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            U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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           BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT
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     In Re:
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     Programmatic Environmental
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     Impact Statement
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     Proposed Geological and
     Geophysical Activities in the )
     Mid- and South Atlantic OCS
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     Planning Areas
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               TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING
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                       EVENING SESSION
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                         Sheraton Suites
                         422 Delaware Avenue
15
                         Wilmington, Delaware
                         Thursday, April 26, 2012
16
                         7:05 p.m.
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     HELD BY: JAMES BENNETT - Division of
     Environmental Assessment Chief
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     APPEARANCES:
22
         JILL LEWANDOWSKI
         MEGAN BUTTERWORTH
23
         KIM OLSEN
         ROBIN SCHURICHT
24
         CAREN MADSEN
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1	MR. BENNETT: Okay. I guess we can
2	get going. I appreciate you being here. I'd
3	like to welcome you to this public hearing on the
4	draft programmatic environmental impact statement
5	for geological and geophysical activities in the
6	Mid- and South Atlantic.
7	My name is Jim Bennett. I'm the
8	Chief of the Division of Environmental Assessment
9	for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.
10	Safety first. You know where the
11	exits are. Stairs are over by the elevator, and
12	the restrooms are to the left of our registration
13	desk.
14	We are the Bureau of Ocean Energy
15	Management. We are a bureau within the United
16	States Department of the Interior, and we are
17	responsible for the development and environmental
18	protection of national resources of the Outer
19	Continental Shelf.
20	We are here to take your comments.
21	As I understand it, no one has actually signed up
22	to comment at this point, but there will be
23	opportunity to comment. But at the same time,
24	we're going to provide you a little information,
25	and we have a number of people here that are
1	

1	available to discuss any issues with you outside
2	of the formal receipt of comments.
3	That includes Jill Lewandowski from
4	our office in Washington, in Herndon. She's a
5	marine biologist; Megan Butterworth, who is a
6	marine biologist in our headquarters office.
7	Caren Madsen is also here from our Office of
8	Public Affairs.
9	And we have a couple of people from
10	CSA International who do a lot of consulting work
11	for us on the Outer Continental Shelf activities,
12	including Kim Olsen, who is the deputy project
13	manager, and Robin Schuricht, who's outside at
14	the desk.
15	With that, I'm going to turn it over
16	to Jill to give you a little background on what
17	the project is, and then we'll get to the
18	comments. Thank you.
19	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Okay. I think
20	since we have a nice small group, if there are
21	any questions as I'm going through this, anything
22	you want further clarification on, you know, just
23	feel free to stop and ask your questions.
24	MR. BENNETT REPORTER: And identify
25	yourself for the record when you do so.

1	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Oh, yes. And
2	please identify yourself for the record. Okay.
3	We're here tonight to talk about an environmental
4	impact statement that we're developing under the
5	National Environmental Policy Act, and it's
6	dealing with the geological and geophysical
7	activities in the Mid-Atlantic and the South
8	Atlantic planning area. We'll see a map in a
9	moment where I'll show you exactly what area
10	we're talking about.
11	This is something that is, you know,
12	a separate process from any sort of five-year
13	planning that we do for oil and gas development,
14	or planning that we're doing for renewable
15	energy, or sand and gravel. This has resulted
16	because we had essentially 11 applications from
17	oil and gas industry asking to do seismic surveys
18	off the Atlantic.
19	We also have a renewable industry
20	that uses seismic surveys to characterize sites,
21	to make sure that the sites they're interested
22	in, they're not going to put a pile like in a gas
23	pocket, or something that could be potentially
24	dangerous.
25	And also for sand and gravel, for

1	collection of sand resources offshore that are
2	used for beach renourishment projects, they also
3	use a number of the geological and geophysical
4	techniques.
5	So, what we wanted to do is take a
6	programmatic approach to this and look at all of
7	those together, and determine what impacts may or
8	may not happen, what kind of, you know,
9	mitigations we might or might consider imposing.
10	And that's the purpose of this particular
11	document, and it's just focused on these surveys.
12	Now, as you can see from the
13	schedule here, we're about at the end of our
14	public hearings. What happens with the NEPA
15	process is you will issue your draft EIS, which
16	we did at the end of March. And then you will
17	solicit comments from anybody who's interested.
18	They can either be written comments or we hold
19	these public meetings where you can actually come
20	and put a statement in for the record, or just
21	come and learn a little bit more information
22	about the project.
23	The close of the comment period for
24	this project, and I'll remind you again about
25	that later on, is May 30th. So at that point,

1	after May 30th is when we'll close all the
2	comments coming in, and we'll start going through
3	all them, reading every single one of them,
4	reading all the transcripts from the public
5	meetings, and looking for that information that
6	we might have missed, other things we have to
7	consider, and so forth. Other information we
8	might have to look up.
9	So, as I said, we've distributed for
10	the 60-day comment period. You know, today is
11	the public meeting point where we're looking for
12	soliciting any comments that you may want to
13	offer. And again, as Jim said, if you have
14	questions and you just want to come and ask us
15	some questions off the record, that is also fine.
16	Now, I mentioned that we're looking
17	just at the Mid- and South Atlantic area. What
18	we're trying to do, when you look at a NEPA
19	analysis, is you take a proposed action, and in
20	this case, it's all of those G & G the seismic
21	surveys and the other geological and geophysical
22	activities that have been requested for approval
23	from us, whether it's, again, oil and gas, sand
24	and gravel, or renewables. And that's our
25	proposed action.

1	So then what we do is we take all
2	sorts of subject matter experts, biologists,
3	physical oceanographers, archaeologists,
4	meteorologists, to look at air quality, folks to
5	look at effects to socioeconomic resources,
6	fishing, all of that. And we look at the
7	proposed action, and all of those folks with all
8	those expertise try to determine what the effects
9	could be on all those resource areas.
10	And what we'll also do then is we'll
11	look at the different alternatives we came up
12	with, which have different mitigations associated
13	with them, in determining which alternative is
14	perhaps more protective for that resource, or not
15	as protective.
16	And all that information is put into
17	the draft EIS for comment and review, and then
18	things are, you know, finalized and edited based
19	on the public comments that we get, any new
20	information, we have to.
21	This is sort of a graph to give you
22	an idea of the areas where there has been
23	interest expressed, particularly for what we
24	would call the deep seismic, the larger-scale
25	surveys that are done mostly to look for

1	hydrocarbon resources, oil and gas resources.
2	And this is sort of a density map.
3	So, the darker areas are indicating where there's
4	greater interest, where we've had multiple
5	operators interested in doing surveys, and the
6	lighter gray would indicate, you know, less
7	intensive interest in the surveys.
8	Now, this doesn't take into account
9	that we have mitigations that would this
10	doesn't take into account that we are not really
11	considering an alternative that would necessarily
12	let all of this happen at once, at the same time.
13	So our mitigations are meant to, you know,
14	through various methods, sort of, you know, avoid
15	that sort of scenario. So, you're just looking
16	at where the interest has been.
17	Now, what we're looking at, how we
18	consider, at BOEM, how we consider the Atlantic,
19	we actually have four planning areas. There's
20	the North Atlantic up here, the Mid-Atlantic,
21	South Atlantic, and there's also a Straits of
22	Florida that's further down here.
23	We are just looking at the South
24	Atlantic planning area, and the Mid-Atlantic.
25	And that's what this document is covering, and

1	that's what is being considered. Okay?
2	So the North Atlantic planning area
3	and the Straits of Florida down here are not
4	under consideration for us to move ahead with
5	this level of permitting of seismic surveys.
6	MR. HORAN: Why are the other two
7	areas excluded from this?
8	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: A good question.
9	The question is why are the other two areas
10	excluded. And that's just a call that was made,
11	you know, by management, that we're just looking
12	at the Mid- and South Atlantic.
13	Now, there could be some things that
14	happen case by case, some of the renewable
15	projects that are going on in the North Atlantic.
16	You know, we could still consider that with a
17	separate NEPA document at a separate time. But I
18	think because of where the interest, expressed
19	interest, and whatever, you know, frankly,
20	political judgments that have been made, we're
21	just looking at the Mid- and South Atlantic for
22	this effort.
23	MR. BENNETT: I think that's
24	predominantly where the interest was expressed.
25	MS. FLEMING: I'm Lorraine Fleming.

1	If you said it, I missed when you anticipate
2	having the draft EIS out.
3	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Okay. The
4	question was about having a draft EIS out. We
5	have the draft out. What happens
6	MS. FLEMING: PEIS?
7	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Yes. The PEIS
8	stays the same no matter what. There's a draft,
9	and then there's a final.
10	MS. FLEMING: Oh, okay. I
11	misunderstood.
12	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: That's okay.
13	MS. FLEMING: I thought you were
14	going to do another document based on all the
15	comments you receive.
16	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Well, that is
17	true. We are going to do another document, but
18	we essentially take we try to put the most
19	robust analysis that we can at the time on all
20	the available information in the draft. And that
21	was released on March 30th.
22	Then we want you to respond to what
23	we've done, and then we look at all the comments
24	in the public comment period, and in all
25	likelihood there will be a number of revisions

1	that go to make the final document.
2	So the final isn't just going to be
3	the draft replicated. It's going to we're
4	actually going to go through and find those
5	things that we might have missed.
6	MS. FLEMING: Thank you.
7	MR. BENNETT: And respond to
8	comments.
9	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: And also respond
10	to comments. Jim was just pointing out, within
11	the final EIS we will put in the comments we have
12	received through all the various public meetings
13	and the written comments that come in, and we'll
14	respond to them. We'll tell you what we've done
15	to the document to change it, if we have. And if
16	not, why we don't think a change is necessary.
17	So you'll get to see all of that in the final,
18	also. All right?
19	When we say G & G, it's short for
20	geological and geophysical. They're basically
21	activities that let you explore either at the
22	surface or directly below the surface, or even
23	far down below the surface, depending what you're
24	trying to do. If you are trying to look for
25	hydrocarbon resources, you probably will want to

1	go further down into the substrate, and you'd be
2	looking at a geophysical survey like a seismic
3	survey that can get an image of what's down way
4	below, the ocean floor.
5	For things like renewables where you
6	need to maybe consider putting a wind turbine out
7	there, you probably don't need to go quite so
8	deep. You may use a geophysical survey. You may
9	use some other techniques to basically just
10	characterize the substrate and make sure that you
11	know what's there, and that you know there's not
12	a shipwreck right under where you want to go,
13	there's not a gas pocket there, and it can be
14	done as safely as possible. So this document
15	covers all of those activities that would fall in
16	those two categories.
17	And then what we do is we divide it
18	into what we would call routine operations, and
19	then accidental events. Routine operations are
20	listed up there.
21	When we do our analysis, for me as a
22	marine biologist, I will look at all those things
23	under the routine activities, what's being
24	proposed, what the available science and other
25	information tells me about what potential effects

1	are, and I'll write that up, and I'll come up
2	with an idea at the end, or a recommendation, and
3	explain it in the document, what I think the
4	effects to my resource area might be. And then
5	there's a lot of us that are doing that for
6	different resource areas.
7	So, routine operations are going to
8	be the things we anticipate happening, and of
9	course, there could be accidental events. In the
10	case of these activities, we would basically say
11	an accidental event would more likely be a fuel
12	spill from a seismic vessel.
13	And then I mentioned all the
14	different "-ologies" that we have. Biology so
15	here's an idea of the different things we're
16	looking at, the different resource areas that
17	we're looking at. And we do have subject matter
18	experts that are trained within these, within
19	BOEM itself, and also with CSA International. We
20	also bring their perspectives and their expertise
21	in for the analysis, also.
22	Now we have three alternatives, and
23	basically, we'll have a little tiny table at the
24	end of this that will compare the alternatives.
25	Alternative A would basically have a

1	suite of measures in there, one of which would be
2	some closure areas to protect the North Atlantic
3	Right Whale. The North Atlantic Right Whale is
4	one of the most endangered marine mammal species
5	in the world. It is an animal that does migrate
6	up and down the coast of the Atlantic.
7	There are definitely places that the
8	National Marine Fisheries Service, who is the
9	government agency with the general mandate to
10	protect the Right Whale, there are areas they've
11	identified of higher, you know, Right Whale use.
12	And we believe that those areas that they sort of
13	already put closures on for other activities, we
14	also believe that needs to be a central part of
15	the analysis.
16	So alternative A, and I'll show a
17	map in a moment, basically will show you those
18	areas that we think would automatically be
19	closed.
20	It also includes a number of what we
21	consider more standard mitigation measures to
22	protect different species out there. Vessel
23	strike avoidance, marine debris awareness,
24	basically teaching the operators and folks that
25	are out there, you know, to be very mindful of
1	

1	their trash and their discharges and things like
2	that, that could potentially be a problem.
3	Alternative B takes all those things
4	in A and adds a few more to them. One of the
5	things it does is it expands those Right Whale
6	closure areas even further. It also adds one off
7	of Florida for sea turtles that nest in that area
8	for part of the year.
9	It also does provide what we would
10	call basically a separation distance between
11	surveys that might be out there at the same time.
12	And what we're getting at there is if we require
13	a separation distance, then there is an ability
14	for an animal to move around, and move through
15	the area without potentially being exposed to
16	noise, or things that they might find disturbing.
17	And then we also do require passive
18	acoustic monitoring. Under this one, under
19	alternative A it would be optional. And what
20	that basically means is as part of the standard
21	mitigation practices for seismic in particular,
22	we do require observers that are just their
23	only job is to look for marine mammals and sea
24	turtles. And they will sit on the vessel, on the
25	seismic sound source vessel, and there will be a

1	pre-determined distance from the vessel that they
2	will monitor.
3	And if a whale or a dolphin or a
4	seal or a turtle comes up in that area, they can
5	call for a shutdown of the operation; or before
6	the operation is started, they have to make sure
7	that area is clear of those animals before the
8	operation can start up.
9	They also, companies will also be
10	required to do something we call ramp-up, which
11	is basically, they can't turn their sources on
12	full power immediately. They have to generally
13	add gradually to get up to the full power status.
14	And what we believe that will do is
15	if an animal does find the noise to be
16	disturbing, there's an opportunity for it to
17	become aware of the noise before that full
18	intensity is put out there, and to move from the
19	area if they need be.
20	So, you know, those sorts of things
21	are geared, really, for marine mammals and for
22	sea turtles, but they also do provide benefits
23	for other species that are perhaps mobile, such
24	as fish. So it does sort of also apply for them.
25	And alternative C would be what we

1	would consider no action. For oil and gas it
2	would be no action because there's nothing that's
3	being permitted out there right now for seismic
4	or for geological surveys for oil and gas.
5	We do have some things that are
б	being authorized for renewables and for sand and
7	gravel at this time. That would continue, but
8	the renewables and sand and gravel surveys are
9	much smaller scale. They tend to use sound
10	sources that are not quite as intense. They
11	don't they're not as loud, and like I said,
12	they're smaller scale geographically, meaning
13	they're much more of a more pinpoint survey than
14	some of the ones that are looking for oil and
15	gas, that cover a much larger area.
16	So here's alternative A, and this is
17	the Right Whale closure areas that I first
18	mentioned. And these are the ones that have
19	already been established by the National Marine
20	Fisheries Service, and down here is where you're
21	going to find the Right Whale calving habitat.
22	This is where a lot of their calving happens,
23	along here. This is about a 20 nautical mile
24	distance from shore, in all of these areas.
25	And these are areas that NMFS has

1 established to slow vessels down, mostly 2 commercial vessels that are coming into these 3 ports. And we've basically made the determination that any sort of seismic survey 4 that is going to utilize an airgun could also 5 follow these closure areas. 6 7 So if someone is proposing to do a survey without an airgun, with another source 8 that perhaps isn't quite as loud an intensity of 9 10 noise, then we would consider that during those closure times. But if it's using an airgun, we 11 12 would not consider it during the closure times. 13 And you can see here, it lists here, as well as 14 within the document, it will tell you what those 15 closure times are. 16 Now, alternative B has basically got those same closures, but you'll also see, it's a 17 18 little harder to see right now, but this little 19 slashed area, we've essentially extended the 20 closure of that 20 nautical miles in between all 21 of this. And so, basically within 20 nautical 22 miles of the coast, during the times that are 23 listed here, we would not consider authorizing 24 any surveys using airguns. 25 For the most part, I have to say

1	that when you look at renewable projects and you
2	look at sand and gravel, and you look at their
3	need for seismic surveys, they do tend not to use
4	airguns, because again, these are much smaller
5	surveys. They don't need to go as deep into the
6	ocean floor, especially, to look at what's below.
7	But if it's they were to propose
8	to use an airgun, they would be closed off from
9	that area, also.
10	And then down here, and I think on
11	the next slide it shows a little bit more. This
12	is off of Brevard County, Florida. This is an
13	area known for sea turtle nesting, and we would
14	also be having a closure and not authorizing any
15	activities with airguns in that area during that
16	time period.
17	So, comparing all three
18	alternatives, if you look at the time area
19	closure for the Right Whales, it is across A and
20	B, and it's expanded in B, as I've just showed
21	you in those maps.
22	If you look at our standard seismic
23	survey protocol, you're going find the same one
24	in A versus B. What you will find different is
25	when we get to the passive acoustic monitoring.
1	

1	And what that does is if you have we require
2	visual observers, but we recognize that these
3	animals are under water a lot, and even if you
4	allow a long period of time to observe, to make
5	sure that they haven't come up to surface, you
6	may still miss some.
7	And so, industry has developed
8	technology where you can actually listen for
9	them, too. And in alternative A, we would say,
10	you know, it's optional whether you wanted to use
11	that technology.
12	Alternative B, we would say you have
13	to. Where they might still use it, even if it's
14	optional, is at nighttime. Right now, if they
15	cannot visually observe the zone, they can't
16	start up at night. They have to wait till day.
17	But if they can acoustically listen to it, then
18	they're allowed to start up at night.
19	Now, again, alternative B, though,
20	that would be required at all times. And there
21	is a lot of software out there, a lot of training
22	that's going on where you can know what kind of
23	animal you're hearing, you can even triangulate
24	the distance of that animal's noise that you're
25	hearing from the vessel. So it's gotten
1	

1	quite the technology has really come into
2	play.
3	The separation distance would not be
4	in A, but it would be in B. And again, that
5	is the thought behind that is to allow that
6	corridor, an extra area for these animals to move
7	through if needed.
8	And the protocols, the high
9	resolution survey protocols are essentially the
10	same as a seismic survey protocol. So that would
11	be consistent on A and B.
12	A vessel strike avoidance. We have
13	guidance for that, how you're supposed to, you
14	know, slow down when you've observed a whale
15	would be an example. And then also the marine
16	debris awareness, that would also be in both A
17	and B.
18	This gives a real, real top-level
19	snapshot of so far what we've determined as far
20	as the effects to these different at least to
21	the resource areas that we have identified in
22	this table.
23	Where you can see that there's a
24	greater potential for effects is going to be with
25	marine mammals, where you see it's listed as

1	moderate. Sea turtles would also be the other
2	one. And that's because these are activities
3	that, particularly seismic surveys, that do
4	generate noise. And we know enough to know that
5	the noise that a lot of these sound sources
6	generate is within the hearing ranges of many
7	marine mammals, and sea turtles to some extent.
8	So if an animal can hear it, then we have to look
9	at whether or not it is bothersome to them.
10	And that depends on a lot of
11	factors. It depends on, you know, what the
12	animal's doing at that particular moment. If
13	it's an animal that's heard the noise before,
14	hasn't heard the noise before; do they have a
15	calf nearby, or they don't; are they feeding, are
16	they not.
17	It is very, very context specific.
18	So you do have to make some general conclusions,
19	but we've gone through all that, and basically
20	have come up with these determinations with the
21	mitigations considered in each one, what we think
22	the potential effects might be.
23	And then, also, this analysis is
24	used for the National Environmental Policy Act,
25	but there's a suite of other statutes that we

1	also comply with. We will use an analysis from
2	this, as well as some additional information, to
3	do an Endangered Species Act consultation, and we
4	will essentially, under that, you work with
5	National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish
6	and Wildlife Service, and you just do an
7	analysis, a robust analysis, on endangered
8	species, and any of their habitat that's been
9	designated.
10	And you work with the services, and
11	if they decided there needs to be an additional
12	mitigation added, then that's something you would
13	also incorporate into your action.
14	We do the same sort of thing under
15	the National Historic Preservation Act. We want
16	to make sure that cultural resources that are out
17	there, shipwrecks, all those sorts of things, are
18	protected.
19	And also, there's the
20	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management
21	Act. And what that has us do is work with the
22	National Marine Fisheries Service to look at
23	effects to fish habitat and fisheries, and that's
24	something that we also go through.
25	And then we have a cooperating

1	agency on this document with us, and that's the
2	National Marine Fisheries Service. And a
3	company, if they're going to be doing a survey,
4	if we authorize a survey that could potentially
5	impact a marine mammal, they will have to go to
6	NMFS to get the appropriate authorization.
7	So, by NMFS cooperating with us, we
8	produce one NEPA document that both agencies can
9	use. So we make sure the sorts of things that
10	they'll need to have analyzed are included in our
11	document, and it makes for some, you know,
12	better, more efficient government that way.
13	Next steps. We'll continue to take
14	comments, whether written comments and I'll
15	show you the address for those or from the
16	public meetings, up until May 30th. At that
17	time, we will close the comment period, and we
18	will honestly and truly go through every comment
19	we've received. We'll read every letter, we'll
20	look at all the transcripts that were done from
21	all the various public hearings that we've done.
22	And the participation at the hearings has ranged
23	from a few folks, some of them have had 80 at one
24	meeting. So there will definitely be a lot of
25	comments that we'll be able to go through.

1	And we'll find those areas of things
2	we missed, where you all have raised something
3	that we have forgotten or we haven't thought
4	about, and then we'll determine if there needs to
5	be a change to the document. And like I said
6	earlier on, we'll respond in the final EIS to all
7	of those comments. You'll see what the response
8	was.
9	And of course, in many cases we may
10	group them, if they're similar comments, but
11	you'll get a general idea of what our thoughts
12	are about the comment, and then if we've made any
13	changes to the document.
14	And then come November, we hope
15	of this year, we hope to have the final EIS
16	completed. At that point, the EIS, as well as
17	the other consultations we've done, and what has
18	resulted from them, will go in front of our
19	director. And he will look at all of that, look
20	at all of the information that's in there and the
21	advice that's in there, and he'll make a final
22	decision on what BOEM will do with these
23	requests. And that record and decision, how that
24	comes out, that will be issued in December of
25	this year, is our current plan.

1 And then just deploying out here, 2 you do, besides today, you have the opportunity, 3 of course, to provide some oral comments, or if you have something written up you want to hand to 4 us, that's also fine. 5 There's also an e-mail address and a 6 mailing address, if you want to send something to 7 8 those before May 30th. And I would also point out that we do have a website for this project, 9 10 and I believe it's on the materials you may have 11 gotten out front, that website is listed. So you 12 don't necessarily have to write it all down from 13 here. 14 On that website you'll find copies 15 of the applications we received. You can see 16 where different companies are asking to do 17 surveys. You'll be able to see an explanation in 18 greater detail of what a geological survey is, what a geophysical survey is, the different laws 19 20 that we need to comply with. So there's a lot of 21 additional information there, and I would point 22 you there if you have any questions. 23 Go ahead. 24 MS. FLEMING: Are your --25 MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Your name again.

1	You just have to do your name.
2	MS. FLEMING: Oh. Lorraine Fleming.
3	Are your slides on the website?
4	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: They will be.
5	MS. FLEMING: Excellent.
6	MR. BENNETT: They're supposed to be
7	up next week. Gulf of Mexico Regional Office is
8	handling that, and they told us it would be up
9	next week.
10	MS. FLEMING: Very good. Thank you.
11	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Because sometimes
12	you start with a presentation, and based off of
13	people want different things, you end up with
14	something maybe a little different as you go
15	through the hearings. So that's why it comes
16	afterwards. Okay?
17	All right. Well then, I'll turn it
18	back over to Jim, and he can give you some
19	instructions on if you want to go ahead and offer
20	any comments at this time.
21	MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Jill. We
22	do have one speaker who is registered to speak,
23	and we can accommodate that. Again, I want to
24	point out to you that we have a number of subject
25	matter experts here. If you have questions or

1	you want to discuss some issues, we'll be happy
2	to stick around and do that with you.
3	Normally we ask people to
4	self-police their comments to three minutes, but
5	given the extent of the speakers list, I think
6	we'll be okay in that department this evening.
7	And I do ask that you address your
8	comments to the panel, and we will have an
9	opportunity, after the registered speaker talks,
10	if anybody else wants to speak, they will be
11	welcome to do so.
12	So, we can start with Ruth Ann
13	Purchase. You can use the microphone over there.
14	MS. PURCHASE: My name is Ruth Ann
15	Purchase, P-u-r-c-h-a-s-e, just like when you buy
16	something. I'm sorry I was a bit late. I am
17	wondering if the transcripts will be available.
18	MR. BENNETT: Yes.
19	MS. PURCHASE: Yes?
20	MR. BENNETT: The transcripts are a
21	matter of public record. They will be available.
22	MS. PURCHASE: Through the website?
23	MR. BENNETT: I don't think they get
24	posted on the website, but upon request we can
25	provide them. We don't usually get them for some

1	time after the hearing, so they're not something
2	that will be posted next week.
3	MS. PURCHASE: But before the
4	decisions are made, we get to see all the
5	different hearing
6	MR. BENNETT: Again, I don't believe
7	they'll be posted, but they would be available,
8	yes. You can contact us through the website, and
9	I can give you my card.
10	MS. PURCHASE: Thank you. I have
11	three points that I was requested to make, and I
12	am sorry I was a little bit late.
13	First of all, there's a request that
14	complete disclosure of all lobbying activity on
15	this subject, as well as international
16	corporations' funding of academic research, of
17	all the offshore research, especially the
18	validity of mitigation measures.
19	The public would like to see who is
20	pushing for this to be done, and who is funding
21	the research itself, who funds the academic
22	laboratories that are doing the research, since
23	we understand that so much of the motivation
24	comes from people who do want to make profit from
25	this work.

1 Secondly, from the organizations 2 that I participate in, we have understood that 3 many environmental scientists, especially international scientists, are definitively 4 declaring that there is no energy requirement for 5 an increase in natural gas or oil. And that if 6 the current level of funding dedicated to this 7 particular project alone were dedicated to energy 8 efficiency and energy reduction, less polluting 9 10 and less damaging processes would develop, which would be more in alignment with the general 11 international environmental recommendations. 12 13 Thirdly, the most valuable cultural 14 resources that would be disturbed are not related to modern shipwrecks or tourism, but the ancient 15 cities of the original places -- of the original 16 people, and sacred places, which some believe 17

have an ancient wisdom understood, and which modern science ignores, which may be why we're in the dangerous situation we're in today.

I would like to know personally if there's anyone here in the room that can answer the question, I would like an answer tonight to be able to take back to people, about the process for disclosure of who's funding the research, and

1	especially the mitigation aspect, and how Native
2	Americans are being included in the process of
3	evaluating the damages that would be done.
4	Recognizing that in some ways, a
5	50-foot increase in our oceans at this point
6	would destroy a lot more of our natural
7	resources, everyone's thinking about how we
8	protect ancient resources, and what might be
9	discovered and learned about the ancient wisdom
10	of ancient people.
11	So that is a question that I would
12	like to be able to respond to as I go back to the
13	organizations that sent me tonight.
14	Thank you very much.
15	MR. BENNETT: Thank you for your
16	comments. Normally we would provide, be able to
17	respond to points of clarification. I don't have
18	an answer for your first question there. We'll
19	have to do some research to be able to give you a
20	complete enough answer.
21	The second question that you asked
22	is also much more involved than we can get into
23	here. However, I do want to assure you of the
24	consultation processes that we talked about, that
25	Jill mentioned earlier.

1	We have several processes that we
2	have to pursue with Native American communities,
3	including government-to-government consultations,
4	and the 106 process under the National Historic
5	Preservation Act.
6	But with that as an overview, if you
7	want more specific information, we would have
8	to we'd have to do some more research on it.
9	MS. PURCHASE: I was informed that
10	Native Americans have requested that the process
11	be slowed down for further investigation of the
12	possible cultural resource damage, and that
13	that no change in the timeline has been allowed
14	for that. And they have they don't have the
15	funding for lawyers to request that further.
16	So maybe you could clarify that.
17	Has any
18	MR. BENNETT: Well, I can't clarify
19	it any further, but we can take your comments,
20	and we will respond to it in the final
21	environmental impact statement.
22	MS. PURCHASE: Okay. Thank you.
23	MR. BENNETT: That is all of the
24	registered speakers. Anyone who has not had an
25	opportunity to speak, please step to the
1	

1	microphone. State your name, please for the
2	court reporter.
3	MS. FLEMING: Yes, my name is
4	Lorraine Fleming, and that's Fleming with one M.
5	I wanted to first of all thank you for holding a
6	hearing in Delaware. That's a rare occurrence
7	for a Federal agency to hold it here in Delaware,
8	and I thought I should attend for that reason.
9	But and I'm wondering how many
10	people were at the 1:00?
11	MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Seven, I think.
12	MR. BENNETT: Seven.
13	MS. FLEMING: Seven? Well, I was at
14	a Sea Grant Advisory Council meeting this
15	morning, and sitting at the same table with our
16	coastal management program manager, and she
17	didn't know about this. I had to tell her about
18	it, and she quickly sent a staff member up from
19	Dover to attend. I presume he was here this
20	afternoon.
21	But at any rate, I am planning to
22	submit comments by the 30th of May, but I had
23	some things, and I have gone through the
24	documents in a very cursory manner.
25	And thank you for your good

1	presentation about the biota. I am a
2	biologist/ecologist by trade, and I retired. I'm
3	wondering if you have had the benefit of
4	Delaware's marine spatial planning document?
5	The this was a one-year study by graduate
6	students primarily working under Dr. Jeremy
7	Firestone in our University of Delaware' College
8	of Earth, Ocean and Environment. It was partly
9	funded by the Sea Grant program.
10	Anyway, there was a workshop in
11	November, much like this one, to pick up on
12	information that they might have missed, that
13	people there and there were a lot of
14	professional, technical people in attendance.
15	And there were two staff people from your agency
16	there, and I hope you're all talking to each
17	other.
18	This is brand new. This document is
19	the final now, and in November we were working
20	from drafts. But there are excellent
21	compilations of data in graphic form in here,
22	much of it dealing with well, this is pointed
23	at wind energy development offshore.
24	And a lot of it has to do with sea
25	birds, which is not a concern in this case. But
I	

1	there also is a great deal about migratory marine
2	mammals, and that is obviously a primary concern
3	of yours, as well as mine and others in Delaware.
4	Now, there has been if you don't
5	have this, you can obtain it almost immediately.
6	This was issued April 9th, so I doubt that it was
7	incorporated directly into your work in the draft
8	PEIS. But there has been work done in the past
9	in Delaware concerning investigation of the oil
10	and gas potential of the Outer Continental Shelf.
11	And I don't think that our Delaware Geological
12	Survey people knew about this, either. I think I
13	was instrumental in informing them, but maybe a
14	little too late.
15	And I was looking for something
16	report of investigations number 36, from the DGS,
17	history of oil and gas exploration in the
18	Mid-Atlantic region, and Delaware's involvement
19	in the Federal OCS leasing program.
20	Now that's, you know, old stuff, but
21	nevertheless, in the in the executive summary,
22	which is as far as I've been able to get I
23	know there are some graphics further on that
24	maybe I'll get to explore, but I found this on my
25	computer, on my e-mail, at 5:00 this afternoon.

1	Anyway, it says three Mid-Atlantic
2	lease sales were held, sale 40 in 1976, sale 49
3	in 1978, and sale 59 in 1981. A total of 361
4	tracts were offered, and the industry paid nearly
5	\$1.5 billion in bonus money for 187 of these
6	tracts.
7	From 1978 through 1981, there were
8	28 wells drilled, ranging in total depth from
9	13,000 to 18,000 feet. Five wells encountered
10	significant oil and gas on a small part of their
11	major target structure. Two others, plus the
12	I don't know, this is the IDCOSTB3 well,
13	encountered minor gas shows.
14	Results from the five well group
15	with significant hydrocarbon shows indicate a
16	total of 88.45 million cubic feet of gas per day.
17	Some condensate, and 630 barrels per day of oil.
18	Now, and there as far as I know,
19	there was no further exploration, because
20	basically it was off limits. But I'm wondering
21	why now, other than that there's renewed
22	interest? We in Delaware are very focused on
23	developing our offshore wind resource, and I, in
24	addition to my concern about the impact to biota,
25	I think there will be conflict.
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2 that once every everything that will be 3 conflicting or obstructing is ruled out, there 4 a very narrow area left of the wind designat	
4 a very narrow area left of the wind designat	ed
5 wind energy areas, WEAs, in your organization.	
6 And I think that most of the constraints that a	re
7 identified in here would be also constraints fo	r
8 oil and gas investigation.	
9 So, I hope that you will be able t	ο,
10 you know, get ahold of these other materials, a	nd
11 pipe that in.	
12 And by the way, Ms. Purchase, at t	he
13 workshop I referred to in November, there were	
14 members of two Native American tribes there, on	e
15 from Massachusetts, and one from Delaware, aski	ng
16 for consideration in an investigation in terms	of
17 this. I haven't had a chance to see whether	
18 there's any new information entered in.	
19 MS. PURCHASE: They got no respons	е
20 from that.	
21 MR. BENNETT: Okay.	
22 MS. PURCHASE: They requested a	
23 delay, but they got no response.	
24 MS. FLEMING: No. I'm talking abo	ut
25 the marine spatial planning that Delaware did.	

1 So --2 MR. BENNETT: Okay. The information vou're identifying, I don't know exactly the 3 status of it with regard to the preparation of 4 the draft EIS, but we will take note of it, we 5 will determine whether it is information that we 6 7 should be including. And I appreciate your 8 bringing that to our attention. 9 MS. FLEMING: Well, it should be in 10 your agency. 11 MR. BENNETT: I'm pretty sure -- I 12 know we have the Firestone report. 13 MS. LEWANDOWSKI: The draft was done 14 prior to March, of the EIS, so --15 MS. FLEMING: Yes. 16 MS. LEWANDOWSKI: We have seen the 17 report, yes. 18 MR. BENNETT: And we will determine whether there's information that needs to be 19 20 incorporated into the final. 21 MS. LEWANDOWSKI: Some of it is 22 already in there, but --23 MS. FLEMING: And the work done 24 earlier? I -- that must be of some value. 25 Oh, yeah. MS. LEWANDOWSKI:

Absolutely. 1 2 MS. FLEMING: Perhaps it was one of 3 the things that prompted the 11 applications. Ι 4 don't know. MR. BENNETT: Possible. We're 5 6 familiar with that, yes. 7 MS. FLEMING: Well, thank you again 8 for coming to Delaware. 9 Thank you. Glad to be MR. BENNETT: 10 here. Anyone else who has not had an opportunity 11 to speak that would like to say anything? Ιf 12 not, does anybody who has already spoken wish to 13 speak again? 14 MS. PURCHASE: I would -- I would 15 just like -- Ruth Ann Purchase again. I would 16 just like to know --17 MR. BENNETT: Could you go to the 18 microphone, please. 19 I am curious MS. PURCHASE: Yeah. 20 about how this was advertised, since many of the 21 organizations I'm connected with didn't get word 22 of it until yesterday. 23 MR. BENNETT: Yeah. I can clarify that for you. We did publish a public notice in 24 25 the Federal Register, and my understanding is we

1	also advertised in the Wilmington paper, the
2	local paper in Wilmington.
3	MS. MADSEN: And media advisories
4	were also issued to the press throughout the
5	region.
6	MS. PURCHASE: Would you say that
7	again?
8	MS. MADSEN: We had a media advisory
9	that was sent out, with all of the meetings
10	listed, and it's also posted on our website.
11	MS. PURCHASE: Where was it sent,
12	the media advisories?
13	MS. MADSEN: Sent to regional media,
14	and sent to outlets in the D.C. area that have
15	affiliates in this area.
16	MS. PURCHASE: Regional media
17	received this document?
18	MR. BENNETT: No. They didn't
19	receive the document. They received the press
20	releases.
21	MS. MADSEN: The press advisory.
22	MS. PURCHASE: How long ago?
23	MS. MADSEN: I'd have to look up the
24	date, but it's been within the past couple weeks
25	that the advisory went out.

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1	MS. FLEMING: I was advised by
2	someone who apparently saw the notice in the
3	Federal Register, but I don't believe any of the
4	media carried this locally.
5	MS. MADSEN: It's possible, yeah.
6	MR. BENNETT: These are standard
7	procedures for notification of public hearings
8	that we pursue. And as far as I know, they've
9	been they've been fulfilled for this one, as
10	well as the other eight meetings that we've had.
11	Okay. Any other questions,
12	comments?
13	MR. HORAN: I'm Charlie Horan. I'd
14	like to address that question. I didn't see it
15	through any of those. I saw it on the internet.
16	MR. BENNETT: Okay.
17	MR. HORAN: Just a standard when I
18	go on in the morning, I see AOL news or
19	something, and it was listed, one of the things
20	that automatically comes to my inbox. So I'm
21	sure anybody that's got their name out there for
22	anything would have seen that, I think. I can
23	hardly believe someone looking for it wouldn't
24	have found it.
25	MR. BENNETT: Okay. Thank you.

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1	Ober And there are athen commonted Ober
1	Okay. Are there any other comments? Okay.
2	Well, like I said, we will be around. I'd like
3	to remind you that the comment period closes on
4	May 30th. Even though you haven't even though
5	you may not have gotten your comments in today,
6	we can receive comments until the 30th of May,
7	either by snail mail or through the web. And
8	we'll treat them, they will be treated with equal
9	consideration.
10	And since there's nobody further to
11	speak, I think we're done. Thank you very much.
12	Adjourned.
13	(Hearing concluded at 7:47 p.m.)
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1	REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
2	
3	I, JULIANNE LaBADIA, Registered Diplomate
4	Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby certify
5	that the foregoing record, pages 1 through 43
б	inclusive, is a true and accurate transcript of
7	my stenographic notes taken on April 26, 2012, in
8	the above-captioned matter.
9	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
10	hand and seal this 2nd day of May, 2012, at
11	Wilmington.
12	
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16	Julianne LaBadia, RDR, CRR
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