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DONLIN GOLD PROJECT  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
PUBLIC MEETING

ANIAK, ALASKA

Taken January 20, 2016  
Commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Volume I - Pages 1 - 57, inclusive

Taken at  
Aniak Community Hall  
Aniak, Alaska

Reported by:  
Mary A. Vavrik, RMR

Page 2

1                                   A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S  
 2 For U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:  
 3       Keith Gordon  
       Project Manager  
 4 For U.S. Bureau of Land Management:  
 5       Alan Bittner  
       Anchorage Field Office Manager  
 6       Bruce Seppi  
       Wildlife Biologist  
 7 For U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:  
 8       Mark Jen  
       Project Manager  
 9 For Alaska Department of Natural Resources:  
 10      Cathe Heroy  
       State Pipeline Coordinator's Office  
 11 For AECOM:  
 12      Taylor Brelsford  
       NEPA Advisor  
 13      Nancy Darigo  
       Physical Science Lead  
 14      David Every  
       Biological Science Lead  
 15      Donne Fleagle  
       Senior Rural Outreach Lead  
 16      Jon Isaacs  
       Principal in Charge  
 17      Joan Kluwe  
       Social Science Lead  
 18      Cecil Urlich  
       Mining Engineer  
 19  
 20  
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 23  
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Page 4

1                                   P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S  
 2                                   **MR. KEITH GORDON:** I appreciate everybody  
 3 coming out tonight. If you can't hear us, please let me  
 4 know, and I'll try to project a little bit louder. My  
 5 name is Keith Gordon. I'm a project manager with the  
 6 United States Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District.  
 7 Normally when I do presentations, I ask everybody to  
 8 just go ahead and raise your hand and make a comment at  
 9 any time during the presentation. Because what we are  
 10 trying to do this evening is give you some very brief  
 11 information on the status of the project and how you can  
 12 comment, we are going to ask preferably that you hold your  
 13 comments until the end of the presentation, and then we  
 14 will open it up specifically for your comments because  
 15 that's exactly why we're here.  
 16 As most of you are aware, Donlin Gold is proposing to  
 17 construct a rather large gold mine project approximately  
 18 ten miles south of Crooked Creek -- north of Crooked  
 19 Creek.  
 20 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement went out  
 21 November 27th. It's out until April 30th of 2016 for your  
 22 comments. And I'll give you a little bit more information  
 23 about the project in a minute as we take a look at the  
 24 next couple of slides.  
 25 The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead for the

Page 3

1  
 2  
 3 Taken by:  
 4       Mary A. Vavrik, RMR  
 5 BE IT KNOWN that the aforementioned proceedings were taken  
 6 at the time and place duly noted on the title page, before  
 7 Mary A. Vavrik, Registered Merit Reporter and Notary  
 8 Public within and for the State of Alaska.  
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Page 5

1 development of the Environmental Impact Statement due to  
 2 our role as a federal agency. We are neither a proponent  
 3 nor an opponent of the proposed project. Our job is to do  
 4 middle-of-the-road unbiased analyses to give you all the  
 5 information you need to effectively comment on what they  
 6 are proposing, as well as giving information to the  
 7 decisionmakers as to whether or not the project should go  
 8 forward.  
 9 We have a variety of cooperators on the project that  
 10 you can see on the bottom of the screen. Under the  
 11 National Environmental Policy Act, cooperators are  
 12 entities that assist us in development of the EIS. We are  
 13 also assisted by AECOM, an international engineering and  
 14 environmental analysis firm with a substantial amount of  
 15 experience in analyzing the potential effects of these  
 16 projects.  
 17 The project, as you are aware, in relation to the  
 18 mine would be constructed in part on TKC land. The  
 19 pipeline, if constructed, would be constructed in part on  
 20 CIRI lands. And most of you are aware that Donlin is a  
 21 component of both Barrick and NOVAGOLD. It was a  
 22 corporation generated specifically to determine if this  
 23 project is feasible and how it might be constructed.  
 24 Very briefly, our agenda tonight. As I mentioned,  
 25 our purpose here is to give you information on the

Page 6

1 proposed project, but quite specifically give you  
 2 information on how you can comment substantively in  
 3 relation to the draft EIS that's out there.  
 4 After this presentation, we will go into a poster  
 5 session where we have got some folks who have been  
 6 specifically doing the EIS analyses. You can see a dozen  
 7 posters around the room. These three posters give you a  
 8 little bit of information on what the proposed project is.  
 9 And then there is nine other posters around the room that  
 10 talk about some potential impacts to major resource areas,  
 11 whether that's subsistence, whether it's socioeconomics,  
 12 whether it's hazardous chemicals or spill risks.  
 13 After that approximately 45-minute poster session  
 14 when you can actually talk to the folks that have been  
 15 working on the EIS, we will reconvene and go through a  
 16 public comment session where you can give us your specific  
 17 comments on the project. Please note that while we have  
 18 45 minutes set aside for you all to review the posters, if  
 19 you want less time, that's fine. If you want more time,  
 20 that's fine.  
 21 And after we go through that session, we will  
 22 immediately go into an 810 hearing that the Bureau of Land  
 23 Management will do. Mr. Alan Bittner with Bureau of Land  
 24 Management will give you a brief bit of information on  
 25 what that hearing is about.

Page 7

1 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** My name is Alan  
 2 Bittner. I'm an Anchorage field manager for BLM. And I  
 3 just have a short statement here regarding the subsistence  
 4 analysis that we did. In addition to the draft EIS,  
 5 Section 810(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands  
 6 Conservation Act, or ANILCA, requires an evaluation of  
 7 subsistence uses and needs to be completed before any  
 8 federal determination to withdraw, reserve, lease or  
 9 otherwise permit the use, occupancy or disposition of  
 10 public lands.  
 11 Due to the proposed project affecting BLM-managed  
 12 lands, the BLM prepared a preliminary analysis of  
 13 subsistence impacts. We have a copy in the back there if  
 14 you need to take a look at it and would like to review it.  
 15 The preliminary findings concluded that the project may  
 16 result in significant restrictions to subsistence uses for  
 17 certain communities.  
 18 Immediately following this presentation, the BLM will  
 19 conduct an 810 public hearing. Please stay to hear about  
 20 the subsistence analysis. Our presentation is about 15  
 21 minutes. And then we will take comments. That's your  
 22 opportunity to provide formal comments on the record in  
 23 relation to that subsistence analysis and the potential  
 24 effects that the project may have on subsistence  
 25 resources. So we appreciate you staying for that after.

Page 8

1 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Thank you, Alan. So we  
 2 need your comments specifically on the EIS and the draft  
 3 analyses, the draft conclusions that are in it, to tell us  
 4 whether or not we understand the baseline environment that  
 5 exists out here, whether we understand how you all live in  
 6 it, how you all use it, how it functions.  
 7 And please understand that the draft analyses in the  
 8 document is a draft. We have made no final decisions.  
 9 The draft conclusions are draft. We have made no final  
 10 decisions.  
 11 After the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is  
 12 reviewed, after we review everyone's comments, after we  
 13 determine if we have adequately defined the baseline or  
 14 not, after we have determined if there are any additional  
 15 data gaps we need to review, any additional alternatives  
 16 that need to be reviewed or rereviewed, additional  
 17 analysis that needs to be done, we would prepare a Final  
 18 Environmental Impact Statement from which the federal  
 19 entities -- the Bureau of Land Management, the Army Corps  
 20 of Engineers and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials and  
 21 Safety Administration -- would develop Records of Decision  
 22 that would be used by decisionmakers to determine for our  
 23 federal entities whether or not the project should go  
 24 forward or not.  
 25 So please be aware that it is rare that any one

Page 9

1 federal or State entity's decision on a project requires  
 2 that another federal or State entity make the same  
 3 decision. So if the Army Corps of Engineers makes a  
 4 decision and BLM doesn't agree, then we have something to  
 5 resolve, or we just agree to disagree. So our decision,  
 6 the Army Corps of Engineers, does not constrain anyone  
 7 else's.  
 8 So please give us your comments on the Draft  
 9 Environmental Impact Statement, but please understand that  
 10 your comments on that carry as much weight as they do for  
 11 testimony in the subsistence hearing. So we need your  
 12 comments in both sessions if you have the time and are  
 13 willing to spend a little more time with us this evening.  
 14 Let me give you a very brief run-through of the  
 15 project since I think the vast majority of you have  
 16 probably seen it.  
 17 As you are aware, the mine site consists of three  
 18 primary components. No. 1, the two pits that would  
 19 ultimately be merged into a single pit that would be  
 20 approximately 2.2 square miles in size. No. 2 is the  
 21 tailings storage facility. Tailings effectively are rock  
 22 dust. And in this case it would be rock dust with water  
 23 in it, as well as some chemicals left over from the mill  
 24 processing.  
 25 They are proposing to process 59,000 tons of ore per

Page 10

1 day for this project, 24 hours a day, seven days a week,  
 2 365 days a year for 27 and a half years. So it's going to  
 3 be a lot of rock dust. Basically it's going to fill that  
 4 valley. And you can see the dam that would be on the  
 5 downstream end of it that would retain the tailings behind  
 6 it.  
 7 No. 3 on the screen is the waste rock facility.  
 8 Frankly, waste rock is either rock that does not have gold  
 9 in it or just does not have a high enough quantity of gold  
 10 in it to be worth considering ore in processing. So that,  
 11 very briefly, are the facilities at the mine.  
 12 The project is broken is into three primary  
 13 components: The mine site, the transportation  
 14 infrastructure, and the proposed pipeline that's intended  
 15 to supply fuel to it if it were to be constructed as  
 16 proposed.  
 17 The pinkish-red blob you can see up in the center of  
 18 the screen near the top is the mine facility. Donlin is  
 19 proposing to construct a 30-mile road, that red line that  
 20 runs down to what would be a new port at Jungjuk about 30  
 21 miles away that would have a barge facility at that  
 22 location, that would receive fuel and cargo that would  
 23 then be shipped to the mine. There is a 5,000-foot  
 24 airstrip that you can see right up here, that little  
 25 narrow red line.

Page 11

1 You see a lot of little boxes and circles along the  
 2 road. Those would all be materials sites developed to  
 3 either construct or maintain the road, camp facilities,  
 4 et cetera. The project also would store between the port  
 5 and the mine site, if constructed as proposed, 40 million  
 6 gallons of diesel per year, and the project is expected to  
 7 use at least 40 million gallons of diesel per year in its  
 8 operation operating the mine equipment and the remainder  
 9 of the facilities that utilize it.  
 10 The primary power source for the mill and a variety  
 11 of the other facilities at the project is a pipeline.  
 12 This pipeline would be 315 miles long, 14 inches in  
 13 diameter, buried steel, run from the western side of Cook  
 14 Inlet through the Alaska Range all the way over to the  
 15 mine site.  
 16 What we are going to give you in a few minutes is a  
 17 little bit of information on alternatives to the project,  
 18 as well as how to mitigate effects of the project so if it  
 19 were constructed impacts can be minimized to the degree  
 20 possible.  
 21 You see a half a dozen small gold stars along that  
 22 black line that represents the pipeline route. One of the  
 23 things that Donlin is proposing, those are six major river  
 24 crossings that are all salmon-bearing rivers, important  
 25 salmon-bearing rivers with a lot of fish in them. So what

Page 12

1 Donlin is proposing to do is what we call horizontal  
 2 directional drilling. In other words, they are going to  
 3 bore underneath the river instead of trenching through it  
 4 to put the pipeline in. That's one of the ways we will  
 5 talk about in a minute as far as mitigation impacts to the  
 6 project.  
 7 The project, if constructed, would take approximately  
 8 three to four years to construct, 27 and a half years'  
 9 worth of operations and maintenance. Closure and  
 10 reclamation doesn't actually happen when mining -- the day  
 11 mining ceases. It actually starts before mining ceases,  
 12 and exactly when isn't nailed down yet. It would continue  
 13 for a number of years after the mine closed to finish  
 14 closing out all the facilities. And then there would be a  
 15 period of monitoring for not less than 50 years due to  
 16 water quality and issues to make sure the tailings were --  
 17 that the water coming out of the tailings was meeting the  
 18 water quality standards provided. And then the project  
 19 would require management of water coming out of the  
 20 project into the tailings facility or in the pit lake in  
 21 perpetuity.  
 22 It's important to understand that the mine, if  
 23 constructed, if you measure the depth from the lowest  
 24 point on the ground, it's 11- or 1,200 feet deep. If you  
 25 measure it from the highest point on the ground, it's

Page 13

1 1,800 feet deep. So when it fills, you are looking at  
 2 about 1,000 feet of water, or something close to that. So  
 3 it would take about 50 to 55 years to fill, and that's the  
 4 reason it would need treatment of water and monitoring in  
 5 perpetuity to make sure the water that comes out of it  
 6 that would then be released back into Crooked Creek or  
 7 another tributary in the area would be clean enough to be  
 8 released.  
 9 Very briefly, the EIS process. We put out a Notice  
 10 of Intent in December of 2012 to indicate that, based on  
 11 the project Donlin was proposing to construct, it appeared  
 12 that there could be significant negative impacts to the  
 13 human and/or natural environments, therefore triggering in  
 14 the National Environmental Policy Act a requirement to  
 15 prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.  
 16 Between December of 2012 and March of 2013, folks who  
 17 were working on the project at that time before I came  
 18 along came out to some scoping meetings in Aniak and 12  
 19 other communities in the Kuskokwim and Yukon River regions  
 20 and Anchorage to get your initial input on what you  
 21 thought of the project as it was proposed. That  
 22 information has since been developed into the draft EIS  
 23 that went out, as I mentioned, November 27th.  
 24 We're here at this meeting now to get some additional  
 25 comment from you. And please understand, any comments you

Page 14

1 want to give us tonight or any testimony in the hearing is  
 2 great, but the comment period stays open until April 30th,  
 3 so we don't need it all right here and now if you would  
 4 like to think about this for a while. The document is  
 5 5,500 pages in length without some of its attachments, so  
 6 we know that it's a substantial thing to go through.  
 7 As I mentioned, after we go through the review of  
 8 comments on the draft and determine if any additional work  
 9 needs to be done, we would go and prepare a Final  
 10 Environmental Impact Statement, then the Records of  
 11 Decision, then the various agencies make their decision.  
 12 As I mentioned, no decisions have been made. And we will  
 13 go through some of what we have looked at tonight before  
 14 we open it up to you all to give us a little bit of input  
 15 on what we have proposed so far, what we have done so far.  
 16 The document, when you are reviewing it, Chapter 1 is  
 17 basically purpose and need. Donlin obviously has their  
 18 purpose for the project. The Army Corps of Engineers,  
 19 because of our regulations, has to define the basic and  
 20 overall purposes as we see it in the public interest for  
 21 the project so that we can draft the analyses and define  
 22 the analyses correctly in the Environmental Impact  
 23 Statement.  
 24 I won't read the purpose -- the overall purpose  
 25 that's on the screen, but the one thing I do have to point

Page 15

1 out is that we had one glitch in the document when it went  
 2 out. We had a change that did not get made. So if you  
 3 are looking at Chapter 1 in the document, you will see  
 4 that after Western Alaska, there is another half sentence  
 5 attached to that overall purpose. That half sentence  
 6 notes that part of the purpose of the document is to  
 7 maximize economic benefit for Donlin's stockholders and  
 8 Calista and TKC shareholders.  
 9 We can't analyze a project by defining economics to  
 10 be a primary criteria for given entities. If we do that,  
 11 we potentially skew the analyses of the project. It is  
 12 extremely important that TKC and Calista shareholders  
 13 benefit economically from the project. It's extremely  
 14 important that people in the Yukon/Kuskokwim River region  
 15 benefit. It's appropriate in the project that Donlin  
 16 stockholders benefit. We just can't put that in our  
 17 analyses as a primary purpose because what we are doing is  
 18 a public interest review for folks locally, regionally,  
 19 and nationally. So economics is, by regulation,  
 20 constrained in our analyses and how we develop EISs. You  
 21 can see the need that is up there, and I'm sure you are  
 22 more well aware of it than we are.  
 23 The alternatives -- I'll just bounce through the  
 24 alternatives real quick we have looked at so far. The  
 25 National Environmental Policy Act requires that we look at

Page 16

1 the no-action alternative; in other words, doing nothing.  
 2 The reason we look at that is because the whole purpose  
 3 for the Environmental Impact Statement is to disclose  
 4 potential project impacts to you, give you an avenue to  
 5 comment to us, and provide decisionmakers with better  
 6 information regarding whether or not proposed projects  
 7 should go forward so they can make better decisions. So  
 8 if we don't start by comparing a proposed project to what  
 9 exists, we are not doing an adequate analyses of the  
 10 potential impacts.  
 11 Alternative 2 is Donlin Gold's proposed project we  
 12 just talked about. The LNG power haul truck, Alternative  
 13 3A, all that means is instead of the haul trucks at the  
 14 mine operating off of diesel, they operate off of LNG,  
 15 which just means less diesel comes up the river. Less  
 16 diesel is burned in the trucks. The diesel pipeline  
 17 alternative means instead of that gas line running to the  
 18 mine, it would be replaced with a diesel pipeline. So  
 19 instead of the project operating off of natural gas, it  
 20 would operate off of diesel.  
 21 Alternative 4, Birch Tree Crossing, I'll show you a  
 22 slide of this in a minute. You remember the proposed port  
 23 at Jungjuk. Well, move down the river about 70 miles, and  
 24 a port would be constructed at Birch Tree Crossing instead  
 25 of Jungjuk.

Page 17

1 Alternative 5A is a dry stacks tailings alternative  
 2 that I'll describe more in a couple of minutes. And then  
 3 there is the Dalzell Gorge pipeline route alternative,  
 4 which is just a different route by which the pipeline -- a  
 5 portion of the pipeline might be aligned.  
 6 Why are we looking at these alternatives? We are  
 7 looking at them for ways to minimize the project if it  
 8 were to be constructed.  
 9 As I mentioned, this project is just a baseline for  
 10 the analyses. It's a very important baseline. And it  
 11 gives us a starting point so we have a functional  
 12 analysis.  
 13 What's the benefit of Alternative 3A? Alternative 2,  
 14 which is not shown on the screen, was Donlin's proposed  
 15 action. So when we're talking about ways to minimize and  
 16 mitigate impacts, what's one way to do that? One way to  
 17 do that is Alternative 3A, which I mentioned a couple of  
 18 minutes ago. This alternative requires the construction  
 19 of an LNG plant at the mine site, which is not currently  
 20 proposed, but does, as I mentioned, reduce diesel barging  
 21 up and down the river via the use of LNG in the haul  
 22 trucks.  
 23 Alternative 3B. Alternative 3B, the advantage of  
 24 this alternative is you are not barging during operations  
 25 diesel up or down the river. So you get rid of a

Page 18

1 substantial quantity of those barge impacts. It does  
 2 mean, for instance, that a new pipeline segment, 19-mile  
 3 pipeline segment, would have to be added between Tyonek  
 4 and the current starting point of the proposed pipeline.  
 5 So anytime we change -- the point of all this is,  
 6 anytime we change one thing on these projects, we  
 7 potentially change another thing, and it changes the  
 8 weight and balance of what we do.  
 9 When we are looking at barges going all the way up to  
 10 Jungjuk, we are looking at potential barge impacts to  
 11 fish, water quality, et cetera, upstream of Birch Tree  
 12 Crossing.  
 13 When we're looking at Alternative 4 and there is no  
 14 barging upstream of Birch Tree Crossing, we not only  
 15 eliminate the potential for spill risk, but we eliminate  
 16 the various other impacts. So this is just an example of  
 17 Alternative 4. You can see the mine site in red, the  
 18 proposed port site at Jungjuk and then the purple line  
 19 which gets you down Birch Tree Crossing. Obviously, with  
 20 the Jungjuk port, we have a 30-mile road, we have a  
 21 76-mile road if we went forward with the Birch Tree  
 22 Crossing alternative.  
 23 Alternative 5A, the dry stack tailings alternative,  
 24 right now the tailings, as I mentioned, is rock dust, and  
 25 it would be wet rock dust, basically, that would fill the

Page 19

1 valley. If we go with the dry stack tailings method, the  
 2 tailings are dry before they go into the valley primarily,  
 3 and they're stacked to a much higher elevation.  
 4 So the variation on the theme for dry stack tailings  
 5 is that the tailings footprint for the dry material, the  
 6 tailings themselves, is much smaller. It's stacked  
 7 higher. That means wind erosion could potentially spread  
 8 tailings farther under this alternative than the other  
 9 alternative.  
 10 It also means that we have an operating pond  
 11 immediately downstream of the dry stack tailings facility,  
 12 and we go from one dam to retain the two to three -- one  
 13 dam to retain Donlin's proposed tailings to three dams to  
 14 propose this alternative and the operating pond downstream  
 15 of it.  
 16 So every time we change one thing in the analyses, we  
 17 change the weight and balance of others.  
 18 Alternative 6A, as I mentioned, is the alternative  
 19 pipeline route. We have a variety of alternative pipeline  
 20 routes that we originally looked at. This is the one we  
 21 carried forward for detailed analyses. The gold line is  
 22 Donlin's proposed pipeline route. The purple line is the  
 23 Dalzell Gorge route that is the alternative.  
 24 What kind of differences are we looking at? Well,  
 25 the Dalzell Gorge route, the purple line, is a couple

Page 20

1 miles shorter, but Donlin's proposed route is through an  
 2 area that already has some degree of human impact in it  
 3 versus the Dalzell Gorge route, which is a reasonably  
 4 pristine area with very little impact. Those are just a  
 5 few of the variations between the two. You will find  
 6 substantially more in the document.  
 7 By way of giving you a little information on what we  
 8 have done in relation to analyses, the example we are  
 9 going to use is barge traffic. When we -- when you look  
 10 at the document, what you see is there is 26 major  
 11 resource areas that are potentially impacted by the  
 12 project overall. In the case of barge traffic, barge  
 13 traffic potentially impacts these 14 resource areas. So  
 14 impacts under these 14 resource types were analyzed.  
 15 And we will talk about a little bit of what we have  
 16 seen after we give you a characterization of what -- the  
 17 barge traffic that currently exists. The dark gold color  
 18 on the bottom is current barge traffic as represented in  
 19 this graph on the screen. On this side of the screen you  
 20 see the barge traffic required during construction. On  
 21 this side of the screen you see barge traffic required  
 22 during operations.  
 23 So as you can see, whether it's construction or  
 24 operations, all the alternatives, barge traffic is the  
 25 same. Currently it's our understanding that there are 68

Page 21

1 barge trips on the Kuskokwim River a year, round trips  
 2 upstream and downstream.  
 3 What Donlin is proposing is effectively industrial  
 4 barging on the Kuskokwim River. Based on the current  
 5 levels of barging on the river, you have, based on the  
 6 analyses that's been done -- you can tell us whether we  
 7 are right or wrong -- approximately a 122-day barging  
 8 window on the Kuskokwim River, 122 days of ice-free season  
 9 in which barging might run. There's about 110 days of  
 10 that that Donlin feels it could run when they would have  
 11 sufficient water levels to barge materials up and down the  
 12 river.  
 13 So to give you the best comparison I can of what they  
 14 are proposing versus what you currently see, currently if  
 15 you were standing anywhere on the riverbank between Bethel  
 16 and the proposed port at Jungjuk this last summer, you  
 17 would have seen a single tug and a single barge pass you  
 18 once in approximately a two-day time frame. That would be  
 19 the average.  
 20 With what Donlin is proposing, they are going to have  
 21 one tug pushing four barges, and they are going to do it  
 22 at a rate that would mean in that same two-day time frame,  
 23 you would see approximately five combination of tugs and  
 24 barges going past you.  
 25 So basically it's a 179 percent increase over what

Page 22

1 currently exists. 100 percent, that 68, is what you  
 2 currently have. They are going to add 179 percent more.  
 3 So effectively you almost see triple the number of barges  
 4 going up and downstream. We also have to recognize that  
 5 the barges are larger. The tugs are larger. They have  
 6 bigger props. And they're not pushing one barge; they are  
 7 pushing four. When we get to the comment portion, if I  
 8 haven't adequately characterized that, please let me know.  
 9 The point of the slide is just to give you an idea of  
 10 the variation in alternatives. There is no variation in  
 11 the alternatives in relation to construction. It's the  
 12 same amount of barge traffic through what Donlin's impact  
 13 would be.  
 14 Alternative 1, the no action, there is no action, so  
 15 there is no additional barging. It just stays the way it  
 16 is. Alternative 2, 4, 5A and 6A that we talked about  
 17 briefly, there is -- that's the change in barging, the  
 18 light blue that you see. Alternative 3A is the LNG truck  
 19 alternative, so we are limiting a percentage of the diesel  
 20 that needs to go upstream to operate the trucks, so less  
 21 barging. Alternative 3B is the diesel pipeline route;  
 22 therefore, even less barging.  
 23 The important thing to understand about  
 24 Alternative 4, which has the same impact as Alternative 2  
 25 when we are doing the analyses, Alternative 4, as you

Page 24

1 with LNG instead of diesel, it's currently being done, but  
 2 it's currently being done with a combination of natural  
 3 gas and diesel. It's not being done, to our knowledge,  
 4 with straight diesel. So when we get to the point in the  
 5 process where if Donlin got a permit and they could  
 6 construct the project, well, the question is would those  
 7 LNG trucks be functional and available at that time;  
 8 therefore, would this alternative be a reasonable  
 9 alternative.  
 10 Alternative 3B, as indicated, there are less air  
 11 emissions from barging diesel up the river because you are  
 12 not barging up the river. It's running down a pipeline.  
 13 However, we are operating the mine site off of diesel  
 14 instead of natural gas. So there is more emissions in  
 15 that route.  
 16 Alternative 4, if you are running everything from  
 17 Birch Tree Crossing and up, you have less air emissions  
 18 coming out of your tugs because they are going a shorter  
 19 distance up the river, but you have more air emissions  
 20 coming out of your trucks because now your trucks are  
 21 running over twice the distance they would have been.  
 22 So again, every time we change one thing, we change  
 23 another.  
 24 Chapter 4 in the EIS is a cumulative impacts  
 25 analysis. Cumulative impacts is a combination of all

Page 23

1 remember, is the Birch Tree Crossing alternative. So  
 2 there are no barges going upstream above Birch Tree  
 3 Crossing. So while the number of trips stays the same,  
 4 the number of barge hauls every year, the amount of  
 5 impacts don't stay the same. So every time we modify one  
 6 thing, we change another.  
 7 This slide has got a lot of stuff on it, but  
 8 basically we have pretty much talked about it. When we  
 9 are talking about resource types, obviously fish are one  
 10 of the most important resource types out here for you all.  
 11 Alternative 2 in the document is considered to have  
 12 moderate impacts on fish with greater impacts in shallow  
 13 and narrow segments of the river.  
 14 And please remember, as I noted, this is draft  
 15 analyses and draft conclusions. We haven't signed off on  
 16 it yet. We need your input. That's the whole purpose of  
 17 this NEPA process is to get you to tell us whether or not  
 18 you think the analyses and the draft conclusions are  
 19 functional.  
 20 And again, Alternative 3A and 3B reduce the potential  
 21 impacts to fishing. Alternative 4, again, the reduction  
 22 in impacts is primarily because there is no barging above  
 23 Birch Tree Crossing.  
 24 Couple other things to be aware of in relation to the  
 25 alternatives. Alternative 3A, powering mining equipment

Page 25

1 past, present and reasonably foreseeable future activities  
 2 combined. In other words, we are predicting, based on  
 3 what used to exist, what currently exists, and what we  
 4 think will exist what the impacts will be in the future.  
 5 So again, we need your input on whether or not we have  
 6 adequately disclosed it, defined it and analyzed it.  
 7 Mitigation, as I mentioned earlier, is our various  
 8 methodologies by which to minimize potential impacts of  
 9 projects. Chapter 5 gives you some basic information on a  
 10 whole host of ways that the project could be mitigated.  
 11 And please understand that while I'm noting -- I  
 12 think I forgot to mention that in the alternatives process  
 13 you see in Chapter 2, that there were over 300 options  
 14 looked at that could be turned into alternatives that we  
 15 didn't feel needed to be carried forward for future  
 16 analyses.  
 17 While we have these seven alternatives that we  
 18 carried forward for detailed analysis, that does not mean,  
 19 if you look back at the appendix that contains those, that  
 20 there aren't alternatives that we missed that should be  
 21 included or combinations of alternatives that we did not  
 22 combine. So please take a look at that and give us an  
 23 idea of any comments you have any time from now to April  
 24 30th.  
 25 As I mentioned, the poster session, again, we have

Page 26

1 the three posters over here that give you the layout of  
 2 what they are proposing for the project and then  
 3 individual posters that give you some impacts by resource.  
 4 In a moment what we will do is ask the folks that are  
 5 here from AECOM to stand up and introduce themselves, as  
 6 well as the rest of the folks that have come along, and  
 7 give you an idea of specifically what poster they are  
 8 going to be available to give you information on.  
 9 But as I mentioned, the most important thing that we  
 10 are here for is to give you information on how you can  
 11 comment to us in a manner that allows us to utilize your  
 12 comment in the EIS process.  
 13 NEPA is not a voting process. If 100 people say I  
 14 oppose the project and 100 people say I support the  
 15 project, we don't have a tie. NEPA is a public interest  
 16 review process. If 100 people tell me I oppose the  
 17 project, that comment would be noted in the final EIS and  
 18 the response would be, comment noted. If 100 people say I  
 19 support the project, well, one time we will list that  
 20 comment in the final EIS and say, comment noted.  
 21 If what you tell me is you eliminated this  
 22 alternative from more detailed analyses or you didn't  
 23 adequately characterize our use of this species in our  
 24 subsistence or in sharing or in some other way, if you can  
 25 tell us why we didn't adequately address it, then we have

Page 27

1 something to respond to.  
 2 If you tell me that you eliminated that alternative  
 3 but you need to look at it again, I need to know why  
 4 because at this point we have done the draft analyses, and  
 5 if somebody says you eliminated that alternative but you  
 6 need to look at it again, well, we are going to look at  
 7 what we did, but we already did it. So odds are we are  
 8 going to think we did it right. So we need you to tell  
 9 us you eliminated that alternative for these reasons, but  
 10 you should have considered this, you know; you don't  
 11 understand this. Give us some detail about whether we are  
 12 right, whether we are wrong, what we should have looked  
 13 at, what we weighted correctly, et cetera.  
 14 The more detail you can give us, the more we can  
 15 utilize your comment to effectively develop the draft or  
 16 the Final Environmental Impact Statement. And please note  
 17 that I didn't mention earlier, the Final Environmental  
 18 Impact Statement will be out for 30, 60, 90 days. We  
 19 haven't decided yet. So the Final Environmental Impact  
 20 Statement also will go out and be available.  
 21 So how can you comment on the Draft Environmental  
 22 Impact Statement? Obviously you are here tonight to  
 23 gather information and to offer us any comments you have.  
 24 Again, the 810 ANILCA hearing will take place immediately  
 25 after the comments session, and it is equally important

Page 28

1 that we get any comments you have that relate to  
 2 subsistence in the comments session and/or the 810 ANILCA  
 3 hearing. But please, during the 810 hearing it would be  
 4 very beneficial.  
 5 Submitting written comments by April 30 to the  
 6 website you see up there, you can mail comments to me, or  
 7 you can fax comments to the phone number up there. And we  
 8 have this information in the back of the room on a piece  
 9 of paper so you don't have to try to capture it here.  
 10 Obviously, you are at the first meeting tonight. You  
 11 are welcome to come to any other meeting. Any comments  
 12 you make tonight anybody else can repeat at any other  
 13 meeting or every meeting. We need your input. That's the  
 14 whole purpose of this entire process.  
 15 Our website has additional information on the project  
 16 as proposed. It's under this EIS documents tab right  
 17 there when you go to the website. There is also the  
 18 newsletters that are out there 1 through 5, additional  
 19 project information, background documents and presentation  
 20 summaries. My contact information is there. And if you  
 21 have anything for Ms. Amanda Andraschko, our Alaska  
 22 District tribal liaison, her information is here, and I  
 23 can give that information to you at the back of the room.  
 24 Jon, would you like to start with introducing  
 25 yourself and just go through everybody else who is here?

Page 29

1 **MR. JON ISAACS:** So I'll go ahead and  
 2 start. I'm with the AECOM team. My name is Jon Isaacs.  
 3 I'm in the Anchorage office. And my role is the senior  
 4 manager on this project.  
 5 **MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD:** Good evening, and  
 6 thank you again for coming out to join us on this. My  
 7 name is Taylor Brelsford, and I'll be standing by a couple  
 8 of posters over here, the project description and the  
 9 spill risk and hazardous chemicals. So come and visit.  
 10 It will be a pleasure.  
 11 **MR. CECIL URLICH:** My name is Cecil  
 12 Urlich, and I'm a mining engineer. And I'll be at the  
 13 tailings dam poster.  
 14 **MS. NANCY DARIGO:** I'm Nancy Darigo with  
 15 AECOM in Anchorage. I'm a discipline lead for physical  
 16 sciences within the environment, and I'll be standing over  
 17 by the water flow and air emissions and water discharges  
 18 posters.  
 19 **MR. DAVID EVERY:** I'm Dave Every from  
 20 AECOM in Seattle. And I'm over the biological stuff. So  
 21 fisheries. And they put the barging poster by me, too,  
 22 since it's related.  
 23 **MS. JOAN KLUWE:** Good evening. My name is  
 24 Joan Kluwe, and I am also with the AECOM team. I'll be  
 25 standing here by the rest of the snacks, also by the

Page 30

1 socioeconomics and subsistence posters.  
 2 **MS. DONNE FLEAGLE:** Good evening, Aniak.  
 3 It's nice to be here. It's nice to see you. I'll be back  
 4 by the subsistence poster. My name is Donne Fleagle. I'm  
 5 originally from McGrath.  
 6 **MR. ALAN BITTNER:** Again, I'm Alan  
 7 Bittner, field manager for the Anchorage field office of  
 8 Bureau of Land Management.  
 9 **MR. BRUCE SEPPI:** I'm Bruce Seppi. I'm  
 10 doing the subsistence impacts analysis here shortly after  
 11 this part of the EIS.  
 12 **MR. MARK JEN:** My name is Mark Jen. I'm  
 13 with the Environmental Protection Agency, and I'm based in  
 14 Anchorage, Alaska. And I'll be here if you have any  
 15 questions for me. Thanks.  
 16 **MS. CATHE HEROY:** I'm Cathe Heroy with the  
 17 State Pipeline Coordinator's Office. We are reviewing the  
 18 application for the pipeline across State lands.  
 19 **MR. KURT PARKAN:** My name is Kurt Parkan.  
 20 I'm the external affairs manager for Donlin Gold in  
 21 Anchorage.  
 22 **MR. ENRIC FERNANDEZ:** I'm Enric Fernandez.  
 23 I'm with Donlin Gold based in Anchorage. I'm the manager  
 24 of environmental baseline studies.  
 25 **MR. RON RIMELMAN:** I'm Ron Rimelman. I'm

Page 31

1 the environmental lead for NOVAGOLD. We are the 50  
 2 percent owners of the Donlin Gold Project.  
 3 **MR. WAYNE MORGAN:** Wayne Morgan with  
 4 community relations for Donlin Gold within several  
 5 organizations within the group.  
 6 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Okay. And Mary is  
 7 capturing as much as she can this evening. And so when we  
 8 go into the comments session, we have given out a variety  
 9 of numbers to folks, and we will start by going through  
 10 those numbers, but you don't have to have a number to make  
 11 a comment. If you think of a comment after your turn has  
 12 gone by from the numbers, we will just keep going. So we  
 13 will start with number one and then go through anybody and  
 14 everybody that wants to make a comment.  
 15 The idea is to spend about 45 minutes in the poster  
 16 session. So about 7:35 we plan to reconvene. We will  
 17 just keep an eye on it. And if you all are ready to start  
 18 back up sooner, we can do that.  
 19 And then the 810 hearing would happen immediately  
 20 after the comments session. And as they mentioned, their  
 21 presentation is pretty short. So we will go from one to  
 22 the other pretty quickly.  
 23 Does anybody have any questions before we start? Is  
 24 there anybody on-line that has any questions? Okay. We  
 25 will go ahead and go to the posters. Thank you.

Page 32

1 (Off the record.)  
 2 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Because Mary needs to  
 3 document what you are saying so that we can properly  
 4 address it in the EIS, there is a couple of things we  
 5 would like you to do. We ask that you please state your  
 6 name clearly. Please speak slowly and clearly, a little  
 7 better job than I'm doing this evening. And if you have  
 8 any testimony in writing, please leave it with Mary. And  
 9 not only will we have your written comment you provide, we  
 10 will document your comment in the transcript. And Mary  
 11 will also be here during the BLM 810 hearing, which  
 12 immediately follows this, to document your comments or  
 13 testimony there.  
 14 Okay. Nos. 1 through 16 are pretty much out there.  
 15 Would you like to start us off this evening?  
 16 **MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL:** My name is Gail  
 17 Vanderpool. I want to talk about the subsistence impact.  
 18 I was told back here that the noise level is very minimal,  
 19 but I beg to differ on that because the noise does carry a  
 20 long ways, and I'm worried about the impact to the moose  
 21 and other animals and stuff. You can take all the bears  
 22 and wolves you want to. But the impact on the moose,  
 23 because they do travel, you know. They come from the  
 24 hills and stuff. So I beg to differ that there is no  
 25 noise on that.

Page 33

1 And also I think it will affect the birds in some  
 2 way, not only for our area, but the Yukon and downriver  
 3 because they will diverge if there is a lot of noise  
 4 impact from this. So I just have a big concern over that.  
 5 So you can't tell me noise level is not going to harm it.  
 6 **MR. JON ISAACS:** I would like to say  
 7 that's a really good comment. You gave us something  
 8 specific about your concerns, both for the resource and  
 9 the species. So thank you.  
 10 **MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL:** There is really no  
 11 comments on that. You just had one or two things that say  
 12 noise is not a factor. Noise is a factor.  
 13 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** You are very correct.  
 14 We know if the project is constructed as proposed, there  
 15 is an exclusion zone around this mine. 24 hours, seven  
 16 days a week for 27 and a half years, 365 days a year,  
 17 there is an area that moose, caribou, if you get any  
 18 migrating through the area, the bears and wolves, they are  
 19 just going to move out of the area.  
 20 **MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL:** That's my feeling.  
 21 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** And it's the noise,  
 22 it's the vibration, it's the lights. So yeah, we are  
 23 aware of it. But what we need to know is if we haven't  
 24 adequately characterized it, if you don't feel the level  
 25 of effects is accurate, then yes, we need to know that.

Page 34

1           **MS. PATRICIA YASKA:** My name is Patricia  
2 Yaska, and I would like to comment on Alternative No. 4.  
3 I notice it goes back behind Chuathbaluk where I'm from.  
4 And there is a portion on the left side of Chuathbaluk  
5 where people go bird hunting in the spring when they can't  
6 access the river in early spring. Were there any studies  
7 done that show that it won't have an impact -- I know  
8 there is going to be an impact either way, but were there  
9 thorough studies or is it just a proposed alternate route?  
10       And also I noticed it crosses the Ohwat, and that's  
11 where people go moose hunting. Fish, all types of  
12 species -- salmon, grayling, whitefish -- they all spawn  
13 back there. And people go back there to go fishing, bird  
14 hunting, trapping, and I'd like to know what the impacts  
15 will be because it's our way of life. That's part of our  
16 subsistence way of life.  
17           **MR. KEITH GORDON:** All right. One of the  
18 things to point out is Donlin is proposing Alternative 2,  
19 their proposed action. So they have done studies for 15  
20 to 20 years on potential effects and done baseline data  
21 collection in relation to what they are proposing.  
22       As far as the alternatives, these alternatives are  
23 things the rest of us involved in the process have come up  
24 with. So no, we don't have necessarily a specific study  
25 that addresses specifically that in relation to

Page 35

1 Alternative 4. There is information in the document about  
2 potential impacts to the Ohwat. There is baseline  
3 information on birds, et cetera.  
4       But yeah, we will take your comments and look back at  
5 the document and see what it contains and if we need to do  
6 more. And if you have anything further between now and  
7 April 30, please let us know.  
8           **FR. MICHAEL FREDERICKS:** My main concern  
9 is with barge traffic. And it's kind of when you said,  
10 what was it, 170 percent increase in barge traffic, three  
11 times the amount, I believe. Is that correct? That just  
12 kind of blows my mind, especially knowing that they have  
13 bigger engines, bigger props, and the props going through  
14 the water, how much damage that will do to the river. So  
15 this concerns me.  
16       So I'm just kind of wondering -- I don't like the  
17 effects of that. I just don't like the effects of that  
18 happening on the river. I don't know if everybody shares  
19 that same concern.  
20           **MR. JOHN BOROWSKI:** John Borowski. And  
21 the barge picture was in the magazine that showed the  
22 barge belonging to that mining company. And a couple  
23 years ago when they passed my place, they got the barge  
24 stuck on the other side of the river. And then the other  
25 barge, instead of pushing it into deep water, they pushed

Page 36

1 it just above my place in the shallow ground. When they  
2 pulled that one out, they dug a big hole in there and tore  
3 up the whole beach, and then the river just gouged the  
4 whole thing going past my place. And every summer I've  
5 got to move my boats up and down the beach. And they are  
6 going to rip it up some more.  
7       That's my comment. Thank you.  
8           **MR. WILLIAM HUNTER:** William Hunter from  
9 Chuathbaluk. My mother and my grandfather were originally  
10 from Chuathbaluk. And that's where my wife is from and  
11 her family. We have been putting away fish all our lives.  
12 That's my concern, the impact on the fish. They were  
13 showing us pictures about the mine and the lining that  
14 they were supposed to catch the chemicals so they don't  
15 interfere with our fish or poison our fish. I'm concerned  
16 about that because they are -- everybody from Alaska knows  
17 if we put water into a big container, water expands and it  
18 breaks. It breaks anything. And I'm concerned about the  
19 dam, what would happen to the dam if it starts cracking  
20 and spilling chemicals into our water system. It could  
21 affect our fish.  
22           **UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER:** You want to  
23 comment on that?  
24           **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Well, if you would like  
25 a direct response, please let me know. Your comment is

Page 37

1 extremely important. The effects analyses is a process by  
2 which engineers determine how a structure, a dam  
3 structure, might fail, if it were to fail, and give some  
4 characterization for probabilities. There is that initial  
5 analyses in the document, and then failure modes effects  
6 analyses will be done again when the State is reviewing  
7 the dams to determine if the project should be permitted  
8 and, if it is permitted, how. So we have some of that  
9 analyses in the document. We will do more.  
10       But yes, we fully understand your concerns. We feel  
11 we fully understand your concerns, but we will look back  
12 at what we have done and see if there is anything that you  
13 all or anybody else expresses and indicates we need to do  
14 more.  
15           **MR. DAVE CANNON:** My name is Dave Cannon,  
16 and I'm with the Kuskokwim River Watershed Council. And I  
17 hope it's okay. There was a person that couldn't attend  
18 tonight. They wanted me to pass on a couple of concerns,  
19 questions. And this was Roxanne Evan. One of them was  
20 that she felt there may be the need during very low water  
21 years to get the barges all the way up to maybe dredge the  
22 river, and if that was going to be the case, how would  
23 that be handled in the analysis.  
24       And maybe tied in with that same thing is her concern  
25 for climate change and how that's going to affect

Page 38

1 permafrost particularly and the pipeline.  
 2 And her other concern was the horizontal drilling  
 3 under the Kuskokwim and maybe some fluids somehow getting  
 4 into the river. Okay?  
 5 Now, I've got a few things I'd like to ask. And one  
 6 would be -- and it's very similar to Willie's question  
 7 here. Does the analysis look at worst case scenarios for,  
 8 say, tailings dam failure in light of these large scale  
 9 catastrophic failures, one in British Columbia not too  
 10 long ago and one in South America? And so my feeling is  
 11 that it would be a disservice to the people here in the  
 12 drainage if we don't look at the worst case scenarios and  
 13 understand what the tradeoffs are because of the  
 14 subsistence salmon, how important they are to the people  
 15 here.  
 16 And another worst case scenario I'd like to see  
 17 addressed is in the pit lake if there is any failures with  
 18 the water treatment plants down the road.  
 19 And I guess my concern might be the size of the  
 20 document and if people will or will not have enough time  
 21 to comment by April 30th. We, as the watershed council,  
 22 asked a month ago for a copy, a hard copy as well as the  
 23 executive summary, and it just showed up yesterday. And  
 24 if I had to do it over, I would have brought it tonight to  
 25 show people. You might have to come by the watershed

Page 39

1 council office and just look at it. It stands that high  
 2 [indicating], literally. It's impressive alone to look at  
 3 it.  
 4 I don't know how many people have had a chance to  
 5 actually get on the website and start looking into, you  
 6 know, some of the things that we saw on the wall. I have  
 7 a question: Is it possible to put these posters on the  
 8 website?  
 9 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Yes. They expect --  
 10 while we think there may be some minor changes to these  
 11 posters after the two meetings this week, they will be on  
 12 the website next week for people to look at and review and  
 13 comment on further.  
 14 **MR. DAVE CANNON:** One other thing I  
 15 thought about as far as tonight and for further  
 16 preparation, I had an email from several people today  
 17 asking if they would be able to access this meeting  
 18 through the phone line. And I did not know. And it was  
 19 only till I found out yesterday what the phone number was.  
 20 So I think maybe for the future meetings you want to get  
 21 that information out somewhere.  
 22 And I know on the website it says if you have  
 23 questions to contact you, Keith. And I know how busy you  
 24 are. Is that realistic to expect a response from you if  
 25 hundreds of people were to send a question?

Page 40

1 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** If your question is  
 2 something that relates to the normal process in the EIS,  
 3 your question would be addressed likely after April 30th  
 4 as we go through the comments that we receive on the EIS.  
 5 There are some questions that are coming in that people  
 6 need an answer to so they can continue to analyze the  
 7 document or make another comment.  
 8 So we are looking at the comments coming in and  
 9 responding back to those immediately if it's something  
 10 that someone requires information so that they can keep  
 11 going through the process. For those that are just the  
 12 normal comment that we would typically address after we  
 13 receive all the comments, yeah, responses to those won't  
 14 occur until after April 30. And virtually all those  
 15 responses will actually occur and be seen in the Final  
 16 Environmental Impact Statement when it goes out versus  
 17 sending a specific letter back to someone, a specific  
 18 email or making a specific phone call.  
 19 **MR. NICHOLAS KAMEROFF:** Nicholas Kameroff,  
 20 Aniak resident here. I have a bunch of them in here. I  
 21 just wrote them. That's what I've got here. But  
 22 restrictions on subsistence, I just had a question. I got  
 23 an answer earlier when I went in the back and found out  
 24 which communities were affected. But like what was  
 25 brought up is on subsistence resources -- the moose, the

Page 41

1 fish, the birds, the wild game -- what the impacts would  
 2 be on those because it's a -- what we use for our  
 3 livelihood. And also will the barge traffic affect our  
 4 fishing activities. So much increase in there, 179  
 5 percent increase.  
 6 I live right near where a lot of that traffic is  
 7 going to be -- or I fish where that traffic is going to  
 8 be. That's going to be a huge concern. And then one  
 9 thing that I spaced out and Morgan Adkins brought up to  
 10 refresh my memory on this is a tractor sunk out here in  
 11 the river, which would be a navigational hazard for even a  
 12 double hull barge. And I believe that double hulls should  
 13 be in effect for all the site's fuel hauling, maybe cargo  
 14 haulers.  
 15 I recommend that all traffic stop at Birch Tree  
 16 because we have like the hazards here. And then there is  
 17 another one -- there is a few more on the river. When the  
 18 water is really low, it's hard to get barges past  
 19 Napaimute and up by Oskawalik. Just below that part that  
 20 you guys were talking about the river gets wide, it's a  
 21 narrow channel and flatbed rock area, especially near  
 22 Oskawalik just below that proposed site.  
 23 And this is written in here. Is there going to be  
 24 training facilities? Will there be training or training  
 25 opportunities for people who will be working at the mine

Page 42

1 or tied in with the mine, barge traffic, truckers,  
 2 et cetera?  
 3 And that's it there. I'll give you this for the  
 4 record.  
 5 **MR. RAY PETERSON:** Good evening. My name  
 6 is Ray Peterson. You all know my name. Well, my concern  
 7 is subsistence way of living. And I think that research  
 8 from coastal villages all the way up to Stony --  
 9 Taylor Brelsford knows what I mean. So all these things,  
 10 subsistence way of living is very, very important to our  
 11 people, us, even our new ones, too.  
 12 And then I'll tell you one thing about barge traffic.  
 13 And I used to work on a boat. And every summer it's  
 14 getting worse and worse going from Birch Tree all the way  
 15 up past Nick's place up by [indiscernible] cannery. Those  
 16 are -- I don't know how your big barges will go through  
 17 those. They got to have at least a minimum four-foot  
 18 draft. If you get any more, you will turn around and  
 19 block the channel. And that's not very good, you know,  
 20 being an old river man.  
 21 And then I'll tell you another thing. It is very,  
 22 very important that you get somebody that knows the river.  
 23 You have to know how to navigate the river because from up  
 24 there you have to know which way it goes. And that little  
 25 doohickey up there don't know. That's very true because,

Page 43

1 you know, they had a barge stuck across the river for  
 2 three days.  
 3 When my dad was alive, he told me, son, go get that  
 4 guy to bring that barge over. I did, and about 15 minutes  
 5 I was on this side. And that guy was sitting there. And  
 6 he want to know, do you want me to pilot for you? I go,  
 7 no way, I said. I'm here from my State job to help my mom  
 8 and dad do their subsistence. So that was it.  
 9 Then we took a ride upriver, and the same kind of  
 10 barge was stuck by the mine the same way. Those are very  
 11 narrow channels.  
 12 And I'd like to -- all my friends here know my main  
 13 thing is subsistence way of fishing. We all know what to  
 14 do out there, up there and everywhere. But the fish is  
 15 getting less and less. And that's very true. And I'd  
 16 like to see -- well, I don't know. It's maybe you have to  
 17 go [indiscernible] up that way. But I don't think you  
 18 will be able to haul a lot of fuel up and down this part.  
 19 Okay. Thank you very much.  
 20 **MR. JON ISAACS:** Is there anybody else who  
 21 hasn't got a number who would like to say something, a  
 22 comment for the record?  
 23 **MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL:** Is this all the  
 24 subsistence issue, or can we bring up something else?  
 25 Anything we want?

Page 44

1 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** You can comment on  
 2 anything. After you have commented, we will give the  
 3 folks on the phone a chance, and then we will come back to  
 4 the room for anything else. But just because you don't  
 5 have another number, you can comment. So go right ahead.  
 6 **MS. GAIL VANDERPOOL:** I want to talk about  
 7 the pipeline. Before, originally, it was supposed to be  
 8 buried, but after talking to this gentleman -- or it was  
 9 going to be above the ground, but now he's telling me it's  
 10 going to be buried because it has to be kept cool. How  
 11 are we going to keep that pipeline cool with all the  
 12 permafrost and the change of weather and the global  
 13 warming? That's a great concern. And how are you going  
 14 to regulate or make sure it's always copacetic underneath  
 15 there? How are you going to know?  
 16 That's my comment.  
 17 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** All right. Why don't  
 18 we take a break in the room -- we have got one more  
 19 comment in the room, and then we will go to the phones.  
 20 **MR. RICKY CILETTI:** Ricky Ciletti. I just  
 21 got some stuff on the impact of subsistence, especially  
 22 for salmon fishing. I hear that's kind of a big topic the  
 23 last few years, especially with the king runs that are  
 24 diminishing, and now we're having more impact on other  
 25 salmon because we are shifting towards them because the

Page 45

1 people aren't able to get the kings.  
 2 With the barge traffic you guys showed earlier,  
 3 that's going to have a pretty significant impact, like the  
 4 man was saying earlier, on subsistence activities. And  
 5 I've heard that they have also talked about proposals of  
 6 doing most of the barging at night so people won't be  
 7 seeing all the activity on the river. Actually, salmon,  
 8 when they are migrating up the river -- I used to work  
 9 with Fish & Game as one of their techs on the weir. The  
 10 salmon actually run up the river during the middle of the  
 11 night. That's when they are most active moving through.  
 12 So that -- you know, all that extra traffic at night is  
 13 also going to probably affect them, as well.  
 14 And you know, the salmon's natural response to any  
 15 type of threat, noise or whatever, if anybody here has  
 16 ever seen that, walked up on them, they just go downriver.  
 17 So we are naturally going to be causing more  
 18 [indiscernible]. Their natural defense is to go back  
 19 down.  
 20 So that's kind of the things that [indiscernible]  
 21 miles and miles away. I don't know if any of that stuff  
 22 has been looked into. Because, honestly, that's pretty  
 23 important. It's a pretty hot topic, especially from here,  
 24 Bethel. You know, even further upriver that's a pretty  
 25 hot topic.

Page 46

1 Another thing is the socioeconomics. I notice you  
 2 guys have stuff that was up here on the board, but nothing  
 3 was even thought about the possible impact of a borough  
 4 formation for the region because, you know, that's -- like  
 5 you said earlier, most of this stuff is the good impacts  
 6 that will happen. But a borough could have good impacts,  
 7 but then it could also have its negative impacts.  
 8 And I don't see any information on that. And I think  
 9 that's something that should be looked into a little more,  
 10 as well.  
 11 Those are my comments. Thank you very much.  
 12 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Okay. Why don't we  
 13 check to see if anybody on the phone has any comments they  
 14 would like to make, and then we will come back into the  
 15 room.  
 16 **MS. DELICE CALCOTE:** Yes, I would like to  
 17 make a comment. My name is Delice Calcote, and I'm the  
 18 Executive Director of the Alaska Intertribal Council. And  
 19 I do have a question about the hearing. Are they going to  
 20 be available by telephone or on-line streaming for our  
 21 tribal peoples and Alaskans that are directly impacted  
 22 along the entire mine transport and energy footprint? Me  
 23 and my coworkers, we can't make all the village meetings.  
 24 We are going to try to, you know, get people there and  
 25 encourage them to stand up. I really appreciate hearing

Page 47

1 all the voices there.  
 2 And we are very worried. We are concerned about  
 3 their life ways. You know, I think that our message to  
 4 Governor Walker is, you know, it's fish first. It's our  
 5 subsistence way of life first. The Public Trust Doctrine,  
 6 the Clean Water Act, you know, it's a public trust  
 7 document. It's also known as the Tribal Trust Doctrine.  
 8 These water rights go all the way back to the year 1672,  
 9 the Justinian laws. My water laws that I have been  
 10 studying, you know, this is a federal responsibility,  
 11 duty, obligation, as well as our tribal governments.  
 12 And we are very concerned about the lack of fishing  
 13 under the Clean Water Act. The waters have to be kept  
 14 fishable, swimmable and navigable. But most important,  
 15 you know, where is our drinking water coming from? How is  
 16 this going to be impacting our lives, our children's  
 17 lives? We don't need another bad water treatment system  
 18 like the folks are dealing with down in the Lower 48.  
 19 Anyway, my request is AITC would like to receive all  
 20 the records of the testimony for every single meeting  
 21 starting with this one here in Aniak today. And our  
 22 second request is that we also would like the entire  
 23 Donlin Gold EIS translated into Yup'ik and Dena'ina for  
 24 our limited English speakers and [indiscernible] members  
 25 in this proposed project area. Our people need to be able

Page 48

1 to understand how these impacts are going to affect them.  
 2 Are there studies that can be explained to our Elders  
 3 so that they understand what this is going to do? I think  
 4 that already they are already feeling there is less fish,  
 5 climate change affecting our animals, our way of life.  
 6 And, you know, we could see it in the news. Down  
 7 there in California, there are natural gas wells that  
 8 doesn't have any turn-off valves, shut-off valves, no  
 9 blow-out preventers. We don't want to see that kind of an  
 10 accident happening.  
 11 This is a very high earthquake and volcano area. We  
 12 have more volcanos in our state than any other state. We  
 13 don't need to be shaking the ground and dealing with  
 14 unintended consequences.  
 15 You know, the LNG plant, you know, there are so many  
 16 questions about LNG plants, dams. Show me one dam that --  
 17 we don't need any dams eroding our fishing. We have  
 18 already been impacted, our fishing areas, our tribal  
 19 communities on the coast and up our rivers.  
 20 And the socioeconomic studies, those should be  
 21 valued. Who is valuing our subsistence economy? What  
 22 kind of money value has been put on, you know, us  
 23 providing thousands of years, ice ages, from some of the  
 24 Elders' stories -- what kind of money value do you put on  
 25 that, Federal Reserve value, compared to like Shell

Page 49

1 shelling out millions?  
 2 Well, our lives matter. Our community survival  
 3 matters. Being able to take care of themselves and their  
 4 future and their children's future matters. And I thank  
 5 everybody who is [indiscernible], and I thank you also for  
 6 all those that are trying to do job because 7,000 pages,  
 7 really? Oh, my goodness.  
 8 Thank you for this time and thank you for the  
 9 opportunity to have a comment. And thank you for the  
 10 opportunity to request.  
 11 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Can you repeat your  
 12 name for Mary?  
 13 **MS. DELICE CALCOTE:** Yes. My name is  
 14 Delice Calcote. D-E-L-I-C-E. Calcote is C-A-L-C-O-T-E.  
 15 [indiscernible] Tribes created this entity. It's their  
 16 entity.  
 17 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Thank you very much.  
 18 Before we go back to the phone, I want to see if Taylor  
 19 can very briefly talk about the oral translation that's  
 20 going to be done that will be hopefully going on in some  
 21 podcasts in the very near future.  
 22 **MR. TAYLOR BRELSFORD:** Good evening,  
 23 Delice. This is Taylor Brelsford. We met at the tribal  
 24 providers' conference a few weeks ago. And you had two  
 25 points about translation and effective opportunity for

Page 50

1 people in the communities. First I'd like to mention that  
 2 we will have simultaneous translation in nine of the  
 3 Native communities. John Active, Yup'ik language  
 4 newscaster from KYUK, will join us for the meetings in the  
 5 Lower Kuskokwim River, the Bering Sea coast, and the Lower  
 6 Yukon River.  
 7 Then a second initiative -- and this again relies on  
 8 John Active. He will be preparing a Yup'ik language  
 9 introduction to the draft EIS. We will be doing that at  
 10 KYUK studios next week that will be broadcast as a podcast  
 11 in about five ten-minute segments over the next several  
 12 weeks and then available on the website and available in  
 13 CDs that we will take to the Yup'ik language communities  
 14 as the meetings unfold. Thank you.  
 15 **MS. CELICE CALCOTE:** Thank you. I'm just  
 16 bringing up points that were brought up to me to cover.  
 17 Thank you so much.  
 18 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** That's exactly what we  
 19 are here to listen for. So thank you very much. Is there  
 20 anybody else on the phone that has a comment they would  
 21 like to make?  
 22 Okay. Is there anybody in the room who would like  
 23 to --  
 24 **MR. DAVE CANNON:** This isn't a comment,  
 25 actually. And I invite, once again, for anybody, if you

Page 51

1 want to come to the watershed council office and look  
 2 through the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we have  
 3 it there. Our office is right next to the city office  
 4 building where the VPSO housing was. So please come by.  
 5 We are open from probably 9:00 to 4:00 every day. And  
 6 look through it. Okay.  
 7 **MR. MARK MATTER:** I want to bring up about  
 8 the wetlands mitigation and some things I've heard  
 9 recently from NYAC Gold. This would be a positive aspect  
 10 for subsistence if they chose, too. They wanted to sell  
 11 their assets at NYAC to Calista and make a wetlands bank  
 12 there to offset for the wetlands mitigation at Donlin  
 13 Creek.  
 14 I don't know if anybody has heard about it or not,  
 15 but either they are going to have to pay for the wetlands  
 16 mitigation and whatnot, whether it's a wetlands bank or  
 17 whether they can offset it by putting -- or using these  
 18 banks as wetlands banks for offsets. So I don't know if  
 19 anybody knows much about it, but it's something that NYAC  
 20 brought forward to Calista, and Calista would be the one  
 21 to buy it. But it would put that land into perpetual  
 22 protection for subsistence, basically; no more mining over  
 23 there, no more development. That's one positive aspect  
 24 that could come out of Donlin at this point, a positive  
 25 aspect. So something that needs to be explored in this

Page 52

1 EIS, as well.  
 2 That's all.  
 3 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Thank you. You are  
 4 right. By way of mitigation of the proposed project,  
 5 there is a couple of things people can do in relation to  
 6 wetlands impacts, and one of those options is  
 7 proponent-sponsored mitigation. In other words, someone  
 8 comes to us and says, we'd like to build this project and  
 9 improve this project and in some way offset impacts to  
 10 wetlands by proposing a project and taking it through the  
 11 process.  
 12 Another way of offsetting impacts is the mitigation  
 13 banks you are referring to where someone goes out and  
 14 says, okay, this area is going to be protected from  
 15 impacts, and it will be protected for some period of time.  
 16 And they are using the prevention effectively of impacts  
 17 to an area to offset impacts in another area from  
 18 something that is done.  
 19 Another way to do it that I won't try to explain here  
 20 is the in-lieu fee. The in-lieu fee is another instrument  
 21 in which someone will effectively limit impacts in a given  
 22 area and offset impacts in another area. Banking and  
 23 in-lieu fee can get reasonably complicated pretty quickly.  
 24 They are options for doing things.  
 25 We are analyzing banking proposals and in-lieu fee

Page 53

1 proposals throughout the state for not only this project,  
 2 but other projects. But it is something we are analyzing,  
 3 and we will look further at what we have done. But in  
 4 relation to banks and in-lieu fees, we are dependent on  
 5 someone coming to us and proposing that those things  
 6 happen and completing the information we need before we  
 7 can determine if we can approve a bank or if we can  
 8 approve an in-lieu fee.  
 9 Is there anybody else that would like to comment?  
 10 **MR. ALLEN SIMEON:** My name is Allen  
 11 Simeon, Aniak tribe member. I have three questions. One  
 12 is your 40-million gallons of diesel storage at Donlin  
 13 Creek. Now, you are Corps of Engineers or you are federal  
 14 government. That being Native land, I was wondering who  
 15 is going to supervise the containment for that amount of  
 16 fuel.  
 17 Taylor tells me that Donlin Gold is proposing a 110  
 18 capacity containment for your guys' tank. That doesn't  
 19 say anything about the risk of the other tanks that are  
 20 there for storage. And within the state law, you are not  
 21 required to have the total containment for all of the fuel  
 22 that's left on hand. And that being the watershed area  
 23 for Crooked Creek and the Kuskokwim area, you guys got to  
 24 consider 100 percent of all that diesel all the time to  
 25 keep it there instead of running down the Crooked Creek or

Page 54

1 into the Kuskokwim River.  
 2 And over 80 percent of all these major spills in the  
 3 sea in North America is human error. You can have all of  
 4 your safety engineers and all of these things, but they  
 5 don't do any good when a human makes a mistake. And this  
 6 is going to be around for 27 and a half years, so there's  
 7 a lot of fuel to be easily something happen to it and run  
 8 down into the watershed.  
 9 Another one I have is, your containment for all of  
 10 your tailings piles, your water storage area and all, all  
 11 I see in your paper is one major design to keep it in  
 12 place. No one knows what's going to happen in the next 30  
 13 years. Maybe it will rain in April and don't stop until  
 14 November. What you going to do with all that water that's  
 15 in there? Something has to hold it there in place. If  
 16 that water goes down into the Crooked Creek/Kuskokwim  
 17 area, every living organism, including bacteria, are dead.  
 18 They do not exist anymore. For how long, no one knows.  
 19 But that is what can happen. Very major concern.  
 20 And the other one I see is that you guys are talking  
 21 about building a road, whether from Birch Crossing or from  
 22 up here to Crooked Creek. That's a lot of material you  
 23 are talking about and a lot of material at the mine site.  
 24 Where is the material going to come from, and how is it  
 25 going to be brought there?

Page 55

1 Thank you.  
 2 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Thank you very much.  
 3 Is there anybody else in the room who would like to  
 4 comment?  
 5 **MS. CHERYL ALOYSIUS:** My name is Cheryl  
 6 Aloysius. I live here in Aniak. My question is about  
 7 storage containers that the mercury and cyanide are going  
 8 to be contained in. Are they tested under extreme Arctic  
 9 conditions, like 40-below weather? Are they tested to  
 10 where they will withstand the weather here? And also the  
 11 liner.  
 12 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** Okay. Yes, we can look  
 13 into that and determine what the specifications are for  
 14 both liners and isotainers, as well as the pigs the  
 15 mercury will be contained in and the flasks.  
 16 Does anybody else have a comment they would like to  
 17 make before we go to the subsistence hearing?  
 18 **MR. OSCAR SAMUELSON:** Oscar Samuelson from  
 19 Kalskag. That dam you are going to build, I'm wondering  
 20 if there is any way that you could build two or three of  
 21 them down below so nothing gets through in case the first  
 22 one fails.  
 23 **MR. KEITH GORDON:** What is currently  
 24 proposed is the single tailings dam, but through the  
 25 failure modes effects analyses, they will do another

Page 56

1 analysis of what's proposed when we get farther downstream  
 2 in the project. But as I said, we are talking about a  
 3 proposed project. We are talking about draft analyses and  
 4 draft conclusions. So decisions have not been made as yet  
 5 that this project would be permitted as proposed. But  
 6 yes, we will take the comment and consider if more  
 7 analysis needs to be done.  
 8 If we don't have any other comments for the comments  
 9 session, we'll move into BLM's 810 hearing. And again,  
 10 they are specifically looking for impacts -- your comments  
 11 or testimony in relation to potential impacts to  
 12 subsistence.  
 13 So Mary, if you want to close one file, and we will  
 14 just go to the next one.  
 15 (Proceedings adjourned at 8:19 p.m.)  
 16  
 17  
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Page 57

1 **REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE**

2 I, **MARY A. VAVRIK, RMR,** Notary Public in and for  
 3 the State of Alaska do hereby certify:  
 4 That the foregoing proceedings were taken before  
 5 me at the time and place herein set forth; that the  
 6 proceedings were reported stenographically by me and later  
 7 transcribed under my direction by computer transcription;  
 8 that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings  
 9 taken at that time; and that I am not a party to nor have  
 10 I any interest in the outcome of the action herein  
 11 contained.  
 12 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed  
 13 my hand and affixed my seal this \_\_\_\_ day of  
 14 \_\_\_\_\_ 2016.  
 15  
 16  
 17 **MARY A. VAVRIK,**  
 18 Registered Merit Reporter  
 19 Notary Public for Alaska  
 20  
 21 My Commission Expires: November 5, 2016  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

[	Administration (1) 8:21	46:22	appeared (1) 13:11	B
[indicating] (1) 39:2 [indiscernible] (7) 42:15;43:17;45:18, 20;47:24;49:5,15	advantage (1) 17:23 AECOM (6) 5:13;26:5;29:2,15, 20,24 affairs (1) 30:20 affect (6) 33:1;36:21;37:25; 41:3;45:13;48:1	ALOYSIUS (2) 55:5,6 alternate (1) 34:9 alternative (51) 16:1,11,12,17,21; 17:1,1,3,13,13,17,18, 23,23,24;18:13,17,22, 23,23;19:8,9,14,18,18, 19,23;22:14,16,18,19, 21,24,24,25;23:1,11, 20,21,25;24:8,9,10,16; 26:22;27:2,5,9;34:2, 18;35:1	appendix (1) 25:19 application (1) 30:18 appreciate (3) 4:2;7:25;46:25 appropriate (1) 15:15 approve (2) 53:7,8 approximately (7) 4:17;6:13;9:20;12:7; 21:7,18,23	back (21) 7:13;13:6;25:19; 28:8,23;30:3;31:18; 32:18;34:3,13,13;35:4; 37:11;40:9,17,23;44:3; 45:18;46:14;47:8; 49:18
A	affected (1) 40:24 affecting (2) 7:11;48:5	alternatives (16) 8:15;11:17;15:23,24; 17:6;20:24;22:10,11; 23:25;25:12,14,17,20, 21;34:22,22	April (9) 4:21;14:2;25:23; 28:5;35:7;38:21;40:3, 14;54:13	background (1) 28:19
able (5) 39:17;43:18;45:1; 47:25;49:3 above (4) 23:2,22;36:1;44:9 access (2) 34:6;39:17 accident (1) 48:10 accurate (1) 33:25 across (2) 30:18;43:1 Act (6) 5:11;7:6;13:14; 15:25;47:6,13 action (4) 17:15;22:14,14; 34:19 active (3) 45:11;50:3,8 activities (3) 25:1;41:4;45:4 activity (1) 45:7 actually (8) 6:14;12:10,11;39:5; 40:15;45:7,10;50:25 add (1) 22:2 added (1) 18:3 addition (1) 7:4 additional (8) 8:14,15,16;13:24; 14:8;22:15;28:15,18 address (3) 26:25;32:4;40:12 addressed (2) 38:17;40:3 addresses (1) 34:25 adequate (1) 16:9 adequately (6) 8:13;22:8;25:6; 26:23,25;33:24 adjourned (1) 56:15 Adkins (1) 41:9	again (14) 23:20,21;24:22;25:5, 25;27:3,6,24;29:6; 30:6;37:6;50:7,25;56:9 agencies (1) 14:11 agency (2) 5:2;30:13 agenda (1) 5:24 ages (1) 48:23 ago (5) 17:18;35:23;38:10, 22;49:24 agree (2) 9:4,5 ahead (4) 4:8;29:1;31:25;44:5 air (4) 24:10,17,19;29:17 airstrip (1) 10:24 AITC (1) 47:19 Alan (6) 6:23;7:1,1;8:1;30:6,6 Alaska (8) 4:6;7:5;11:14;15:4; 28:21;30:14;36:16; 46:18 Alaskans (1) 46:21 aligned (1) 17:5 alive (1) 43:3 ALLEN (2) 53:10,10 allows (1) 26:11 almost (1) 22:3 alone (1) 39:2 along (5) 11:1,21;13:18;26:6;	always (1) 44:14 Amanda (1) 28:21 America (2) 38:10;54:3 amount (5) 5:14;22:12;23:4; 35:11;53:15 analyses (27) 5:4;6:6;8:3,7;14:21, 22;15:11,17,20;16:9; 17:10;19:16,21;20:8; 21:6;22:25;23:15,18; 25:16;26:22;27:4;37:1, 5,6,9;55:25;56:3 analysis (14) 5:14;7:4,12,20,23; 8:17;17:12;24:25; 25:18;30:10;37:23; 38:7;56:1,7 analyze (2) 15:9;40:6 analyzed (2) 20:14;25:6 analyzing (3) 5:15;52:25;53:2 Anchorage (8) 7:2;13:20;29:3,15; 30:7,14,21,23 and/or (2) 13:13;28:2 Andraschko (1) 28:21 Aniak (6) 13:18;30:2;40:20; 47:21;53:11;55:6 ANILCA (3) 7:6;27:24;28:2 animals (2) 32:21;48:5 anymore (1) 54:18	Arctic (1) 55:8 area (19) 13:7;20:2,4;33:2,17, 18,19;41:21;47:25; 48:11;52:14,17,17,22, 22;53:22,23;54:10,17 areas (4) 6:10;20:11,13;48:18 Army (6) 4:6,25;8:19;9:3,6; 14:18 around (5) 6:7,9;33:15;42:18; 54:6 aside (1) 6:18 aspect (3) 51:9,23,25 assets (1) 51:11 assist (1) 5:12 assisted (1) 5:13 attached (1) 15:5 attachments (1) 14:5 attend (1) 37:17 available (6) 24:7;26:8;27:20; 46:20;50:12,12 avenue (1) 16:4 average (1) 21:19 aware (8) 4:16;5:17,20;8:25; 9:17;15:22;23:24; 33:23 away (3) 10:21;36:11;45:21	bacteria (1) 54:17 bad (1) 47:17 balance (2) 18:8;19:17 bank (3) 51:11,16;53:7 Banking (2) 52:22,25 banks (4) 51:18,18;52:13;53:4 barge (31) 10:21;18:1,10;20:9, 12,12,17,18,20,21,24; 21:1,11,17;22:6,12; 23:4;35:9,10,21,22,23, 25;41:3,12;42:1,12; 43:1,4,10;45:2 barges (9) 18:9;21:21,24;22:3, 5;23:2;37:21;41:18; 42:16 barging (16) 17:20,24;18:14;21:4, 5,7,9;22:15,17,21,22; 23:22;24:11,12;29:21; 45:6 Barrick (1) 5:21 based (6) 13:10;21:4,5;25:2; 30:13,23 baseline (7) 8:4,13;17:9,10; 30:24;34:20;35:2 basic (2) 14:19;25:9 Basically (6) 10:3;14:17;18:25; 21:25;23:8;51:22 beach (2) 36:3,5 bears (2) 32:21;33:18 beg (2) 32:19,24 behind (2) 10:5;34:3 belonging (1) 35:22

<p><b>below (3)</b> 41:19,22;55:21</p> <p><b>beneficial (1)</b> 28:4</p> <p><b>benefit (5)</b> 15:7,13,15,16;17:13</p> <p><b>Bering (1)</b> 50:5</p> <p><b>best (1)</b> 21:13</p> <p><b>Bethel (2)</b> 21:15;45:24</p> <p><b>better (3)</b> 16:5,7;32:7</p> <p><b>big (5)</b> 33:4;36:2,17;42:16; 44:22</p> <p><b>bigger (3)</b> 22:6;35:13,13</p> <p><b>biological (1)</b> 29:20</p> <p><b>Birch (13)</b> 16:21,24;18:11,14, 19,21;23:1,2,23;24:17; 41:15;42:14;54:21</p> <p><b>bird (2)</b> 34:5,13</p> <p><b>birds (3)</b> 33:1;35:3;41:1</p> <p><b>bit (7)</b> 4:4,22;6:8,24;11:17; 14:14;20:15</p> <p><b>Bittner (5)</b> 6:23;7:1,2;30:6,7</p> <p><b>black (1)</b> 11:22</p> <p><b>BLM (5)</b> 7:2,12,18;9:4;32:11</p> <p><b>BLM-managed (1)</b> 7:11</p> <p><b>BLM's (1)</b> 56:9</p> <p><b>blob (1)</b> 10:17</p> <p><b>block (1)</b> 42:19</p> <p><b>blow-out (1)</b> 48:9</p> <p><b>blows (1)</b> 35:12</p> <p><b>blue (1)</b> 22:18</p> <p><b>board (1)</b> 46:2</p> <p><b>boat (1)</b> 42:13</p> <p><b>boats (1)</b> 36:5</p> <p><b>bore (1)</b> 12:3</p> <p><b>borough (2)</b> 46:3,6</p> <p><b>BOROWSKI (2)</b></p>	<p>35:20,20</p> <p><b>both (4)</b> 5:21;9:12;33:8; 55:14</p> <p><b>bottom (2)</b> 5:10;20:18</p> <p><b>bounce (1)</b> 15:23</p> <p><b>boxes (1)</b> 11:1</p> <p><b>break (1)</b> 44:18</p> <p><b>breaks (2)</b> 36:18,18</p> <p><b>BRELSFORD (5)</b> 29:5,7;42:9;49:22,23</p> <p><b>brief (3)</b> 4:10;6:24;9:14</p> <p><b>briefly (5)</b> 5:24;10:11;13:9; 22:17;49:19</p> <p><b>bring (3)</b> 43:4,24;51:7</p> <p><b>bringing (1)</b> 50:16</p> <p><b>British (1)</b> 38:9</p> <p><b>broadcast (1)</b> 50:10</p> <p><b>broken (1)</b> 10:12</p> <p><b>brought (6)</b> 38:24;40:25;41:9; 50:16;51:20;54:25</p> <p><b>BRUCE (2)</b> 30:9,9</p> <p><b>build (3)</b> 52:8;55:19,20</p> <p><b>building (2)</b> 51:4;54:21</p> <p><b>bunch (1)</b> 40:20</p> <p><b>Bureau (4)</b> 6:22,23;8:19;30:8</p> <p><b>buried (3)</b> 11:13;44:8,10</p> <p><b>burned (1)</b> 16:16</p> <p><b>busy (1)</b> 39:23</p> <p><b>buy (1)</b> 51:21</p>	<p>15:8,12;51:11,20,20</p> <p><b>call (2)</b> 12:1;40:18</p> <p><b>came (2)</b> 13:17,18</p> <p><b>camp (1)</b> 11:3</p> <p><b>can (47)</b> 4:11;5:10;6:2,6,14, 16;10:4,17,24;11:19; 14:21;15:21;16:7; 18:17;20:23;21:6,13; 26:10,24;27:14,14,21; 28:6,7,12,23;31:7,18; 32:3,21;40:6,10;43:24; 44:1,5;48:2;49:11,19; 51:17;52:5,23;53:7,7, 7;54:3,19;55:12</p> <p><b>cannery (1)</b> 42:15</p> <p><b>CANNON (4)</b> 37:15,15;39:14; 50:24</p> <p><b>capacity (1)</b> 53:18</p> <p><b>capture (1)</b> 28:9</p> <p><b>capturing (1)</b> 31:7</p> <p><b>care (1)</b> 49:3</p> <p><b>cargo (2)</b> 10:22;41:13</p> <p><b>caribou (1)</b> 33:17</p> <p><b>carried (3)</b> 19:21;25:15,18</p> <p><b>carry (2)</b> 9:10;32:19</p> <p><b>case (7)</b> 9:22;20:12;37:22; 38:7,12,16;55:21</p> <p><b>catastrophic (1)</b> 38:9</p> <p><b>catch (1)</b> 36:14</p> <p><b>Cathe (2)</b> 30:16,16</p> <p><b>causing (1)</b> 45:17</p> <p><b>CDs (1)</b> 50:13</p> <p><b>ceases (2)</b> 12:11,11</p> <p><b>CECIL (2)</b> 29:11,11</p> <p><b>CELICE (1)</b> 50:15</p> <p><b>center (1)</b> 10:17</p> <p><b>certain (1)</b> 7:17</p> <p><b>cetera (5)</b></p>	<p>11:4;18:11;27:13; 35:3;42:2</p> <p><b>chance (2)</b> 39:4;44:3</p> <p><b>change (13)</b> 15:2;18:5,6,7;19:16, 17;22:17;23:6;24:22, 22;37:25;44:12;48:5</p> <p><b>changes (2)</b> 18:7;39:10</p> <p><b>channel (2)</b> 41:21;42:19</p> <p><b>channels (1)</b> 43:11</p> <p><b>Chapter (5)</b> 14:16;15:3;24:24; 25:9,13</p> <p><b>characterization (2)</b> 20:16;37:4</p> <p><b>characterize (1)</b> 26:23</p> <p><b>characterized (2)</b> 22:8;33:24</p> <p><b>check (1)</b> 46:13</p> <p><b>chemicals (5)</b> 6:12;9:23;29:9; 36:14,20</p> <p><b>CHERYL (2)</b> 55:5,5</p> <p><b>children's (2)</b> 47:16;49:4</p> <p><b>chose (1)</b> 51:10</p> <p><b>Chuathbaluk (4)</b> 34:3,4;36:9,10</p> <p><b>CILETTI (2)</b> 44:20,20</p> <p><b>circles (1)</b> 11:1</p> <p><b>CIRI (1)</b> 5:20</p> <p><b>city (1)</b> 51:3</p> <p><b>clean (3)</b> 13:7;47:6,13</p> <p><b>clearly (2)</b> 32:6,6</p> <p><b>climate (2)</b> 37:25;48:5</p> <p><b>close (2)</b> 13:2;56:13</p> <p><b>closed (1)</b> 12:13</p> <p><b>closing (1)</b> 12:14</p> <p><b>Closure (1)</b> 12:9</p> <p><b>coast (2)</b> 48:19;50:5</p> <p><b>coastal (1)</b> 42:8</p> <p><b>collection (1)</b></p>	<p>34:21</p> <p><b>color (1)</b> 20:17</p> <p><b>Columbia (1)</b> 38:9</p> <p><b>combination (3)</b> 21:23;24:2,25</p> <p><b>combinations (1)</b> 25:21</p> <p><b>combine (1)</b> 25:22</p> <p><b>combined (1)</b> 25:2</p> <p><b>coming (10)</b> 4:3;12:17,19;24:18, 20;29:6;40:5,8;47:15; 53:5</p> <p><b>comment (44)</b> 4:8,12;5:5;6:2,16; 13:25;14:2;16:5;22:7; 26:11,12,17,18,20,20; 27:15,21;31:11,11,14; 32:9,10;33:7;34:2; 36:7,23,25;38:21; 39:13;40:7,12;43:22; 44:1,5,16,19;46:17; 49:9;50:20,24;53:9; 55:4,16;56:6</p> <p><b>commented (1)</b> 44:2</p> <p><b>comments (35)</b> 4:13,14,22;6:17; 7:21,22;8:2,12;9:8,10, 12;13:25;14:8;25:23; 27:23,25;28:1,2,5,6,7, 11;31:8,20;32:12; 33:11;35:4;40:4,8,13; 46:11,13;56:8,8,10</p> <p><b>communities (7)</b> 7:17;13:19;40:24; 48:19;50:1,3,13</p> <p><b>community (2)</b> 31:4;49:2</p> <p><b>company (1)</b> 35:22</p> <p><b>compared (1)</b> 48:25</p> <p><b>comparing (1)</b> 16:8</p> <p><b>comparison (1)</b> 21:13</p> <p><b>completed (1)</b> 7:7</p> <p><b>completing (1)</b> 53:6</p> <p><b>complicated (1)</b> 52:23</p> <p><b>component (1)</b> 5:21</p> <p><b>components (2)</b> 9:18;10:13</p> <p><b>concern (11)</b> 33:4;35:8,19;36:12;</p>
	<p><b>C</b></p>			
	<p><b>CALCOTE (6)</b> 46:16,17;49:13,14, 14;50:15</p> <p><b>C-A-L-C-O-T-E (1)</b> 49:14</p> <p><b>California (1)</b> 48:7</p> <p><b>Calista (5)</b></p>			

37:24;38:2,19;41:8; 42:6;44:13;54:19 <b>concerned (4)</b> 36:15,18;47:2,12 <b>concerns (5)</b> 33:8;35:15;37:10,11, 18 <b>concluded (1)</b> 7:15 <b>conclusions (5)</b> 8:3,9;23:15,18;56:4 <b>conditions (1)</b> 55:9 <b>conduct (1)</b> 7:19 <b>conference (1)</b> 49:24 <b>consequences (1)</b> 48:14 <b>Conservation (1)</b> 7:6 <b>consider (2)</b> 53:24;56:6 <b>considered (2)</b> 23:11;27:10 <b>considering (1)</b> 10:10 <b>consists (1)</b> 9:17 <b>constrain (1)</b> 9:6 <b>constrained (1)</b> 15:20 <b>construct (6)</b> 4:17;10:19;11:3; 12:8;13:11;24:6 <b>constructed (12)</b> 5:18,19,19,23;10:15; 11:5,19;12:7,23;16:24; 17:8;33:14 <b>construction (4)</b> 17:18;20:20,23; 22:11 <b>contact (2)</b> 28:20;39:23 <b>contained (2)</b> 55:8,15 <b>container (1)</b> 36:17 <b>containers (1)</b> 55:7 <b>containment (4)</b> 53:15,18,21;54:9 <b>contains (2)</b> 25:19;35:5 <b>continue (2)</b> 12:12;40:6 <b>Cook (1)</b> 11:13 <b>cool (2)</b> 44:10,11 <b>cooperators (2)</b> 5:9,11	<b>Coordinator's (1)</b> 30:17 <b>copacetic (1)</b> 44:14 <b>copy (3)</b> 7:13;38:22,22 <b>corporation (1)</b> 5:22 <b>Corps (7)</b> 4:6,25;8:19;9:3,6; 14:18;53:13 <b>correctly (2)</b> 14:22;27:13 <b>Council (5)</b> 37:16;38:21;39:1; 46:18;51:1 <b>couple (10)</b> 4:24;17:2,17;19:25; 23:24;29:7;32:4;35:22; 37:18;52:5 <b>cover (1)</b> 50:16 <b>coworkers (1)</b> 46:23 <b>cracking (1)</b> 36:19 <b>created (1)</b> 49:15 <b>Creek (8)</b> 4:18,19;13:6;51:13; 53:13,23,25;54:22 <b>Creek/Kuskokwim (1)</b> 54:16 <b>criteria (1)</b> 15:10 <b>Crooked (7)</b> 4:18,18;13:6;53:23, 25;54:16,22 <b>crosses (1)</b> 34:10 <b>Crossing (11)</b> 16:21,24;18:12,14, 19,22;23:1,3,23;24:17; 54:21 <b>crossings (1)</b> 11:24 <b>cumulative (2)</b> 24:24,25 <b>current (3)</b> 18:4;20:18;21:4 <b>currently (11)</b> 17:19;20:17,25; 21:14,14;22:1,2;24:1, 2;25:3;55:23 <b>cyanide (1)</b> 55:7	<b>dam (11)</b> 10:4;19:12,13;29:13; 36:19,19;37:2;38:8; 48:16;55:19,24 <b>damage (1)</b> 35:14 <b>dams (4)</b> 19:13;37:7;48:16,17 <b>DARIGO (2)</b> 29:14,14 <b>dark (1)</b> 20:17 <b>data (2)</b> 8:15;34:20 <b>Dave (5)</b> 29:19;37:15,15; 39:14;50:24 <b>DAVID (1)</b> 29:19 <b>day (4)</b> 10:1,1;12:10;51:5 <b>days (8)</b> 10:1,2;21:8,9;27:18; 33:16,16;43:2 <b>dead (1)</b> 54:17 <b>dealing (2)</b> 47:18;48:13 <b>December (2)</b> 13:10,16 <b>decided (1)</b> 27:19 <b>Decision (7)</b> 8:21;9:1,3,4,5;14:11, 11 <b>decisionmakers (3)</b> 5:7;8:22;16:5 <b>decisions (5)</b> 8:8,10;14:12;16:7; 56:4 <b>deep (3)</b> 12:24;13:1;35:25 <b>defense (1)</b> 45:18 <b>define (2)</b> 14:19,21 <b>defined (2)</b> 8:13;25:6 <b>defining (1)</b> 15:9 <b>degree (2)</b> 11:19;20:2 <b>DELICE (5)</b> 46:16,17;49:13,14, 23 <b>D-E-L-I-C-E (1)</b> 49:14 <b>Dena'ina (1)</b> 47:23 <b>dependent (1)</b> 53:4 <b>depth (1)</b> 12:23	<b>describe (1)</b> 17:2 <b>description (1)</b> 29:8 <b>design (1)</b> 54:11 <b>detail (2)</b> 27:11,14 <b>detailed (3)</b> 19:21;25:18;26:22 <b>determination (1)</b> 7:8 <b>determine (8)</b> 5:22;8:13,22;14:8; 37:2,7;53:7;55:13 <b>determined (1)</b> 8:14 <b>develop (3)</b> 8:21;15:20;27:15 <b>developed (2)</b> 11:2;13:22 <b>development (3)</b> 5:1,12;51:23 <b>diameter (1)</b> 11:13 <b>diesel (19)</b> 11:6,7;16:14,15,16, 16,18,20;17:20,25; 22:19,21;24:1,3,4,11, 13;53:12,24 <b>differ (2)</b> 32:19,24 <b>differences (1)</b> 19:24 <b>different (1)</b> 17:4 <b>diminishing (1)</b> 44:24 <b>direct (1)</b> 36:25 <b>directional (1)</b> 12:2 <b>directly (1)</b> 46:21 <b>Director (1)</b> 46:18 <b>disagree (1)</b> 9:5 <b>discharges (1)</b> 29:17 <b>discipline (1)</b> 29:15 <b>disclose (1)</b> 16:3 <b>disclosed (1)</b> 25:6 <b>disposition (1)</b> 7:9 <b>disservice (1)</b> 38:11 <b>distance (2)</b> 24:19,21 <b>District (2)</b>	4:6;28:22 <b>diverge (1)</b> 33:3 <b>Doctrine (2)</b> 47:5,7 <b>document (19)</b> 8:8;14:4,16;15:1,3,6; 20:6,10;23:11;32:3,10, 12;35:1,5;37:5,9; 38:20;40:7;47:7 <b>documents (2)</b> 28:16,19 <b>done (18)</b> 8:17;14:9,15;20:8; 21:6;24:1,2,3;27:4; 34:7,19,20;37:6,12; 49:20;52:18;53:3;56:7 <b>Donlin (23)</b> 4:16;5:20;10:18; 11:23;12:1;13:11; 14:17;15:15;16:11; 21:3,10,20;24:5;30:20, 23;31:2,4;34:18;47:23; 51:12,24;53:12,17 <b>Donlin's (6)</b> 15:7;17:14;19:13,22; 20:1;22:12 <b>DONNE (2)</b> 30:2,4 <b>doohickey (1)</b> 42:25 <b>double (2)</b> 41:12,12 <b>down (18)</b> 10:20;12:12;16:23; 17:21,25;18:19;21:11; 24:12;36:5;38:18; 43:18;45:19;47:18; 48:6;53:25;54:8,16; 55:21 <b>downriver (2)</b> 33:2;45:16 <b>downstream (6)</b> 10:5;19:11,14;21:2; 22:4;56:1 <b>dozen (2)</b> 6:6;11:21 <b>Draft (25)</b> 4:20;6:3;7:4;8:2,3,7, 8,9,9,11;9:8;13:22; 14:8,21;23:14,15,18; 27:4,15,21;42:18;50:9; 51:2;56:3,4 <b>drainage (1)</b> 38:12 <b>dredge (1)</b> 37:21 <b>drilling (2)</b> 12:2;38:2 <b>drinking (1)</b> 47:15 <b>dry (7)</b> 17:1;18:23;19:1,2,4,
	<b>D</b>			
	<b>dad (2)</b> 43:3,8 <b>Dalzell (4)</b> 17:3;19:23,25;20:3			

5,11 <b>due (3)</b> 5:1;7:11;12:15 <b>dug (1)</b> 36:2 <b>during (8)</b> 4:9;17:24;20:20,22; 28:3;32:11;37:20; 45:10 <b>dust (5)</b> 9:22,22;10:3;18:24, 25 <b>duty (1)</b> 47:11	18:15,15 <b>eliminated (4)</b> 26:21;27:2,5,9 <b>else (10)</b> 28:12,25;37:13; 43:20,24;44:4;50:20; 53:9;55:3,16 <b>else's (1)</b> 9:7 <b>email (2)</b> 39:16;40:18 <b>emissions (5)</b> 24:11,14,17,19; 29:17 <b>encourage (1)</b> 46:25 <b>end (2)</b> 4:13;10:5 <b>energy (1)</b> 46:22 <b>engineer (1)</b> 29:12 <b>engineering (1)</b> 5:13 <b>Engineers (9)</b> 4:6,25;8:20;9:3,6; 14:18;37:2;53:13;54:4 <b>engines (1)</b> 35:13 <b>English (1)</b> 47:24 <b>enough (3)</b> 10:9;13:7;38:20 <b>ENRIC (2)</b> 30:22,22 <b>entire (3)</b> 28:14;46:22;47:22 <b>entities (4)</b> 5:12;8:19,23;15:10 <b>entity (3)</b> 9:2;49:15,16 <b>entity's (1)</b> 9:1 <b>environment (2)</b> 8:4;29:16 <b>Environmental (22)</b> 4:20;5:1,11,14;8:11, 18;9:9;13:14,15;14:10, 22;15:25;16:3;27:16, 17,19,21;30:13,24; 31:1;40:16;51:2 <b>environents (1)</b> 13:13 <b>equally (1)</b> 27:25 <b>equipment (2)</b> 11:8;23:25 <b>eroding (1)</b> 48:17 <b>erosion (1)</b> 19:7 <b>error (1)</b> 54:3	<b>especially (5)</b> 35:12;41:21;44:21, 23;45:23 <b>et (5)</b> 11:4;18:11;27:13; 35:3;42:2 <b>evaluation (1)</b> 7:6 <b>Evan (1)</b> 37:19 <b>even (5)</b> 22:22;41:11;42:11; 45:24;46:3 <b>evening (10)</b> 4:10;9:13;29:5,23; 30:2;31:7;32:7,15; 42:5;49:22 <b>everybody (7)</b> 4:2,7;28:25;31:14; 35:18;36:16;49:5 <b>everyone's (1)</b> 8:12 <b>everywhere (1)</b> 43:14 <b>exactly (3)</b> 4:15;12:12;50:18 <b>example (2)</b> 18:16;20:8 <b>exclusion (1)</b> 33:15 <b>executive (2)</b> 38:23;46:18 <b>exist (3)</b> 25:3,4;54:18 <b>exists (5)</b> 8:5;16:9;20:17;22:1; 25:3 <b>expands (1)</b> 36:17 <b>expect (2)</b> 39:9,24 <b>expected (1)</b> 11:6 <b>experience (1)</b> 5:15 <b>explain (1)</b> 52:19 <b>explained (1)</b> 48:2 <b>explored (1)</b> 51:25 <b>expresses (1)</b> 37:13 <b>external (1)</b> 30:20 <b>extra (1)</b> 45:12 <b>extreme (1)</b> 55:8 <b>extremely (3)</b> 15:12,13;37:1 <b>eye (1)</b> 31:17	<b>F</b> <b>facilities (6)</b> 10:11;11:3,9,11; 12:14;41:24 <b>facility (6)</b> 9:21;10:7,18,21; 12:20;19:11 <b>factor (2)</b> 33:12,12 <b>fail (2)</b> 37:3,3 <b>fails (1)</b> 55:22 <b>failure (3)</b> 37:5;38:8;55:25 <b>failures (2)</b> 38:9,17 <b>family (1)</b> 36:11 <b>far (6)</b> 12:5;14:15,15;15:24; 34:22;39:15 <b>farther (2)</b> 19:8;56:1 <b>fax (1)</b> 28:7 <b>feasible (1)</b> 5:23 <b>federal (9)</b> 5:2;7:8;8:18,23;9:1, 2;47:10;48:25;53:13 <b>fee (5)</b> 52:20,20,23,25;53:8 <b>feel (3)</b> 25:15;33:24;37:10 <b>feeling (3)</b> 33:20;38:10;48:4 <b>feels (1)</b> 21:10 <b>fees (1)</b> 53:4 <b>feet (3)</b> 12:24;13:1,2 <b>felt (1)</b> 37:20 <b>FERNANDEZ (2)</b> 30:22,22 <b>few (6)</b> 11:16;20:5;38:5; 41:17;44:23;49:24 <b>field (3)</b> 7:2;30:7,7 <b>file (1)</b> 56:13 <b>fill (3)</b> 10:3;13:3;18:25 <b>fills (1)</b> 13:1 <b>final (10)</b> 8:8,9,17;14:9;26:17, 20;27:16,17,19;40:15	<b>find (1)</b> 20:5 <b>findings (1)</b> 7:15 <b>fine (2)</b> 6:19,20 <b>finish (1)</b> 12:13 <b>firm (1)</b> 5:14 <b>first (5)</b> 28:10;47:4,5;50:1; 55:21 <b>fish (16)</b> 11:25;18:11;23:9,12; 34:11;36:11,12,15,15, 21;41:1,7;43:14;45:9; 47:4;48:4 <b>fishable (1)</b> 47:14 <b>fisheries (1)</b> 29:21 <b>fishing (8)</b> 23:21;34:13;41:4; 43:13;44:22;47:12; 48:17,18 <b>five (2)</b> 21:23;50:11 <b>flasks (1)</b> 55:15 <b>flatbed (1)</b> 41:21 <b>FLEAGLE (2)</b> 30:2,4 <b>flow (1)</b> 29:17 <b>fluids (1)</b> 38:3 <b>folks (9)</b> 6:5,14;13:16;15:18; 26:4,6;31:9;44:3;47:18 <b>following (1)</b> 7:18 <b>follows (1)</b> 32:12 <b>footprint (2)</b> 19:5;46:22 <b>foreseeable (1)</b> 25:1 <b>forgot (1)</b> 25:12 <b>formal (1)</b> 7:22 <b>formation (1)</b> 46:4 <b>forward (8)</b> 5:8;8:24;16:7;18:21; 19:21;25:15,18;51:20 <b>found (2)</b> 39:19;40:23 <b>four (3)</b> 12:8;21:21;22:7 <b>four-foot (1)</b>
<b>E</b>				
<b>earlier (6)</b> 25:7;27:17;40:23; 45:2,4;46:5 <b>early (1)</b> 34:6 <b>earthquake (1)</b> 48:11 <b>easily (1)</b> 54:7 <b>economic (1)</b> 15:7 <b>economically (1)</b> 15:13 <b>economics (2)</b> 15:9,19 <b>economy (1)</b> 48:21 <b>effect (1)</b> 41:13 <b>effective (1)</b> 49:25 <b>effectively (7)</b> 5:5;9:21;21:3;22:3; 27:15;52:16,21 <b>effects (10)</b> 5:15;7:24;11:18; 33:25;34:20;35:17,17; 37:1,5;55:25 <b>EIS (20)</b> 5:12;6:3,6,15;7:4; 8:2;13:9,22;24:24; 26:12,17,20;28:16; 30:11;32:4;40:2,4; 47:23;50:9;52:1 <b>EISs (1)</b> 15:20 <b>either (4)</b> 10:8;11:3;34:8; 51:15 <b>Elders (1)</b> 48:2 <b>Elders' (1)</b> 48:24 <b>elevation (1)</b> 19:3 <b>eliminate (2)</b>				

42:17 <b>FR (1)</b> 35:8 <b>frame (2)</b> 21:18,22 <b>Frankly (1)</b> 10:8 <b>FREDERICKS (1)</b> 35:8 <b>friends (1)</b> 43:12 <b>fuel (7)</b> 10:15,22;41:13; 43:18;53:16,21;54:7 <b>fully (2)</b> 37:10,11 <b>functional (3)</b> 17:11;23:19;24:7 <b>functions (1)</b> 8:6 <b>further (5)</b> 35:6;39:13,15;45:24; 53:3 <b>future (7)</b> 25:1,4,15;39:20; 49:4,4,21	52:13;54:16 <b>Gold (14)</b> 4:16,17;10:8,9; 11:21;19:21;20:17; 30:20,23;31:2,4;47:23; 51:9;53:17 <b>Gold's (1)</b> 16:11 <b>Good (10)</b> 29:5,23;30:2;33:7; 42:5,19;46:5,6;49:22; 54:5 <b>goodness (1)</b> 49:7 <b>GORDON (21)</b> 4:2,5;8:1;31:6;32:2; 33:13,21;34:17;36:24; 39:9;40:1;44:1,17; 46:12;49:11,17;50:18; 52:3;55:2,12,23 <b>Gorge (4)</b> 17:3;19:23,25;20:3 <b>gouged (1)</b> 36:3 <b>government (1)</b> 53:14 <b>governments (1)</b> 47:11 <b>Governor (1)</b> 47:4 <b>grandfather (1)</b> 36:9 <b>graph (1)</b> 20:19 <b>grayling (1)</b> 34:12 <b>great (2)</b> 14:2;44:13 <b>greater (1)</b> 23:12 <b>ground (5)</b> 12:24,25;36:1;44:9; 48:13 <b>group (1)</b> 31:5 <b>guess (1)</b> 38:19 <b>guy (2)</b> 43:4,5 <b>guys (5)</b> 41:20;45:2;46:2; 53:23;54:20 <b>guys' (1)</b> 53:18	37:23 <b>happen (8)</b> 12:10;31:19;36:19; 46:6;53:6;54:7,12,19 <b>happening (2)</b> 35:18;48:10 <b>hard (2)</b> 38:22;41:18 <b>harm (1)</b> 33:5 <b>haul (4)</b> 16:12,13;17:21; 43:18 <b>haulers (1)</b> 41:14 <b>hauling (1)</b> 41:13 <b>hauls (1)</b> 23:4 <b>hazard (1)</b> 41:11 <b>hazardous (3)</b> 6:12;8:20;29:9 <b>hazards (1)</b> 41:16 <b>hear (3)</b> 4:3;7:19;44:22 <b>heard (3)</b> 45:5;51:8,14 <b>hearing (14)</b> 6:22,25;7:19;9:11; 14:1;27:24;28:3,3; 31:19;32:11;46:19,25; 55:17;56:9 <b>help (1)</b> 43:7 <b>HEROY (2)</b> 30:16,16 <b>high (3)</b> 10:9;39:1;48:11 <b>higher (2)</b> 19:3,7 <b>highest (1)</b> 12:25 <b>hills (1)</b> 32:24 <b>hold (2)</b> 4:12;54:15 <b>hole (1)</b> 36:2 <b>honestly (1)</b> 45:22 <b>hope (1)</b> 37:17 <b>hopefully (1)</b> 49:20 <b>horizontal (2)</b> 12:1;38:2 <b>host (1)</b> 25:10 <b>hot (2)</b> 45:23,25 <b>hours (2)</b>	10:1;33:15 <b>housing (1)</b> 51:4 <b>huge (1)</b> 41:8 <b>hull (1)</b> 41:12 <b>hulls (1)</b> 41:12 <b>human (4)</b> 13:13;20:2;54:3,5 <b>hundreds (1)</b> 39:25 <b>HUNTER (2)</b> 36:8,8 <b>hunting (3)</b> 34:5,11,14	11:12 <b>included (1)</b> 25:21 <b>including (1)</b> 54:17 <b>increase (4)</b> 21:25;35:10;41:4,5 <b>indicate (1)</b> 13:10 <b>indicated (1)</b> 24:10 <b>indicates (1)</b> 37:13 <b>individual (1)</b> 26:3 <b>industrial (1)</b> 21:3 <b>information (28)</b> 4:11,22;5:5,6,25;6:2, 8,24;11:17;13:22;16:6; 20:7;25:9;26:8,10; 27:23;28:8,15,19,20, 22,23;35:1,3;39:21; 40:10;46:8;53:6 <b>infrastructure (1)</b> 10:14 <b>initial (2)</b> 13:20;37:4 <b>initiative (1)</b> 50:7 <b>Inlet (1)</b> 11:14 <b>in-lieu (6)</b> 52:20,20,23,25;53:4, 8 <b>input (5)</b> 13:20;14:14;23:16; 25:5;28:13 <b>instance (1)</b> 18:2 <b>instead (9)</b> 12:3;16:13,17,19,24; 24:1,14;35:25;53:25 <b>instrument (1)</b> 52:20 <b>intended (1)</b> 10:14 <b>Intent (1)</b> 13:10 <b>Interest (4)</b> 7:5;14:20;15:18; 26:15 <b>interfere (1)</b> 36:15 <b>international (1)</b> 5:13 <b>Intertribal (1)</b> 46:18 <b>into (25)</b> 6:4,22;9:19;10:12; 12:20;13:6,22;19:2; 25:14;31:8;35:25; 36:17,20;38:4;39:5;
<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>		
<b>GAIL (6)</b> 32:16,16;33:10,20; 43:23;44:6 <b>gallons (3)</b> 11:6,7;53:12 <b>game (2)</b> 41:1;45:9 <b>gaps (1)</b> 8:15 <b>gas (5)</b> 16:17,19;24:3,14; 48:7 <b>gather (1)</b> 27:23 <b>gave (1)</b> 33:7 <b>generated (1)</b> 5:22 <b>gentleman (1)</b> 44:8 <b>gets (3)</b> 18:19;41:20;55:21 <b>given (3)</b> 15:10;31:8;52:21 <b>gives (2)</b> 17:11;25:9 <b>giving (2)</b> 5:6;20:7 <b>glitch (1)</b> 15:1 <b>global (1)</b> 44:12 <b>goes (5)</b> 34:3;40:16;42:24;	<b>half (7)</b> 10:2;11:21;12:8; 15:4,5;33:16;54:6 <b>hand (2)</b> 4:8;53:22 <b>handled (1)</b>	<b>ice (1)</b> 48:23 <b>ice-free (1)</b> 21:8 <b>idea (4)</b> 22:9;25:23;26:7; 31:15 <b>immediately (7)</b> 6:22;7:18;19:11; 27:24;31:19;32:12; 40:9 <b>Impact (30)</b> 4:20;5:1;8:11,18; 9:9;13:15;14:10,22; 16:3;20:2,4;22:12,24; 27:16,18,19,22;32:17, 20,22;33:4;34:7,8; 36:12;40:16;44:21,24; 45:3;46:3;51:2 <b>impacted (3)</b> 20:11;46:21;48:18 <b>impacting (1)</b> 47:16 <b>impacts (41)</b> 6:10;7:13;11:19; 12:5;13:12;16:4,10; 17:16;18:1,10,16; 20:13,14;23:5,12,12, 21,22;24:24,25;25:4,8; 26:3;30:10;34:14;35:2; 41:1;46:5,6,7;48:1; 52:6,9,12,15,16,17,21, 22;56:10,11 <b>important (15)</b> 11:24;12:22;15:12, 14;17:10;22:23;23:10; 26:9;27:25;37:1;38:14; 42:10,22;45:23;47:14 <b>impressive (1)</b> 39:2 <b>improve (1)</b> 52:9 <b>inches (1)</b>		

45:22;46:9,14;47:23; 51:21;54:1,8,16;55:13; 56:9 <b>introduce (1)</b> 26:5 <b>introducing (1)</b> 28:24 <b>introduction (1)</b> 50:9 <b>invite (1)</b> 50:25 <b>involved (1)</b> 34:23 <b>ISAACS (4)</b> 29:1,2;33:6;43:20 <b>isotainers (1)</b> 55:14 <b>issue (1)</b> 43:24 <b>issues (1)</b> 12:16	22,24 <b>king (1)</b> 44:23 <b>kings (1)</b> 45:1 <b>KLUWE (2)</b> 29:23,24 <b>knowing (1)</b> 35:12 <b>knowledge (1)</b> 24:3 <b>known (1)</b> 47:7 <b>knows (6)</b> 36:16;42:9,22;51:19; 54:12,18 <b>KURT (2)</b> 30:19,19 <b>Kuskokwim (9)</b> 13:19;21:1,4,8; 37:16;38:3;50:5;53:23; 54:1 <b>KYUK (2)</b> 50:4,10	6:19;12:15;16:15,15; 22:20,22;24:10,17; 43:15,15;48:4 <b>letter (1)</b> 40:17 <b>level (3)</b> 32:18;33:5,24 <b>levels (2)</b> 21:5,11 <b>liaison (1)</b> 28:22 <b>life (5)</b> 34:15,16;47:3,5;48:5 <b>light (2)</b> 22:18;38:8 <b>lights (1)</b> 33:22 <b>likely (1)</b> 40:3 <b>limit (1)</b> 52:21 <b>limited (1)</b> 47:24 <b>limiting (1)</b> 22:19 <b>line (9)</b> 10:19,25;11:22; 16:17;18:18;19:21,22, 25:39;18 <b>liner (1)</b> 55:11 <b>liners (1)</b> 55:14 <b>lining (1)</b> 36:13 <b>list (1)</b> 26:19 <b>listen (1)</b> 50:19 <b>literally (1)</b> 39:2 <b>little (14)</b> 4:4,22;6:8;9:13; 10:24;11:1,17;14:14; 20:4,7,15;32:6;42:24; 46:9 <b>live (3)</b> 8:5;41:6;55:6 <b>livelihood (1)</b> 41:3 <b>lives (4)</b> 36:11;47:16,17;49:2 <b>living (3)</b> 42:7,10;54:17 <b>LNG (9)</b> 16:12,14;17:19,21; 22:18;24:1,7;48:15,16 <b>locally (1)</b> 15:18 <b>location (1)</b> 10:22 <b>long (4)</b> 11:12;32:20;38:10;	54:18 <b>look (21)</b> 4:23;7:14;15:25; 16:2;20:9;25:19,22; 27:3,6,6;35:4;37:11; 38:7,12;39:1,2,12;51:1, 6;53:3;55:12 <b>looked (7)</b> 14:13;15:24;19:20; 25:14;27:12;45:22; 46:9 <b>looking (11)</b> 13:1;15:3;17:6,7; 18:9,10,13;19:24;39:5; 40:8;56:10 <b>lot (10)</b> 10:3;11:1,25;23:7; 33:3;41:6;43:18;54:7, 22,23 <b>louder (1)</b> 4:4 <b>low (2)</b> 37:20;41:18 <b>Lower (3)</b> 47:18;50:5,5 <b>lowest (1)</b> 12:23	<b>March (1)</b> 13:16 <b>MARK (3)</b> 30:12,12;51:7 <b>Mary (6)</b> 31:6;32:2,8,10; 49:12;56:13 <b>material (4)</b> 19:5;54:22,23,24 <b>Materials (3)</b> 8:20;11:2;21:11 <b>matter (2)</b> 49:2;51:7 <b>matters (2)</b> 49:3,4 <b>maximize (1)</b> 15:7 <b>may (4)</b> 7:15,24;37:20;39:10 <b>maybe (7)</b> 37:21,24;38:3;39:20; 41:13;43:16;54:13 <b>McGrath (1)</b> 30:5 <b>mean (4)</b> 18:2;21:22;25:18; 42:9 <b>means (5)</b> 16:13,15,17;19:7,10 <b>measure (2)</b> 12:23,25 <b>meeting (8)</b> 12:17;13:24;28:10, 11,13,13;39:17;47:20 <b>meetings (6)</b> 13:18;39:11,20; 46:23;50:4,14 <b>member (1)</b> 53:11 <b>members (1)</b> 47:24 <b>memory (1)</b> 41:10 <b>mention (3)</b> 25:12;27:17;50:1 <b>mentioned (13)</b> 5:24;13:23;14:7,12; 17:9,17,20;18:24; 19:18;25:7,25;26:9; 31:20 <b>mercury (2)</b> 55:7,15 <b>merged (1)</b> 9:19 <b>message (1)</b> 47:3 <b>met (1)</b> 49:23 <b>method (1)</b> 19:1 <b>methodologies (1)</b> 25:8 <b>MICHAEL (1)</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>L</b>		<b>M</b>	
<b>JEN (2)</b> 30:12,12 <b>JOAN (2)</b> 29:23,24 <b>job (4)</b> 5:3;32:7;43:7;49:6 <b>JOHN (4)</b> 35:20,20;50:3,8 <b>join (2)</b> 29:6;50:4 <b>Jon (5)</b> 28:24;29:1,2;33:6; 43:20 <b>Jungjuk (7)</b> 10:20;16:23,25; 18:10,18,20;21:16 <b>Justinian (1)</b> 47:9	<b>lack (1)</b> 47:12 <b>lake (2)</b> 12:20;38:17 <b>land (7)</b> 5:18;6:22,23;8:19; 30:8;51:21;53:14 <b>lands (5)</b> 5:20;7:5,10,12;30:18 <b>language (3)</b> 50:3,8,13 <b>large (2)</b> 4:17;38:8 <b>larger (2)</b> 22:5,5 <b>last (2)</b> 21:16;44:23 <b>law (1)</b> 53:20 <b>laws (2)</b> 47:9,9 <b>layout (1)</b> 26:1 <b>lead (3)</b> 4:25;29:15;31:1 <b>lease (1)</b> 7:8 <b>least (2)</b> 11:7;42:17 <b>leave (1)</b> 32:8 <b>left (3)</b> 9:23;34:4;53:22 <b>length (1)</b> 14:5 <b>less (11)</b>		<b>magazine (1)</b> 35:21 <b>mail (1)</b> 28:6 <b>main (2)</b> 35:8;43:12 <b>maintain (1)</b> 11:3 <b>maintenance (1)</b> 12:9 <b>major (6)</b> 6:10;11:23;20:10; 54:2,11,19 <b>majority (1)</b> 9:15 <b>makes (2)</b> 9:3;54:5 <b>making (1)</b> 40:18 <b>MALE (1)</b> 36:22 <b>man (2)</b> 42:20;45:4 <b>Management (5)</b> 6:23,24;8:19;12:19; 30:8 <b>manager (6)</b> 4:5;7:2;29:4;30:7,20, 23 <b>manner (1)</b> 26:11 <b>many (2)</b> 39:4;48:15	
<b>K</b>				
<b>Kalskag (1)</b> 55:19 <b>KAMEROFF (2)</b> 40:19,19 <b>keep (6)</b> 31:12,17;40:10; 44:11;53:25;54:11 <b>KEITH (22)</b> 4:2,5;8:1;31:6;32:2; 33:13,21;34:17;36:24; 39:9,23;40:1;44:1,17; 46:12;49:11,17;50:18; 52:3;55:2,12,23 <b>kept (2)</b> 44:10;47:13 <b>kind (10)</b> 19:24;35:9,12,16; 43:9;44:22;45:20;48:9,				

<p>35:8 middle (1) 45:10 middle-of-the-road (1) 5:4 might (6) 5:23;17:5;21:9;37:3; 38:19,25 migrating (2) 33:18;45:8 miles (8) 4:18;9:20;10:21; 11:12;16:23;20:1; 45:21,21 mill (2) 9:23;11:10 million (2) 11:5,7 millions (1) 49:1 mind (1) 35:12 mine (24) 4:17;5:18;9:17; 10:11,13,18,23;11:5,8, 15;12:13,22;16:14,18; 17:19;18:17;24:13; 33:15;36:13;41:25; 42:1;43:10;46:22; 54:23 minimal (1) 32:18 minimize (3) 17:7,15;25:8 minimized (1) 11:19 minimum (1) 42:17 mining (7) 12:10,11,11;23:25; 29:12;35:22;51:22 minor (1) 39:10 minute (3) 4:23;12:5;16:22 minutes (7) 6:18;7:21;11:16; 17:2,18;31:15;43:4 missed (1) 25:20 mistake (1) 54:5 mitigate (2) 11:18;17:16 mitigated (1) 25:10 mitigation (8) 12:5;25:7;51:8,12, 16;52:4,7,12 moderate (1) 23:12 modes (2) 37:5;55:25</p>	<p>modify (1) 23:5 mom (1) 43:7 moment (1) 26:4 money (2) 48:22,24 monitoring (2) 12:15;13:4 month (1) 38:22 moose (5) 32:20,22;33:17; 34:11;40:25 more (26) 4:22;6:19;9:13; 15:22;17:2;20:6;22:2; 24:14,19;26:22;27:14, 14;35:6;36:6;37:9,14; 41:17;42:18;44:18,24; 45:17;46:9;48:12; 51:22,23;56:6 MORGAN (3) 31:3,3;41:9 most (8) 4:16;5:20;23:10; 26:9;45:6,11;46:5; 47:14 mother (1) 36:9 move (4) 16:23;33:19;36:5; 56:9 moving (1) 45:11 much (15) 9:10;19:3,6;23:8; 31:7;32:14;35:14;41:4; 43:19;46:11;49:17; 50:17,19;51:19;55:2</p>	<p>15:19 Native (2) 50:3;53:14 natural (7) 13:13;16:19;24:2,14; 45:14,18;48:7 naturally (1) 45:17 navigable (1) 47:14 navigate (1) 42:23 navigational (1) 41:11 near (4) 10:18;41:6,21;49:21 necessarily (1) 34:24 need (28) 5:5;7:14;8:2,15,16; 9:11;13:4;14:3,17; 15:21;23:16;25:5;27:3, 3,6,8;28:13;33:23,25; 35:5;37:13,20;40:6; 47:17,25;48:13,17; 53:6 needed (1) 25:15 needs (7) 7:7;8:17;14:9;22:20; 32:2;51:25;56:7 negative (2) 13:12;46:7 neither (1) 5:2 NEPA (3) 23:17;26:13,15 new (3) 10:20;18:2;42:11 news (1) 48:6 newscaster (1) 50:4 newsletters (1) 28:18 next (7) 4:24;39:12;50:10,11; 51:3;54:12;56:14 nice (2) 30:3,3 NICHOLAS (2) 40:19,19 Nick's (1) 42:15 night (3) 45:6,11,12 nine (2) 6:9;50:2 no-action (1) 16:1 noise (9) 32:18,19,25;33:3,5, 12,12,21;45:15</p>	<p>nor (1) 5:3 normal (2) 40:2,12 Normally (1) 4:7 north (2) 4:18;54:3 Nos (1) 32:14 note (2) 6:17;27:16 noted (4) 23:14;26:17,18,20 notes (1) 15:6 Notice (3) 13:9;34:3;46:1 noticed (1) 34:10 noting (1) 25:11 NOVAGOLD (2) 5:21;31:1 November (3) 4:21;13:23;54:14 number (10) 12:13;22:3;23:3,4; 28:7;31:10,13;39:19; 43:21;44:5 numbers (3) 31:9,10,12 NYAC (3) 51:9,11,19</p>	<p>34:10;35:2 old (1) 42:20 once (2) 21:18;50:25 one (47) 8:25;11:22;12:4; 14:25;15:1;17:16,16; 18:6;19:12,12,16,20; 21:21;22:6;23:5,9; 24:22;26:19;31:13,21; 33:11;34:17;36:2; 37:19;38:5,9,10;39:14; 41:8,17;42:12;44:18; 45:9;47:21;48:16; 51:20,23;52:6;53:11; 54:9,11,12,18,20; 55:22;56:13,14 ones (1) 42:11 on-line (2) 31:24;46:20 only (5) 18:14;32:9;33:2; 39:19;53:1 open (4) 4:14;14:2,14;51:5 operate (3) 16:14,20;22:20 operating (6) 11:8;16:14,19;19:10, 14;24:13 operation (1) 11:8 operations (4) 12:9;17:24;20:22,24 opponent (1) 5:3 opportunities (1) 41:25 opportunity (4) 7:22;49:9,10,25 oppose (2) 26:14,16 options (3) 25:13;52:6,24 oral (1) 49:19 ore (2) 9:25;10:10 organism (1) 54:17 organizations (1) 31:5 originally (4) 19:20;30:5;36:9; 44:7 Oscar (2) 55:18,18 Oskawalik (2) 41:19,22 others (1) 19:17</p>
	<b>N</b>		<b>O</b>	
	<p>nailed (1) 12:12 name (20) 4:5;7:1;29:2,7,11,23; 30:4,12,19;32:6,16; 34:1;37:15;42:5,6; 46:17;49:12,13;53:10; 55:5 NANCY (2) 29:14,14 Napaimute (1) 41:19 narrow (4) 10:25;23:13;41:21; 43:11 National (4) 5:11;7:5;13:14; 15:25 nationally (1)</p>		<p>obligation (1) 47:11 obviously (5) 14:17;18:19;23:9; 27:22;28:10 occupancy (1) 7:9 occur (2) 40:14,15 odds (1) 27:7 off (8) 16:14,14,19,20; 23:15;24:13;32:1,15 offer (1) 27:23 office (7) 29:3;30:7,17;39:1; 51:1,3,3 offset (5) 51:12,17;52:9,17,22 offsets (1) 51:18 offsetting (1) 52:12 Ohwat (2)</p>	

<p><b>otherwise (1)</b> 7:9 <b>out (36)</b> 4:3,20,21;6:3;8:5; 12:14,17,19;13:5,9,18, 23;15:1,2;23:10;24:18, 20;27:18,20;28:18; 29:6;31:8;32:14;33:19; 34:18;36:2;39:19,21; 40:16,23;41:9,10; 43:14;49:1;51:24; 52:13 <b>over (15)</b> 9:23;11:14;21:25; 24:21;25:13;26:1;29:8, 16,20;33:4;38:24;43:4; 50:11;51:22;54:2 <b>overall (4)</b> 14:20,24;15:5;20:12 <b>owners (1)</b> 31:2</p>	<p>12:15;14:2;52:15 <b>permafrost (2)</b> 38:1;44:12 <b>permit (2)</b> 7:9;24:5 <b>permitted (3)</b> 37:7,8;56:5 <b>perpetual (1)</b> 51:21 <b>perpetuity (2)</b> 12:21;13:5 <b>person (1)</b> 37:17 <b>PETERSON (2)</b> 42:5,6 <b>phone (8)</b> 28:7;39:18,19;40:18; 44:3;46:13;49:18; 50:20 <b>phones (1)</b> 44:19</p>	<p><b>pleasure (1)</b> 29:10 <b>pm (1)</b> 56:15 <b>podcasts (1)</b> 49:21 <b>podcast (1)</b> 50:10 <b>point (11)</b> 12:24,25;14:25; 17:11;18:4,5;22:9; 24:4;27:4;34:18;51:24 <b>points (2)</b> 49:25;50:16 <b>poison (1)</b> 36:15 <b>Policy (3)</b> 5:11;13:14;15:25 <b>pond (2)</b> 19:10,14 <b>port (7)</b> 10:20;11:4;16:22,24; 18:18,20;21:16 <b>portion (3)</b> 17:5;22:7;34:4 <b>positive (3)</b> 51:9,23,24 <b>possible (3)</b> 11:20;39:7;46:3 <b>poster (8)</b> 6:4,13;25:25;26:7; 29:13,21;30:4;31:15 <b>posters (12)</b> 6:7,7,9,18;26:1,3; 29:8,18;30:1;31:25; 39:7,11 <b>potential (12)</b> 5:15;6:10;7:23;16:4, 10;18:10,15;23:20; 25:8;34:20;35:2;56:11 <b>potentially (5)</b> 15:11;18:7;19:7; 20:11,13 <b>power (2)</b> 11:10;16:12 <b>powering (1)</b> 23:25 <b>predicting (1)</b> 25:2 <b>preferably (1)</b> 4:12 <b>preliminary (2)</b> 7:12,15 <b>preparation (1)</b> 39:16 <b>prepare (3)</b> 8:17;13:15;14:9 <b>prepared (1)</b> 7:12 <b>preparing (1)</b> 50:8 <b>present (1)</b> 25:1</p>	<p><b>presentation (7)</b> 4:9,13;6:4;7:18,20; 28:19;31:21 <b>presentations (1)</b> 4:7 <b>pretty (9)</b> 23:8;31:21,22;32:14; 45:3,22,23,24;52:23 <b>preventers (1)</b> 48:9 <b>prevention (1)</b> 52:16 <b>primarily (2)</b> 19:2;23:22 <b>primary (5)</b> 9:18;10:12;11:10; 15:10,17 <b>pristine (1)</b> 20:4 <b>probabilities (1)</b> 37:4 <b>probably (3)</b> 9:16;45:13;51:5 <b>Proceedings (1)</b> 56:15 <b>P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S (1)</b> 4:1 <b>process (14)</b> 9:25;13:9;23:17; 24:5;25:12;26:12,13, 16;28:14;34:23;37:1; 40:2,11;52:11 <b>processing (2)</b> 9:24;10:10 <b>project (69)</b> 4:4,5,11,17,23;5:3,7, 9,17,23;6:1,8,17;7:11, 15,24;8:23;9:1,15; 10:1,12;11:4,6,11,17, 18;12:6,7,18,20;13:11, 17,21;14:18,21;15:9, 11,13,15;16:4,8,11,19; 17:7,9;20:12;24:6; 25:10;26:2,14,15,17, 19;28:15,19;29:4,8; 31:2;33:14;37:7;47:25; 52:4,8,9,10;53:1;56:2, 3,5 <b>projects (5)</b> 5:16;16:6;18:6;25:9; 53:2 <b>properly (1)</b> 32:3 <b>proponent (1)</b> 5:2 <b>proponent-sponsored (1)</b> 52:7 <b>proposals (3)</b> 45:5;52:25;53:1 <b>propose (1)</b> 19:14 <b>proposed (32)</b> 5:3;6:1,8;7:11;10:14,</p>	<p>16;11:5;13:21;14:15; 16:6,8,11,22;17:14,20; 18:4,18;19:13,22;20:1; 21:16;28:16;33:14; 34:9,19;41:22;47:25; 52:4;55:24;56:1,3,5 <b>proposing (16)</b> 4:16;5:6;9:25;10:19; 11:23;12:1;13:11;21:3, 14,20;26:2;34:18,21; 52:10;53:5,17 <b>props (3)</b> 22:6;35:13,13 <b>protected (2)</b> 52:14,15 <b>Protection (2)</b> 30:13;51:22 <b>provide (3)</b> 7:22;16:5;32:9 <b>provided (1)</b> 12:18 <b>providers' (1)</b> 49:24 <b>providing (1)</b> 48:23 <b>public (8)</b> 6:16;7:10,19;14:20; 15:18;26:15;47:5,6 <b>pulled (1)</b> 36:2 <b>purple (3)</b> 18:18;19:22,25 <b>purpose (11)</b> 5:25;14:17,18,24,24; 15:5,6,17;16:2;23:16; 28:14 <b>purposes (1)</b> 14:20 <b>pushed (1)</b> 35:25 <b>pushing (4)</b> 21:21;22:6,7;35:25 <b>put (9)</b> 12:4;13:9;15:16; 29:21;36:17;39:7; 48:22,24;51:21 <b>putting (2)</b> 36:11;51:17</p>
<b>P</b>				
<p><b>pages (2)</b> 14:5;49:6 <b>paper (2)</b> 28:9;54:11 <b>PARKAN (2)</b> 30:19,19 <b>part (7)</b> 5:18,19;15:6;30:11; 34:15;41:19;43:18 <b>particularly (1)</b> 38:1 <b>pass (2)</b> 21:17;37:18 <b>passed (1)</b> 35:23 <b>past (5)</b> 21:24;25:1;36:4; 41:18;42:15 <b>PATRICIA (2)</b> 34:1,1 <b>pay (1)</b> 51:15 <b>people (25)</b> 15:14;26:13,14,16, 18;34:5,11,13;38:11, 14,20,25;39:4,12,16, 25;40:5;41:25;42:11; 45:1,6;46:24;47:25; 50:1;52:5 <b>peoples (1)</b> 46:21 <b>per (3)</b> 9:25;11:6,7 <b>percent (8)</b> 21:25;22:1,2;31:2; 35:10;41:5;53:24;54:2 <b>percentage (1)</b> 22:19 <b>period (3)</b></p>	<p><b>physical (1)</b> 29:15 <b>picture (1)</b> 35:21 <b>pictures (1)</b> 36:13 <b>piece (1)</b> 28:8 <b>pigs (1)</b> 55:14 <b>piles (1)</b> 54:10 <b>pilot (1)</b> 43:6 <b>pinkish-red (1)</b> 10:17 <b>pipeline (25)</b> 5:19;8:20;10:14; 11:11,12,22;12:4; 16:16,18;17:3,4,5;18:2, 3,4;19:19,19,22;22:21; 24:12;30:17,18;38:1; 44:7,11 <b>pit (3)</b> 9:19;12:20;38:17 <b>pits (1)</b> 9:18 <b>place (7)</b> 27:24;35:23;36:1,4; 42:15;54:12,15 <b>plan (1)</b> 31:16 <b>plant (2)</b> 17:19;48:15 <b>plants (2)</b> 38:18;48:16 <b>please (20)</b> 4:3;6:17;7:19;8:7, 25;9:8,9;13:25;22:8; 23:14;25:11,22;27:16; 28:3;32:5,6,8;35:7; 36:25;51:4</p>	<p><b>portion (3)</b> 17:5;22:7;34:4 <b>positive (3)</b> 51:9,23,24 <b>possible (3)</b> 11:20;39:7;46:3 <b>poster (8)</b> 6:4,13;25:25;26:7; 29:13,21;30:4;31:15 <b>posters (12)</b> 6:7,7,9,18;26:1,3; 29:8,18;30:1;31:25; 39:7,11 <b>potential (12)</b> 5:15;6:10;7:23;16:4, 10;18:10,15;23:20; 25:8;34:20;35:2;56:11 <b>potentially (5)</b> 15:11;18:7;19:7; 20:11,13 <b>power (2)</b> 11:10;16:12 <b>powering (1)</b> 23:25 <b>predicting (1)</b> 25:2 <b>preferably (1)</b> 4:12 <b>preliminary (2)</b> 7:12,15 <b>preparation (1)</b> 39:16 <b>prepare (3)</b> 8:17;13:15;14:9 <b>prepared (1)</b> 7:12 <b>preparing (1)</b> 50:8 <b>present (1)</b> 25:1</p>	<p><b>presentation (7)</b> 4:9,13;6:4;7:18,20; 28:19;31:21 <b>presentations (1)</b> 4:7 <b>pretty (9)</b> 23:8;31:21,22;32:14; 45:3,22,23,24;52:23 <b>preventers (1)</b> 48:9 <b>prevention (1)</b> 52:16 <b>primarily (2)</b> 19:2;23:22 <b>primary (5)</b> 9:18;10:12;11:10; 15:10,17 <b>pristine (1)</b> 20:4 <b>probabilities (1)</b> 37:4 <b>probably (3)</b> 9:16;45:13;51:5 <b>Proceedings (1)</b> 56:15 <b>P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S (1)</b> 4:1 <b>process (14)</b> 9:25;13:9;23:17; 24:5;25:12;26:12,13, 16;28:14;34:23;37:1; 40:2,11;52:11 <b>processing (2)</b> 9:24;10:10 <b>project (69)</b> 4:4,5,11,17,23;5:3,7, 9,17,23;6:1,8,17;7:11, 15,24;8:23;9:1,15; 10:1,12;11:4,6,11,17, 18;12:6,7,18,20;13:11, 17,21;14:18,21;15:9, 11,13,15;16:4,8,11,19; 17:7,9;20:12;24:6; 25:10;26:2,14,15,17, 19;28:15,19;29:4,8; 31:2;33:14;37:7;47:25; 52:4,8,9,10;53:1;56:2, 3,5 <b>projects (5)</b> 5:16;16:6;18:6;25:9; 53:2 <b>properly (1)</b> 32:3 <b>proponent (1)</b> 5:2 <b>proponent-sponsored (1)</b> 52:7 <b>proposals (3)</b> 45:5;52:25;53:1 <b>propose (1)</b> 19:14 <b>proposed (32)</b> 5:3;6:1,8;7:11;10:14,</p>	<p>16;11:5;13:21;14:15; 16:6,8,11,22;17:14,20; 18:4,18;19:13,22;20:1; 21:16;28:16;33:14; 34:9,19;41:22;47:25; 52:4;55:24;56:1,3,5 <b>proposing (16)</b> 4:16;5:6;9:25;10:19; 11:23;12:1;13:11;21:3, 14,20;26:2;34:18,21; 52:10;53:5,17 <b>props (3)</b> 22:6;35:13,13 <b>protected (2)</b> 52:14,15 <b>Protection (2)</b> 30:13;51:22 <b>provide (3)</b> 7:22;16:5;32:9 <b>provided (1)</b> 12:18 <b>providers' (1)</b> 49:24 <b>providing (1)</b> 48:23 <b>public (8)</b> 6:16;7:10,19;14:20; 15:18;26:15;47:5,6 <b>pulled (1)</b> 36:2 <b>purple (3)</b> 18:18;19:22,25 <b>purpose (11)</b> 5:25;14:17,18,24,24; 15:5,6,17;16:2;23:16; 28:14 <b>purposes (1)</b> 14:20 <b>pushed (1)</b> 35:25 <b>pushing (4)</b> 21:21;22:6,7;35:25 <b>put (9)</b> 12:4;13:9;15:16; 29:21;36:17;39:7; 48:22,24;51:21 <b>putting (2)</b> 36:11;51:17</p>
<b>Q</b>				
<p><b>quality (3)</b> 12:16,18;18:11 <b>quantity (2)</b> 10:9;18:1 <b>quick (1)</b> 15:24 <b>quickly (2)</b> 31:22;52:23 <b>quite (1)</b> 6:1</p>				

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>R</b></p>	<p><b>regarding (2)</b> 7:3;16:6</p>	<p><b>resource (8)</b> 6:10;20:11,13,14; 23:9,10;26:3;33:8</p>	<p><b>riverbank (1)</b> 21:15</p>	<p>38:16</p>
<p><b>rain (1)</b> 54:13</p>	<p><b>region (2)</b> 15:14;46:4</p>	<p><b>resources (2)</b> 7:25;40:25</p>	<p><b>rivers (3)</b> 11:24,25;48:19</p>	<p><b>scenarios (2)</b> 38:7,12</p>
<p><b>raise (1)</b> 4:8</p>	<p><b>regionally (1)</b> 15:18</p>	<p><b>respond (1)</b> 27:1</p>	<p><b>road (7)</b> 10:19;11:2,3;18:20, 21;38:18;54:21</p>	<p><b>sciences (1)</b> 29:16</p>
<p><b>Range (1)</b> 11:14</p>	<p><b>regions (1)</b> 13:19</p>	<p><b>responding (1)</b> 40:9</p>	<p><b>rock (9)</b> 9:21,22;10:3,7,8,8; 18:24,25;41:21</p>	<p><b>scoping (1)</b> 13:18</p>
<p><b>rare (1)</b> 8:25</p>	<p><b>regulate (1)</b> 44:14</p>	<p><b>response (4)</b> 26:18;36:25;39:24; 45:14</p>	<p><b>role (2)</b> 5:2;29:3</p>	<p><b>screen (8)</b> 5:10;10:7,18;14:25; 17:14;20:19,19,21</p>
<p><b>rate (1)</b> 21:22</p>	<p><b>regulations (1)</b> 14:19</p>	<p><b>responses (2)</b> 40:13,15</p>	<p><b>RON (2)</b> 30:25,25</p>	<p><b>Sea (2)</b> 50:5;54:3</p>
<p><b>rather (1)</b> 4:17</p>	<p><b>relate (1)</b> 28:1</p>	<p><b>responsibility (1)</b> 47:10</p>	<p><b>room (10)</b> 6:7,9;28:8,23;44:4, 18,19;46:15;50:22; 55:3</p>	<p><b>season (1)</b> 21:8</p>
<p><b>RAY (2)</b> 42:5,6</p>	<p><b>related (1)</b> 29:22</p>	<p><b>rest (3)</b> 26:6;29:25;34:23</p>	<p><b>round (1)</b> 21:1</p>	<p><b>Seattle (1)</b> 29:20</p>
<p><b>read (1)</b> 14:24</p>	<p><b>relates (1)</b> 40:2</p>	<p><b>restrictions (2)</b> 7:16;40:22</p>	<p><b>route (12)</b> 11:22;17:3,4;19:19, 22,23,25;20:1,3;22:21; 24:15;34:9</p>	<p><b>second (2)</b> 47:22;50:7</p>
<p><b>ready (1)</b> 31:17</p>	<p><b>relation (11)</b> 5:17;6:3;7:23;20:8; 22:11;23:24;34:21,25; 52:5;53:4;56:11</p>	<p><b>result (1)</b> 7:16</p>	<p><b>routes (1)</b> 19:20</p>	<p><b>Section (1)</b> 7:5</p>
<p><b>real (1)</b> 15:24</p>	<p><b>relations (1)</b> 31:4</p>	<p><b>retain (3)</b> 10:5;19:12,13</p>	<p><b>Roxanne (1)</b> 37:19</p>	<p><b>seeing (1)</b> 45:7</p>
<p><b>realistic (1)</b> 39:24</p>	<p><b>released (2)</b> 13:6,8</p>	<p><b>review (8)</b> 6:18;7:14;8:12,15; 14:7;15:18;26:16; 39:12</p>	<p><b>run (5)</b> 11:13;21:9,10;45:10; 54:7</p>	<p><b>segment (2)</b> 18:2,3</p>
<p><b>really (5)</b> 33:7,10;41:18;46:25; 49:7</p>	<p><b>relies (1)</b> 50:7</p>	<p><b>reviewed (2)</b> 8:12,16</p>	<p><b>running (5)</b> 16:17;24:12,16,21; 53:25</p>	<p><b>segments (2)</b> 23:13;50:11</p>
<p><b>reason (2)</b> 13:4;16:2</p>	<p><b>remainder (1)</b> 11:8</p>	<p><b>reviewing (3)</b> 14:16;30:17;37:6</p>	<p><b>runs (2)</b> 10:20;44:23</p>	<p><b>sell (1)</b> 51:10</p>
<p><b>reasonable (1)</b> 24:8</p>	<p><b>remember (3)</b> 16:22;23:1,14</p>	<p><b>RICKY (2)</b> 44:20,20</p>	<p><b>run-through (1)</b> 9:14</p>	<p><b>send (1)</b> 39:25</p>
<p><b>reasonably (3)</b> 20:3;25:1;52:23</p>	<p><b>repeat (2)</b> 28:12;49:11</p>	<p><b>rid (1)</b> 17:25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>S</b></p>	<p><b>sending (1)</b> 40:17</p>
<p><b>reasons (1)</b> 27:9</p>	<p><b>replaced (1)</b> 16:18</p>	<p><b>ride (1)</b> 43:9</p>	<p><b>Safety (2)</b> 8:21;54:4</p>	<p><b>senior (1)</b> 29:3</p>
<p><b>receive (4)</b> 10:22;40:4,13;47:19</p>	<p><b>represented (1)</b> 20:18</p>	<p><b>right (13)</b> 10:24;14:3;18:24; 21:7;27:8,12;28:16; 34:17;41:6;44:5,17; 51:3;52:4</p>	<p><b>salmon (6)</b> 34:12;38:14;44:22, 25;45:7,10</p>	<p><b>sentence (2)</b> 15:4,5</p>
<p><b>recently (1)</b> 51:9</p>	<p><b>represents (1)</b> 11:22</p>	<p><b>rights (1)</b> 47:8</p>	<p><b>salmon-bearing (2)</b> 11:24,25</p>	<p><b>SEMPI (2)</b> 30:9,9</p>
<p><b>reclamation (1)</b> 12:10</p>	<p><b>request (3)</b> 47:19,22;49:10</p>	<p><b>RIMELMAN (2)</b> 30:25,25</p>	<p><b>same (11)</b> 9:2;20:25;21:22; 22:12,24;23:3,5;35:19; 37:24;43:9,10</p>	<p><b>session (11)</b> 6:5,13,16,21;25:25; 27:25;28:2;31:8,16,20; 56:9</p>
<p><b>recognize (1)</b> 22:4</p>	<p><b>require (1)</b> 12:19</p>	<p><b>rip (1)</b> 36:6</p>	<p><b>salmon's (1)</b> 45:14</p>	<p><b>sessions (1)</b> 9:12</p>
<p><b>recommend (1)</b> 41:15</p>	<p><b>required (3)</b> 20:20,21;53:21</p>	<p><b>risk (3)</b> 18:15;29:9;53:19</p>	<p><b>saying (2)</b> 32:3;45:4</p>	<p><b>set (1)</b> 6:18</p>
<p><b>reconvene (2)</b> 6:15;31:16</p>	<p><b>requirement (1)</b> 13:14</p>	<p><b>risks (1)</b> 6:12</p>	<p><b>SAMUELSON (2)</b> 55:18,18</p>	<p><b>seven (3)</b> 10:1;25:17;33:15</p>
<p><b>record (4)</b> 7:22;32:1;42:4; 43:22</p>	<p><b>requires (5)</b> 7:6;9:1;15:25;17:18; 40:10</p>	<p><b>river (38)</b> 11:23;12:3;13:19; 15:14;16:15,23;17:21, 25;21:1,4,5,8,12;23:13; 24:11,12,19;34:6; 35:14,18,24;36:3; 37:16,22;38:4;41:11, 17,20;42:20,22,23; 43:1;45:7,8,10;50:5,6; 54:1</p>	<p><b>saw (1)</b> 39:6</p>	<p><b>several (3)</b> 31:4;39:16;50:11</p>
<p><b>Records (3)</b> 8:21;14:10;47:20</p>	<p><b>rereviewed (1)</b> 8:16</p>	<p><b>scale (1)</b> 38:8</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>shaking (1)</b> 48:13</p>
<p><b>red (3)</b> 10:19,25;18:17</p>	<p><b>research (1)</b> 42:7</p>	<p><b>scale (1)</b> 38:8</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>shallow (2)</b> 23:12;36:1</p>
<p><b>reduce (2)</b> 17:20;23:20</p>	<p><b>reserve (2)</b> 7:8;48:25</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>shareholders (2)</b> 15:8,12</p>
<p><b>reduction (1)</b> 23:21</p>	<p><b>resident (1)</b> 40:20</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>shares (1)</b> 35:18</p>
<p><b>referring (1)</b> 52:13</p>	<p><b>resolve (1)</b> 9:5</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>sharing (1)</b> 26:24</p>
<p><b>refresh (1)</b> 41:10</p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>Shell (1)</b> 48:25</p>
<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>scenario (1)</b></p>	<p><b>shelling (1)</b></p>



<p>35:11 <b>TKC (3)</b> 5:18;15:8,12 <b>today (2)</b> 39:16;47:21 <b>told (2)</b> 32:18;43:3 <b>tonight (10)</b> 4:3;5:24;14:1,13; 27:22;28:10,12;37:18; 38:24;39:15 <b>tons (1)</b> 9:25 <b>took (1)</b> 43:9 <b>top (1)</b> 10:18 <b>topic (3)</b> 44:22;45:23,25 <b>tore (1)</b> 36:2 <b>total (1)</b> 53:21 <b>towards (1)</b> 44:25 <b>tractor (1)</b> 41:10 <b>tradeoffs (1)</b> 38:13 <b>traffic (19)</b> 20:9,12,13,17,18,20, 21,24;22:12,35;9,10; 41:3,6,7,15;42:1,12; 45:2,12 <b>training (3)</b> 41:24,24,24 <b>transcript (1)</b> 32:10 <b>translated (1)</b> 47:23 <b>translation (3)</b> 49:19,25;50:2 <b>transport (1)</b> 46:22 <b>transportation (1)</b> 10:13 <b>trapping (1)</b> 34:14 <b>travel (1)</b> 32:23 <b>treatment (3)</b> 13:4;38:18;47:17 <b>Tree (12)</b> 16:21,24;18:11,14, 19,21;23:1,2,23;24:17; 41:15;42:14 <b>trenching (1)</b> 12:3 <b>tribal (6)</b> 28:22;46:21;47:7,11; 48:18;49:23 <b>tribe (1)</b> 53:11</p>	<p><b>Tribes (1)</b> 49:15 <b>tributary (1)</b> 13:7 <b>triggering (1)</b> 13:13 <b>triple (1)</b> 22:3 <b>trips (3)</b> 21:1,1;23:3 <b>truck (2)</b> 16:12;22:18 <b>truckers (1)</b> 42:1 <b>trucks (7)</b> 16:13,16;17:22; 22:20;24:7,20,20 <b>true (2)</b> 42:25;43:15 <b>Trust (3)</b> 47:5,6,7 <b>try (4)</b> 4:4;28:9;46:24; 52:19 <b>trying (2)</b> 4:10;49:6 <b>tug (2)</b> 21:17,21 <b>tugs (3)</b> 21:23;22:5;24:18 <b>turn (2)</b> 31:11;42:18 <b>turned (1)</b> 25:14 <b>turn-off (1)</b> 48:8 <b>twice (1)</b> 24:21 <b>two (7)</b> 9:18;19:12;20:5; 33:11;39:11;49:24; 55:20 <b>two-day (2)</b> 21:18,22 <b>Tyonek (1)</b> 18:3 <b>type (1)</b> 45:15 <b>types (4)</b> 20:14;23:9,10;34:11 <b>typically (1)</b> 40:12</p>	<p>12:3;44:14 <b>unfold (1)</b> 50:14 <b>UNIDENTIFIED (1)</b> 36:22 <b>unintended (1)</b> 48:14 <b>United (1)</b> 4:6 <b>up (47)</b> 4:14;10:17,24;14:14; 15:21;16:15;17:21,25; 18:9;21:11;22:4;24:11, 12,17,19;26:5;28:6,7; 31:18;34:23;36:3,5,6; 37:21;38:23;40:25; 41:9,19;42:8,15,15,23, 25;43:14,17,18,24; 45:8,10,16;46:2,25; 48:19;50:16,16;51:7; 54:22 <b>upriver (2)</b> 43:9;45:24 <b>upstream (5)</b> 18:11,14;21:2;22:20; 23:2 <b>URLICH (2)</b> 29:11,12 <b>use (7)</b> 7:9;8:6;11:7;17:21; 20:9;26:23;41:2 <b>used (4)</b> 8:22;25:3;42:13; 45:8 <b>uses (2)</b> 7:7,16 <b>using (2)</b> 51:17;52:16 <b>utilize (3)</b> 11:9;26:11;27:15</p>	<p><b>various (3)</b> 14:11;18:16;25:7 <b>vast (1)</b> 9:15 <b>versus (3)</b> 20:3;21:14;40:16 <b>via (1)</b> 17:21 <b>vibration (1)</b> 33:22 <b>village (1)</b> 46:23 <b>villages (1)</b> 42:8 <b>virtually (1)</b> 40:14 <b>visit (1)</b> 29:9 <b>voices (1)</b> 47:1 <b>volcano (1)</b> 48:11 <b>volcanos (1)</b> 48:12 <b>voting (1)</b> 26:13 <b>VPSO (1)</b> 51:4</p>	<p>31:3,3 <b>ways (6)</b> 12:4;17:7,15;25:10; 32:20;47:3 <b>weather (3)</b> 44:12;55:9,10 <b>website (8)</b> 28:6,15,17;39:5,8,12, 22;50:12 <b>week (5)</b> 10:1;33:16;39:11,12; 50:10 <b>weeks (2)</b> 49:24;50:12 <b>weight (3)</b> 9:10;18:8;19:17 <b>weighted (1)</b> 27:13 <b>weir (1)</b> 45:9 <b>welcome (1)</b> 28:11 <b>wells (1)</b> 48:7 <b>western (2)</b> 11:13;15:4 <b>wet (1)</b> 18:25 <b>wetlands (8)</b> 51:8,11,12,15,16,18; 52:6,10 <b>whatnot (1)</b> 51:16 <b>What's (4)</b> 17:13,16;54:12;56:1 <b>whitefish (1)</b> 34:12 <b>whole (6)</b> 16:2;23:16;25:10; 28:14;36:3,4 <b>wide (1)</b> 41:20 <b>wife (1)</b> 36:10 <b>wild (1)</b> 41:1 <b>WILLIAM (2)</b> 36:8,8 <b>Willie's (1)</b> 38:6 <b>willing (1)</b> 9:13 <b>wind (1)</b> 19:7 <b>window (1)</b> 21:8 <b>withdraw (1)</b> 7:8 <b>within (4)</b> 29:16;31:4,5;53:20 <b>without (1)</b> 14:5 <b>withstand (1)</b></p>
			<b>W</b>	
			<b>V</b>	
	<b>U</b>	<p><b>valley (3)</b> 10:4;19:1,2 <b>value (3)</b> 48:22,24,25 <b>valued (1)</b> 48:21 <b>valuing (1)</b> 48:21 <b>valves (2)</b> 48:8,8 <b>VANDERPOOL (6)</b> 32:16,17;33:10,20; 43:23;44:6 <b>variation (3)</b> 19:4;22:10,10 <b>variations (1)</b> 20:5 <b>variety (4)</b> 5:9;11:10;19:19; 31:8</p>	<p><b>walked (1)</b> 45:16 <b>Walker (1)</b> 47:4 <b>wall (1)</b> 39:6 <b>wants (1)</b> 31:14 <b>warming (1)</b> 44:13 <b>waste (2)</b> 10:7,8 <b>water (29)</b> 9:22;12:16,17,18,19; 13:2,4,5;18:11;21:11; 29:17,17;35:14,25; 36:17,17,20;37:20; 38:18;41:18;47:6,8,9, 13,15,17;54:10,14,16 <b>waters (1)</b> 47:13 <b>Watershed (6)</b> 37:16;38:21,25;51:1; 53:22;54:8 <b>way (29)</b> 11:14;17:16,16;18:9; 20:7;22:15;26:24;33:2; 34:8,15,16;37:21;42:7, 8,10,14,24;43:7,10,13, 17;47:5,8;48:5;52:4,9, 12,19;55:20 <b>WAYNE (2)</b></p>	

55:10 <b>wolves (2)</b> 32:22;33:18 <b>wondering (3)</b> 35:16;53:14;55:19 <b>words (4)</b> 12:2;16:1;25:2;52:7 <b>work (3)</b> 14:8;42:13;45:8 <b>working (3)</b> 6:15;13:17;41:25 <b>worried (2)</b> 32:20;47:2 <b>worse (2)</b> 42:14,14 <b>worst (3)</b> 38:7,12,16 <b>worth (2)</b> 10:10;12:9 <b>writing (1)</b> 32:8 <b>written (3)</b> 28:5;32:9;41:23 <b>wrong (2)</b> 21:7;27:12 <b>wrote (1)</b> 40:21	<b>1,200 (1)</b> 12:24 <b>1,800 (1)</b> 13:1 <b>100 (6)</b> 22:1;26:13,14,16,18; 53:24 <b>11- (1)</b> 12:24 <b>110 (2)</b> 21:9;53:17 <b>12 (1)</b> 13:18 <b>122 (1)</b> 21:8 <b>122-day (1)</b> 21:7 <b>14 (3)</b> 11:12;20:13,14 <b>15 (3)</b> 7:20;34:19;43:4 <b>16 (1)</b> 32:14 <b>1672 (1)</b> 47:8 <b>170 (1)</b> 35:10 <b>179 (3)</b> 21:25;22:2;41:4 <b>19-mile (1)</b> 18:2	10:20;27:18;28:5; 35:7;40:14;54:12 <b>300 (1)</b> 25:13 <b>30-mile (2)</b> 10:19;18:20 <b>30th (5)</b> 4:21;14:2;25:24; 38:21;40:3 <b>315 (1)</b> 11:12 <b>365 (2)</b> 10:2;33:16 <b>3A (6)</b> 16:13;17:13,17; 22:18;23:20,25 <b>3B (5)</b> 17:23;23:22:21; 23:20;24:10	20:25;22:1 <b>6A (2)</b> 19:18;22:16	
<b>Y</b>			<b>7</b>	
<b>YASKA (2)</b> 34:1,2 <b>year (7)</b> 10:2;11:6,7;21:1; 23:4;33:16;47:8 <b>years (13)</b> 10:2;12:8,13,15; 13:3;33:16;34:20; 35:23;37:21;44:23; 48:23;54:6,13 <b>years' (1)</b> 12:8 <b>yesterday (2)</b> 38:23;39:19 <b>Yukon (3)</b> 13:19;33:2;50:6 <b>Yukon/Kuskokwim (1)</b> 15:14 <b>Yup'ik (4)</b> 47:23;50:3,8,13	<b>2</b> <b>2 (8)</b> 9:20;16:11;17:13; 22:16,24;23:11;25:13; 34:18 <b>2.2 (1)</b> 9:20 <b>20 (1)</b> 34:20 <b>2012 (2)</b> 13:10,16 <b>2013 (1)</b> 13:16 <b>2016 (1)</b> 4:21 <b>24 (2)</b> 10:1;33:15 <b>26 (1)</b> 20:10 <b>27 (4)</b> 10:2;12:8;33:16; 54:6 <b>27th (2)</b> 4:21;13:23	<b>4</b> <b>4 (11)</b> 16:21;18:13,17; 22:16,24,25;23:21; 24:16,24;34:2;35:1 <b>4:00 (1)</b> 51:5 <b>40 (2)</b> 11:5,7 <b>40-below (1)</b> 55:9 <b>40-million (1)</b> 53:12 <b>45 (2)</b> 6:18;31:15 <b>45-minute (1)</b> 6:13 <b>48 (1)</b> 47:18	<b>7,000 (1)</b> 49:6 <b>7:35 (1)</b> 31:16 <b>70 (1)</b> 16:23 <b>76-mile (1)</b> 18:21	
<b>Z</b>			<b>8</b>	
<b>zone (1)</b> 33:15			<b>8:19 (1)</b> 56:15 <b>80 (1)</b> 54:2 <b>810 (8)</b> 6:22;7:19;27:24; 28:2,3;31:19;32:11; 56:9 <b>810a (1)</b> 7:5	
<b>1</b>			<b>9</b>	
<b>1 (6)</b> 9:18;14:16;15:3; 22:14;28:18;32:14 <b>1,000 (1)</b> 13:2	<b>3</b> <b>3 (1)</b> 10:7 <b>30 (6)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>5 (2)</b> 25:9;28:18 <b>5,000-foot (1)</b> 10:23 <b>5,500 (1)</b> 14:5 <b>50 (3)</b> 12:15;13:3;31:1 <b>55 (1)</b> 13:3 <b>59,000 (1)</b> 9:25 <b>5A (3)</b> 17:1;18:23;22:16	<b>9:00 (1)</b> 51:5 <b>90 (1)</b> 27:18	
		<b>6</b> <b>60 (1)</b> 27:18 <b>68 (2)</b>		