

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Subsistence Advisory Panel (SAP) Meeting

September 2-3, 2015

Barrow, Alaska

Summary of Public Presentations and Panel Recommendations



From left: Colleen Akpik-Lemen for Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, Wanda Kippi for Native Village of Atkasuk, Bart Absogeak for North Slope Borough, Terry Qaqsu Tagarook for Wainwright Traditional Council, Joe Sage for Native Village of Barrow, Robert Nukapigak for Native Village of Nuiqsut, Warren Harding Lampe for Native Village of Point Lay, Sam Kunaknana for Native Village of Nuiqsut, and Jerry Sikvaguyak and Sollie Hugo for Naqsraqmiut Tribal Council of Anaktuvuk Pass on 9/2/2015 at the 46th SAP meeting.^a

The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Subsistence Advisory Panel (SAP) consists of representatives from seven tribal governments and the North Slope Borough. SAP meetings provide a forum for representatives to review oil and gas activities and other projects authorized by BLM in the NPR-A and to make recommendations to BLM on measures to reduce impacts to subsistence. The SAP was established in 1998 and has public meetings 3-4 times per year with presentations by oil industry and researchers. This September 2015 meeting was the 46th the SAP has held. SAP members communicate issues and concerns from their communities to BLM and information from the meetings to the tribal governments they represent.

** Please like the [NPR-A Subsistence Advisory Panel Facebook page^b](#) to receive updates on the SAP and other NPR-A activities and research **

^a Photos and text by BLM Arctic Field Office Anthropologist/Subsistence Specialist (SAP Coordinator) Stacey Fritz. Slides copied from meeting presentations. Complete meeting materials available electronically: contact sfritz@blm.gov

^b <https://www.facebook.com/BLM.NPRA.SAP>

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Participants

Subsistence Advisory Panel Representatives

Joseph Eeleyak Sage, Native Village of Barrow
Wanda Kippi, Native Village of Atqasuk
Warren Lampe, Native Village of Point Lay
Terry Qaqsu Tagarook, Wainwright Traditional Council
Samuel Kunaknana and Robert Nukapigak, Native Village of Nuiqsut
Colleen Akpik-Lemen, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
Charles (Sollie) Hugo and Riley Sikvayugak, Naqsragmiut Tribal Council of Anaktuvuk Pass
Bart Ahsogek, North Slope Borough Planning Department

BLM Employees

Stacie McIntosh, BLM Arctic Field Office Manager
Nicole Hayes, BLM Legacy Wells Program Coordinator
Dave Yokel: BLM Arctic Field office Wildlife Biologist
Roy Nageak, BLM Barrow Field Station Natural Resource Specialist

Summary: Sept. 2-3, 2015 BLM NPR-A SAP in Barrow

Bridget Psarianos, BLM State Office Greater Mooses Tooth One EIS Planning Lead
Stacey Fritz, BLM Arctic Field Office Anthropologist/Subsistence Specialist (SAP Coordinator)

Industry Representatives

ConocoPhillips: Sam Widmer and Lisa Pekich
Caelus Energy Alaska: Dale Hoffman and Julie Lina

Researchers/Other

John Pearce, USGS Alaska Science Center
Nikki Braem, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence Division
Max Enders, Jeremy Miner, and Molly Staats, IRIS / USArray
Ernest Nageak, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native Affairs Specialist

Wednesday, September 2, 2015 (Day One): Public Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 9 am. The meeting opened with general introductions followed by an invocation by Roy Nageak. The Panel approved one change to the agenda (recognizing Colleen Akpik-Lemen as the ICAS rep.) before approving it. The Panel then held an election for new Chair and Vice-Chair. Sollie Hugo was elected Chair and Joe Sage was elected Vice-Chair.

BLM update

Overview of the Subsistence Advisory Panel

Stacie McIntosh, Manager of the [BLM Arctic Field Office^c](http://www.blm.gov/ak/en/fo/fdo/arctic_field_office.html), presented the history of the SAP, why it is important to BLM, and discussed some of the key recommendations that the SAP has made, including nominations for Special Areas (Kasegaluk Lagoon, Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands), and creation of a [SAP Website^d](http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/res/npra_sap.html) and [Facebook Page^e](https://www.facebook.com/BLM.NPRA.SAP). The Panel reviewed the bylaws and agreed that travel arrangements should be made for both primary and alternate representatives and that two representatives of each tribal government are welcome to attend the meetings.

Stacie McIntosh presented the **2015 spreadsheet of BLM permitted activities in the NPR-A**.

SAP Response: ICAS Representative Colleen Akpik-Lemen recommended that BLM produce a map monthly to illustrate where activities are taking place and that BLM consider giving priority to subsistence users over hunting guides when processing those permits.

The **BLM Response to the ICAS Resolution on Aviation** led to a lengthy discussion on aviation issues, sports hunters, guided hunters, and the BLM permitting process. Sam Kunaknana recommended that BLM and other agencies increase their potential for enforcement and withhold permits the following year from permittees that violate flight restrictions. Bart Ahsogek recommended that at the next SAP meeting, BLM give a presentation on its permitting process.

^c http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/content/ak/en/fo/fdo/arctic_field_office.html

^d http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/res/npra_sap.html

^e <https://www.facebook.com/BLM.NPRA.SAP>

GMT1 Regional Mitigation Strategy

Stacie McIntosh gave an update on the new Regional Mitigation Strategy that was established by the [Record of Decision \(ROD\)^f](#) for the Greater Mooses Tooth 1 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement ([Final Supplemental EIS^g](#)). ConocoPhillips, Alaska, Inc. (CPAI) submitted an application to the BLM for issuance of a right-of-way grant and related authorizations to construct, operate, and maintain a drill site, access road, pipelines, and other facilities to support oil development in July 2013. The GMT1 project would constitute the first production of oil from federal lands in the NPR-A.

The proposed drill site location and majority of the infield roads and pipeline route are on BLM-managed lands in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) about 11 miles west of Nuiqsut and adjacent to the 3-mile buffer around Fish Creek. The GMT1 drill site would be operated and maintained by Alpine staff and supported by the existing ConocoPhillips-operated Alpine Central Facility (CD-1) infrastructure. Oil, gas and water produced from the GMT1 reservoir would be carried via pipeline to CD-1 and CD-5 for processing. Sales quality crude would be transported from CD-1 via pipeline to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. ASRC is the owner of the majority of the resources that would be developed at GMT1.

The GMT1 ROD established:

- 1) A Compensatory Mitigation Fund to address residual impacts resulting from development of Greater Mooses Tooth 1 on the community of Nuiqsut
- 2) The development of a long-term landscape level [NE NPR-A Regional Mitigation Strategy^h](#) to lay a framework for mitigation from future development enabled by GMT1

The first Regional Mitigation Strategy workshop was held in Fairbanks in late March/early April. The second workshop was held September 24-25 in Barrow. The BLM has an 18-month deadline and will complete the Regional Mitigation Strategy by October 18, 2016. The website provides summaries and other information on the [NE NPR-A Regional Mitigation Strategy](#). The Panel had several questions about how the funding amount for the Greater Mooses Tooth 1 Compensatory Mitigation Fund (project-specific compensation for impacts to Nuiqsut) was determined and what kind of precedent it might set. Several members supported BLM's plan to have community meetings in all North Slope Borough communities to explain the Regional Mitigation Strategy to residents.

SAP Response: Colleen Akpik-Lemen distributed copies of the new ICAS report on [Sensitive Tribal Areas on the North Slope: An Update of Areas, Issues, and Actions in Four Communities](#).ⁱ Akpik-Lemen encouraged the BLM to incorporate information from this report into the Regional Mitigation Strategy and said that ICAS would be expanding the report to include all communities of the North Slope.

^f <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage¤tPageId=50912>

^g <https://www.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage¤tPageId=50912>

^h <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/NPR-A/RMS.html>

ⁱ <http://www.inupiatgov.com/files/North%20Slope%20Sensitive%20Tribal%20Areas%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Subsistence Research by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Subsistence

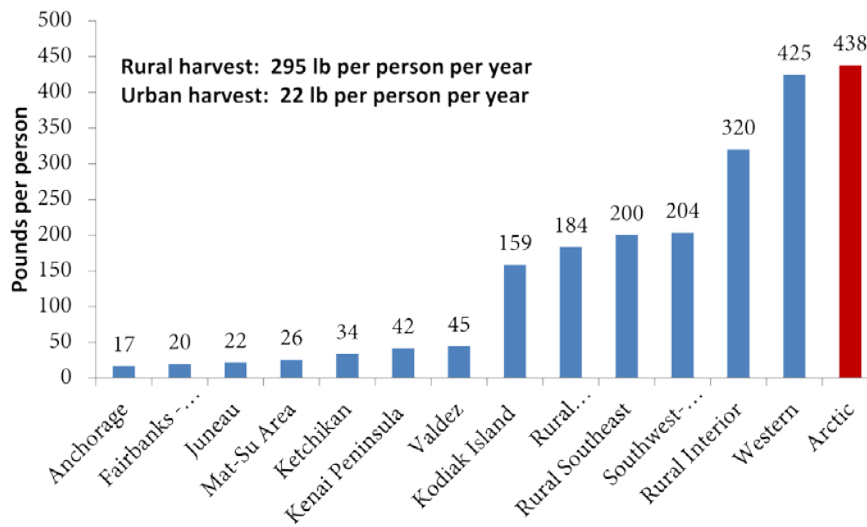
Nikki Braem, [ADF&G Division of Subsistence](#)^j Resource Specialist III, gave a presentation on why and how ADF&G's Subsistence Division conducts research. The mission statement of the ADF&G Subsistence Division is:

To scientifically quantify, evaluate, and report information about customary and traditional uses of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources.

The Division of Subsistence is an applied anthropological research group that was established in 1978 by statute in the Alaska State Legislature and that conducts both qualitative (descriptive) and quantitative (numerical data) research. ADF&G Subsistence consults and collaborates with communities: ADF&G Subsistence will not conduct research without community approval, the community is involved with research design, the community reviews all findings and reports, and locals are hired and trained to help conduct the study. All participation is voluntary. The Division of Subsistence conducts Traditional/Local Ecological Knowledge studies and several levels of harvest surveys. The Division of Subsistence has no affiliation with law enforcement, and all information gathered in surveys is anonymous.

Wild food harvests in Alaska

By area, pounds edible weight, in 2012

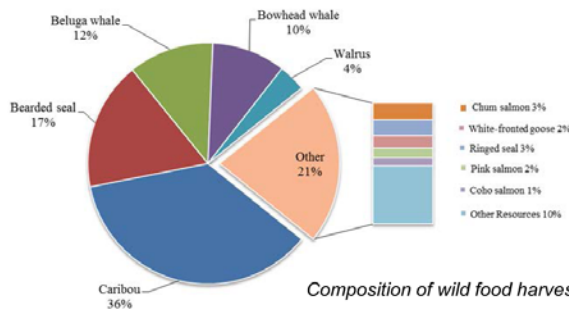


^j <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=subsistence.main>

Why we do these projects

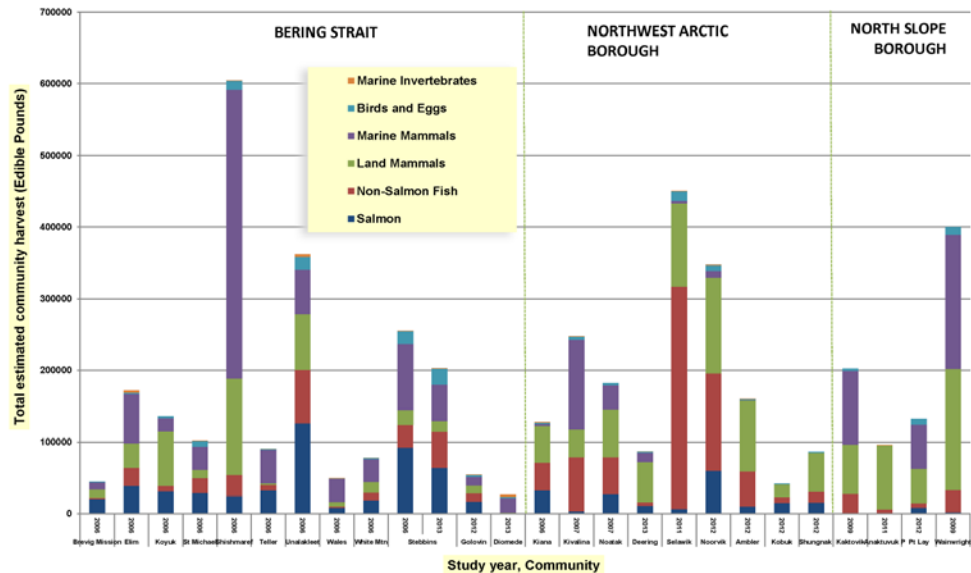
Impact assessment, regulations, monitoring changes

- Environmental and man-made changes have the potential to impact life in Arctic communities.
- Information about subsistence harvests informs decisions on proposed development projects and regulations.
- Local communities use this information to protect subsistence way of life.
- Local and traditional ecological knowledge is invaluable in monitoring changes in the environment.



Harvest estimates 2005-2015

Bering Strait, Northwest Arctic Borough, and North Slope Borough



Source: Ahmadi et al. 2008 (2006 data); Kofinas et al. in press (Kaktovik, Wainwright data); Community harvest curves: Division of Subsistence.

Alaska LNG Pipeline project

Comprehensive surveys in community along possible route

Purpose: to document harvest and uses of subsistence resources, harvest areas, and local traditional knowledge in the proposed pipeline area for NEPA and permitting process.

Funding: Industry via State Pipeline Coordinator's Office

Phase 1 (2014-2015) – 7 communities:

North Slope: Barrow, Nuiqsut, & Kaktovik

Interior: Healy, Rampart, Stevens Village & Tanana

Barrow, Nuiqsut, Anaktuvuk Pass surveyed in 2015.

Phase 2 (2015-2016) – 6 communities:

North Slope: Kaktovik

Interior: Nenana/5 Mile CDP, Anderson, Ferry, McKinley Park CDP

Meade River Fisheries

Harvest monitoring and traditional ecological knowledge study

Purpose: to document changes in harvests of broad whitefish and other fishes important to subsistence fishers who use the Meade River; to gather local observation on changes in abundance of broad whitefish and other species, as well as other related changes relevant to subsistence fisheries.

Funding: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS

Proposal submitted in March 2015: study topic identified as key information need by Office of Subsistence Management in call for proposals.

Community consultation: Ongoing. Initiated with tribal government in Atqasuk, ICAS, and NSB Wildlife Department

Emerging North Slope Fisheries

A limited scope project focusing on salmon and other fishes

Purpose: to collect baseline harvest and use information about fish species in Wainwright and Point Lay. Also to understand what socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors shape fishing efforts.

Funding: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS

Summer 2012, 2013, 2014: Host community meetings. Observe fishing activities. Distribute fishing log books. Conduct key respondent interviews.

January – March 2013, 2014, 2015: Household harvest surveys in Point Lay and Wainwright

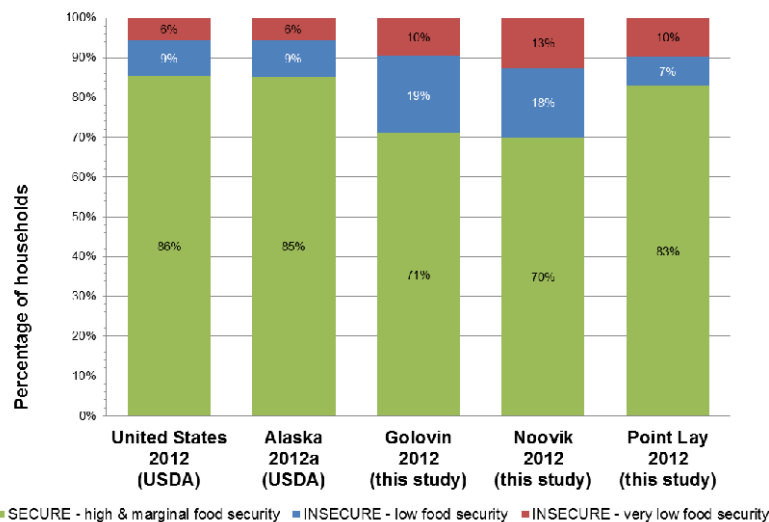
Fall 2015: Draft final report under review

Spring 2016: Final report published and distributed. Summaries mailed to box holders.

ADF&G Subsistence has recently added analyses of food security to its surveys. Braem explained that ADF&G Subsistence took the standard USDA form and adapted it for an Alaskan mixed cash/subsistence economy, and that food security is not the same as harvest levels but involves a wide variety of determinates, including a healthy environment.

Food Security Conditions

CIAP study communities, Alaska, and the United States



SAP Response: Panel members appreciated Braem’s presentation, wondered whether harvest data could be correlated with periods of industrial activity, wanted to know how many pounds of edible meat ADF&G considers one caribou provides (136 pounds), and repeated the commonly-made request that all agencies

and entities share research results to reduce impacts from numerous studies.

Contact: **Nikki Braem (Lead researcher for the Arctic region)**, Subsistence Resource Specialist III

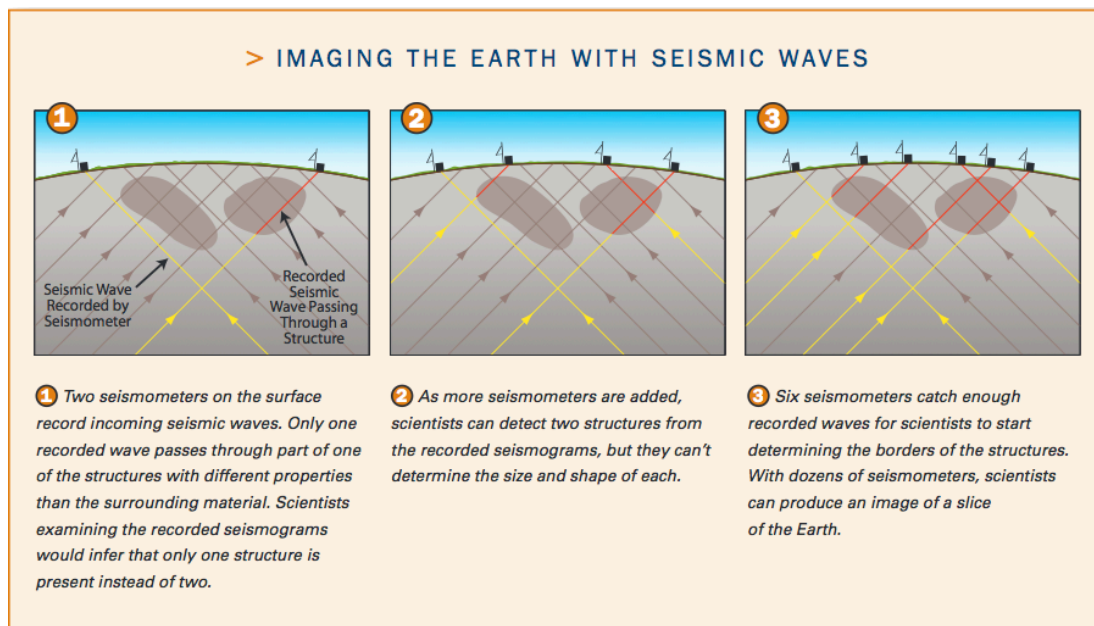
Tel: (907)328-6107; Email: nicole.braem@alaska.gov

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence 1300 College Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701; Fax: 907-459-7331

Transportable Array Alaska Update: Deployment and Operation of Broadband Seismometers to Explore the Structure and Evolution of Alaska

Jeremy Miner, Field Operations Manager with [Earthscope](#)^k, provided an update on the installation of a series of seismic listening stations in the NPR-A that are part of a nation-wide, National Science Foundation-funded project to build a 3D image of the structure of the deep crust and mantle of the Earth. Nationwide, 200 seismometers are removed and redeployed in new sites every year.

A total of thirty-three stations are planned for the North Slope, including 15^l within the NPR-A. There are already stations at Barrow and Toolik; the other stations on the North Slope will be installed from mid-May to mid-October in 2016 and 2017 and will remain in place, operating continuously, for 2 to 3 years. There is a slight possibility that some of the sites may be installed as late as 2018.



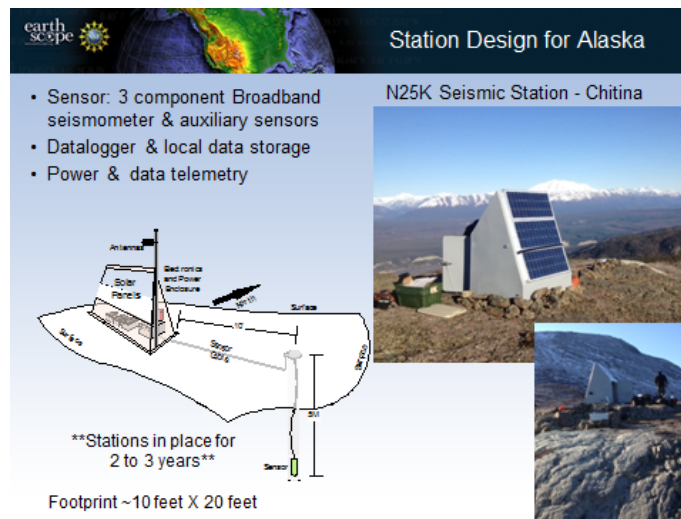
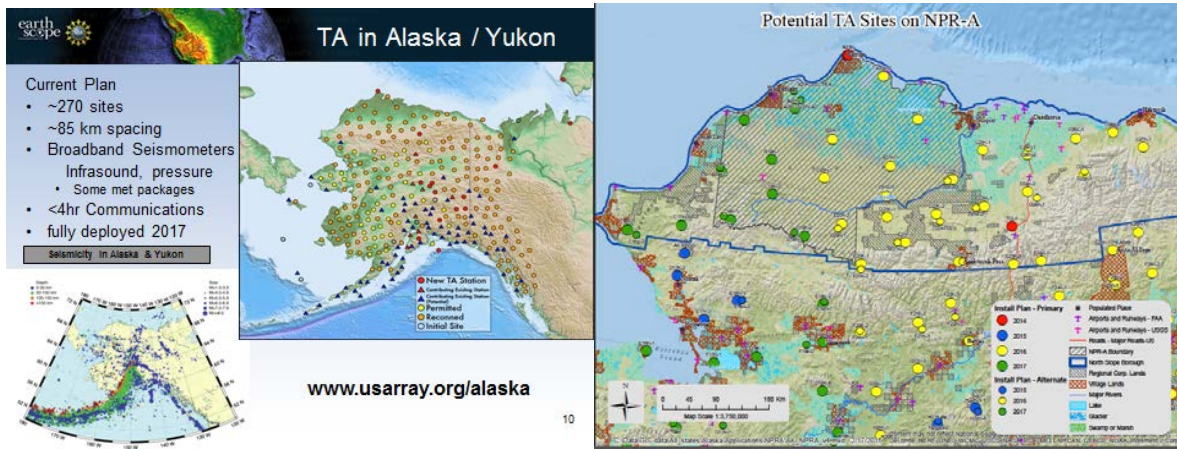
A lightweight auger/drilling machine with the ability to both auger and drill holes will be transported in the helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft, and the seismometer will be placed in a PVC or steel cased hole 3 to 15 feet below the surface of the ground. The typical USArray station will occupy a footprint not to exceed 20 x 20 feet and does not produce any noise or motion. The electronics and power system will be

^k <http://www.usarray.org/Alaska>

^l 15 primary sites are identified. Nearby alternative sites have been identified for 4 of them which may be used once the sites are visited and deemed suitable or not.

housed in an above ground insulated enclosure, usually a grey hut, measuring approximately 5'x5'x7'H, and made of fiberglass that can be painted to blend in with the form, line, and color of the surrounding landscape. Solar panels are mounted directly to the hut.

Station installation will involve 2-3 technicians plus a helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft pilot. The installation team will require access to each site for ~2 days which may not be contiguous due to weather and construction of each station will take 4-6 hours. The crews will stay overnight in local communities. The project will require a total of 75 aircraft flights (150 take offs and landings: 90 for installation and 60 for removal). Removal will occur in 1 day and involves the removal of the hut enclosure and contents, sensor cable conduit, and borehole seismic sensor. The PVC or steel casing would be left in place but cut about 1 foot below the surface and buried/covered with local sediment and native material. All stations will be removed by October 15, 2019.



SAP Response: Panel members were interested in the auger (known as a Lundrill) that EarthScope uses to drill into ground and permafrost and its potential applications in digging ice cellars and graves. Colleen Akpik-Lemen asked if the order of work on the sites was flexible and would shift to accommodate/avoid disturbance during peak subsistence hunting periods.

BLM Legacy Wells Program

[NPR-A Legacy Well Summary Report \(May 2013\) and Strategic Plan \(Sept. 2013\)](#)^m

Nicole Hayes introduced herself as the new BLM Legacy Wells Program Coordinator. Born and raised in Alaska, Hayes has worked for the federal government for over 20 years, came to BLM in May, and is passionate about Alaskan issues.

Hayes gave an update on work being done or planned to clean up Legacy Wells in the NPR-A. BLM has plugged 18 wells since 2002 at a cost of approximately \$86 Million to the Federal Government. BLM continues to conduct surface inspection of the wells to determine changes in site or well conditions and, during the 2014-2015 winter season, plugged and abandoned 3 wells at Umiat (Umiat 1, 3, and 11) and has removed the wellheads at Umiat 2, 8, and 10.

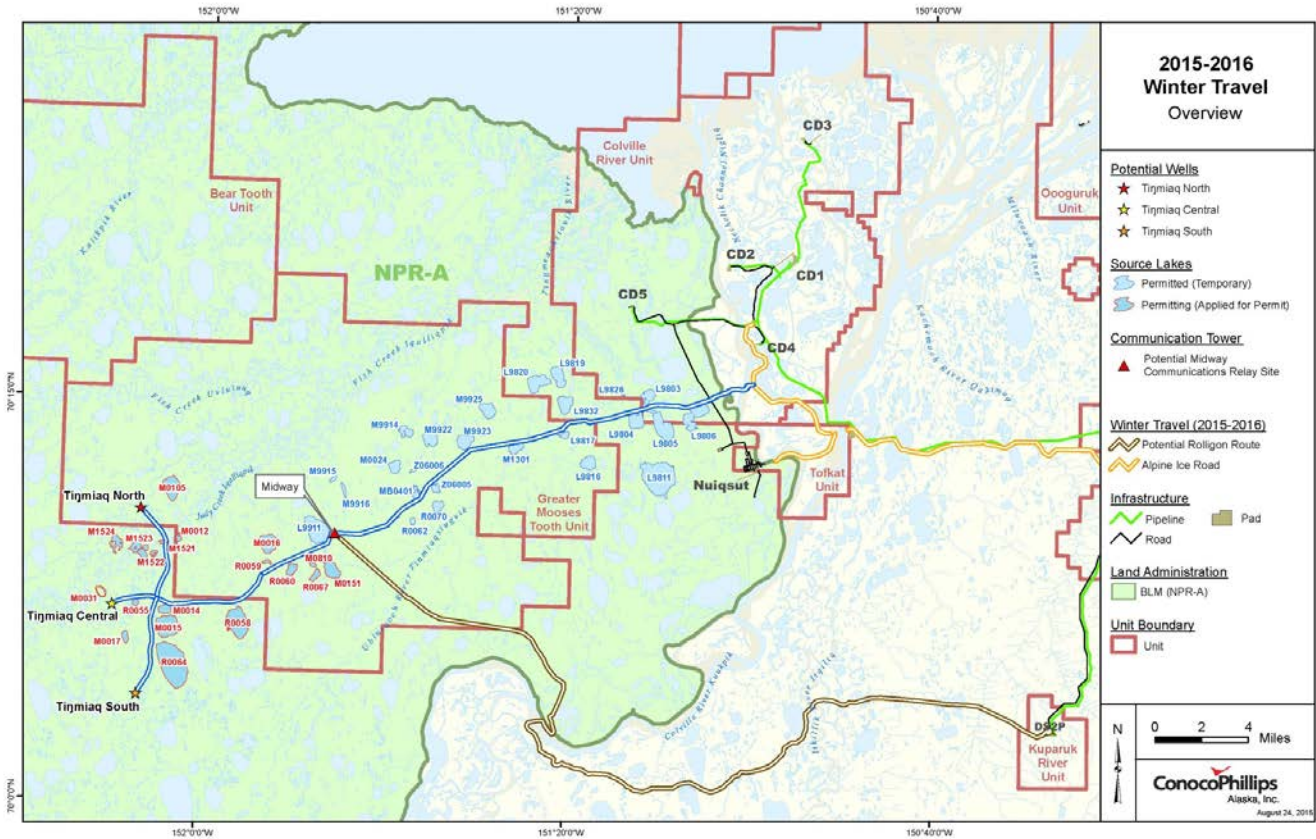
When Nicole Hayes came on the job, she visited all the Legacy Wells that are accessible by road from Barrow with BLM Barrow Field Station employee Roy Nageak. Hayes is aware of and sensitive to the use of some Legacy Wells as landmarks. She gave an update on the surface clean up of Cape Simpson that occurred in summer 2015 and the contracting mechanism that is being put in place for future work.

ConocoPhillips NPR-A Exploration and Development Activities:

2015-2016 Exploration Program, Status of GMT1 & GMT2, and 2015 Summer Studies Overview

Sam Widmer, ConocoPhillips Permit Coordinator, gave an overview of ConocoPhillips' proposed 2015-2016 exploration plan. The company's board has not yet sanctioned the winter exploration project but will make a decision in late October or November. Activities would commence Dec. 1-15 with Rolligon travel to the site; ice road and pad construction would begin around Jan. 1 from the midway camp (near Lake L991) and the ice road would be built in both directions from there. Drilling at Tingmiaq Central would begin Feb. 1, drilling at Tingmiaq North and well testing at Tingmiaq Central would begin around March 1. Drilling at Tingmiaq South is scheduled to begin on March 25. ConocoPhillips plans to use one rig to drill all 3 wells, build 6 main ice pads, one midway camp pad, and one communication pad.

^m http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/energy/oil_gas/npra/legacywell.html



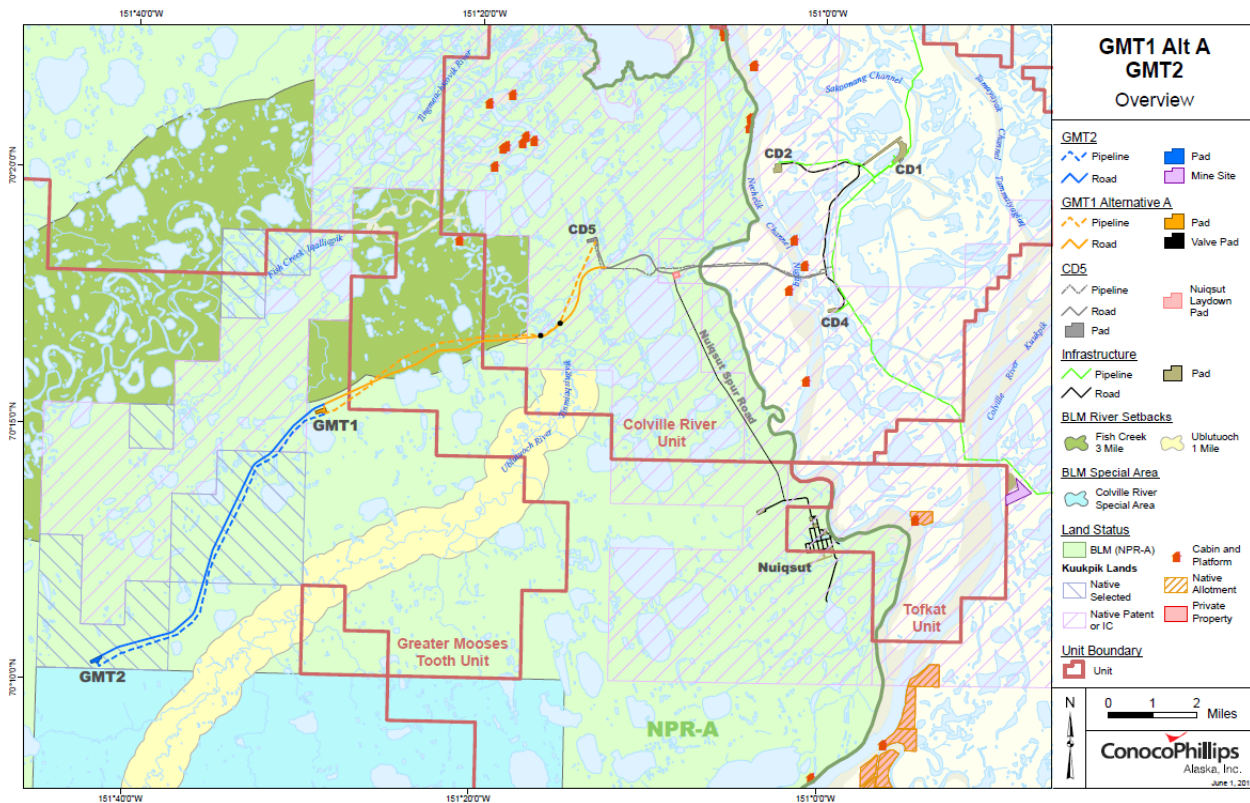
SAP Response: Joe Sage questioned Sam Widmer about the timing and number of helicopter flights to conduct post-ice road season clean up. Widmer explained that ConocoPhillips is improving the system: hiring younger people who can walk farther and conducting clean up earlier in the season.

Lisa Pekich, CPAI Director of Village Outreach, gave an overview of NPR-A history and development of Alpine and the Alpine Satellites (CD2, CD3, CD4, CD5, and GMT1):

- Naval Petroleum Reserve Number 4 (Pet-4) – E.O. 3797
- 1976 – Naval Petroleum Reserve Production Act (NPRPA) renamed Pet-4 to NPR-A
- 1980 – Congress authorized Production in NPR-A and directed USDO I to undertake an “expeditious leasing program”
- 1980s - Several lease sales, one exploration well drilled
- 1998 – USDO I BLM IAP/EIS (August 1998), ROD (October 1998) – 87% NE Planning Area (4 million acres) available for oil and gas leasing
 - The Spark prospect was one of COP’s first explorations under 1998 lease sale; follow-up exploration activities called Rendezvous led to discovery of the Spark-Rendezvous accumulation.
 - COP drilled more than 20 exploration wells in NPRA after 1998 lease sale
- 2000 - Alpine Development (CD1, CD2) start-up in November 2000 (State, Kuukpik Land)
- 2003 - Alpine Satellite Development Project (ASDP) EIS initiated
 - CD3, CD4, CD5, CD6 (renamed GMT1), CD7 (renamed GMT2)
- 2004 - ASDP EIS signed by Secretary of Interior

- 2005 – Construction of CD3 and CD4 began (completed in 2006)
- 2008 - Greater Moose's Tooth (GMT) Unit established
- Late 2011 - CD5 Development Permits Issued (Kuukpik Land);
- Jan 2014 CD5 construction began January
- February 2015 – GMT1 USACE 404 permit and ROD and BLM ROD issued

Pekich also gave a description of the proposed GMT2 project, for which an application for a permit to drill was submitted to BLM in August 2015. The GMT2 site is approximately 16 miles west of Nuiqsut, and slightly over 20 miles from Alpine production facility. It would be linked to Greater Mooses Tooth 1 by an 8.1-mile gravel road that would include three .4-acre pullouts for tundra access, sit on a 14 acres gravel pad with capacity for 48 wells, include 8.6 miles of pipeline, be located outside of the Colville River Special Area, and would use the ASRC mine site for gravel. It would not include any bridges or overhead power lines.



SAP Response: Colleen Akpik-Lemen asked about restrictions on the Kuukpik Spur Road. Pekich clarified that once the road is open, use will be restricted to Kuukpik Corporation shareholders and residents of Nuiqsut. Sam Kunaknana expressed concerns that the road would interfere with caribou migration in the area and said he would prefer to see GMT2 constructed without roads. Pekich explained that those alternatives would be explored in the NEPA process, that it would most likely be another Supplemental EIS, and that there is a trade off for increased helicopter traffic and noise associated with roadless development. Kunaknana stated that his experience has led him to understand that whether there are roads or not, there will be helicopter activity. Roy Nageak said this spring’s flooding had been a concern because prior to Alpine’s construction, large floods had submerged the lands around Alpine. Pekich explained that ConocoPhillips monitors the break up very carefully and that this spring breakup water overtopped the CD4 road but that the flooding was not as bad as on the Sagavanirktok River.

Pekich gave an overview of some of the scientific research and monitoring studies in the Alpine, GMT and BTU areas, including caribou abundance and distribution surveys via fixed wing aircraft, the annual Nuiqsut Caribou Subsistence Monitoring Project, and the 30 years of Nuiqsut Fall Qaakaq Fishery study. She noted that some research contractors had been asked to come present at the SAP and asked the Panel to tell her precisely which studies they are interested in hearing about. ConocoPhillips is teaming up with Repsol and Brooks Range Petroleum on several studies to avoid overlap.

USGS Projects Summer 2015 & 2016

John Pearce, US Geological Survey Alaska Science Center (Chief, Wetland and Terrestrial Ecosystems Office) has presented at SAP meetings for the past couple of years and began this update with an overview:

- The mission of the USGS is to provide timely and unbiased scientific data on the health of our ecosystems, impacts of climate change and natural hazards, and provide this information to decision-makers and the public.
- The goal of our work on the North Slope ([USGS Changing Arctic Ecosystems Initiativeⁿ](#)) is to inform management decisions facing Department of the Interior and to provide forecasts of wildlife response to the rapid changes taking place in the Arctic.

Pearce reported on goose studies at Point Lonely and at the Colville River Delta Research Camp (where USGS has employed local subsistence advisor Paul Kaigelak of Nuiqsut), noting that snow geese populations are expected to double every 2-3 years. They are arriving earlier in the spring and are very successful breeders.

The USGS has produced [several fact sheets^o](#) on the results of its research in the Arctic, including: [What is causing the rapid increase of snow geese in Northern Alaska?^p](#) Other fact sheets that are available online include:

- 1) [Ecology of Loons in a Changing Arctic^q](#)
- 2) [Resilience of Caribou to Climate Shifts in the Arctic^r](#)
- 3) [Sea Ice Decline, Permafrost Thaw, and Benefits for Geese^s](#)

[Click here for the complete USGS Changing Arctic Ecosystems FY2015-2019 Research Work Plan^t](#)

USGS also conducted goose forage vegetation studies in summer 2015:

ⁿ http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/interdisciplinary_science/cae/index.php

^o <http://alaska.usgs.gov/products/factsheets.php>

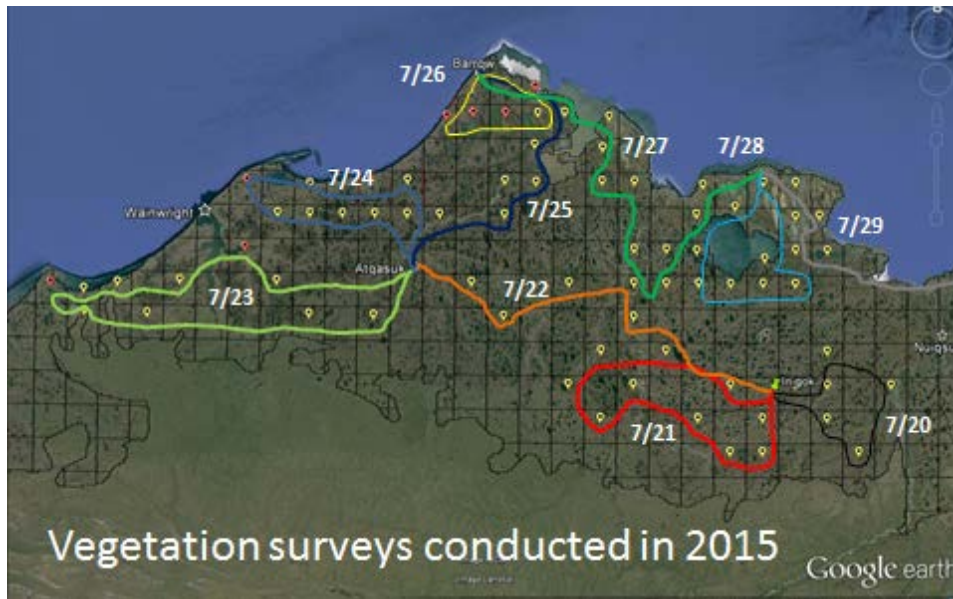
^p http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/interdisciplinary_science/cae/index.php

^q <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2014/3093/>

^r <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2014/3103/>

^s <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2014/3088/>

^t http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/interdisciplinary_science/cae/research_work_plan.php



Aircraft Disturbance: Due in large part to John Pearce’s regular participation in SAP meetings, all USGS researchers on the North Slope are now very aware of the aircraft disturbance issues. USGS has altered its studies and flight plans to avoid heavily used subsistence areas during hunting season, distributes flyers with pictures of the planes that it uses ahead of time, communicates its flight plans to the North Slope Borough and to BLM, and starting in 2016 will conduct 24/7 flight following.

SAP response: Sam Kunaknana expressed concern that not enough research that specifically monitors potential impacts to birds and other resources from industry is being done near Alpine and its satellites. Bart Ahsogek iterated the strongly held desire of North Slope residents that BLM and/or UAF or some other entity needs to organize an Arctic research repository, in part so that potential researchers can easily determine whether their proposed research is duplicating work that has already been done. Pearce respectfully disagreed that the studies USGS is currently doing on the North Slope are repetitious: similar studies may have been done other places but these studies have not been conducted on the North Slope. Pearce also offered to talk more to people about this issue and explain that the first step of the scientific method is to conduct an extensive search to find out if a research project has been done before. The BLM will invite John Pearce to include an overview of the scientific method at a future SAP meeting.

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## Thursday, September 3, 2015 (Day Two): Public Meeting

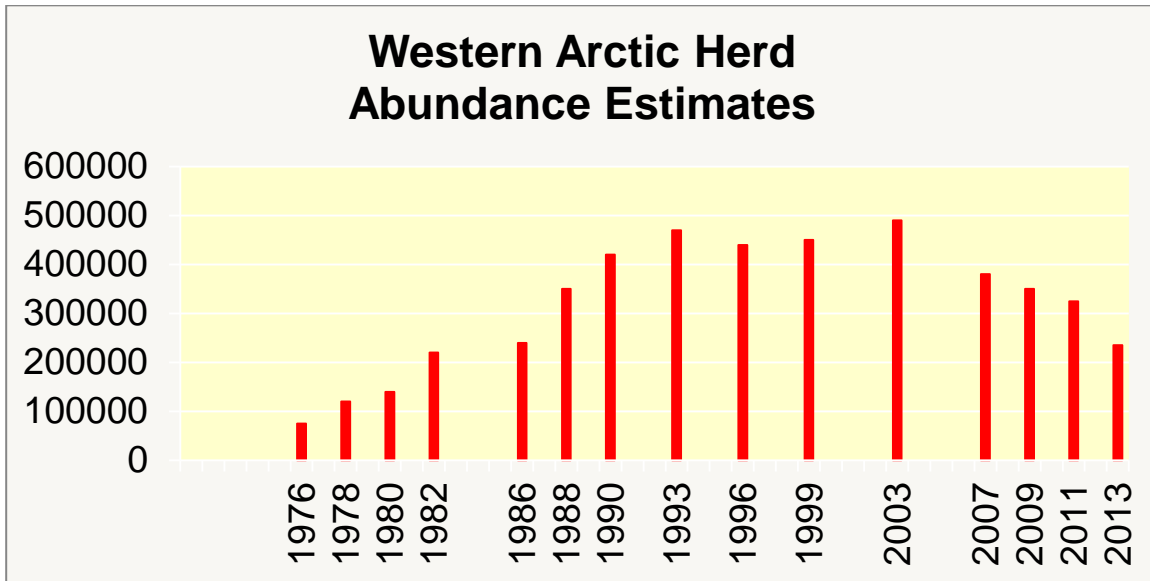
The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am, and after introductions and approval of the agenda Roy Nageak gave an invocation.

### Caribou Overview: New Caribou Hunting Regulations

Dave Yokel, BLM wildlife biologist, presented an update on new hunting regulations that became effective July 1, 2015 along with background information that was provided by ADF&G biologists Geoff Carroll, Jim Dau, and Lincoln Parrett on population data on the Western Arctic, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic, and Porcupine caribou herds.

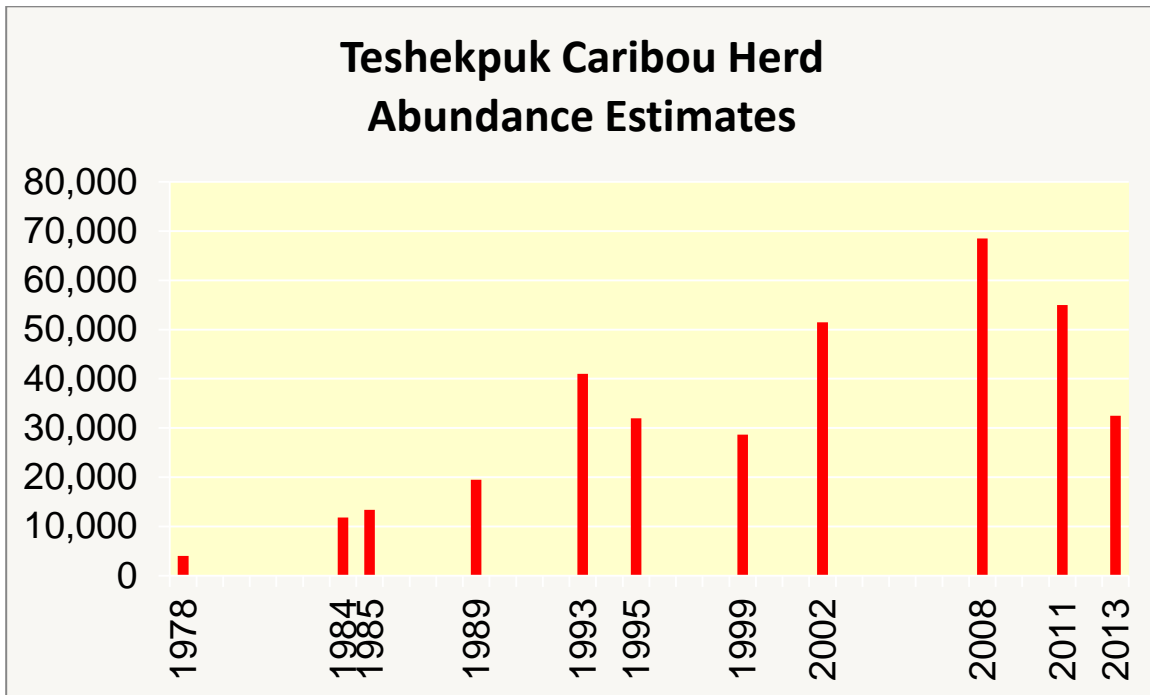
### Western Arctic Caribou Herd

The population of the Western Arctic herd has been declining since 2003:



**Teshkepuk Caribou Herd**

The Teshkepuk Herd is also in decline:



The decline is a due to a combination of:

- Low and declining calf production
- Poor calf survival (<30%)
- High adult mortality rates (especially recently)

The underlying reasons for these rates are not totally clear, but are likely related to:



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- Poor summer and winter nutrition and difficult winters
- High levels of predation on calves in winter
- Nutritionally mediated risk of predation

Harvest will play an increasing role in herd dynamics if the decline continues.

Alaska Board of Game (BOG) and Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) were influenced by:

- Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game managers and caribou biologists
- Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group
- Local hunters throughout northwest Alaska
- Local Advisory Committees to the BOG
- North Slope Borough Fish and Game Management Committee
- Regional Advisory Councils to the FSB, including North Slope RAC

\*\* Please note: The Board of Game distributes notices for meetings, regulatory changes, proposals, and other information via email: [sign up here to join that list<sup>u</sup>](#). Hard copies are available upon request. \*\*

Updated Hunting Regulations:

## GMU 23; north of Singoalik R, near Pt. Hope

### State regulations:

**5 caribou per day as follows:**

**Calves may NOT be taken.**

**BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Feb. 1 – June 30.**

**COWS may be harvested July 15 – April  
30.**

### Federal regulations:

**5 caribou per day as follows:**

**Calves may NOT be taken.**

**BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Feb. 1 – June 30.**

**COWS may be harvested July 1 – Mar. 31.**

**However, COWS accompanied by calves  
may NOT be taken July 1 – Oct. 10.**

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<sup>u</sup> <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.emailsubscription>

## GMU 24; north of the Kanuti River

### State regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

Calves may NOT be taken.

BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Feb. 1 – June 30.

COWS may be harvested July 15 – April  
30.

### Federal regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

Calves may NOT be taken.

BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Feb. 1 – June 30.

COWS may be harvested July 15 – April  
30.

However, COWS accompanied by calves  
may NOT be taken July 15 – Oct. 10.

GMU 26A; the Colville River drainage upstream from  
the Anaktuvuk River, and Chukchi Sea drainages  
south and west of, and including, the Utukok River.

### State regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

Calves may NOT be taken.

BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Feb. 1 – June 30.

COWS may be harvested July 15 – April  
30.

### Federal regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

Calves may NOT be taken.

BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14  
and Dec. 6 – June 30.

No more than 3 COWS per day may be  
harvested July 16 – March 15.

However, COWS accompanied by calves  
may NOT be taken July 16 – Oct. 15.

GMU 26A; remainder (i.e. the Colville River drainage downstream from the Anaktuvuk River, and Chukchi Sea drainages north of the Utukok River).

State regulations:

Calves may NOT be taken under any time period below.

Five BULLS per day may be harvested July 1 – 15 and Mar. 16 – June 30.

Five caribou per day, 3 of which may be COWS, may be harvested July 16 - Oct. 15, however COWS with calves may not be taken.

Three COWS per day may be harvested Oct. 16 – Dec. 31.

Five caribou per day, 3 of which may be COWS, may be harvested Jan. 1 – Mar. 15.

Federal regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

Calves may NOT be taken.

BULLS may be harvested July 1 – Oct. 14 and Dec. 6 – June 30.

No more than 3 COWS per day may be harvested July 16 – March 15.

However, COWS accompanied by calves may NOT be taken July 16 – Oct. 15.

GMU 26B; north of 69° 30' N lat. and west of the Kuparuk River; at 70° 10' N lat, west to Kalubik Creek and north to the ocean.

State regulations:

5 caribou per day as follows:

BULLS: no closed season.

COWS may be harvested July 1 – May 15.

Federal regulations:

No federal lands in this area.

**SAP Response:** Yokel's presentation led to a lengthy discussion about the number of sport hunters and hunting guides that are allowed to hunt in the NPR-A and or near Anaktuvuk (not in the NPR-A). Most residents want hunters from outside the region to be restricted from hunting in the area before or if there are going to be hunting quota restrictions. Yokel explained that the number of animals harvested by people from outside the region is negligible, but everyone understands the central concern that these hunters could

be diverting the herds from migration routes that might otherwise take them near communities. Biologists do not believe that the overall decline of the herds is due to human hunters. Sports hunters do not require permits from BLM (even those with planes, including local residents who hunt using planes), and BLM only gives about 2 permits per year to hunting guides. Due to some anger and confusion over BLM's authority regarding game management and the number of people hunting near North Slope communities, the BLM will no longer provide regular updates on hunting regulations at SAP meetings as it has done recently because it is not productive and there are no recommendations made that BLM can act on.

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## **Nuiqsut Community Based-Monitoring Program and Aircraft Activity & Caribou Hunting Patterns**

Todd Brinkman, UAF Professor of Wildlife Biology, was not able to attend the SAP but provided a presentation with recorded audio. With graduate student Taylor Stinchcomb, Brinkman is leading two phases research in Nuiqsut that respond to residents' concerns and requests.

**Phase 1:** Since 2014, the ongoing Nuiqsut Community-Based Monitoring Program documents social and environmental changes occurring in and around Nuiqsut that the community perceives as important by equipping hunters with GPS cameras. 14 hunters have participated and they have submitted over 200 unique images and local narratives. These have been used to create an interactive map with the help of the Trapper School for the community to view and share images.

**Phase 2:** The second phase of the research investigates the relationship and interactions among oil and gas development (e.g. roads and infrastructure), aircraft traffic, environmental change, caribou distribution and movement, and caribou hunting patterns. In summer 2015, Brinkman and Stinchcomb set up 3 acoustic monitors at community selected sites (Fish Creek, Ocean Point, and on the west side of the Colville across from Itqilippaa. More monitors will be deployed in subsequent summers to gather baseline information on where, when, and how much aircraft activity is occurring in important caribou hunting areas. This aircraft activity data will be merged with data on hunter access, infrastructure, caribou movement and distribution, and landscape change.

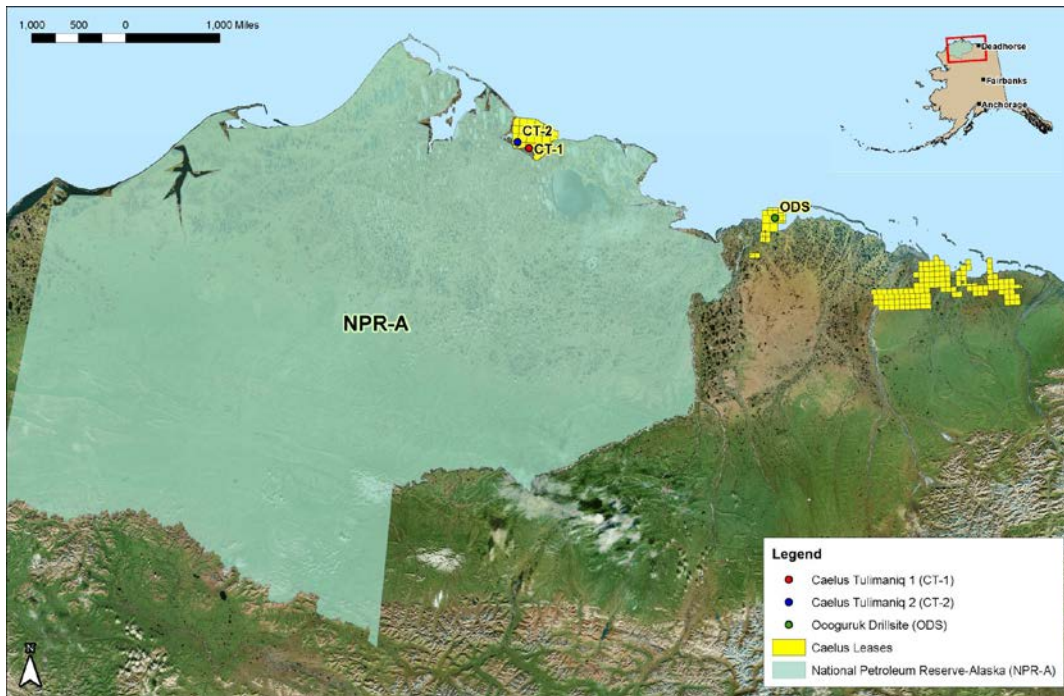
The Subsistence Advisory Panel appreciated these community-based and responsive research projects. Sollie Hugo said that it was good because it involved all the hunters and facilitated participation without having to travel to meetings.

## **Caelus Energy Alaska Tulimaniq Exploration Program**

Dale Hoffman (Manager of Land and External Affairs) and Julie Lina (Senior Regulatory Coordinator) provided an overview of Caelus Energy Alaska's recent expansion in the North Slope and nearshore Beaufort Sea. Caelus Energy is the successor in interest to Pioneer Natural Resources (ODS or the Ooogruk offshore oil field in Harrison Bay). Caelus was the high bidder of on 127 leases in the Beaufort Sea and North Slope. Subsequent to its Ooogruk development, Caelus we came up with an onshore project that has an offshore resource, called Nuna.

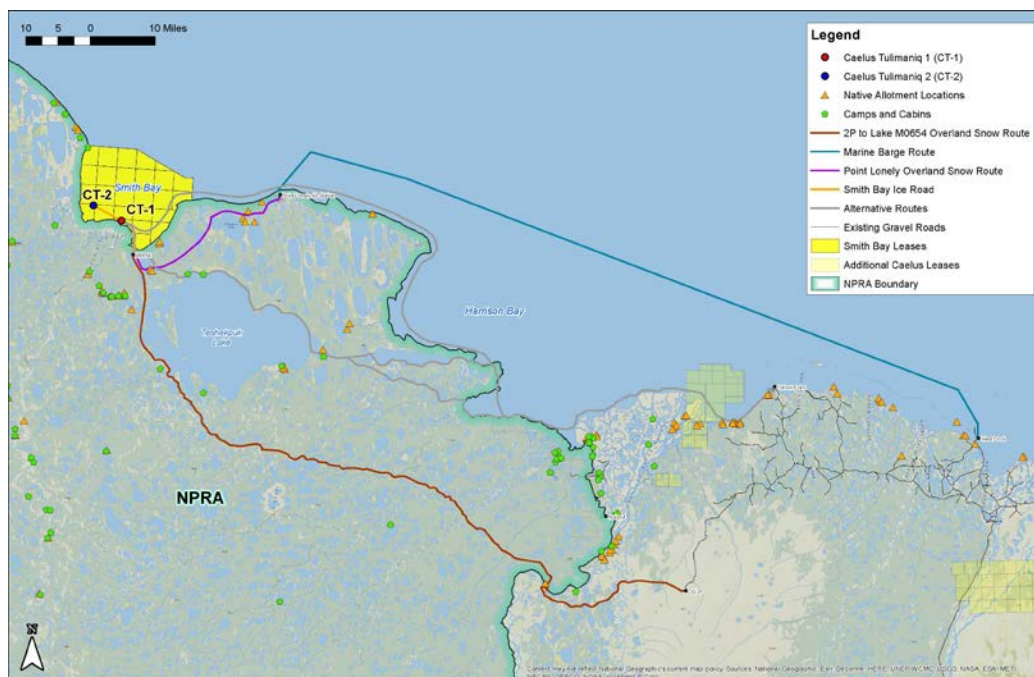
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<sup>v</sup> <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.emailsubscription>

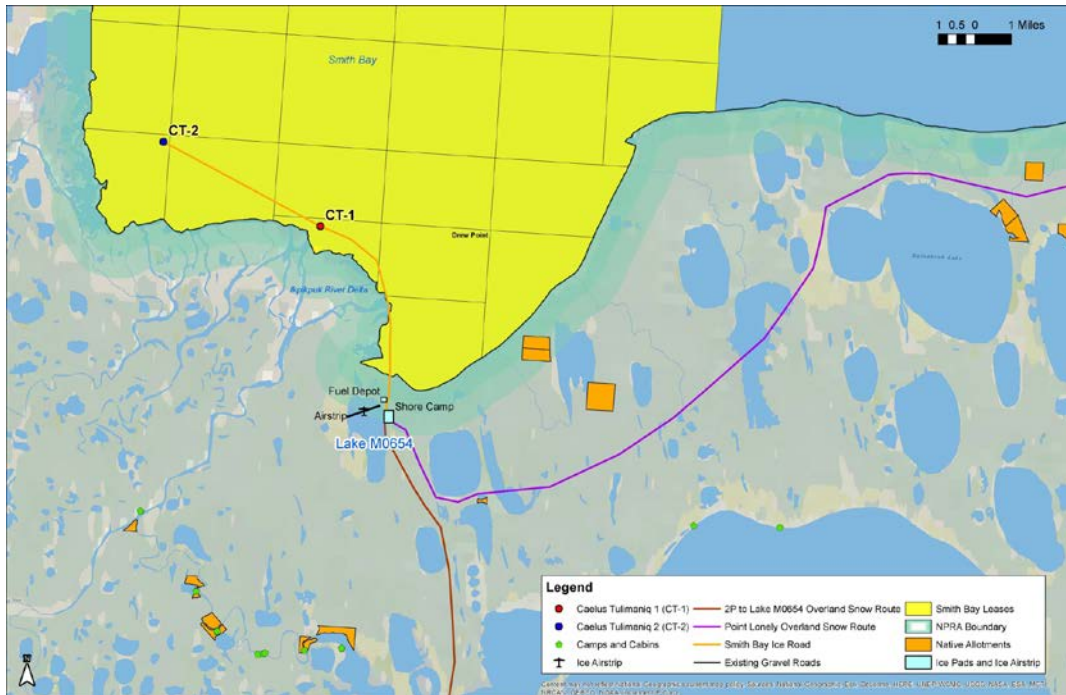


In June 2014, Caelus purchased NordAq’s interest in the Tulumaniq program in Smith Bay on State of Alaska leases. That exploration plan has been presented at several past SAP meetings and Caelus’ plans to establish 1-2 ice islands at the bottom of Smith Bay to drill 1-2 exploratory wells and build an onshore camp is fundamentally the same as NordAq’s plan was.

In August/September 2014, Caelus barged most of the equipment it will need for this winter’s exploratory drilling project to Point Lonely to stage it closer to Smith Bay. When tundra travel opens, Caelus will pre-pack snow routes from Point Lonely to Lake 654, the site near the base of Smith Bay where it will build a camp. Caelus will also pre-pack a trail from the 2P Pad southeast of Nuiqsut to Lake 654.



Caelus will build a 5,000 ft. airstrip on top of Lake 654 to support Hercules and smaller aircraft. Most flights to the camp will originate in Fairbanks, some from Deadhorse or Anchorage. There will be an average of 3-4 landings per day.



| Program Activity                       | 2015 |     |      |     |     |     | 2016 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|----------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                                        | Jul  | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan  | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug |
| Marine Barging                         |      |     | ■    | ■   |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Pre-Season Infield Operations          |      |     | ■    | ■   | ■   | ■   |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Overland Mobilization from 2P Ice Pad  |      |     | ■    | ■   | ■   | ■   | ■    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Overland Mobilization from Pt. Lonely  |      |     |      |     |     | ■   | ■    | ■   |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Infield Ice Infrastructure Development |      |     |      |     |     | ■   | ■    | ■   | ■   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Exploration Drilling Program           |      |     |      |     |     |     | ■    | ■   | ■   | ■   | ■   |     |     |     |
| Demobilization and Clean-Up            |      |     |      |     |     |     |      |     |     | ■   | ■   | ■   | ■   | ■   |

Demobilization in spring 2016 will primarily use the snow road to the 2P Pad southeast of Nuiqsut. Any items staged at Point Lonely will be barged to West Dock during the summer, and cleanup, stickpicking, and inspections will also occur in summer 2016.

Caelus has a Conflict Avoidance Agreement (CAA) with the AEW Caelus and held stakeholder meetings in Barrow, Nuiqsut, and Atqasuk. Flyers with aircraft identifying information have also been distributed. KBRW radio announcements are planned and a **Tulmaniq Information Line has been established: 907-343-2108.**

For additional information, residents are invited to contact Dale Hoffman at 907-343-2108 or [dale.hoffman@caelusenergy.com](mailto:dale.hoffman@caelusenergy.com)

**SAP Response:** Colleen Akpik-Lemem expressed concern that the barging operations could disturb the fall time bowhead whale migration back from Canada. Caelus noted its CAA with the AEWG and reported that the AEWG thought its barging activities would be too far south to disturb the migration. Akpik-Lemem also asked about Caelus' efforts contacting nearby allotment owners (Caelus sent letters and is continuing to try to contact owners) and Bart Ahsogek noted that not all allotment owners want to be avoided: some want the opportunity to rent their land.

### **US Fish and Wildlife Update on North Slope Projects**

Ernest Nageak, USFWS Alaska Native Affairs Specialist, described several of the projects that USFWS operates out of its Barrow Field Office, which opened in 2010. One reason the USFWS office in Barrow was opened was due to the presence of threatened and endangered spectacled eiders in the Barrow area. In the past, law enforcement would travel to Barrow, sell duck stamps to residents and enforce regulations in the field. This situation caused a substantial amount of hard feelings: someone from out of town worked at the office, residents did not like being inspected and questioned. The situation inspired Ernest Nageak to move over from Native Village of Barrow to USFWS in November 2011 so that local residents could have a say in the rules and management. It has been a long road, but now, the USFWS has a good working relationship with the communities. This is the first year that rural residents are not required to buy federal duck stamps thanks to work done by Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council and the State of Alaska (State duck stamps and state hunting licenses are still required!).

The vision for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's work on the North Slope is:

*Cooperation between the public and the US Fish & Wildlife Service is vital to conserving fish, wildlife and their habitat on the North Slope of Alaska. Success is Service employees and local residents sharing traditional, local, and scientific knowledge in a respectful way resulting in better conservation and enduring human relationships too.*

Ernest encouraged all participants to [like the USFWS Barrow Field Office Facebook Page<sup>w</sup>](#). Residents can contact Ernest Nageak by email at [ernest\\_nageak@fws.gov](mailto:ernest_nageak@fws.gov) or by phone at 907-852-2058

The office has two local employees who were born and raised in Barrow: Ernest Nageak and Uinñiq Lambrecht (Biologist and Environmental Education Specialist). The USFWS Barrow Field Office has a popular annual open house event and puts out an annual newsletter: look for the next one in January or February 2016. The office runs an annual Alaska Migratory Bird Calendar contest and solicits drawings from students for that. Projects run out of the USFWS Barrow Office include:

**Eider Journey Science Program**, an educational program that involves high school students in research and outreach related to Steller's and spectacled eiders near Barrow, Alaska. Field work includes assisting with the ground-based Steller's eider breeding pair survey, nest searching and monitoring, hen capture, and brood monitoring.

**Fox Management Program**, the purpose of which is to increase nest survival and success of Steller's eiders breeding near Barrow by removing a common predator, the arctic fox. Since 2005, the USFWS has contracted with USDA-WS to kill foxes in the eider nest study area at Barrow between late May and mid to late July. The USFWS hires local youth as fox trapper assistants, who work directly with USDA-WS

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<sup>w</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Barrow-Field-Office/114752052009158>

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personnel during June and July. Fox trapper assistants also participate in community outreach activities related to Steller's eider conservation following the field work season.

**Lemming Monitoring Study**, a research and education project investigating lemming distribution and abundance near Barrow, Alaska.

**North Slope Science and Culture Camp**, including day programs that provide fun, age-appropriate, educational opportunities for Barrow youth to learn about scientific and Inupiaq cultural aspects of wildlife and nature of the North Slope. In July 2015, the Barrow Field Office will offer one session for each of the following age groups: youth entering 1st – 3rd grades, youth entering 4th – 6th grades, and youth entering 7th-9th grades. Each day, camp participants explore and learn about wildlife and habitats of the North Slope through a variety of hands-on activities, crafts, games, and field trips as well as cultural presentations by community members.

**Migratory Bird Calendar Contest**: The Service gets students to compete in getting their work into the calendar, part of a state-wide Art and Literature contest.

**Barrow Migratory Bird Fair and Barrow Field office open house**. Every spring the USFWS Barrow Office gets the community together, welcomes the birds back to the Slope, and has a bird fair with info about the upcoming season. This is followed by the fall open house that provides feedback to the community about what kind of work students did out in the field and updates on studies.

**Aerial Surveys for Polar Bears and Steller's Eiders** during specific times of the year and the USFWS Barrow office provides descriptions of all planes used and provides a time frame in which the surveys will be held.

**Marking and Tagging of Marine Mammals**: 1-2 taggers in all the coastal villages provide tags and gather information on Polar Bears and Walrus on the North Slope.

**Alaska Native Relations training**: USFWS Barrow Office provides training to new employees who plan to work in rural areas and provide a history of the cultures and people in each region of Alaska.

**SAP Response**: Warren Harding offered his sincere thanks to Ernest Nageak and commented that it was very good to see someone local like Ernest step up and take a position in the USFWS office. Harding said that relations would likely still be bad if local employees like Ernest Nageak and Uinñiq Lambrecht hadn't started worked there. Nageak responded that there is now an annual, one-week long Alaska Native Relations training for all USFWS employees that work in rural areas. The training was inspired by a cultural orientation project begun for law enforcement by Joe Sage and the Native Village of Barrow. Sollie Hugo and Jerry Sikvaguyak both thanked Ernest for his good presentation and positive work with the young people. This inspired Ernest Nageak to once again push for industry and other entities to provide funding to support programs, training, and job opportunities for students. He is ready with the account number for anyone that wants to support programs that encourage youth to get out on the land and away from the Xbox. Bart Ahsogeak noted that these types of projects have been needed for a long time. He encouraged USFWS to set up small offices in other villages to defuse tensions between residents and agencies in those locations. Nageak pointed out some of the many wildlife grants that USFWS awards to tribal villages who apply for various programs that serve to get youth engaged in subsistence. Joe Sage noted that it would be very beneficial for all the villages to have a federal Native Affairs Specialists like Nageak so that residents have a point of contact to address issues and questions as they arise. The State of Alaska would also benefit from a similar employed official point of contact in each community. Nageak agreed that it is indeed very confusing for residents to be clear on all the various State versus Federal game regulations and land



management policies. Ernest Nageak encouraged all North Slope residents to call him for now if they have any questions and he will help find answers or the appropriate government agency to address their questions. Qaqsu Tagarook thanked Ernest for working with the students. He noted that with climate change, nesting has started earlier. He remarked that brants taste very good when they first arrive on the North Slope but that after nesting and being here for a time, they don't taste as good. Bart Ahsogeak reinforced how valuable it is to have a local working for a federal agency so that people know who to talk to, especially in contrast to trying to contract agencies with automated answering services that make it very difficult to talk to a person. Bart also noted that the best local biologists are the women who cut up and prepare harvested animals.

## Subsistence Advisory Panel Concerns and Recommendations to BLM

**Charles (Sollie) Hugo** stated that the main concern for Anaktuvuk Pass are sports hunters and commercial hunting guides that hunt in areas north of town and disturb the caribou migration, when caribou are the staple of the diet in Anaktuvuk Pass. He noted that trying to improve communication and educate the companies flying the hunters in as well as the hunters themselves and the agencies that give permits might help to convince all parties to delay hunting in the area until the leaders of the herds have passed. Hugo also asked the SAP to recommend that residents provide an hour of education per day in school on traditional hunting ways. Small planes are a constant concern for Anaktuvuk and Hugo recommended that the North Slope Borough try to communicate information about permits it is signing for hunting guides in the area more rapidly so that residents could plan and respond.

**Jerry Sikvayugak** of Anaktuvuk Pass seconded Hugo's comments and also noted that increasing wildfires and smoke are impacting caribou in the Brooks Range.

**Warren Lampe** noted that studies in the Point Lay area have declined dramatically, especially since the closure of the coal mine south of town. He agreed that the village would like to be notified by the North Slope Borough about all permits, especially permits that are being approved for studies in the area, when they are going to be using aircraft. Residents felt bombarded with the studies and didn't understand why they were going on without proper notification. With the media frenzy over the walrus haul out, the Native Village of Point Lay has decided to cooperate with USGS, USFWS, the Alaska Sea Life Center to issue joint press releases and other efforts. Point Lay has been having a pretty good caribou year although the animals seem to be passing further inland, which Lampe believes may be due to the lack of warm dry weather this summer and the resulting decrease of mosquitoes.

**Robert Nukapigak** requested more communication from ConocoPhillips and Caelus in Nuiqsut due to the large amount of development in the Nuiqsut area that is affecting the community's subsistence way of life.

**Terry Qaqsu Tagarook** also requested that any entity giving permits out improve the process of notifying potentially affected communities. Tagarook noted that climate changes exacerbated impacts from the major August storm and Wainwright was left without any beach at all (high water for a long period of time with waves eroding the bank and exposing the permafrost). The storm washed up creatures from the ocean that Tagarook had never seen before. Some houses in Wainwright were originally built on sites that are now in the ocean and they have been moved inland several times. Like numerous other North Slope Inupiat elders, Tagarook noted that the positions of the sun and moon on the horizons have changed since they were young.

**Joe Sage** said that one of the main concerns in Barrow now is uneducated hunters, whether it is young hunters who have not had enough guidance in traditional hunting ways or people from outside now living there that don't understand or respect traditional hunting ways. This lack of understanding, combined with high-powered rifles and the ability to travel all over the tundra, can disturb the migration and take a toll on the herd as well as on hunters as a whole. When hunters have to travel further it takes a toll on their health because they take a beating from longer 4-wheeler or boat rides. Sage would hate to see this Barrow trend spread to other communities. It is the substantial increase in traffic of all kinds (hunting, traveling, industry, research on land, sea and in the air) that is having major impacts.

**Bart Ahsogeak** noted that once a permit is approved by the North Slope Borough, there is a cc list and notice goes out to City and Tribe and potentially affected allottees in each affected community. Ahsogeak also commented that many complaints came in this summer about a particular plane that ended up being a privately owned plane, over which the Borough has no authority. Regarding the lack of knowledge of traditional hunting ways among youth and new residents, Ahsogeak recommended getting the Tribe involved with enforcement and looking into funding sources that could support that.

**Wanda Kippi** of Atqasuk seconded what others had said about the importance of not disturbing caribou migration trails. She stated that if roads are ever built they should not be allowed to cover the trails. Small aircraft are a perennial problem in Atqasuk that lead to constant complaints from hunters.

**Colleen Akpik-Lemen** appreciated the opportunity to provide input from the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope at her first SAP meeting. She repeated her requests to have BLM create maps of permitted activities on a monthly basis to accompany the spreadsheet and to have BLM give priority to subsistence users when evaluating applications for permits. Akpik-Lemen also requested that BLM increase its enforcement arm so that it is not left to the community members to argue with aircraft users and outside hunters. She also requested that the Regional Mitigation Strategy be designed to benefit all North Slope communities.

**John Pearce of USGS** thanked each of the Subsistence Advisory Panel representatives for volunteering their valuable time, especially during caribou season. He wants the Panel to know that USGS is always available to take phone calls if there are questions about USGS activities and promises that USGS has no automated phone answering services: calls will be answered by an actual human being. He is glad to give out his direct numbers (Work: 907.786.7094, Cell: 907.786.7094, Email: [jpearce@usgs.gov](mailto:jpearce@usgs.gov)) and is always available to answer questions about activities that USGS has going on on the North Slope.

**Joe Sage** noted that it is important to try to have team efforts between agencies, researchers, industry, and the residents of the North Slope. Too often it seems to be a one-way street with industry and residents do not feel that they are being heard, but residents are willing to work towards a healthy balance of Inupiaq ways and modern progress despite the fact that it is often overwhelming. Residents want to have a better understanding of industry's long-term plans, and Sage emphasized that residents need industry or research details to be shared just as the Inupiat have always shared their traditional way of life with others. Sage noted that it has been an honor to serve as chair of the SAP and work with BLM, that he will not be going anywhere and will always back up with the SAP is about and support collaboration with BLM to balance the situation.

**Next SAP meeting:** The Panel determined that the next SAP meeting will be held in Anaktuvuk Pass in January or February 2016.