

APPENDIX I

**The Inupiat People's
History and Future
with regard to the
National Petroleum
Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A)
A 1997 Perspective
from the
North Slope Borough**

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During this period of renewed national interest in the area, it is important to consider the perspective of the Inupiat Eskimo, the people who live within the boundaries of the 23.7 million acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A).

The North Slope Borough, the local home rule body which governs the area in which NPR-A is located, appreciates the opportunity to speak on behalf of its citizens in this IAP/DEIS.

The Borough government represents the 6,000 residents of America's northern most region, who are predominately Inupiat Eskimo and who unquestionably will be impacted most immediately by management decisions and the various activities discussed in this draft EIS.

Federal agencies engaged in preparing the DEIS address significant issues which are related to NPR-A's lands, to the Inupiat people's use of these lands and the fish and wildlife, to our people's subsistence way of life and to their future. Similarly, the future of our subsistence uses and relationships between the land, our culture and tradition and our people have implications for the NPR-A leasing and land management policy which the DEIS is addressing.

The NSB offers these facts and views to other citizens interested in NPR-A because, like other Americans, the Inupiat are concerned about things that happen in our home and "neighborhood", the NPR-A.

Reviewing this document will provide the public and responsible decision-makers a local perspective on the special concerns of the North Slope residents who want to continue our life there forever. Decisions about management, recreation and oil leases must be based on full knowledge of the Eskimo people's historic and current uses and interests, with an eye toward the future and avoiding needless conflicts.

This Statement of Additional Views is intended to give voice to the Inupiat Eskimo people who live in Arctic Alaska. This is their statement, organized simply as follows:

1. Inupiat history and current use in the NPR-A area.
2. Recent history of land selections in the U.S. (Alaska) Arctic
3. Conclusion and essential elements of a NSB-preferred final EIS alternative

1. Inupiat history and current use in the NPR-A area.

The Inupiat people have lived and subsisted in the Arctic for centuries and continue to do so today, and plan to do so for the foreseeable future. This the Inupiat people want to be known, first and foremost.

The Inupiat people's continuous and unbroken use of the entire 23.7 million acre NPR-A and its 4.6 million acre northeastern study area predates by centuries any occupation or claim by others and any land ownership designation in the region.

The Inupiat Eskimo people have roamed the vast Alaska Arctic for thousands of years, catching fish and game, settling and camping according to the seasons and the abundance of wildlife. Much of the activity took place along the coast and rivers, but inland travel was common, with rivers serving as "highways" when overland or ocean travel was not preferred. Seasonal camp shelters, rest areas and supply caches, ice cellars for storage and small dwellings are spread across the Arctic still to support safe long-distance travel in the extreme Arctic conditions.

Traditional land use sites and primitive infrastructure were, and still are, shared by extended families, hunting partners, whaling crew members and other friends and occasional strangers. The responsibility for these sites continues to be passed on to successive generations as younger people are taught by their elders the detailed patterns of the area's resources, Arctic survival lessons and most importantly, the Inupiat way of life, *Inuuniagniq* -- subsistence.

Today, in the remote Arctic, "bush villages" have evolved, with airports the main transportation facility. On the North Slope, some settlements still have "honey bucket" waste systems with limited potable water. Other villages are more modern than others with electricity, safe drinking water and even some flush toilets in the more intensely-settled communities. Barrow is the largest village, serving as the regional service center for the whole North Slope, containing half the population and the North Slope Borough government headquarters.

Still, in 1997, four of the eight villages in the Borough, namely Nuiqsut, Barrow, Wainwright and Atkasuk, remain surrounded by NPR-A boundaries. The other four other established villages are Point Hope, Point Lay, Kaktovik (Barter Island) and Anaktuvuk Pass. Point Lay and Anaktuvuk Pass have subsistence relationships within the NPR-A area, and hunt many of the same migratory species which roam the vast North Slope.

Wherever the animals and fish go, that is where you will find the Inupiat living to hunt and fish. To the Inupiat, NPR-A and other federal boundaries seem artificial, but the people have learned to co-exist with them.

2. Recent history of land selections in the U.S. (Alaska) Arctic

A review of the lands history involving the Arctic shows how North Slope lands were progressively withdrawn from selection by the NSB government and by Inupiat people and their village and regional corporations, even though each entity consistently expressed its desire to select lands within the NPR-A (and other federal Arctic areas) under municipal or native entitlement.

Much of this history was marked by federal actions such as a new administrative designation of two "Special Areas" within the NPR-A for example, without attending first to the rights of the Inupiat people who live there.

Lands available for Inupiat selection were severely limited by prior state and federal government selection, without regard to Inupiat use of or their aboriginal title to the land. The remaining land in many cases was not useful for historic or future needs.

In summary:

1923 An Executive Order #3234 by President Harding designates 23.7 million acres of the western Arctic as the Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 – or PET 4.

1959 Alaska accepts statehood with a 102 million acre land entitlement which includes much of the remaining central Arctic where the giant Prudhoe Bay oilfield is discovered ten years later, also removing it from Inupiat selection.

1960 8.9 million acres of the eastern Arctic are withdrawn for the Arctic National Wildlife Range, adjacent to the Inupiat community of Kaktovik.

1971 The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) created 13 regional corporations and allowed for a total native lands settlement of 44 million acres, but only in areas not already federally-designated or in some cases, state-selected.

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), the North Slope regional corporation, was denied its subsurface selection rights within NPR-A as a result, with villages given limited surface selection in the petroleum reserve.

1976 The Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) re-names PET 4 the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) and puts it under the Department of Interior jurisdiction.

1980 The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) expands and creates refuges, new parks and preserves which further divide the Inupiat traditional homeland into restrictive conservation units, including designated Wilderness.

1997 Secretary Babbitt visits the North Slope people, including a visit to a subsistence hunting and fishing camp and promises the Inupiat residents he will "not perpetuate 500 years of separating people from the land."

3. Conclusion and essential elements of a NSB-preferred final EIS alternative

The Inupiat people heard and believed Secretary Babbitt as he spoke.

During this latest renewal of national interest in NPR-A, the Inupiat people believe that the federal government should address and resolve outstanding land issues with the Native people who live there. This should happen before, or concurrent with, oil and gas leasing, or any other special designations in the NPR-A.

The North Slope Borough, ASRC and the village and tribal governments of the North Slope have all recommended land settlement proposals, exchanges and other options to give the Inupiat legally-recognized access and title to their traditional land use sites. This issue remains a major element of a North Slope Borough preferred alternative. Nothing in this DEIS precludes addressing this range of issues before creating a new set of intervening third party legal rights in the form of oil and gas leases or special designations.

The North Slope Borough is on record strongly opposed to any alternative or mix of alternatives which involve additional withdrawals or designations which prevent subsistence activity or properly-regulated oil and gas development in NPR-A or the Planning Area.

Of paramount concern to the NSB is the guaranteed and perpetual use, both individual and communal, of the land in NPR-A for the people who have always lived there. Unresolved land issues must be a priority undertaking.

The land and the Inupiat life are inseparable. The land and sea are the source of the Inupiat food and culture. Even so, the Inupiat have accommodated federal agency management, seismic surveys, film crews, recreational adventurers, oil and gas exploration, scientists of all types and now the potential for new leasehold interest in these lands, with development certain to come if commercial discoveries are made.

If the government does not deal with the issue of communal use of land for cultural purposes, traditional land use and more modern future uses in a way that allows the Inupiat lifestyle to flourish, then the federal government will have failed the Inupiat people in the process.

Thank you for listening to and learning from the residents of the North Slope.

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