inaudible)... so, I don't know the answer to that.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)... how long ...

LOHMAN: We raised and ...(inaudible)... resoundingly the issue of, examining the concept of providing local energy in association with any development project that is near enough, maybe to allow for that.

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

UNKNOWN: (inaudible)

APU STUDENT: (inaudible)... if and when you decide to develop ...(inaudible)... and what I've heard is that, the big companies will use the well until ...(inaudible)... it gets down to a certain point and then they will stop and sell it off to like a small company, and will these smaller companies be watched and monitored and be expected to keep up with regulations and the rules the same way as big companies are. Are they going to be watched just as closely, cause bigger companies, it seems like people really watch them and keep a close eye on them but the smaller companies

WILSON: Well, again, we're not talking about a development in this EIS, but the answer I think would take to that question, if at some point in the future we did get to development, the rules, the stipulations, and standard operating procedures and stuff like that, that the companies are expected to comply with, would be the same. We don't make those decisions based on the size of the company, we make those decisions based on.....

(End of tape 2 - side 2)

(Begin tape 3 - side 1)

RITCHIE: We have a few minutes left, is there anybody who hasn't had a chance to say something who would like to? Is there anybody who has had a chance to say something but would like to say something else?

MORKILL: (inaudible)... Anchorage District Office, The North Slope Borough here in Anchorage ...(inaudible)... Yeah, it's great to see

(End of tape)