

**Beaufort Sea Oil and Gas Lease
Sale 170**

Public Hearings

Barrow

1997

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT - PUBLIC HEARING
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR BEAUFORT SEA PROPOSED OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE 170

Barrow, Alaska
Thursday, July 10, 1997
7:40 o'clock p.m.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE PANEL MEMBERS

- Mr. Paul Stang, Regional Supervisor for Leasing and Environment
- Mr. Bob Brock, Special Assistant to the Director of the Alaska Region Office
- Mr. Cleve Cowles, Chief, Environmental Studies Section
- Mr. Kris Nuttall, Hearing Assistant

Proceedings recorded by electronic sound recording. Transcript produced by transcription service.

1 BARROW, ALASKA - THURSDAY, JULY 10, 1997

2
3 (Tape No. 1 of 1)

4 (On record at 7:40 p.m.)

5 HEARING OFFICER BROCK: I'll convene the public
6 hearing. We're a little late getting started this evening,
7 and -- but my name is Bob Brock, and I've got a few opening
8 remarks here.

9 And that's that I'm a Special Assistant to the
10 Regional Director of the Minerals Management Service in
11 Anchorage, Alaska, and this is a public hearing on the Draft
12 Environmental Impact Statement on our proposed offshore oil and
13 gas Lease Sale 170.

14 With me on the panel tonight, on my right here is
15 Paul Stang. He's the new Regional Supervisor for Leasing and
16 Environment. He just started last Monday with us; he came from
17 Washington, D.C. And on his right is Cleve Cowles, Chief of
18 our Studies program. And Kris Nuttall is the fellow standing
19 out in front signing you in as you came in the door.

20 This is the fourth and last public hearing on Sale
21 170. We've held public hearings in Nuiqsut, Kaktovik last
22 night, and Anchorage. So we've held three other public
23 hearings besides this one.

24 The purpose of this meeting is to receive your views
25 and comments and suggestions on our Draft Environmental Impact

1 Statement. We've mailed out copies of the EIS in mid-May;
2 however, if you did not get one, there's plenty of copies here.
3 We encourage you to take one.

4 The area under consideration for this Draft EIS is
5 the area on the map outlined in red, which based -- which
6 focuses on the near-shore area, and it's from about basically
7 the Colville River to the -- to Barter Island. It covers about
8 1.7 million acres. And, as you know, the State jurisdiction
9 goes from three mile -- or from the shoreline out three miles.
10 We start three miles and, in this particular sale, go offshore
11 from 3 miles to 25 miles -- about 25 miles.

12 The proposed lease sale follows closely after Sale
13 144, which was held last summer. In that sale, we issued 29
14 leases, or about 100,000 acres. One well was drilled last
15 winter, and on that well, BP -- British Petroleum -- has
16 started to discuss with us the possibility of a development
17 project called the Liberty Project.

18 This Draft EIS builds upon the information we
19 gathered from you people and others on Sale -- on the Final EIS
20 on Sale 144 about a year ago. We've added new information that
21 we've got since then, and we've added informa-.....

22 MR. EDWARDSSEN: Excuse me. Can we get -- can I make
23 a statement here?

24 PUBLIC TESTIMONY OF MR. VAN D. EDWARDSSEN

25 My name's Van Edwardsen. I am the Barrow -- Vice

1 President of the Barrow Whaling Captain's Association. And
2 we've prepared a statement this afternoon, and I'll read the
3 statement:

4 "To the Minerals Management Service, Lease
5 Sale 170 DEIS Hearing, July 10, 1997, North
6 Slope Borough Assembly Room, Barrow, Alaska
7 99723."

8 "The North Slope Community, including the
9 Barrow Whaling Captain's Association and others,
10 has had enough. The U.S. Government, through
11 the Minerals Management Service, has continued
12 to ignore the comments and the personal
13 experience of many Whaling Captains and Whalers.
14 The Whalers have attended many, many meetings
15 within the past twenty years, commented many,
16 many times about disruption to the bowhead whale
17 migrations, to no avail.

18 "The hokey studies conducted by the
19 Government scientists are concurred (sic) to
20 ethical practices used by legitimate scientists.
21 It is no longer the best interest to the North
22 Slope Communities to attend the Minerals
23 Management Service hokey meetings. The Barrow
24 Whaling Captain's Association strongly oppose
25 Lease Sale 170."

1 And for the record, my name is Van. It is spelled
2 V-a-n, Edwardsen, E-d-w-a-r-d-s-e-n.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROCK: Anybody.....

4 (Pause - Demonstrators can be heard in the background)

5 PUBLIC TESTIMONY OF ACTING MAYOR KAREN BURNELL

6 My name is Karen Burnell, Acting Mayor for the North
7 Slope Borough. This is a statement from the North Slope
8 Borough:

9 The North Slope Borough is in support of the position
10 taken by the Barrow, Kaktovik, and Nuiqsut Whaling Captains.

11 Our major objection to the Draft EIS is poor
12 recognition of the views and comments provided by our
13 subsistence whale hunters. Their observations regarding the
14 impacts of seismic noise, drilling noise, and noise generated
15 by ice breakers during the fall bowhead whale migration has
16 been greatly down-played in the DEIS.

17 These noise impacts have a devastating effect on fall
18 whaling as demonstrated during the 1989 fall hunt in Barrow.
19 All the meat was lost because our hunters had to go to great
20 distances to hunt due to industrial activity east of Barrow.

21 (Demonstrators in the room and chanting loudly)

22 (Pause as the demonstrators leave the room)

23 BY MS. BURNELL (Resuming):

24 Our major objection to the Draft EIS is poor
25 recognition of the views and comments provided by our

1 Borough Mayor's comments, and we are not part of this meeting.
2 Thank you.

3 (Demonstrators heard chanting loudly in the background)

4 PUBLIC TESTIMONY OF MR. ARNOLD BROWER, JR.

5 My name is Arnold Brower, Jr. I'm the President of
6 the Native Village of Barrow Tribal Council. The Native
7 Village of Barrow joins the position of the Barrow Whaling
8 Association membership and the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission
9 and the North Slope Borough to boycott the July 10, 1997,
10 hearing regarding Lease Sale 170 DEIS.

11 As a Tribal government, we endorse the position of
12 the Barrow Whalers, Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, and the
13 North Slope Borough in their efforts to protect our culture and
14 the subsistence way of life in the Arctic.

15 So we will not participate in any of the hearings
16 today -- in your hearings today.

17 (Pause - Demonstrators chanting in the background)

18 HEARING OFFICER BROCK: Is there anybody else that
19 would like to say anything, make any comments?

20 (No response)

21 HEARING OFFICER BROCK: If not, I guess that we'll
22 close the hearing at 10 minutes to 8:00. We'll adjourn for a
23 few minutes and see if -- we'll go off record and adjourn for a
24 few minutes, and if somebody comes in, we'll -- during the next
25 15 or 20 minutes, we'll reopen. We'll wait a while longer.

1 (Off record at 7:55 p.m.)

2 (On record at 8:10 p.m.)

3 HEARING OFFICER BROCK: It's 10 after, and I've
4 checked around, and there are nobody out here that wants to
5 testify. So at this time, we will close the hearing.

6

7 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.)

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