



Candace Nachman - NOAA Federal <candace.nachman@noaa.gov>

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## Re: NMFS Effects of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic Ocean DEIS question

1 message

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Alex Whiting <alex.whiting@qira.org>

Thu, Feb 16, 2012 at 2:50 PM

To: Michael Payne <michael.payne@noaa.gov>

Cc: Candace Nachman <candace.nachman@noaa.gov>

Thanks for the quick response. We are going to support a level 1 with required closures from alternative 4.

Surprisingly there is another area we did not discuss in enough detail and that is regarding the Hope Basin, while it is included in the EIS area, the discussion (and exclusion/timing areas) mainly focuses on the general area of 193 sales.

However if it is likely that seismic activity will occur in the Hope basin (which is included in the EIS area after all) then our comments would be tailored to add exclusion areas in and adjacent to Kotzebue Sound. Northern Kotzebue Sound is extremely important to our members for seal and beluga hunting, as such exploration activity would have great potential to impact this if not done with proper timing and geographical restrictions. I forgot to give you a copy of our recent book **"Combining Inupiaq and Scientific Knowledge: Ecology in Northern Kotzebue Sound, Alaska"**, discussing this area, which by the way should be referenced in the final EIS bible - it can be found at:

<http://seagrant.uaf.edu/bookstore/pubs/SG-ED-72.html>

It would be nice if you could order a copy or two to support the effort, but I would be willing to send either one of you, or the reviewers in NOAA a copy or two for developing the final EIS if needed, just let me know.

I imagine Kivalina and Point Hope would want exclusion areas also. It is easy to forget or not notice the inclusion of the Hope Basin including the nearshore areas, since again the majority of the discussion is focused up north and of course that is where all the money is invested and Hope Basin has not proven the same level of potential as say the burger prospect from previous exploration. Anyways this could all be suggested for inclusion in the final EIS so some feedback would be appreciated.

Thanks,

Alex

On Thu, Feb 16, 2012 at 6:43 AM, Michael Payne <michael.payne@noaa.gov> wrote:

> Alex, I got your voice mail this a.m. but it looks like Candace has already  
> answered your question. It was great to see you again and look forward to  
> the next time.

>

> mike

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> On Thu, Feb 16, 2012 at 9:38 AM, Candace Nachman <candace.nachman@noaa.gov>  
> wrote:

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>> Alex,

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>> We also appreciated the time you took to meet with us last week and that  
>> you had already put so much time and effort into reading and reviewing the  
>> DEIS. We realize it is a large document and not one that is easy to get  
>> through.

>>

>> In response to your question, as currently written, the requirement for  
>> those time/area closures are based on the Level 2 for activity. However,  
>> under Alternative 2, which considers the Level 1 activity, those same  
>> time/area closures are contemplated as mitigation measures but would not  
>> necessarily be required in every case. So, as currently written, they would  
>> not be required every time under the Level 1 activity level. However, your  
>> exact question and thought is something that we would like to see in your  
>> comment letter. There is the potential for some mixing and matching in the  
>> Final EIS of what was contained in the DEIS, especially if public comments  
>> reflect the fact that we should do so.

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>> Thanks,

>> Candace

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>> On Wed, Feb 15, 2012 at 6:13 PM, Alex Whiting <[alex.whiting@qira.org](mailto:alex.whiting@qira.org)>  
>> wrote:

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>>> Hi Candace,

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>>> We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and the team in  
>>> Kotzebue last week, I hope the rest of your trip went well. I have a  
>>> question on the alternatives that I failed to clarify last week.  
>>> Alternative 2 with the level 1 activity is the option that we like for  
>>> its smaller scale activity it allows, however we also like additional  
>>> required time/area closures element included in Alternative 4.  
>>> However Alternative 4 is tied to the Level 2 activity and not the  
>>> lesser Level 1 which we prefer. So my question is whether it is only  
>>> practically applicable to level 2 activity since level 1 activity  
>>> would make the additional measures unnecessary because the allowable  
>>> activity would not impact those areas by default? Or is it a quid  
>>> pro quo for allowing Level 2 activity by having more restrictions in  
>>> place on all exploration. If Level 1 activity is applicable to  
>>> impacting the areas set aside under the additional required time/area  
>>> closers then it would seem useful from our perspective to support  
>>> level 1 activity with these additional required time/area closures? A  
>>> mix and match approach. Please clarify if you can.

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>>> Thank you,

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>> Candace Nachman

>> Fishery Biologist

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>> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

>> National Marine Fisheries Service

>> Office of Protected Resources

>> Permits and Conservation Division