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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR PROPOSED GEOLOGICAL AND GEOPHYSICAL ACTIVITIES
IN THE MID- and SOUTH ATLANTIC PLANNING AREA

Monday, April 16, 2012
1:00 p.m.

Presented by: Gary Goeke, Chief of the Regional
Assessment Section of BOEM

Tom Bjerstedt, EIS Coordinator

Jacksonville Marriott
4760 Salisbury Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32256

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. GOEKE: We will go ahead and get on
3 the record here.

4 Good afternoon. Thank you for coming
5 out. We appreciate your turnout of our
6 public hearing this afternoon.

7 My name is Gary Goeke. I am the chief
8 of the regional assessment section for the
9 Bureau of Ocean Energy Management in New
10 Orleans. Sitting to my right is Tom
11 Bjerstedt. Tom is the EIS coordinator and
12 contact manager for this draft EIS that
13 we're holding this discussion on.

14 Before we get too deeply involved in
15 our discussion, what I wanted to do was sort
16 of set a few ground rules to let everyone
17 know how we're going to try and pull this
18 off this afternoon.

19 I appreciate everybody turning out.
20 This is a wonderful turnout. And I
21 wanted to make sure that everybody is clear
22 on our ground rules. Our agency has written
23 a draft and environmental impact statement
24 on the geological and geophysical collection
25 techniques in the Atlantic -- in the Mid-

1 and South Atlantic Planning Areas.

2 All of you can see the maps that we're
3 talking about. This EIS is only a
4 discussion of the geological and geophysical
5 data collection techniques. It's not a
6 general meeting on oil and gas. It's not a
7 general meeting that we can answer a lot of
8 different questions.

9 As we go through the process to build
10 an environmental impact statement, we create
11 what we call an administrative record. The
12 administrative record is what goes to court
13 would be if you're sued. We try to keep our
14 administrative record as clean as we can,
15 and so we would hold our public hearings
16 like this on that environmental document
17 that we're creating.

18 We have a court reporter who is keeping
19 a verbatim transcript of our discussion this
20 afternoon. And we would ask you to keep
21 your comments to the EIS, to the topic at
22 hand, which is geological, geophysical data
23 collection. And the comments we would like
24 to get are comments on the environmental
25 impact statement that we've created.

1 Given that, I will open the meeting.
2 I'll turn it over to Tom. Tom is going to
3 run the meeting. We have our contractor,
4 Will Sloger, who Tom will introduce, from
5 Continental Shelf Associates.

6 And with that, thank you very much for
7 coming.

8 Tom.

9 MR. BJERSTEDT: Good afternoon. My
10 name is Dr. Tom Bjerstedt with the Bureau of
11 Ocean Energy Management. I'm the BOEM
12 coordinator for the document that's under
13 consideration today.

14 After I speak, I'll introduce William
15 Sloger, who is the contractor that we have
16 retained to write the environmental impact
17 statement that we're reviewing today.

18 This is our public meeting on our
19 programmatic EIS for these activities in the
20 Mid- and South Atlantic. This is the first
21 in a series of public meetings that we will
22 hold in these areas on these dates to take
23 the written comments, take your oral
24 testimony about the document that's
25 available for review at this point.

1 We have prepared a draft. We've
2 distributed it to required agencies and
3 people who have asked for it. It's been
4 published on our website and posted there.
5 Notice of availability for the EIS was
6 published in the Federal Register on
7 March 30th.

8 We're here today to collect your
9 comments, any written or oral testimony that
10 you wish to provide that will help us evolve
11 the draft into a final file. As a draft, we
12 put a lot of energy and effort into posing a
13 structure for a decision that the Department
14 of the Interior will need to make.

15 The result of your public comments is
16 to help us re-analyze some of our
17 assumptions, perhaps to also look at the
18 framing of the issues, and just to give us
19 some information that will help us finalize
20 a document that is, in reality, a decision
21 document. It's an important part of the
22 federal government's process for making
23 decisions.

24 It's a very important component for the
25 NEPA process, which many people regard as

1 a pretty important piece of legislation. The
2 purpose of the programmatic EIS is to assess
3 the potential environmental impacts of
4 various types of geological and geophysical
5 techniques that would be conducted in the
6 Mid- and South Atlantic Outer Continental
7 Shelf.

8 We evaluated the projection of activity
9 that could take place in these OCS areas.
10 We evaluate mitigation measures that are
11 available to reduce or eliminate impacts on
12 affected resources in those areas. And this
13 information provides a data and input for
14 our bureau and for other agencies, federal
15 agencies having responsibilities in
16 environmental law for making the decisions
17 that they need to make before those
18 activities are authorized.

19 A BOEM document has a proposed action.
20 The proposed action in our case is to
21 authorize geological and geophysical
22 activities required to support the three
23 program areas that the Bureau of Ocean
24 Energy Management manages. These are three
25 primary areas: Oil and gas; renewable

1 energy; much smaller, but no less important
2 program from marine mineral, acquisition and
3 use, primarily sand and/or gravel, if there
4 is gravel there.

5 These are the Mid-Atlantic planning
6 areas here. You can see on the maps that
7 are around the room Mid-Atlantic and the
8 South Atlantic. This is the edge of the
9 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone
10 for the United States. This purple line
11 here, that's a little harder to see, is the
12 edge of a possible extended Continental
13 Shelf. That's not territorial waters that
14 we have at states, but there is a procedure
15 in international law for the United States
16 to pursue exclusive economic rights in that
17 area. The United States does not have that
18 provision at this point. But if it should
19 do that, we wanted to have this
20 environmental review include that area until
21 the United States decides to seek that sort
22 of authority.

23 The types of activities we are talking
24 about are geological in nature and
25 geophysical in nature. They're exploratory.

1 Geological activities involve coring,
2 which is near surficial sampling of the soft
3 sediments. It can involve shallow test
4 drilling, which would be a little bit deeper,
5 primarily less than 500 feet. Or if you're
6 drilling even deeper still, beyond 500, you
7 tend to preclude that or regard that as a
8 deep stratigraphic test. That's the kind of
9 activity that would be -- is a geological
10 component. It's under consideration in the
11 document.

12 The geophysical activities we're
13 talking about are two- and three-dimensional
14 site of surveying with airguns. Also,
15 controlled source electromagnetic surveys,
16 these tend to be used by industry for
17 examining the content for formation fluids.

18 High-resolution geophysical surveys,
19 these are engineering in nature primarily.
20 The airguns, if they're used in these type
21 of surveys, tend to be much, much smaller.
22 They're used for analyzing the
23 geoengineering properties for shallow, soft
24 sediment for in placing structures or in
25 placing anchors on the sea bottom.

1 Multibeam echosounders is a device for
2 determining asymmetry. A sidescan sonar is
3 a device for determining construction on the
4 bottom, perhaps shipwrecks perhaps that have
5 hard bottom communities, live bottom
6 communities.

7 Boomers, contrary to the rather
8 intimidating name, is an electromechanical
9 device. It's not an airgun. It's an
10 electrical circuit -- or electrical charge
11 that's introduced to the water and a
12 metallic diaphragm responds to it and that
13 is sort of a signal that is put into the
14 water column. It's not an airgun type of
15 explosion. That type of technique is simply
16 called a boomer, and also in a family that
17 you can have a tool called a spark.

18 We're also considering gravity and
19 magnetic surveys, those conducted on the
20 ocean, usually at the same time the site and
21 survey is conducted, but they're also
22 airborne surveys by aircraft.

23 Now, impact-producing factors is in the
24 NEPA jargon, a stressor on the environment.
25 You are proposing to have a suite of

1 activities take place on public land. You
2 have to analyze what sorts of stressors or
3 impulses you are introducing into the
4 environment. You have to understand what
5 things are influencing resources. For our
6 circumstance, we are talking about things
7 that are routine, things that are expected,
8 normal course of action, and also we have to
9 consider accidental events.

10 Things that are expected as a result of
11 conducting the surveys include this suite of
12 activities here of the impacting factor.

13 Active sound sources would be from an
14 airgun, for example. Electromechanical
15 sound sources are those other tools that
16 don't introduce that kind of impulsive burst
17 of sound into the water. They are much more
18 benign in comparison to airguns.

19 Aircraft traffic and noise for the
20 conduct of aerial magnetic surveys, for
21 example, or aircrafts, helicopters and
22 lighthouse service, vessels that are working
23 offshore, sometimes they have to carry tools
24 out, and sometimes they have to carry
25 materials out. Those are an impacting

1 factor, as well.

2 Drilling and coring that takes place as
3 operational wastes, that could mean cutting
4 from shallow drill coring, the mud cuttings
5 that are brought out. Also, drilling muds
6 that are used to facilitate the drilling
7 shallow holds.

8 Sea floor disturbances would
9 be those -- any disturbance on the bottom or
10 bottom sampling, actually grab the samples
11 from the bottom itself.

12 Drilling and coring, which includes
13 those discharges. You have to put anchors
14 on the bottom before you begin your well.

15 Placement of anchors, cables, sensors,
16 anything that disturbs the bottom is
17 something that needs to be considered.

18 The onshore support services, these are
19 onshore components of offshore work. Ocean
20 boats have to berth somewhere. They have
21 suppliers that bring -- or from which they
22 buy services. They have crew members that
23 live places. All of these are indirect and
24 cascading events that are part of the
25 proposed action, just a little bit more

1 indirect.

2 Vessels cause traffic on the water of
3 noise. They have exclusion zones for safety
4 reasons for setting back from protective
5 species. They also generate waste just by
6 the simple fact of their operation. And
7 human activity on the ocean involves trash
8 and debris, and that's also a potential
9 impacting factor.

10 Accidental events. In our
11 circumstances here, since we're not going
12 through oil, we're not transporting oil,
13 we're not transporting much of anything.
14 We're just worried about fuel spills that
15 might result from an accident or a
16 collision.

17 So you have an array of stressors on
18 the environment. What are the environmental
19 resources that are potentially impacted?
20 That's an affected environment. That's one
21 of the components for EIS evaluation.

22 In our case, we've taken a look at the
23 areas of interest. We're considering the
24 benthic communities. We consider fisheries,
25 commercial and recreation, and also essential

1 fish habitat which bears on the health and
2 viability for commercial and recreational
3 fisheries.

4 We're considering marine mammals that
5 inhabit that area, sea turtles, coastal and
6 marine birds, protected species of any of
7 those major groups that I just mentioned.

8 Also, the socioeconomic issues;
9 archaeological resources, the eastern
10 seaboard has a long history and lots of
11 shipwrecks out there.

12 Marine protected areas. There are at
13 least two. There is the National Marine
14 Sanctuary in the southern, South Atlantic
15 planning area, Gray's Reef, that's one. And
16 in the Mid-Atlantic planning area you have
17 the National Marine Sanctuary. Those are
18 marine protected areas.

19 Recreational resources tend to be
20 things done a bit more closer inshore, but
21 they could be happening offshore as well.
22 They take place and they place in the same
23 area.

24 Human resources and land use. I
25 alluded to the support functions for people

1 working on the ocean have support that is
2 taking place on land.

3 Other marine uses, there are large
4 blocks in the Atlantic and South Atlantic
5 planning areas that are used by Department
6 of Defense for various activities that take
7 place on the surface. Activities that take
8 place on the water, and even activities that
9 take place in the air that drop things in
10 the water. There are vast areas of those
11 planning -- OCS planning areas that have
12 military -- potential military uses.

13 There are also large areas that have a
14 component of NASA programs, National
15 Atmospheric -- NASA -- Aeronautic and Space
16 Administration. There is the Cape Canaveral
17 complex we have at the southern end of the
18 south Atlantic planning area. There's also
19 the Wallops Island Flight Facility, which is
20 on the very northern part of the Virginia
21 coast in the northern part of the
22 Mid-Atlantic planning area. So these areas
23 have national missions that involve private
24 and public funding for space exploration of
25 various types.

1 The heart and soul of an environmental
2 impact statement is the range of
3 alternatives that are chosen for analyses.
4 For an EIS, you have a proposed action, and
5 the BOEM regulations and the law requires
6 you to -- if you're proposing an action on
7 the federal lands, to try to look at
8 alternatives for how you can conduct that
9 work, gather the information that's in
10 concordance with the need for the
11 information and the purpose that you're
12 doing it.

13 We have three alternatives that we've
14 structured. They are basically framed
15 around existing regulations and time-area
16 restrictions that currently exist on the OCS
17 and also in state waters. These are
18 primarily set up for northern right whales.
19 There is a critical habitat area. There's
20 also seasonal management areas that I'll
21 show you on a map later that identifies
22 where these areas are. So they have a --
23 there's an existing time area component and
24 these areas are restricted for vessel speed.
25 When whales are there during certain times

1 of the year, the NOAA regulations have set
2 up these time-area designations for
3 controlling the speed of the vessels. They
4 want the vessels to go slower so that
5 there's a lessened hazard for striking
6 whales that might be there. We're simply
7 adopting these time-area designations.

8 Also, the Bureau of Ocean Energy
9 Management, we have existing mitigation and
10 practices, protective measures that we
11 employ for this kind of activity in the Gulf
12 of Mexico. We have a long history of use
13 and activity in the Gulf and we have a
14 series of, I will call them design elements,
15 for how you conduct surveys. In our
16 program, we have what's called notices to
17 lessees, NTLs. And these are documents
18 that are not regulations, but they are
19 explanations for regulations that are not
20 multi-specific. None of our regulations are
21 ultra-specific for all circumstances, and
22 NTLs are a way for our agency to
23 communicate to people working on the ocean
24 that have leases that are exploring how to
25 interpret our regulations.

1 And in there, there are various
2 practices that have been developed, such as
3 protective species observers, vessel strike
4 avoidance, what you do when you encounter a
5 protected species on the water, marine
6 trash and debris awareness.

7 All of these are existing suites of
8 guidance that we can import to any sort of
9 new activity that is taking place on the
10 Atlantic. I call them design elements
11 because they ultimately are guidance for how
12 you begin, how you conduct, and how you may
13 even shut down survey once it's actually
14 being deployed.

15 That's sort of the basis for our
16 proposed action: Existing, regulation, and
17 time-area closures and restricted activities
18 and the proven and used guidances for
19 existing information that we have in the
20 Gulf of Mexico.

21 Alternative B, the philosophy is to
22 take what Alternative A has and add to it an
23 enhanced component of protection, and also an
24 additional element for time-area activity
25 restrictions that make sense. As part of

1 the Alternative B, we have expanded time-area
2 closures for the northern right whales,
3 seasonal management areas. And I'll get to a
4 map, again.

5 A closure area that we're including as
6 part of the alternative for nesting sea
7 turtles offshore of Brevard County in
8 Central Florida. It's a very prolific area
9 for those species, waterhead turtles. There
10 are tens of thousands of nests that have
11 been reported and observed onshore.

12 For deep-penetrating seismic surveys
13 and separation and simultaneous surveys that
14 are taking place, and also as part of
15 Alternative B, required passive acoustic
16 monitoring, or sometimes you'll hear that
17 referred to as PAM. PAM is nothing more
18 than the deployment of sensitive hydrophone
19 in the water and monitoring by technicians
20 to see if there are characteristic sounds
21 made by marine mammals that infer that
22 they're present underwater.

23 A marine mammal that surfaces, they
24 have to come up to breathe. You can see them.
25 But if they're under water, you can't see

1 them. PAM is a technique that might be
2 helpful to help identify when there are
3 animals around that you can't see. That's
4 what it is all about.

5 Alternative C is the no-action
6 alternative that's required by BOEM
7 evaluation. In our case, since we're
8 considering three program areas -- oil and
9 gas, renewable energy, and marine minerals --
10 our no-action alternative has been framed
11 that no action would take place for oil and
12 gas activity. There are no current leases
13 on the Atlantic at this point. There's no
14 authorized lease sales. There's been no
15 authorized work on the Atlantic for quite
16 some time, 25 years or more. So the
17 no-action alternative for that program is
18 nothing happening.

19 Now for the other programs, renewable
20 energy and marine minerals, they are already
21 authorized on the OCS. They're taking place
22 on a case-by-case basis. When someone comes
23 in with a proposal or a project, the
24 renewable energy program, or for marine
25 minerals, we take it up and we process it

1 through the system. So that is a status quo
2 aspect for those programs. We're not
3 seeking to shut down something that's going
4 on now. We're seeking to analyze whether or
5 not to begin something that hasn't begun.

6 Alternative A is to -- going back to A,
7 allow this activity out to the 350-mile
8 nautical limit. For the entire area of
9 interest, the survey protocols that I
10 mentioned to you earlier, the NTLs that we
11 used that designed how you design a survey;
12 how you begin a survey; how you conduct it
13 while it's going on and how in some cases
14 you shut it down if something happens. If
15 you see animals in the area, you ramp down.
16 That's part of the type of protocol. They
17 apply -- seismic survey protocols will apply
18 with airgun-type surveys and also through
19 the electromechanical types of
20 high-resolution surveys.

21 The time-area closures for the northern
22 rights, November 1st through April 30th for
23 the Mid-Atlantic seasonal management area.
24 Again, map to follow. And a little bit
25 later in the year in the southeast seasonal

1 management area, because these are migrating
2 creatures. They summertime offshore in New
3 England states and migrate down the
4 coastline in the summer months and early
5 fall and they winter offshore Jacksonville
6 in the critical habitat area.

7 Also, in these seasonal management areas
8 for the periods that are identified here,
9 which also correspond to the vessel speed
10 restrictions that National Oceanographic and
11 Atmospheric Administration recognizes, that
12 no airguns proposed for deployment in those
13 periods of time in those areas.

14 We would include the guidance for
15 vessel strike avoidance, the NTLs avoidance
16 and reporting for sensitive benthic
17 communities. If you're proposing to disturb
18 the sea bottom in some manner or form in the
19 course of doing G&G activity, you need to do
20 certain surveys, and the reports that result
21 from those surveys are prescribed in NTLs,
22 so our people get to review those surveys
23 before operators go offshore and do
24 anything.

25 Military and NASA coordination for the

1 range complexes that are out there, so you
2 have a point of contact with the appropriate
3 military point of contact there, so that
4 those folks know if we're seeking to permit
5 some work that is going on out there, we can
6 coordinate with them. They can tell us,
7 hey, this is not a good idea at this
8 particular time for this particular reason,
9 that's why the coordination is included.

10 And the passive acoustic modeling that
11 I've mentioned, the PAM, is just recommended
12 under Alternative A. It's not required.
13 It's not part of that particular
14 alternative.

15 Now, these are seasonal management
16 areas that I had mentioned to you. This
17 hatched area offshore Jacksonville extends
18 in a belt here all the way down the Florida
19 coastline to the bottom of the southern
20 South Atlantic area is the critical habitat
21 for the northern right whale. This orangish
22 box here that is containing the critical
23 habitat is what they call their seasonal
24 management area. That's the area in which
25 they have vessel speed restrictions for

1 those periods of a year because there are
2 whales in there and you want to keep the
3 ships going slow so that they have a
4 fighting chance of seeing whales if they are
5 there.

6 The south of -- the Mid-Atlantic
7 seasonal management area are these yellow
8 regions. There is a continuous belt from
9 Brunswick all the way up the coast to
10 Wilmington. It extends offshore about 20
11 nautical miles, and then you will see these
12 small cuspid regions that are located off
13 the miles of bays and large estuaries where
14 there are a lot of vessels coming in and
15 out.

16 When the whales are migrating down this
17 corridor, they want people to keep their
18 eyes -- keep their eyes clear for whales
19 that might be in the area. We're proposing
20 that that be part of the time-area closure
21 for the deployment of airguns during those
22 periods. That's part of what we're -- our
23 concept with time-area closures in
24 Alternative A.

25 Now, Alternative B, to amplify what

1 that's all about, is also to allow these
2 activities off of the 350 nautical miles to
3 include all the mitigations that I just
4 mentioned to you with Alternative A. The
5 expanded time-area closures for northern
6 right whale, an additional closure zone out
7 to 20 nautical miles from the coastline to
8 close the gaps in the Mid-Atlantic seasonal
9 management areas, map to follow. And an
10 additional closure zone out to 20 nautical
11 miles, it extends south of the southeastern
12 seasonal management area that I showed you
13 on the map on the previous slide. And the
14 time-area closure for the sea turtles during
15 nesting season off Brevard County.

16 I mentioned to you seismic separation
17 for simultaneous surveys. 40 kilometers is
18 what we're proposing, because industry
19 generally keeps a distance of 20 kilometers
20 from any seismic survey ongoing just to
21 avoid interference between airguns array and
22 one seismic survey and an airgun array in
23 another one. So we're proposing to step
24 back that area so that there's a bit of a
25 buffer zone between, just so that it's not

1 sonicfied with airgun activity.

2 And the survey protocol includes
3 required passive acoustic monitoring.
4 Required use of the PAM. PAM is kind of
5 considered by many people to be a bit
6 experimental, but it is used. It is used by
7 other countries to various degrees of
8 success, but we're proposing that the
9 industry adopt it and use it.

10 For this Alternative B time-area
11 closures, these are the areas that I showed
12 you for A. Here is the southeast seasonal
13 management area, critical habitat and
14 hatcher. Here's the Mid-Atlantic seasonal
15 management area. And what we're proposing
16 is to include in a beltway between these
17 cuspis areas that connect up with the
18 existing time-area closure that NOAH
19 recognizes.

20 Also, from the southern end of the
21 southern southeastern management area, if
22 you go down all the way in a similar belt to
23 this southern edge of the South Atlantic
24 planning area, so that in effect what the
25 alternative is proposing is to have a

1 continuous beltway along the seaboard out 20
2 nautical miles along -- all the way from the
3 top of the northern part of the Mid-Atlantic
4 planning area all the way to the southern
5 extent of the South Atlantic planning area.

6 And this is the area where the
7 migrating whales tend to be focused. They
8 can be found anywhere, but they tend to go
9 along the shoreline. They tend to be seen
10 most often along the shoreline. And what
11 we're proposing as part of this alternative
12 is just to exclude airgun activity in that
13 belt for those periods of time. That is
14 what Alternative B is all about.

15 The area off of Brevard County, I
16 mentioned that there are prolific numbers of
17 loggerhead sea turtle nesting spots here.
18 The seasonal area that's being proposed is
19 out to 11 miles, nautical miles, for this
20 part of the year, because the turtles come
21 in, they lay their eggs, they hatch, they
22 migrate out. It is probably a good idea to
23 keep active airgun sources away from that
24 area for that period of time.

25 Alternative C, I mentioned to you no

1 action for oil and gas, but to continue the
2 status quo for the other programs because
3 there is no restriction on them at this
4 point. It is being considered as a total
5 program in this environmental impact
6 statement because we don't have any
7 programmatic consideration of everything we
8 do in this category in this area.

9 What you will see in the EIS, if you'll
10 take it up and take a look at it, is a
11 rendering for -- a qualitative rendering
12 what we call significance criteria for what
13 these impacting factors are doing to these
14 particular resources.

15 If you look at the document itself, if
16 you take it up, look at Table 2-2. It's a
17 really good summary where you can go to see
18 all of the resources, all of the impacting
19 factors that affect those resources, each of
20 the three alternatives and how they've been
21 assessed according to qualitative
22 significance criteria.

23 Each of these qualitative terms are
24 defined in the document. But this is a
25 really good way if you want to see a

1 complete roll-up, is to examine Table 2-2.

2 Part of the BOEM evaluation includes
3 consultations that are required by
4 environmental law. Now that we have a draft
5 document on the street open for comment,
6 we've already begun informal consultations
7 for Marine Mammal Protection Act. Also
8 Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.
9 Once we have formal documentation prepared,
10 we'll begin formal consultations other than
11 the laws.

12 What are the next steps. The public
13 comment period extends over April and May.
14 Once we have comments from people like
15 yourself, from other federal agencies and
16 gathered in from the other meetings that we
17 will be holding, we'll revise to a final
18 during the summer and early part of the
19 third quarter.

20 Once we have a revised document, it
21 will go through a review cycle within the
22 Department of Interior and we'll begin to
23 fashion what kind of recommendation we would
24 like to make to the Secretary of Interior
25 for a decision. All of the environmental

1 consultations are taking place during the
2 period of time between right now and when
3 we're finished.

4 The record of decision we forecast to
5 be sometime early in December before the end
6 of the calendar year.

7 I mentioned to you that the comment
8 period closes May 30th. Comments we collect
9 here orally or if you happen to hand it to
10 us in writing as part of the record that we
11 consider.

12 You can e-mail comments to our
13 dedicated e-mail box GGEIS@boem.gov. This
14 is a link for the -- where the document is
15 posted on our regional web page for the
16 project.

17 If you choose to do snail mail, you can
18 mail to this address here. These are all of
19 the public meeting announcements. All of
20 this information, our newspaper
21 announcements and the Federal Register, and
22 it's generally available. So if you don't
23 have it right now, you don't have to
24 furiously type to copy it.

25 In closing, what I would like to mention

1 is that we spent the better part of a year --
2 in fact, longer than a year -- putting together
3 this draft proposal. It involves
4 state-of-the practice modeling for noise in
5 the sea for these types of instruments.
6 It's difficult material to digest. What I'm
7 asking of those folks who wish to offer
8 comments is that they take a good read of
9 the document. It is not easy reading. Try
10 to understand the mitigations, try to
11 understand the motivation for the
12 mitigations. Digest the material as best as
13 you can and pass it back to us to help us
14 make a decision, because that is what we
15 really seek.

16 At this point, I'll introduce Mr. Will
17 Sloger, who will talk about in greater detail
18 how we assess the impacts on marine mammals
19 for this environmental review. I talked
20 about the whole superstructure. He'll talk
21 a little bit more about the modeling that
22 was done and some of the assumptions that
23 are used in order to assess impacts on
24 marine mammals. Mr. Sloger is from CSA
25 International, Inc., located right here in

1 the great state of Florida, in Stuart.

2 Bill?

3 First of all, I have to boot up his
4 presentation.

5 MR. GOEKE: While Tom is doing that,
6 let me suggest if you are interested in what
7 we are talking about this afternoon, when
8 you got here we asked you to sign in. That
9 sign-in sheet allows you to get added to our
10 mail list, allows us to send you publication
11 notices, allows us to keep in touch with
12 you. If you are interested in that
13 happening, then make sure you sign the
14 sign-in sheet either before you leave or at
15 the break, because we will be taking about a
16 15-minute break after the speaker. But
17 that's important for you to track what we
18 are doing. We are not trying to track you
19 or track who you are, but if you want to get
20 these news fliers, you have to sign the
21 sheet.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. SLOGER: Thank you, Tom. I would
24 like to now describe the assessment of
25 impacts to marine mammals. There were 15

1 research areas that were listed on one of
2 your earlier slides that Tom had just showed
3 you.

4 A multistep that was followed in
5 assessing impacts for all resource areas
6 including marine mammals.

7 The first step in the process was to
8 identify resources within the area of
9 interest by species, distribution, and
10 destiny. The criteria that define the
11 significance of the impact on the resource
12 is then established.

13 The next step in the process is to
14 identify the factors that could produce the
15 impacts, such as noise. Once these steps
16 are completed, data is collected about the
17 proposed action, resources potentially
18 impacted, and the measures that could
19 mitigate those impacts.

20 The final step in the process is to
21 analyze impacts by developing estimates of
22 incidental take, if any, and determining the
23 level of impact.

24 There are 38 species of marine mammals
25 known to occur within the area of interest.

1 These include seven baleen whales, 27
2 toothed whales, dolphins and porpoises,
3 three pinnipeds and one sirenian. The
4 sirenian, the West Indian manatee and the
5 pinniped species are not likely to be
6 affected because of their limited occurrence
7 in the area.

8 To establish impact significance
9 criteria, we must first look at current
10 federal regulations. The Endangered Species
11 Act applies to certain marine mammals that
12 have been designated as threatened or
13 endangered.

14 BOEM has prepared a biological
15 assessment to comply with Section 7
16 consultation requirements with the National
17 Marine Fishery Service regarding listed
18 species. In the future, operators will have
19 to apply for incidental take authorizations
20 for their specific surveys.

21 There is seven species of marine
22 mammals known to occur within the area of
23 interest that are currently listed as
24 endangered under the Endangered Species Act.
25 These include five baleen whales, the blue,

1 sei, fin, humpback and north atlantic right
2 whale, one toothed whale, the sperm whale,
3 and West Indian manatee.

4 One species, the north atlantic right
5 whale, was designated critical habitat within
6 the area of interest. Tom has already gone
7 over this slide pretty well. I just wanted
8 to point this out, because it is very
9 important as far as the mitigation program
10 for this proposed action.

11 The analysis of impacts was designed to
12 address harassment to marine mammals, both
13 Level A and B, as defined under the Marine
14 Mammal Protection Act from project-related
15 activities.

16 To assess impact levels, categories of
17 significance must be defined. Broad
18 significance criteria were developed for the
19 biological and socioeconomic resources based
20 on the results of the resource streaming and
21 in consideration of recent environmental
22 impact analyses and their respective impact
23 descriptions.

24 The criteria reflect considerations for
25 both contacts and intensity of four basic

1 parameters. Detectability, that is, is an
2 impact measurable or detectable. Duration,
3 is it short term or long term. Spatial
4 extent, is it localized or extensive in
5 severity.

6 For the purposes of this analysis,
7 negative impacts have been classified into
8 one of four levels: Negligible, minor,
9 moderate, and major, as shown here with
10 their general definitions.

11 All impact-producing factors evaluated
12 in the PEIS were identified earlier in the
13 presentation. These five were identified
14 for the proposed action as having potential
15 to affect marine mammals. All but the
16 first factor have been found to have
17 negligible to minor impact on marine
18 mammals.

19 The remainder of this discussion will
20 focus on the analysis of potential impacts
21 of noise from active acoustic sound sources.

22 There are three basic steps to the
23 assessment of impacts: Collection of
24 support of information, establishment of
25 mitigation measures, and the determination

1 of potential impacts.

2 Support of information includes
3 materials about the proposed action,
4 information about potentially-impacted
5 resources, and the estimation of the impact
6 to those resources.

7 The acoustic sources covered in the
8 analysis are divided into two categories:
9 airguns and electromechanical sources. Six
10 sound sources were chosen as representative
11 of various type of surveys, two sizes of
12 airgun arrays, and four electromechanical
13 sources. These six sources are
14 representative of all surveys within the two
15 general categories.

16 The unit of measure to define the level
17 of survey activity during the time period
18 analyzed during the year 2012 to 2020 is
19 line kilometers. As you can see from the
20 total number of line kilometers for the
21 nine-year period, the majority proposed
22 survey activity would be 2D-sized
23 exploration surveys. Most of the surveys
24 listed here are deep penetration size that
25 involve the use of airgun sound.

1 This figure provides visual
2 representation of the information on the
3 previous slide. It is a view of where two
4 of the proposed surveys would be located and
5 the relative levels of survey activity. The
6 areas that are darkest represent the areas
7 of greatest survey activity.

8 Information was also gathered for all
9 potentially-impacted marine mammals species
10 regarding hearing capability and
11 sensitivity. In addition, acoustic impact
12 thresholds for Level A and Level B
13 harassment were reviewed using established
14 National Marine Fishery service approach and
15 the approach proposed by Southhall, et al.

16 In order to better understand the
17 potential acoustic-related impacts from the
18 proposed activities, a modeling study was
19 conducted to estimate the propagation of
20 underwater sounds within the area of
21 interest produced by representative sound
22 sources.

23 The sound sources were modeled at 22
24 modeling sites located throughout the area
25 of interest to depths different in physical

1 conditions such as water depth, sea floor
2 composition, and seasonal temperature
3 differences which affect relative underwater
4 sound speed profiles.

5 These combinations resulted in 35
6 propagation scenarios which, when combined
7 with the different acoustic source
8 configurations, led to 105 different acoustic
9 propagation estimates.

10 This is one of the intermediate
11 products in modeling effort. These figures
12 show relative differences in predicted sound
13 pressure levels for the two sizes of
14 airguns, the locations on the Continental
15 Slope and the Continental Shelf.

16 Now I would like to discuss the
17 acoustic integration Model A, which was used
18 to predict the average number of marine
19 mammals that could be exposed to sound
20 levels above a given threshold in order to
21 estimate take.

22 To accomplish this, a virtual
23 environment was created within which sound
24 sources and animals were placed. Specific
25 circumstances modeled included sound source

1 properties and movements derived from the
2 acoustic propagation monitoring results.

3 Species distribution and dive and swim
4 pattern and environmental conditions
5 affecting transmission. Expected effects
6 from proposed mitigation measures were also
7 fed into the software program.

8 BOEM conducted modeling for incidental
9 takes. Not for incidental take
10 authorization, but for impact analysis and
11 to help in developing appropriate
12 mitigation.

13 The analysis of impact for marine
14 mammal species was very conservative. While
15 it takes into account certain mitigation
16 measures, take estimates did not include the
17 effects of operational mitigation measures,
18 such as pre-activity surveys of safety zones
19 by a protected species observers, ramp-up
20 procedures or shutdown measures for animals
21 entering the safety zone during the surveys.

22 It also did not factor in the hearing
23 range for species. That is, some species
24 may not be able to hear within the range of
25 frequencies of sound produced by the

1 airguns.

2 This slide summarizes the mitigation
3 measures for reducing potential impacts to
4 marine mammals as implemented in the three
5 project alternatives. All authorizations
6 for seismic airgun and monitoring airgun
7 high-resolution surveys would include the
8 survey protocol as Tom described earlier.

9 That specifies mitigation measures for
10 protective species, including requirements
11 for visual monitoring of the exclusion zone
12 by its protected species observers and
13 start-up and shutdown procedures.

14 Alternative A also includes the option
15 we use of PAM, as Tom talked about, to help
16 develop -- to help vocalizing marine
17 mammals, along with the sight and survey
18 mitigation measures.

19 Use of PAM, of course, is mandatory for
20 Alternative B. Alternative B would also
21 establish the 40 kilometers separation
22 distance between simultaneous surveys to
23 limit its sonification in large areas at the
24 same time.

25 Geographic separation of current

1 surveys is not required for Alternative A.
2 All authorizations for shipboard surveys
3 that include guidance for vessel strike
4 avoidance and renewable events.

5 As you saw earlier, this is a slide
6 showing areas that will be closed as part of
7 Alternative A and, of course, those areas
8 are expanded under Alternative B, both north
9 and south.

10 I would like to conclude with this
11 table. It lists the impact levels for all
12 of the impact-producing factors applicable
13 to marine mammals under all three
14 alternatives.

15 Alternative A, of course, is the
16 proposed action, followed through to
17 Alternative C, is the no-action alternative.

18 As you can see, with the exception of
19 active acoustic sound sources, the impact
20 level is negligible to minor for all of the
21 other impact-producing factors.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. GOEKE: Thank you, Will.

24 At this point, thank you all. I know
25 that this -- we had a lot of information

1 that needs to be presented and I appreciate
2 your patience with this.

3 At this point we're going to move to
4 the comment section of our meeting. Do we
5 have any elected officials in the audience?
6 We do? We offer you the chance to speak
7 first, if you care to take it.

8 MS. HUTTON: I will wait my turn. I'm
9 third.

10 MR. GOEKE: Okay. All right. Then we
11 will move to the list of speakers as they're
12 signed in. Kevin Doyle is first.

13 MR. DOYLE: (Tapping mic.)

14 MR. GOEKE: Sorry. There is a little
15 button on the top of that, that needs to be
16 pressed.

17 MR. DOYLE: Thank you for allowing me
18 the opportunity to be here today, and thanks
19 for choosing Jacksonville, Florida to be
20 first public hearing.

21 My name is Kevin Doyle. I am the
22 Florida Executive Director for the Consumer
23 Energy Alliance, a nonpartisan, nonprofit
24 group dedicated to expanding dialogue
25 between the energy and consuming sectors and

1 ensuring balanced national energy policy.

2 I'm pleased to comment today on behalf of
3 Consumer Energy Alliance.

4 Considering that more than 30 years
5 have passed since the last estimates of
6 Atlantic OCS energy resources were
7 completed, we must allow for seismic studies
8 to be conducted in an
9 environmentally-friendly manner so that
10 proper resource assessments can be made to
11 support future lease sales.

12 With the availability of newer and
13 better seismic exploration technologies, it
14 is likely that current estimates of oil and
15 natural gas resources in the Atlantic OCS
16 will change because the latest technology
17 will allow for the development of resources
18 that were previously thought unrecoverable
19 or because new locations of these resources
20 might be found. In fact, further
21 exploration has led to increased resource
22 estimates in parts of offshore Alaska and
23 the Gulf of Mexico, where oil estimates
24 increased by 400 percent and natural gas
25 estimates doubled between 1995 and 2003.

1 Quite simply, there is much for us to
2 learn about the energy resources contained
3 within Atlantic waters, and we must begin
4 that process as soon as possible. We must
5 recognize the tremendous economic
6 opportunity that safe and responsible
7 offshore energy exploration presents to the
8 citizens of Florida and the nation at large.

9 According to a 2011 Woods Mackenzie
10 study, oil and gas development in the
11 Atlantic OCS could generate up to 140,000
12 jobs and \$14 billion in government revenue
13 annually.

14 The U.S. oil and gas industry supports
15 over nine million American jobs -- both
16 directly and indirectly -- and generates
17 nearly \$1 trillion in economic activity
18 every year. If access to areas currently
19 off-limits to production were granted, an
20 additional \$1.7 trillion in government
21 revenues could be generated.

22 It is time to implement a balanced,
23 commonsense national energy strategy that
24 creates jobs, improves our national energy
25 security and responsibly allows access to

1 our abundant offshore resources.

2 In conclusion, Consumer Energy Alliance
3 feels that with the appropriate mitigation
4 measures, seismic surveys can be undertaken
5 with little or no impact to marine life. As
6 such, we hope that the process surrounding
7 the development of the PEIS moves forward
8 expeditiously so that this essential data
9 can be available as soon as possible to
10 support future lease sales and resource
11 assessments.

12 CEA thanks the Bureau of Ocean
13 Management for their work on the PEIS. And
14 thank you again for allowing me to speak
15 today.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

18 (Clapping.)

19 MR. BJERSTEDT: William Boe.

20 MR. BOE: I would like to thank you for
21 bringing these hearings to the people of the
22 state of Florida. It's certainly a timely
23 topic.

24 My name is Bill Boe. I'm from
25 Gainesville and speaking as a south Florida

1 farmer. I moved to Florida as a school
2 teacher in Marion County and I served in the
3 Vietnam War and speak strictly on behalf of
4 myself representing no formal group.

5 I would like to state with absolutely
6 no reservations that I support the physical
7 processes that you suggested today. Likely
8 accurate, more current data and we'll need
9 to expend the domestic actuator energy
10 production in a responsible and safe manner.

11 As a Florida public school teacher, I
12 know in our classrooms in this state we have
13 a talent, and I know that the engineering
14 communities provide the technology that we
15 can collect the needed data in a safe manner
16 as you've proposed today.

17 I believe Alternative A's proposed
18 action is practical, responsible, and
19 certainly needed. I want to see our
20 resources, possibly inventory that lead to
21 new leases that would expand production.

22 I think Alternative C, which was
23 no-action maintained status quo and no new data
24 collection, is certainly impractical and
25 irresponsible.

1 I would like to recall an incident from
2 my personal background that I think shows
3 the necessity of having the most available
4 data for a lot of your purposes.

5 I was a junior at the University of
6 Georgia when I enlisted in the Army
7 Infantry, volunteered for Vietnam, served
8 the Bally (phonetic) Company, First
9 Battalion, 14th Infantry. My final military
10 adventure was on June the 7th, 1968 as
11 platoon sergeant and my patrol was ambushed
12 through the Cambodian border. Out of 27 of
13 us, 17 were killed or wounded. We weren't
14 where we thought we were and we weren't
15 where we needed to be. The reason for that
16 is we had inaccurate maps. We were using
17 maps left over by the French.

18 I think we're in a very important
19 period of time in our country's development
20 and history where we need to use the most
21 accurate information available to plot our
22 future course.

23 Obviously, our current scenario as far
24 as energy is certainly unacceptable to me as
25 a consumer, as an American citizen of

1 Jacksonville, as a Navy town. We send
2 people throughout the world to protect
3 international shipping lanes in the world.
4 We can bring those resources other people
5 create, to bring us, at fairly high rates.
6 I filled up in Gainesville at \$3.98 today.

7 I think it is irresponsible sending our
8 servicemen all over the world to protect
9 other peoples' energy, but to send it to us
10 to sell at higher rates.

11 I would like to see us as a nation to
12 be responsible, identify our own resources,
13 and use it for own benefit in a responsible
14 and practical manner.

15 Thank you, very much.

16 (Clapping.)

17 MR. BJERSTEDT: Marge Hutton.

18 MS. HUTTON: Good afternoon. I'm Marge
19 Hutton. I'm a member of the town of Orange
20 Park Council. I'm the immediate past
21 president of the Clay County Chamber of
22 Commerce and I am running for county
23 commissioner, District 3, in Clay County.

24 Business, especially small businesses,
25 are an economic engine of Florida. And as

1 the cost of doing business continues to
2 rise, more and more businesses are forced to
3 close permanently, and in this economic
4 climate we must do all that we can to
5 maintain a climate that businesses can
6 thrive.

7 One way to do that is to help lower the
8 cost that discourage businesses from
9 starting here and prevent existing
10 businesses from growing and expanding.

11 Energy costs from electric bills to
12 fuel for vehicles to the cost of
13 transporting goods and products have a huge
14 impact on our businesses. And we have an
15 opportunity to help get those costs under
16 control by increasing our domestic energy
17 supplies.

18 I ask you to move forward with the
19 seismic surveys in the Atlantic outer
20 Continental Shelf for the sake of Clay
21 County, for the sake of Florida, and our
22 nation's businesses.

23 These surveys are an important first
24 step toward developing domestic oil and
25 natural gas resources that can ultimately

1 help lower energy costs that greatly affect
2 businesses and the employers. Help Florida
3 businesses stay in business by increasing
4 domestic supplies of fuel and getting our
5 energy costs under control.

6 I thank you for your time.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MR. BJERSTEDT: Eric Hamilton.

9 MR. HAMILTON: Good afternoon. My name
10 is Eric Hamilton. I'm the associate
11 director of the Florida Petroleum Council,
12 Division of the American Petroleum
13 Institute.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
15 today about this PEIS, which will support
16 the issuance of permits to conduct
17 geological and geophysical study activities
18 on the Atlantic outer Continental Shelf.

19 The oil and natural gas industry has a
20 long history of working with the Department
21 of Interior to develop this country's
22 natural resources to the benefit of the U.S.
23 economy and all Americans. Our industry
24 stands ready to invest in exploration off
25 the Atlantic OCS, and this PEIS is a needed

1 first step to begin the process of
2 generating the data that will allow for more
3 accurate estimates of the potential for oil
4 and natural gas development in this area.
5 Generating new data is very important for
6 the Atlantic OCS, given that current
7 estimates are based on decades-old data and
8 have not benefited from the technological
9 advances in seismic surveying and computer
10 modeling in use by the industry today.
11 Although it is difficult to accurately
12 estimate the amount of resources without the
13 benefit of drilling, current estimates are
14 likely to be conservative, given that
15 history has shown that active exploration
16 and development often leads to increased
17 resource estimates.

18 However, the belief that moving forward
19 with this decision can quickly lead to
20 filling the information gaps on potential
21 Atlantic OCS oil and gas resources is
22 misguided. This effort falls short in
23 initiating forward-thinking, comprehensive
24 energy policy. In fact, the data-collection
25 activities envisioned by the administration

1 will not likely happen unless companies are
2 convinced the prospects for leasing in the
3 Atlantic OSC in the near future are real.
4 As we all know, current OCS policy does not
5 allow for a lease sale in the Atlantic until
6 2017 at the earliest.

7 It's important to remember that the
8 government does not generate this data;
9 seismic companies do. And they generally do
10 this on a speculative basis, hoping to sell
11 the data to operators who are looking to
12 purchase leases in an area. With no lease
13 sale scheduled in the Atlantic, and thus no
14 potential customers, seismic companies have
15 little incentive to gather new data.

16 Excluding the North Atlantic Planning
17 Area in this PEIS is yet another
18 short-sighted policy decision. There is a
19 great deal of interest in surveying and
20 eventually developing this area. Oil and
21 natural gas companies need geological and
22 geophysical data that they can use to
23 compare with geological features in other
24 offshore areas where there is current oil
25 and natural gas production. Without this

1 new data, a significant data gap will
2 remain.

3 We can create more jobs and generate
4 more revenue if allowed to responsibly
5 develop and produce here in the United
6 States, more of the oil and natural gas we
7 need. But more development, especially on
8 public lands and federally controlled
9 waters, requires that industry and
10 government share a vision of the potential
11 benefits and act as partners to fully
12 realize them. The oil and natural gas
13 industry already supports 9.2 million U.S.
14 jobs and 7.7 percent of the U.S. economy
15 delivers more than \$86 million a day in
16 revenues to our government, and, since 2000,
17 has invested more than \$2 trillion in U.S.
18 capital projects to advance all forms of
19 energy, including alternatives.

20 To supplement the Wood Mackenzie study
21 that was already mentioned by Kevin Doyle,
22 the oil and gas development would also bring
23 much needed jobs and a variety of industries
24 in Florida.

25 According to that Wood Mackenzie study,

1 opening up Atlantic offshore areas and the
2 Eastern Gulf of Mexico that are currently
3 unavailable could bring 161,000 jobs to
4 Florida.

5 These aren't limited to jobs directly
6 associated with oil and natural gas
7 development, but jobs created indirectly by
8 those companies that supply equipment and
9 other support services, both offshore and
10 onshore, as well as construct the
11 infrastructure required to drill offshore.

12 In addition, offshore development can
13 generate much-needed revenue to fund
14 critical services, including roads,
15 environmental conservation, and education.
16 According to a Wood Mackenzie study, \$24
17 billion dollars in revenue could be
18 generated for Florida from 2012 to 2030 if
19 offshore development, including the Eastern
20 Gulf of Mexico, were allowed to take place
21 in areas that are currently off-limits from
22 development.

23 We appreciate the opportunity to
24 comment on the PEIS for geological and
25 geophysical studies in the Atlantic OCS and

1 the oil and natural gas industry stands
2 ready to invest in safe exploration and
3 development of the OCS should administration
4 policies change to take full advantage of
5 the opportunities that are present.

6 I will leave these comments with you.

7 (Clapping.)

8 MR. BJERSTEDT: Bill Hamilton.

9 MR. HAMILTON: My name is Bill Hamilton
10 and I live on Anastasia Island south of St.
11 Augustine. I'm a small business owner and I
12 am heavily invested both commercially and
13 residentially in the marine area in this
14 part of Florida.

15 I attended a meeting hosted by the
16 local business council and the White House
17 Business Council. Ray Mabus, who is
18 secretary of the Navy, was the guest
19 speaker. And the question was posed to him
20 how he assessed the threat both nationally
21 and internationally from climate change and
22 how he answered those who claim that climate
23 change is a hoax.

24 And he said that he's been all over the
25 world. He had -- including Greenland and

1 Iceland. He has been under the polar ice
2 caps in a submarine and the affects of
3 climate change and evidence for climate
4 change is everywhere. He said that for
5 those who claim climate change is a hoax,
6 you're entitled to your own opinion, but you
7 are not entitled to your own facts.

8 The threat for climate change should be
9 the topic of these hearings, not how we can
10 facilitate putting more carbon in the
11 atmosphere. For every gallon of oil that is
12 drilled and turned into carbon in atmosphere
13 instability increases, uncertainty
14 increases, the weather patterns change and
15 the risk globally increase.

16 He pointed out that roughly half of the
17 world's population lives in areas that are
18 susceptible to flooding due to climate
19 change. Seven billion people, the
20 population of the world now. That is more
21 than three million people.

22 The consequences for the Navy for which
23 he is responsible for is, he said, that
24 20 years the global sea ice will be gone,
25 which will open up new areas for the Navy to

1 patrol and new shipping lanes.

2 The area that we're talking about here
3 is inappropriate for any exploration, gas or
4 oil. It's totally inappropriate to have any
5 oil or gas drilled here.

6 And my recommendation is that these
7 hearings, instead of facilitating a future
8 oil drilling, they should be held on how we
9 protect the marine species that are there,
10 how we protect the resources that God put
11 here for all of us to be responsible for.

12 So my recommendation is not only should
13 there not be exploration, there should never
14 be drilling, and that these hearings, this
15 kind of hearing should be suspended until we
16 get an accurate -- we get accurate
17 information and responsible policy regarding
18 global climate change.

19 Thank you very much.

20 (Clapping.)

21 MR. GOEKE: Please, no more clapping,
22 and certainly no booing, please.

23 MR. BJERSTEDT: Rachel Bardin.

24 MS. BARDIN: Thank you, everyone, for
25 being here. I take this opportunity to

1 educate yourselves and educate us.

2 I'm originally from the Gulf Coast. I
3 grew up fishing, eating oysters and fish out
4 of it, and I learned to surf on its waves.
5 And after the oil spill there, I know the
6 ocean will always be more important to me
7 than \$2.00 or \$3.00 gasoline. I would
8 rather have to ride a bike or walk to the
9 ocean and know that I can still get in,
10 rather than drive, and I can still eat the
11 food from it but to drive there and see
12 orange boom or trenches dug in the sand or
13 oil and fireballs in the sand, which is what
14 I saw. This is not worst-case scenario. This
15 is reality. This is what happened.

16 Petroleum is one of the filthiest forms
17 of energy, and I don't understand why we are
18 so attached to it. The emissions are
19 acidifying our ocean. They're putting
20 mercury into our food. They're putting it
21 into our fish.

22 People like to call my generation the
23 entitlement generation. But it seems our
24 whole country thinks that we're entitled to
25 cheap gasoline. That we're entitled to

1 Ford-150s and iPads. But the planet does
2 not owe those things to us.

3 The only thing that we're entitled to
4 that I hope that future generations are able
5 to see and experience is a clean ocean
6 that's full of life and abundance, not oil
7 rigs and container ships.

8 And I support Option C, Alternative C,
9 because this conversation is the first step
10 to doing to the Atlantic what we've done to
11 the Gulf.

12 I hope to -- I think that the other
13 economic aspect is that I work in surfing.
14 I give surf lessons. I work with someone
15 that builds surfboards over on the Gulf.
16 His business was cut by 75 percent after the
17 spill. The fishermen there were -- they had
18 signs up that were pleading with people, "Our
19 shrimp is oil-free."

20 So if you think it doesn't have a
21 potential negative impact on your
22 assumption, you're absolutely mistaken. And
23 I just ask for us to learn from our mistakes
24 and get more educated in the future.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MR. GOEKE: Thank you. I appreciate
2 your thoughts.

3 MR. BJERSTEDT: Yvonne Norman.

4 MS. NORMAN: Thank you for being here.
5 My name is Yvonne Norman and I also
6 represent small business. I have a
7 residential cleaning business in Clay County
8 and I'm a Florida resident since the late
9 '60s, and my husband is in construction. So
10 between my husband's position in work and my
11 position in work, the way that the economy
12 has turned around to be less and less
13 affordable for us to work for ourselves.

14 It's obvious gas prices are up, so to
15 transport from home-to-home and do the
16 business that we do, it's more taking out of
17 the economy than helping us in the resource
18 of making an income.

19 I appreciate everything that you are
20 doing here to investigate what it takes to
21 save the marine life and work with our
22 country. But as a mother, more importantly
23 than the animals at this point, is the
24 survival of my family. I have five children
25 and two grandchildren and their future is at

1 risk right now of a nation that we've become
2 to be borrowers. We don't have bargaining
3 power anymore. We don't know what our
4 resources are. We are not prepared for the
5 future. We are behind. And I want my
6 children to have a ground to stand on, and
7 there's only one way to do that, find out
8 what is under the ground we stand on.

9 Right now I feel that all of the things
10 that we're looking at is preservation for
11 400 years from now. Well, that's great.
12 But I'm really concerned about what we're
13 going to be looking at the next 5 to 10
14 years. We're not a nation anymore. We're a
15 borrowing nation. We need to become a
16 bargaining nation.

17 Thank you for being here.

18 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

19 MR. BJERSTEDT: Patrick Hamilton.

20 MR. HAMILTON: My name is Patrick
21 Hamilton and I'm a real estate broker in St.
22 Augustine and have been for the last 25
23 years.

24 And when we had the BP oil spill in the
25 Gulf, every condominium, every rental house,

1 every long-term motel filled up Crescent
2 Beach in four days, because everybody
3 cancelled their reservations in the Gulf.

4 And the people in the Gulf went broke.
5 Lots of people who were in construction,
6 lots of people who were in development,
7 hotels, condominiums, have rental houses,
8 they went broke because there was no
9 business, because no one wanted to go there,
10 and they came to where we are. And the
11 reason they all came and the reason people
12 come is because we live in a very vibrant
13 area. We can see dolphins off the beach
14 every day. You can see them in the
15 intracoastal waterway.

16 People sat up on the whale patrols, and
17 they allow themselves with the people with
18 the marina and are told where to spot for
19 whales from the different houses. People
20 volunteer money. They bought a plane for
21 the people down there. They've started a
22 new whale festival.

23 The turtle patrol is the same and lots
24 of the people who live on the beach now get
25 up at daylight and go patrol for the

1 loggerheads and the leatherbacks that nest
2 where we are. There is not protection here
3 for the leatherbacks or loggerheads in north
4 Florida, only in Brevard. It's a little
5 like saying that the impacts are moderate
6 because you can kill off the rural areas and
7 kill everybody who lives in the county and
8 we'll keep the populations in the city.

9 Well, biologically, you need those diverse
10 populations to spread their genetic pool,
11 and that is probably not a very good way to
12 run environmental impacts for those species,
13 as well as different areas.

14 An oil spill would put me out of
15 business where I live as a small businessman
16 who has been there for years and years.

17 But not only would -- again, it is the
18 seismic areas. The figures I've heard were
19 that the airguns noise was loud enough to
20 mask whales' calls literally for thousands
21 of miles, destroy the capacity to
22 communicate and breathe, and it can drive
23 whales to abandon their habitat. If you are
24 a fertilized rooferhead (phonetic) and
25 you're out there in the gulfstream and you

1 hit the Charleston bulk, if you hit the
2 swirl and you come along the coastal area,
3 you have to come into the intracoastal and
4 go up in the land growth and the spar-tidal
5 marshes and whister (phonetic) reefs.
6 Whatever that's going to do to those
7 fertilized eggs is probably not addressed in
8 your current studies.

9 I'm also the president of Joe's
10 Fish Camp in Crescent Beach, and
11 the impacts on fisheries, as well as
12 mammals, make this proposal ridiculous.

13 Selfishly, from my prospects, for my
14 livelihood, this is not a good idea. But
15 also you teach your children to be
16 respectful and for all of the other
17 creatures on earth who we share the earth
18 with, it's not a good idea and it's
19 destructive of us, and we're urging that the
20 administration chooses Alternative C.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. BJERSTEDT: Marcella Matthaei.

23 MS. MATTHAEI: My name is Marcella
24 Matthaei. I am the treasurer of a small
25 nonprofit organization dedicated to

1 preserving the area of Crescent Beach and
2 further north that we live in and keeping it
3 in the old Florida style and maintaining the
4 resources that would associate with old
5 Florida in such a way the river basin
6 continue to produce fish, places for people
7 to come surf, et cetera, et cetera.

8 We are extremely concerned about the
9 proposal and strongly urging you to consider
10 Alternative Plan C. There are many many
11 reasons that have not been explored in the
12 Gulf, unfortunately, I'm sorry to say. But
13 there's no reason going anywhere near the
14 Atlantic floor for many reasons.

15 Airguns noise in particular, it affects
16 fish behavior and fish use on a broad scale.
17 I'm very concerned about what the size of
18 exploration is going to do to our very rich,
19 but eroding southeast fishery area. We are
20 basically a nursery for a great many
21 remaining fish in the ocean, and one blast
22 can injure up to 138,000 marine mammals and
23 disrupt marine mammals feeding, calving,
24 breathing and other activities more than 13
25 million times.

1 There are fishermen from Norway that
2 have been seeking industry compensation for
3 the amount of fish they've lost, commercial
4 fish that they've lost, due to seismic
5 exploration.

6 I would like very much to see you put
7 as much energy as you can into the
8 exploratory and developmental renewable
9 energy and looking for innovative, creative
10 new ways to sustain our needs for sanitation
11 and energy. I would like to use the genius
12 of our students. I would like to use our
13 incredible capacity for innovation and
14 imagination and move forward, rather than
15 respinning the same old wheel over and over
16 again until there is literally nothing left.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. GOEKE: Thank you. I appreciate
19 it.

20 MR. BJERSTEDT: David Kaufman.

21 MR. KAUFMAN: Good afternoon. I'm
22 David Kaufman representing the Jacksonville
23 Port Authority. We're a public agency
24 responsible for managing and marketing
25 public seaport facilities along the Saint

1 Johns River.

2 As you know, the marine transportation
3 sectors of our economy are heavy energy
4 users. Cargo ships, land-side cranes,
5 trucks and rail all demand indirectly on
6 safe, secure, reliable, and affordable fuel
7 resources.

8 A large portion of the goods that are
9 transported by ship are directly associated
10 with the fuel to power that vessel. More
11 than 95 percent of the products we use every
12 day have been carried to this country by
13 ship and have come to one of our nation's
14 seaports.

15 Ship owners are moving towards
16 increasing size of the vessels and the
17 energy efficient technologies in an effort
18 to reduce transportation costs. It's
19 continued to add to the burden that's
20 escalating energy costs, affordable products
21 on the shelves of your local retailer and
22 quickly it becomes as no surprise that the
23 additional transportation costs be passed on
24 to the American consumers.

25 This is why the Jacksonville Port

1 Authority supports efforts to identify
2 environmentally sound and conduct means to
3 secure cheaper energy sources that advocates
4 for a national energy policy.

5 Along with all of our nation's ports, we
6 must maintain and preserve import/export
7 businesses that we have, along with the
8 critically-needed dollars that businesses
9 create. We need to set our sights on future
10 growth. This vision of the future requires
11 controlling energy costs and seeking
12 alternatives that make sense.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

15 MR. BJERSTEDT: Matthew Padon.

16 MR. PADON: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Matthew Padon. I am with the Seaboard
18 Exploration, BRA, geophysical contractor. I
19 am here today representing the International
20 Association of Geophysical Contractors.

21 On behalf of the IAGC and geophysical
22 industry, I wish to express our appreciation
23 for the opportunity to make the following
24 comments which will be supplemented by
25 written comments to BOEM regarding the draft

1 PEIS and G&G activities in the Mid- and
2 South Atlantic OCS. IAGC commends BOEM for
3 their efforts in advancing the PEIS to this
4 point.

5 IAGC is the international trade
6 association representing the industry that
7 provides geophysical services, geophysical
8 data acquisition, processing and
9 interpretation, geophysical information,
10 ownership and licensing, associated services
11 and product providers, to the energy
12 industry, including both the conventional
13 and renewable energy sectors. IAGC member
14 companies play an integral role in the
15 successful exploration and development of
16 offshore hydrocarbon resources through the
17 acquisition and processing of geophysical
18 data. In the past, IAGC members have
19 expressed interest in conducting geophysical
20 activities on the Atlantic
21 OCS.

22 Geophysical surveys are key tools used
23 in oil and natural gas exploration and
24 siting of renewable energy facilities.

25 Geophysical data is critical to the

1 successful discovery and efficient
2 development and production of oil and
3 natural gas. Geophysical surveys are one of
4 the very first tools used in the exploration
5 process. And when applied early in the
6 exploration process, will aid E&P companies
7 in focusing their analysis and illuminate
8 the most prospective areas for future oil
9 and natural gas exploration.

10 The geophysical data is critical for
11 the development of renewable energy, as
12 well. High-resolution geophysical data and
13 geotechnical borings provide important key
14 data required to site renewable energy
15 facilities and design the foundation of
16 structures that will be required for the
17 development of renewable energy.

18 Geophysical data is also very valuable
19 to the federal government, and even to state
20 government. BOEM utilizes geophysical data
21 to assess the resource potential of the OCS
22 and to ensure the federal government
23 receives the fair value of their resources.
24 Geophysical data is critical in aiding the
25 understanding of the oil and natural gas

1 resources before the US OCS. This helps
2 both federal and state governments to
3 understand what may be at stake as they make
4 public policy decisions involving the
5 development of the offshore Continental
6 Shelf.

7 The current hydrocarbon resource
8 assessment of the Atlantic offshore
9 Continental Shelf made by BOEM is based upon
10 data which is over 30 years old. Today,
11 seismic and other geophysical data acquired
12 utilizes more modern technology to produce
13 subsurface images which are much clearer
14 than those from 30 years ago. It is this
15 clear subsurface imaging which will allow
16 for the elimination of areas that are
17 unlikely to be prospective. In addition,
18 this improvement in technology has resulted
19 in fewer dry holes and a smaller exploration
20 footprints, development and production
21 facilities.

22 Our industry conducts operations
23 globally in a variety of environments. In
24 particular, the geophysical industry has 50
25 years of experience in the US Gulf of Mexico

1 offshore Continental Shelf. And 40 years of
2 experience in the US Arctic offshore
3 Continental Shelf in planning, acquiring,
4 and processing seismic data in an
5 environmentally responsible manner. During
6 that time, there has been no
7 scientifically-supported evidence that
8 routine seismic surveys result in
9 biologically-significant population-level
10 impacts for any marine mammal species.

11 Our industry employs operational
12 practices which are designed to protect
13 whales, dolphins and other marine life.
14 With these appropriate, risk-based
15 mitigation measures, we feel that seismic
16 surveys have, and will continue to be
17 undertaken with little or no significant
18 impact to marine mammal population, on and
19 around marine life in general. In addition,
20 it is important to remember that seismic
21 surveys are temporary and transitory and use
22 a low-frequency, short duration source
23 signal.

24 Though additional information is needed
25 in some areas, there is a significant amount

1 of scientific information available, many of
2 it funded by government agencies, regarding
3 the potential effects of exploration and
4 production activities on marine environment.
5 This information and data from the
6 scientific literature, and not speculation,
7 should be used when assessing potential
8 impacts of geological and geophysical
9 activities on the environment.

10 Of the three alternatives listed, IAGA
11 supports Alternative A. The proposed action
12 which allows the greatest coverage using
13 deep penetration seismic and includes
14 seasonal closure areas for the right whale.

15 We do not support a 40-kilometer
16 separation distance between simultaneous
17 seismic operations which is included in the
18 mitigation measures proposed in your part of
19 Alternative B.

20 Notwithstanding that geological and
21 geophysical permits recently approved in the
22 Gulf of Mexico, Western and Central Planning
23 Areas include this mitigation measure as a
24 condition of permit approval. It was not
25 developed using any scientific or anecdotal

1 evidence.

2 We believe that PEIS should be expanded
3 to include the North Atlantic Planning Area,
4 as well. E&P companies need geophysical
5 data that they can use to tie past and
6 current production data from offshore Nova
7 Scotia to the U.S. Atlantic basins. This is
8 critical in development of knowledge shared
9 between exploration companies. Without this
10 new data, there will be a very significant
11 gap in the regional work that E&P companies
12 will want to perform.

13 The incremental cost and time to extend
14 the PEIS to the North Atlantic Planning area
15 would be minimal and would allow for
16 geophysical data acquisition to occur for
17 renewable energy citing requirements as well
18 as when this area is finally considered for
19 natural gas and oil exploration and
20 production.

21 If the North Atlantic Planning Area is
22 not included, we encourage BOEM to conduct
23 individual, project-specific environmental
24 assessments as needed that will allow
25 geological and geophysical operations to

1 take place.

2 Lastly, each of the G&G permit
3 applications currently on file with BOEM are
4 for the purpose of acquiring non-exclusive
5 seismic data which would be licensed to E&P
6 companies as they develop a better
7 understanding of the hydrocarbon resource
8 potential in preparation of pending lease
9 sales.

10 Although the Atlantic PEIS will pave
11 the way for future seismic activity in an
12 area of great interest with the E&P
13 companies, without any planned leasing in
14 the next five years, the likelihood of the
15 seismic contractors investing in
16 non-exclusive seismic data acquisition is
17 very uncertain.

18 The IAGC values the stakeholder process
19 and are committed to participating in a
20 dialogue with all stakeholders to explain
21 what we do, why we do it and the measures
22 that we take to protect the environment.

23 We have with us today several
24 educational items that explain modern marine
25 geophysical data acquisition, underwater

1 sound, and the measures the geophysical
2 industry implements to ensure minimal
3 impacts of our operations on the
4 environment. This information is available
5 for BOEM and those in attendance here in the
6 room. I have some CDs with me if anyone is
7 interested.

8 In conclusion, the IAGC wishes to again
9 express our appreciation for the opportunity
10 to voice our support and commitment to work
11 with BOEM and all stakeholders in the
12 development of the Atlantic PEIS.

13 As I mentioned, we'll be submitting
14 these comments in writing as well. Thank
15 you very much.

16 MR. BJERSTEDT: Arlyn Docking.

17 MS. DOCKING: My name is Arlyn Docking.
18 I've lived in Jacksonville for over
19 45 years. I believe we need to do offshore
20 exploration to help not only our economy,
21 but to help the U.S. to become an
22 independent energy.

23 We are all too dependent on other
24 countries for our energy needs. With proper
25 safety regulations, there should be no

1 problem with the exploration of the ocean,
2 Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Look
3 into fuel resources for us. We need to get
4 the grocery lines open and the people that
5 work in them back to work.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

8 MR. BJERSTEDT: Brian Paradise.

9 MR. PARADISE: Good afternoon,
10 gentlemen. My name is Brian Paradise. I'm
11 here to present some comments and documents
12 on behalf of Florida Chapter of the Sierra
13 Club.

14 We are opposed to the proposed sites to
15 be tested, as we believe there is
16 overwhelming evidence of the seismic testing
17 for the use of airguns causes death and
18 severe injury to marine mammals such as
19 whales and dolphins. We also believe that
20 seismic testing displaces and despoils
21 capturing the various species of fish.

22 As evidence for these comments, we are
23 attaching the following documents. And I
24 will leave all of these documents out at the
25 desk.

1 First document we have is a report
2 which was published on April the 3rd
3 entitled Dolphin Worry/Stop seismic
4 Tests. And this report is of the Bureau of
5 Ocean Energy Management. It's called Global
6 Geophysical Services Not to Conduct Deep
7 Penetration Seismic Surveys until May, after
8 seven dead dolphins were found along the
9 Louisiana coast. So this is your own agency
10 asking for cessation of tests.

11 Second attachment we have is a report
12 of April the 11th in the New Zealand Herald
13 News entitled Eight Dolphin Deaths Based
14 on Oil Exploration, which reports about
15 3,000 dolphins have died on a stretch of the
16 Caribbean coast in recent months. In the
17 article, a veterinarian called Thomas
18 Nathan (phonetic) has expressed the opinion
19 that the deaths were the result of seismic
20 testing in water.

21 And I have got three attachments of
22 scientific papers which talk about the
23 reduction in fisheries from seismic testing.

24 I've also got an information sheet on
25 the Natural Resources Defense Council dated

1 May 20, 2010, entitled Boom Baby Boom,
2 which outlines many of the environmental
3 impacts of seismic surveys. And also an
4 information sheet entitled Seismic Airguns
5 and Fisheries, outlining the impacts of
6 seismic surveys upon fisheries.

7 Final attachment is a report in the
8 Times-Union of Jacksonville on April 2nd,
9 recording that only six right whales were
10 born this winter making the season one of
11 the poorest calving seasons for the
12 endangered northern right whale in decades.

13 We believe that the evidence shows that
14 the proposed seismic testing will be very
15 detrimental to our oceans. Because to
16 search for oil and gas, the industry uses an
17 array of airguns which are towed behind
18 ships and releasing intense, blasts,
19 compressed air into the water. This is just
20 about the loudest sounds humans make short
21 of explosives. Imagine dynamite going off
22 in your neighborhood every 10 seconds for
23 days, weeks, and months on end.

24 Now, imagine that you depend on your
25 hearing to feed, mate, travel, communicate,

1 and do just about everything else necessary
2 for survival. That is the situation that
3 endangered whales, connatural and
4 recreational fish, and our water life are
5 facing with airguns exploration.

6 This activity has a huge environmental
7 footprint. Airgun noises loud enough to
8 mask whales calls have literally thousand of
9 miles destroying the capacity to communicate
10 and breathe. It can drive whales to abandon
11 their habitat and cease faring over vast
12 areas of ocean.

13 For example, a single airgun array in
14 the North Atlantic coast endangered fin and
15 humpback whales to stop singing, a behavior
16 essential for their mating and sparing and
17 abandon habitat over an area of more than
18 100,000 square miles in size, closer in it
19 can cause hearing loss, injury, and death.

20 Rig oils already apply to airgun masks
21 to run hundreds and thousands of miles of
22 airgun surveys off the east coast. Over the
23 next eight years, according to the
24 administration's own estimates, seismic
25 exploration would injure up to 138,500

1 marine mammals and destruct marine mammal
2 feeding, calving, breathing, and other vital
3 activities more than 13.5 million times.

4 Airgun booming and oil and gas
5 development more generally threatens our
6 fishery and coastal economies. Airguns are
7 being shown to displace the natural species
8 of fish horizontally and vertically in the
9 water column on a vast scale over thousands
10 of square kilometers. The result is being
11 dramatically depressed hatcheries of species
12 of this rock fish and others areas as
13 large as the state of Rhode Island leading
14 fishermen in Norway and other parts of the
15 world to seek industry compensation for
16 their losses.

17 Seismic testing has negative impacts on
18 commercial and recreational fishermen.
19 Commercial and recreational fishing off the
20 Mid- and Southeast Atlantic, not including
21 New Jersey, generates 7.4 billion annually
22 and support 180,000 jobs. As noted above,
23 fishermen in some parts of the world where
24 seismic testing is already occurring are
25 seeking industry compensation for their

1 losses.

2 Green light (phonetic) seismic also
3 imposes a threat to the 20 million whale
4 watching industry in the Mid- and Southeast
5 Atlantic. And if the administration takes
6 the next step and opens up the coastal oil
7 and gas drilling, the entire 22 billion
8 coastal tourism and recreational industries
9 are at risk, just as they are in the Gulf of
10 Mexico.

11 To reduce harm, BOEM must keep airguns
12 out of sensitive and environmental areas,
13 promote use of green alternatives and
14 require companies to share data.

15 The only other action that the
16 administration has proposed to protect the
17 critically-endangered right whale is grossly
18 inadequate given the distances noise
19 travels.

20 Under the administration's proposal, a
21 survey can take place right on the edge of
22 the right whales only known calving grounds,
23 frequently filling it with destructive
24 sound. No other species or fisheries would
25 receive even this much protection.

1 According to two expert reports,
2 including one funded by the oil and gas
3 industry itself, green alternative energies
4 that can substantially copy the
5 environmental footprint of airguns in many
6 areas are already well into development and
7 can be available for commercial use in 3 to
8 5 years or less. Yet, the administration is
9 opening the floodgates now in areas it
10 doesn't even intend to consider leasing
11 until well in the future. There is no
12 reason to rush ahead with this dangerous
13 activity before safer greenhouse -- excuse
14 me, greener technologies are
15 available.

16 Incredibly, the administration's plan
17 would allow seismic operators to reshoot the
18 same areas again and again, so they can
19 repackage the same data as big oil
20 companies. This is so even though the
21 agencies are independent experts that call
22 for data sharing to minimize impacts. And
23 so on top of everything else, the
24 administration is needlessly adding to the
25 impact on wildlife and fisheries

1 indifference to a wealthy industry's profit,
2 squeezing business model.

3 Booming and drilling are thought to --
4 if we care about our fisheries, our marine
5 life and our coastal economies, the right
6 vision is offshore renewable, like wind
7 farms. Scanning the ocean floor for wind
8 farm development uses a technology that is
9 safer than airguns.

10 We ask the administration to choose
11 Alternative C and release an environmental
12 impact statement focused on the above.

13 We would also like to request that BOEM
14 review the following reports --

15 MR. GOEKE: Excuse me.

16 MR. PARADISE: -- according to the
17 workshop on alternative technology to
18 seismic airgun surveys for oil and gas
19 exploration, which is detailed in the
20 report, existing and future protection plan
21 for reducing underwater sound from oil and
22 gas industry activities.

23 MR. GOEKE: Excuse me. Are you about
24 to wrap up?

25 MR. PARADISE: I'm about to wrap up.

1 MR. GOEKE: Please proceed.

2 MR. PARADISE: NC report 07001 which is
3 prepared by noise control in an area.

4 Thank you very much for your consideration.

5 MR. GOEKE: Are you going turn a hard
6 copy of that in?

7 MR. PARADISE: Yes, sir. Would you
8 like it now?

9 MR. BJERSTEDT: That's fine.

10 Ray Morton.

11 MR. MORTON: Good afternoon. My name
12 is Ray Morton. I'm a natural born citizen.
13 I'm a former U.S. Army Green Berets. I am
14 an engineer and physicist. I graduated as
15 an ocean engineer from Florida Atlantic
16 University in Boca Raton. I am an applied
17 theoretical physicist.

18 Formerly I was on the Chevron Corporate
19 Offshore Technology and Planning staff where
20 I handled all high technologies for all of
21 Chevron. I can tell you everyone that I met
22 at Chevron were avid environmentalists. If
23 we had a spill, we couldn't sell it, so we
24 had to clean it and we had to pay fines, so
25 we didn't want to incur that.

1 I have also done engineering on just
2 about every kind and system of U.S. made in
3 platform, including nuclear submarines and
4 warships to include their sonar sensor
5 suites, both passive and active, so I think
6 I speak with some authority regarding the
7 issue at hand.

8 Dr. Bjerstedt, I would like to commend
9 you on an excellent high-level summary on
10 this issue. We need acoustic tomography
11 which is a three-dimensional map. CAT scan,
12 in medical terms, is a computerized axial
13 tomography. Now, in order to plan
14 environmentally safe extractions of
15 resources, I listened with interest to your
16 briefing and feel what the mitigation is
17 saying is well-thought. In my experience at
18 Chevron, we had no kills that came to my
19 attention, and I monitored that very closely
20 at corporate direction.

21 As a rebuttal for some people -- I know
22 this is a little bit off topic -- NASA data
23 showed there was some global warming, but it
24 was on all planets in the solar system. So
25 I wonder how driving my car less on planet

1 earth reduces global warming on Jupiter and
2 Mars.

3 We did extensive exploration in
4 geological survey and so forth in the Arctic
5 when I was at Chevron, and subfloor
6 geologically corings clearly showed a solar
7 occipital event of hot and cold, Ice Age and
8 warming. So it seems what we are
9 experiencing is part of such a solar cycle.

10 Also, in the Arctic Ice there is a black
11 carbon zone from the Industrial Age where
12 wood and coal was being used for energy and
13 the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere
14 were huge, much more so than now.

15 The greatest greenhouse gas is water
16 vapors. Perhaps we should pass laws against
17 water. The next most right down from it is
18 methane and then way, way down on the list
19 in third place is carbon dioxide. So I
20 think that is a foolish remark regarding
21 doing a survey for making a realistic and
22 highly detailed three-dimensional map at
23 Sub C structures and resources.

24 So I would recommend that you go
25 forward. And I will read the report in

1 detail and comment if it's appropriate.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. BJERSTEDT: Martin Miller.

4 MR. MILLER: Greetings and thanks for
5 giving me the opportunity to speak. I'm
6 Martin Miller of St. Augustine. And I'm
7 just a citizen, retired civil servant.

8 I'm here first of all -- I'm going to
9 jump around, but I'm here as a proponent of,
10 I guess it's Option A. We need responsible
11 exploration testing and drilling. Okay.

12 We heard people talk here about
13 protecting marine species. Well, I'm aware
14 that there is a species called homosapien
15 that's being threatened. A lot of people
16 because of the economic conditions,
17 parenthetical note, Florida and some
18 communities, the unemployment is much higher
19 than the national rate. And there are
20 people that are doing suicides that are from
21 depression because by three weeks \$5.00 a
22 gallon gas is a problem for a lot of people.
23 Okay. So we need these resources. We have
24 to go out and find out where they are and
25 get them.

1 While we're fooling around, I
2 understand that out China through Cuba is
3 doing diagonal drilling and they are
4 drilling into some of our land or whatever,
5 China's expertise of doing this. They are
6 doing it all around the world. We're
7 fooling around and they are taking oil. If
8 we were going to have a moratorium and no
9 drilling, then we would save everybody else,
10 China and go back home. You don't drill.
11 If they drill, we drill. Because they are
12 not -- as far as I know, there is no oil in
13 China. They are taking our oil. Okay.

14 When people talk about protecting the
15 marine species, I'm remembering the Marines
16 and the Army and the Navy in 1991 in the
17 Gulf War when Saddam Hussein went into Iraq.
18 Okay. As far as I remember, our tanks are
19 not electric or hybrid. They use about 10
20 gallons to the mile or something like this,
21 so we needed to fuel them.

22 Let's talk about animals. Saddam
23 Hussein in 1991 went into Kuwait and he
24 devastated their zoos and that was reported
25 in the Readers Digest. They did things to

1 these animals that I cannot even mention.

2 Okay. So what about protecting those
3 species too? The way we protect them is by
4 having our military, which has to be fueled.
5 Okay.

6 We're talking about all of these -- I'm
7 an animal lover. We're talking about
8 protecting this species and that species.

9 This is a species that has to be protected
10 because this -- the human species is what
11 makes it all happen. If we go away -- I
12 love the whales, but they can't go out and
13 they can't take care of the ocean, we can.
14 Okay.

15 There are organizations like Sea
16 Shepard that go out and fight against
17 whaling. Nobody ever mentions Iceland and
18 Japan and what they are doing with whaling.
19 They are always -- nobody -- they're
20 invisible. Okay. It is always us who is
21 the bad guy.

22 What I wanted to say we have to protect
23 humans first. Okay. We make it all happen.
24 We are the catalyst. And as far as talking
25 about the -- all of these different

1 turtles -- about two years ago in north
2 Florida we had the longest stretch of winter
3 in years and a lot of these sea turtles
4 froze to death. Now, we're not supposed to
5 touch them by law, but the turtle patrol was
6 taking in turtles to warm them. They were
7 breaking the law, so sometimes if you break
8 the law you are doing compassionate. But
9 they're breaking the law. Nature made it
10 cold. I don't think global warming makes a
11 long stretch of cold in north Florida. A
12 lot of turtles died and we feel bad, but
13 that's nature.

14 What do we do if there's a volcanic
15 eruption? What about when we had the
16 Tsunami in 2004? Did we go out to rescue the
17 animals? I didn't hear about that. I
18 didn't hear about the Sierra Club talking
19 about well, how many animals did we rescue
20 from the Tsunami? All right. It's always
21 they are doing it like preemptive as far as
22 well, we can't drill because of what might
23 happen. That's not correct. We have to do
24 it responsible. We have to go out and test.
25 And we have to do -- whatever we have to do

1 and pull the oil out.

2 And I will say this. The technology
3 that we have today is much better than we
4 had 20, 30 years ago. So a lot of this
5 stuff, the threats and the scare tactics are
6 nonsense. They're just telling us stuff
7 because -- if you live near the beach, then
8 you don't have to worry about it. Like you
9 don't hear too many people that are outskirts
10 talking about the beaches. People next to
11 the beach, they don't want beach driving.
12 They don't want all of these things, because
13 they are where they want to be. It's the
14 other people who aren't. All right.

15 With the price going up to \$5.00 a
16 gallon, we need drilling. We need
17 exploration. And we need to stop China from
18 stealing our oil, because that's our oil.
19 And China is not going by any regulations.
20 We've gone over to Africa and other places
21 and Brazil, they're drilling for oil. Let's
22 not let China step on us. Let's do what we
23 have to do.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. BJERSTEDT: LeAnne Kolb.

1 MS. KOLB: I'm so glad that you guys
2 are here in Jacksonville first, because
3 you're not tired of listening to all of
4 these hearings.

5 My name is LeAnne Kolb, and I'm actually
6 running for the United States House of
7 Representative in the new congressional
8 District 5. It was 3.

9 I think it's important to make sure
10 that we have the most current and up-to-date
11 information in order to make the best
12 decisions for Florida and the United States,
13 ultimately.

14 Our future generation they're watching
15 us, and they're depending on us so that we
16 can leave them better off than we were. And
17 we are threatened right now to be the first
18 generation that has not left a better
19 America for our future generations that are
20 coming up, and I think that's a travesty.

21 I think in order for that to happen, we
22 need to make energy independence an absolute
23 realty for our future generations coming up.
24 We would be negligent, also, not to realize
25 the immediate need of increased jobs and

1 lower prices of gas, that is, obviously,
2 something that needs to be addressed. And I
3 think that with the -- what you are
4 proposing with Amendment A, you would
5 definitely be able to increase jobs and I
6 think that would be a bonus for Floridians
7 in general.

8 In my opinion, not only should it be
9 surveyed, but we should also move forward
10 with leasing and drilling in an aggressive
11 manner.

12 Thank you very much for your time.

13 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

14 MR. BJERSTEDT: James Arpaia.

15 MR. ARPAIA: James Arpaia. I'm from
16 St. Augustine. Former marine. Retired.

17 You can tell it's an election year. I
18 think it was just before the previous
19 election when the Obama administration
20 released the leases on the east coast for
21 drilling or for purchase. Shortly after
22 that, we had the BP disaster, and he removed
23 all of the drilling in the Gulf that had
24 been going on for close to 20 years without
25 an accident, but because of that BP, he shut

1 down all oil drilling in the Gulf and
2 removed the leases on the east coast.

3 The same environmentalist who said that
4 it would take a hundred years to clean up
5 the oil spill that happened with BP and that
6 the oil was going to go around the Key West
7 and up the east coast and was going to
8 pollute the ocean for the next hundred years
9 disappeared in six months after the oil
10 spill.

11 In the meantime, the government wanted
12 wind mills. They were going to get wind
13 technology. I never heard of the EPA going
14 after the thousands of dead birds that lie
15 underneath every windmill and there's
16 thousands of windmills sitting out in Texas
17 and in Nebraska, because they're -- number one,
18 they don't work; number two, there's no place to
19 send the electricity because there is no
20 power lines. So that huge investment into a
21 technology that maybe some day will work,
22 isn't now.

23 Our economy is based on oil. We can't
24 move a thing in this country without oil.
25 We need the exploration on the east coast.

1 We need the oil drilling everywhere.

2 The government I understand now is
3 going to be giving Aleutian Islands to
4 Russia where they will be drilling off the
5 coast of Alaska and not us. Why? Because
6 the EPA says no, you are going to harm the
7 polar bears or something. They have been
8 drilling in Alaska for years without any
9 damage, without any suffering by any animal
10 anywhere.

11 It's time that this government realizes
12 that we need the oil here and now. This
13 should have been done 20 years ago. The
14 last election they said, Oh, no, we can't
15 drill now. It will take 10 years before we
16 see any oil. Well, it's 10 years later and
17 we still don't have the oil, so now we're
18 having these meetings and we're going to be
19 another 10 years before we see any oil.

20 In the meantime, the government is
21 asking Saudi Arabia to drill more and to
22 pump more, so that it's price can stay. He
23 wants the price up. He wants \$5.00 and
24 \$6.00 a gallon so he can sell more electric
25 cars and where is the electricity coming

1 from?

2 It is time that we do common sense and
3 drill now and drill here.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. BJERSTEDT: Ed Raube.

6 MR. RAUBE: Thank you for coming to
7 Jacksonville and visiting with us first. My
8 name is Ed Raube and I live at Atlantic
9 Beach on the beach, so yes, I love it.
10 And -- but I'm also an American and I also
11 amongst everyone else here, I don't think
12 anyone rode a bike here today, but I think
13 we all drove. We need to perceive and do
14 the studies, find out what we have and go
15 for it.

16 Just as the prior gentleman mentioned,
17 the other countries in the world are taking
18 our resources away from us. Just because we
19 are not -- or we don't want to offend anyone
20 by being politically incorrect and doing
21 something that should help America and
22 Americans first.

23 So yes, I am all in favor of doing the
24 searching, find out what resources we have,
25 doing it in the safest manner possible, and

1 proceeding forward to help build -- or fix
2 the ills that trouble America.

3 Thanks.

4 MR. BJERSTEDT: Kevin Bodge.

5 MR. BODGE: I am Kevin Bodge with Olsen
6 Associates located here in Jacksonville and
7 I am a coastal engineer.

8 And my comments are directed
9 specifically to the marine minerals element
10 of the program. The city of Jacksonville,
11 Duval County relies on sand from our Outer
12 Continental Shelf which is included, of
13 course, within this programmatic EIS, that
14 is the sand for our various nursing project
15 comes from the seabed that your organization
16 regulates.

17 My professional opinion this
18 programmatic EIS suffers greatly from
19 several fundamental flaws, central of which
20 is the alternatives lumped together, oil and
21 gas with the marine minerals program. It
22 lumps all of the acoustic devices together
23 with airguns.

24 The alternatives as proposed, place a
25 huge cost burden on our local government,

1 because the restrictions associated with the
2 use of low-energy standard acoustic
3 surveying devices that your leases require
4 us to do. That is, it lumps together
5 airguns with lower energy chirp devices.
6 And, for example, the array of
7 alternative -- or the array of equipment
8 being examined, didn't even consider
9 standard dual-frequency thermometer, which
10 is a standard survey devised used by our
11 surveyors to take these surveys.

12 It is my opinion that the alternatives
13 that you consider A or B needs to specify a
14 distinction between equipment. That is, you
15 need to recognize the different of impacts
16 between low energy, high frequency sounding
17 devices that are used for mineral
18 management -- excuse me -- for sand and
19 gravel research versus those that are used
20 for the oil and gas industry.

21 As you noted, the sand and gravel
22 resource is a very, very small part of the
23 oil and gas and renewable energy resources
24 that your organization oversees, yet the
25 alternatives throws this small baby into

1 shark pool with everyone else and puts an
2 undue burden upon those agencies, like the
3 City of Jacksonville and other communities
4 in Florida that rely on offshore sand and
5 gravel.

6 Many of the impacts that are cited in
7 the programmatic EIS are not likely based on
8 scientific sound data. For example, where
9 is the data that high frequency sounds,
10 acoustics, that we use for sand and gravel
11 affect marine turtles? There is none. It's
12 speculative. Yet your Alternative B
13 proposal would allow us to survey the
14 offshore bar area in Duval County for only
15 two weeks in the spring and two weeks in the
16 fall. I can't do that. We don't have the
17 weather windows in order to do that. And
18 there is an indication, oh, exemptions will
19 be given on a case-by-case basis. But the
20 record alone clearly shows that this places
21 an undue burden on the government and
22 certainly one upon local governments that
23 are trying to do these surveys.

24 Getting permission to explore for sand
25 and gravel resources off of the coast of

1 Florida takes forever. And now, we need to
2 get the same kind of permits and approvals
3 just to do a standard demographic survey?
4 Oh, and how can I ensure that my survey is
5 being taken 40 kilometers away from another
6 survey, when most of the surveys are
7 occurring in state waters? Does that mean
8 that every one has to report to the federal
9 government as to what their acoustic survey
10 devices are and when they are going to be
11 operating?

12 All of these alternatives, in my
13 opinion, have not been thought through. In
14 closing, I would highly suggest, recommend,
15 request, that the alternatives as formulated
16 specify an exemption. A blanket de minimis
17 exemption for those low energy, high
18 frequency sound devices that don't have
19 significant impact to marine mammals. That
20 is, don't subject those of us using the low
21 impact devices to all of those associated to
22 those that are important for the oil and gas
23 industry.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

1 MR. BJERSTEDT: Karen Morton.

2 MS. MORTON: Thank you for being here
3 today. My name is Karen Morton. I'm from
4 Jacksonville, Florida.

5 And I have to say that watching your
6 presentation on the screen, it brought
7 back chills. I used to work for the
8 government myself. I try not to remember
9 the bureaucracy involved in trying to put
10 something together like this. And I was
11 struck by the levels of bureaucracy you had
12 to jump through in order to get this report
13 completed. And I thank you for bringing it
14 to us and I thank you for getting this
15 far. It is huge to at least put on the table
16 the fact that yes, we do have exploration.

17 I also have been struck, you know, kind
18 of listening to some of the environmental
19 comments. It doesn't appear through the
20 work that you done or the continuing
21 collaboration that you will be doing with
22 the EPA that you have left a thin or a piece
23 of coral unturned in trying to make sure
24 that things are being done in an appropriate
25 manner that are both ecologically and

1 environmentally sound.

2 So I don't see any reason for us not to
3 proceed with Alternative 1. I encourage
4 that it be begun as quickly as possible.

5 And in addition to the exploration,
6 which absolutely has to be done, as
7 American citizens, you know, like I said, it
8 has been several years since we've had any
9 type of mapping. We know with our new
10 technologies that there's a lot more out
11 there. And I think people need to know what
12 we have available so that we can make
13 proper and valid decisions as to what we can
14 access and how we can go about that.

15 I also urge the government to make the
16 sales of leases available immediately upon
17 determining what's available, and as well as
18 allowing the companies to proceed with
19 actual production, rather than selling the
20 leases and sit on them for years.

21 I really don't see that there should be
22 a kind of arbitrary time period where we would
23 have to wait prior to the sale of leases and
24 prior to production, you know, once we've
25 determined that the resource are there and

1 accessible and it can be done appropriately.

2 So I thank you again and I appreciate
3 your time.

4 MR. BJERSTEDT: Ray Morton.

5 MR. MORTON: No, I've already spoke.

6 MR. BJERSTEDT: Chris Verlander.

7 MR. VERLANDER: Good afternoon. My
8 name is Chris Verlander and I'm vice
9 president of Corporate Development for
10 Associated Industries of Florida. AIF, as
11 we are known, was established in 1920, and is
12 a voluntary association of diversified
13 businesses, created to foster an economic
14 climate in Florida conducive to the growth,
15 development, and welfare of industry and
16 business and people around the state.

17 We are not-for-profit organization, and
18 it's solely owned by our members, which hail
19 from every corner of the state and represent
20 every segment of Florida's private sector.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to speak
22 today about this PEIS, which will support
23 the issuance of permits to conduct
24 geological and geophysical study activities
25 on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf.

1 AIF supports the generation of seismic
2 data that will allow for more accurate
3 estimates of the potential and location for
4 oil and natural gas development in the area.
5 We can create more jobs, as it has been
6 mentioned earlier, and generate more revenue
7 if allowed to responsibly develop and
8 produce here in the United States more oil
9 and natural gas that we need.

10 As mentioned earlier by the Wood
11 Mackenzie study, it can generate 161,000
12 thousand-plus jobs. These are not limited
13 jobs directly associated with oil and gas,
14 but created indirectly by the companies that
15 supply equipment and other support service
16 for onshore and offshore.

17 In addition, as the Wood Mackenzie
18 study showed, \$24 billion in revenue
19 could be generated from 2012 to 2030 if this
20 offshore development in the eastern Gulf
21 happens.

22 To summarize, energy, security, and
23 affordability remain key aspects to
24 successful long-term economic recovery and
25 growth in Florida, and the nation in

1 general. Recent technological advances in
2 exploration and production have led to
3 tremendous potential in meeting future
4 energy demand with domestic resources
5 allowing the United States to better manage
6 our risks in the global energy market. The
7 development of energy resources will lead to
8 more energy security, more jobs, and more
9 government revenues.

10 We appreciate this opportunity to offer
11 supportive comments on this PEIS for
12 geological and geophysical studies in the
13 Atlantic OCS.

14 Thank you very much.

15 MR. BJERSTEDT: Jineane McMinn.

16 (No response.)

17 MR. BJERSTEDT: Jineane McMinn, is she
18 here?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. BJERSTEDT: Jason Kischner.

21 (No response.)

22 MR. BJERSTEDT: Is there anyone else who
23 wishes to speak? That's the last of the
24 speaker list.

25 MR. WING: I wanted to speak. Thank

1 you very much for this opportunity to come
2 here.

3 My concern, or worry, is that one
4 gentleman was correct when he was saying the
5 endangered species will be the American
6 citizens clamoring after we have \$7.00,
7 8.00 a gallon for gasoline, such as they
8 have in Europe right now. It's estimated by
9 the Florida Economic Council that your
10 gasoline is allowed to go up to that point,
11 7 to 8 euros, as President Obama and
12 Mr. Cheney said, that we will lose the poor
13 people in this state. And I will be
14 specific. I will say Jacksonville, Florida.
15 42 percent of people in Jacksonville,
16 Florida earn \$25,000 or less, 42 percent.
17 If those same people have to pay \$7.00, 8.00
18 a gallon, it's estimated that the
19 unemployment in Florida -- I'm talking about
20 the whole state -- will decrease, because
21 people cannot afford to even get to the
22 jobs. It will decrease by 10 percent. In
23 other words, we will have 10 percent more
24 unemployed people. That would be great,
25 wouldn't it?

1 I have sources -- and I'm in the oil
2 business in Texas right now. I work with
3 the people that take the big tankers and the
4 16-wheel trucks and all of that type of
5 thing, pick up the products at the well, and
6 then take it down there, for example, Corpus
7 Christi.

8 Did you know -- you do, because I told
9 you. There are people right now from China
10 working in Corpus Christi, and certainly the
11 Panama Canal, which they are going to
12 control, wanting to get oil out of Texas
13 right now, as soon as that Panama Canal is
14 finished, and guess where they are going?
15 They are going to take our oil all the way
16 over to China. That is what they are going
17 to be doing.

18 A truck driver, for example, right now
19 in Texas -- that is what I deal primarily with.
20 A truck driver will make 4- -- it will net
21 \$4,000 a week driving a rig right now into
22 Texas oil fields. What we want to do in
23 Florida is we want to hire similar people
24 that they make a very responsible living.

25 Now, for the people who were worried by

1 the environmental-type thing, I'll tell you
2 what. When they start going down to Cape
3 Canaveral and start eating turtles because
4 they can't afford to eat because of the
5 price of gasoline, you'll find out where the
6 turtle thing stands. I can tell you that
7 right now.

8 Or, if they can't afford to get down
9 there in they Chevy Volks, which of course
10 they never bought, and I hear all of these
11 radical environmentalists they start talking
12 about things and you go out there and what
13 do they got? They are driving one of those
14 big Cadillac Seville or something like that.
15 Amazing. But since Dr. Chu and the
16 President Obama, they don't want to explore
17 the oil. They want to put us at worldwide
18 disadvantage so that we can export our
19 dollars over to places like Saudi Arabia,
20 Iraq, Iran, the whole thing. What are we
21 doing? We are diminishing ourselves. We're
22 totally diminishing ourselves.

23 The other thing is why do we continue?
24 For example, we are worried about production
25 of oil and that type of thing. Why do we

1 continue the FET test, Federal Excise Tax,
2 on the equipment that we're buying right now
3 use in the oil fields? Why don't we do
4 away with that to make it more
5 economically feasible to be in the oil
6 business and have increased production?

7 I would say one thing. If I were a
8 company a produce -- BP, Chevron or whoever,
9 and I knew that in that map right there that
10 there was absolutely no guarantee that if I
11 did all of this surveying of the ocean
12 fronts and all that, I would say there is
13 all kinds of gasoline there. Guess what?
14 Nothing is going to happen. Do you know
15 why? Because the Obama administration will
16 kill the drilling. And nobody is going to
17 do all of that research -- and he should be
18 happy (indicating) -- nobody is going to do
19 any of that drilling because -- excuse me,
20 the exploratory work, because they know they
21 will never be able to use drilling.

22 MR. GOEKE: Sir.

23 MR. WING: So it's a moot question.

24 MR. GOEKE: Sir. Please address your
25 comments to the front.

1 MR. WING: Yes, I'll do that. For as
2 long as he took --

3 MR. GOEKE: Do you have a clock on?

4 MR. WING: Thank you. Thank you.

5 What we have here is by the
6 environmental people a war on what they
7 consider is what carbon produces. It's
8 ridiculous. And like I said, they are all
9 driving their Chevy Escalades or whatever
10 you call it down here and all they want to
11 do is be on TV or something like that.

12 The job situation is what concerns me
13 the most. We have like 9.4 percent
14 unemployment in Florida right now. If we
15 were to open up these jobs, and not people
16 just actually working in Florida, but I can
17 take people from here in Jacksonville or
18 here in Florida that, for example, have a
19 very good record on truck driving and that
20 type of thing and I can double or triple
21 their income --

22 MR. GOEKE: Sir. Sir.

23 MR. WING: -- down in the oil fields.
24 The oil fields are critical.

25 I want to thank everybody here for your

1 opinion and your response and all of that
2 type thing. Remember one thing, in November
3 the real decision will be made.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. BJERSTEDT: Sir, would you mind
6 giving your name to the court reporter?

7 MR. WING: I did.

8 MR. BJERSTEDT: Okay. Thank you.

9 Is there anyone else? Yes. And could
10 you speak into the microphone you name and
11 spell it for the court reporter?

12 MR. TRIGUERIO: My name is John
13 Triguero, T-R-I-G-U-E-R-I-O. I'm just an
14 average citizen here in Jacksonville, and I
15 fully support the exploration, because
16 literally in theory we acknowledge power.
17 How are we going to position our argument
18 for or against exploration and drilling if
19 we don't know what's exactly there? The
20 information and the tools that we have now
21 in order to chart that data is way better
22 than it was before, so we have a better
23 grasp and more knowledge as what to go
24 after.

25 I'm also a stroke patient and a heart

1 patient. With the gas prices the way they
2 are right now it's kind of hard to decide
3 whether or not should I go to the
4 cardiologist or can I afford to go to the
5 cardiologist. These medications are
6 expensive, but can I afford to get my
7 medication or am I going to have to pay \$6-
8 7.00 a gallon just to get to the pharmacy to
9 try and get the medication?

10 I'm looking out for the families across
11 this nation. The families itself rely on
12 consumer goods. Everything we have is
13 shipped or transported one way or the other,
14 and if gasoline goes up, so does the cost on
15 these products and services. So if we don't
16 explore and at least see what's available
17 for us to obtain, then we're basically hurting
18 ourselves.

19 And on a side note, I would love to get
20 the United States independent of foreign
21 oil, because I seen what happened in Egypt
22 during the uprising, and Libia, as well as
23 when Iran was trying to threaten to close
24 the Straits of Hormuz. That oil went up.
25 That is not what we need here.

1 I'm actually seeing commercials on TV
2 today that say why don't we help Brazil
3 become independent on foreign oil and help
4 jump start their drilling process. I'm not
5 worried about Brazil. I'm worried about the
6 United States and its citizens.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

9 MR. BJERSTEDT: Just speak your name
10 and can you spell it for the court reporter?

11 MR. MILLS: My name is Jake Mills,
12 J-A-K-E M-I-L-L-S. I drove here with my
13 daughter from Tarpon Springs, Florida, over
14 on the Gulf coast. She is home schooled, so
15 everything is okay.

16 Since everybody is giving their
17 military background, I'll just give you
18 mine. I'm a veteran of two wars, Iraq and
19 Afghanistan. And even though we had great
20 surveys, we still never knew where we were.

21 I come from a unique background. I
22 grew up in West Virginia for the first half
23 of my life. I saw mountain top removal for
24 coal. I've seen natural gas exploration.
25 I've seen the regulation of the bi-product,

1 the toxic bi-products of natural gas. The
2 regulation of that. The limits have been
3 reduced to allow more toxic levels, because
4 they couldn't get it regulated.

5 And I have also lived in Texas, and I
6 apologize to my kids for that, where they
7 had oil drilling right off the coast, and
8 they have Galveston Beach, which is down
9 there. On the beach they sell tar remover,
10 because the beaches are just disgusting,
11 nobody swims there. And it is because
12 although the drilling is supposed to be
13 safe, it is never truly safe. There is
14 always oil spills, even though it's not
15 always the magnitude of the deep water
16 horizon, but there's always oil being
17 spilled there.

18 Also my wife's family is all in oil.
19 They are either in the production side,
20 logistic side or the construction side. The
21 jobs that are going to be created in Florida
22 from drilling will be temporary will be
23 temporary and they will be outsourced to the
24 states where they are familiar with this,
25 where companies are already established.

1 They will move them in. They work here on a
2 temporary basis, and then they go back home
3 whether to Mississippi, Louisiana, or Texas,
4 so that's my view on the jobs.

5 Like I said, I live on the Gulf coast.
6 I also have a family that lives in
7 Louisiana. As far as gas prices go, there is
8 direct correlation for the supply of
9 gasoline or oil to the cost that we pay at
10 the pump. In Louisiana they not only have
11 offshore oil drilling, but they also have
12 refineries, as well as Texas does. When I
13 lived in Texas, gas was .05 less per
14 gallon than it was in Florida. In Louisiana
15 it was .10 less.

16 Now, when you look Alaska, they also
17 have oil drilling and refineries. They pay
18 some of the highest prices than anywhere in
19 the country, so there is no correlation.

20 Also, gasoline is a product of
21 capitalism. It's a free market. The leases
22 are sold to the highest bidder, as well as
23 the product. The product goes to whoever
24 wants to pay the most. If you want to
25 federalize oil drilling and gas production

1 and gas sales, then you can probably talk
2 about prices going down. But until that
3 happens -- and I don't see it happening,
4 because we live in a capitalist country --
5 there is going to be no correlation between
6 lower gas prices and where and when we
7 drill.

8 I apologize. I didn't know that this
9 meeting was going and I didn't know anything
10 about the survey, so I kind of scrambled in
11 the few hours it took me to drive over here,
12 and then wait for the meeting to start.

13 But some of the things that disturbed
14 me about just the surveys is that this an
15 obvious first step to oil drilling. I also
16 read that your agency is the fifth leading
17 source of money for the government. So, you
18 know, I know we're not really supposed to
19 pose questions here, but I'm just wondering
20 how your agency, if you're just here to
21 survey and see what is available out there,
22 how are you making money for the government?

23 The environmental impact, obviously, is
24 great. When the oil spill happened, it
25 became my obsession to do -- to learn

1 everything about oil drilling, so I went to
2 Louisiana. I saw beaches that were closed.
3 I saw news reporters that weren't allowed to
4 ask questions or find out what was going on.
5 I saw people that weren't allowed to take
6 their own water sampling. And then a few
7 months later, I saw that the beaches were
8 open, and yet there were people in full --
9 like hazmat suits doing oil sampling and
10 there're kids running in and out of the
11 water. Now, if those guys are protected,
12 you know, what's going on with those kids?

13 And just the other day in my local
14 newspaper, the local college did a survey of
15 the waters in Pensacola and they're still
16 crescent (phonetic) in oil in that water.
17 It is hidden. You can't see it with the
18 naked eye, but when they run it over black
19 light, it was all of these kids' legs. So
20 it's still there, you just can't see it,
21 which is the purpose of crescent to begin
22 with.

23 The jobs lost, and the jobs, it's kind of
24 a risk/benefit. Like I said, there would be
25 some jobs created, but the jobs lost would

1 be like in my county. We rely on tourism.
2 And right now I'm a firefighter. I wouldn't
3 be directly injured by the oil spill. You
4 know, I wouldn't go to the beach, obviously.
5 But real estate would go down. That would
6 mean we would have to lay off people.
7 Tourism would close, restaurants would
8 close, and fisheries would close. And that
9 all happens in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi
10 and Alabama. Those were all things that
11 really happened and would happen in Florida.

12 I guess that's all I've got. Those are
13 my concerns. You know, I'm open to
14 anything, but like I said, this is a
15 risk/benefit. Florida relies on tourism. We
16 rely on beaches. We rely on the water.
17 Bringing in something that's going to
18 pollute all of that, it's going to be
19 nothing but bad for Florida.

20 So thank you.

21 MR. GOEKE: Thank you.

22 Any other comments?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. GOEKE: Well, I want to repeat that
25 I appreciate y'all coming out. This has

1 been a long process. We are working very
2 hard to make sure we can capture your
3 comments and your thoughts and get this into
4 our document.

5 Keep in mind that the comment period
6 remains open for a few more weeks. You can
7 go to the website and access an e-mail
8 address. Tom had it on the bottom and it's
9 most of the literature that's been handed
10 out at the front desk.

11 What we're going to do, unless we have
12 someone else who wishes to speak, we're
13 going to close this down. We are having
14 another meeting this evening at 7:00, so
15 tell your friends.

16 Thank you. I appreciate y'all coming.

17 (Thereupon, the meeting concluded at
18 3:26 p.m.)

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25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
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21
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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF DUVAL)

I, Colleen C. Lee, Court Reporter for the State of Florida At Large, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the proceeding and that the transcript is a true record of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 25th day of April, 2012.

Colleen C. Lee, RPR
Court Reporter

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: \$1..60s

	116:15	24:7,10,19	92:4
<hr/> \$	100,000 80:18	26:1 56:24	30th 5:7 20:22
\$1 44:17	105 38:8	79:1 82:3	29:8
\$1.7 44:20	11 26:19	92:4 94:24	35 38:5
\$14 44:12	11th 78:12	96:13	350 24:2
\$2 53:17	13 65:24	200-nautical-mile	350-mile 20:7
\$2.00 58:7	13.5 81:3	7:9	38 32:24
\$24 54:16	138,000 65:22	2000 53:16	3:26 120:18
105:18	138,500 80:25	2003 43:25	3rd 78:2
\$25,000 107:16	140,000 44:11	2004 91:16	
\$3.00 58:7	14th 47:9	2010 79:1	<hr/> 4 <hr/>
\$3.98 48:6	15 31:25	2011 44:9	4- 108:20
\$4,000 108:21	15-minute	2012 54:18	40 24:17
\$5.00 88:21	31:16	105:19	40:21 72:1
92:15 96:23	16-wheel 108:4	2017 52:6	101:5
\$6- 113:7	161,000 54:3	2020 36:18	40-kilometer
\$6.00 96:24	105:11	2030 54:18	73:15
\$7.00 107:6,17	17 47:13	105:19	400 43:24
\$86 53:15	180,000 81:22	22 37:23 82:7	61:11
	1920 104:11	25 19:16	42 107:15,16
<hr/> 0	1968 47:10	61:22	45 76:19
05 116:13	1991 89:16,23	27 33:1 47:12	
07001 85:2	1995 43:25	2d-sized 36:22	<hr/> 5 <hr/>
	1st 20:22	2nd 79:8	5 61:13 93:8
<hr/> 1			50 71:24
1 103:3	<hr/> 2 <hr/>	3 48:23 83:7	500 8:5,6
10 61:13	2-2 27:16	93:8	
79:22 89:19	28:1	3,000 78:15	<hr/> 6 <hr/>
96:15,16,19	20 23:10	30 43:4	60s 60:9
107:22,23		71:10,14	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: 7..administration

<hr/>	abundant 45:1	100:10	8:9 12:7
<hr/> 7	access 44:18,	acquired 71:11	16:11,13
7 28:8 33:15	25 103:14	acquiring 72:3	17:9,24
107:11	120:7	75:4	19:12 20:7
7.00 113:8	accessible	acquisition 7:2	21:19 25:1
7.4 81:21	104:1	69:8,17	26:12 36:17,
7.7 53:14	accident 12:15	75:16,25	22 37:5,7
75 59:16	94:25	act 28:7,8	44:17 75:11
7:00 120:14	accidental	33:11,24	80:6 83:13
7th 47:10	10:9 12:10	34:14 53:11	actual 103:19
<hr/>	accomplish	action 6:19,20	actuator 46:9
8	38:22	10:8 11:25	add 17:22
<hr/>	account 39:15	15:4,6 17:16	67:19
8 107:11	accurate 46:8	19:11 27:1	added 31:9
8.00 107:7,17	47:21 51:3	32:17 34:10	adding 83:24
<hr/>	57:16 105:2	35:14 36:3	addition 37:11
9	accurately	41:16 46:18	54:12 71:17
<hr/>	51:11	73:11 82:15	72:19 103:5
9.2 53:13	acidifying	active 10:13	105:17
9.4 111:13	58:19	26:23 35:21	additional
95 67:11	acknowledge	41:19 51:15	17:24 24:6,
<hr/>	112:16	86:5	10 44:20
A	acoustic 18:15	activities	67:23 72:24
<hr/>	22:10 25:3	4:19 6:18,22	address 29:18
A's 46:17	35:21 36:7	7:23 8:1,12	34:12 110:24
abandon 63:23	37:11 38:7,	10:1,12	120:8
80:10,17	8,17 39:2	14:6,7,8	addressed 64:7
absolute 93:22	41:19 86:10	17:17 24:2	94:2
absolutely	98:22 99:2	34:15 37:18	administration
46:5 59:22	101:9	50:17 51:25	14:16 21:11
103:6 110:10	acoustic-related	65:24 69:1,	51:25 55:3
abundance 59:6	37:17	20 73:4,9	64:20 82:5,
	acoustics	81:3 84:22	16 83:8,24
		104:24	84:10 94:19
		activity 6:8	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: administration's..American

110:15	affordable	aircraft 9:22	allowing 42:17
administration's	60:13 67:6,	10:19	45:14 103:18
80:24 82:20	20	aircrafts	106:5
83:16	Afghanistan	10:21	alluded 13:25
administrative	114:19	airgun 9:9,	alternative
3:11,12,14	Africa 92:20	10:14 24:22	17:21,22
adopt 25:9	afternoon 2:4,	25:1 26:12,	18:1,6,15
adopting 16:7	6,18 3:20	23 36:12,25	19:5,6,10,17
advance 53:18	4:9 31:7	40:6 80:7,	20:6 22:12,
advances 51:9	48:18 50:9	13,20,22	14 23:24,25
106:1	66:21 68:16	81:4 84:18	24:4 25:10,
advancing 69:3	77:9 85:11	airgun-type	25 26:11,14,
advantage 55:4	104:7	20:18	25 40:14,20
adventure	Age 87:7,11	airguns 8:14,	41:1,7,8,15,
47:10	agencies 5:2	20 10:18	46:17,22
advocates 68:3	6:14, 28:15	21:12 24:21	59:8 64:20
aerial 10:20	73:2 83:21	36:9 38:14	65:10 73:11,
Aeronautic	100:2	40:1 63:19	19 83:3
14:15	agency 16:22	65:15 77:17	84:11,17
affect 27:19	66:23 78:9	79:4,17 80:5	99:7 100:12
35:15 38:3	117:16,20	81:6 82:11	103:3
50:1 100:11	aggressive	83:5 84:9	alternatives
affected 6:12	94:10	98:23 99:5	15:3,8,13
12:20 33:6	ahead 2:2	Alabama 119:10	27:20 40:5
affecting 39:5	83:12	Alaska 43:22	41:14 53:19
affects 56:2	aid 70:6	96:5,8	68:12 73:10
65:15	aiding 70:24	116:16	82:13 98:20,
afford 107:21	AIF 104:10	Aleutian 96:3	24 99:12,25
109:4,8	105:1	Alliance 42:23	101:12,15
113:4,6	air 14:9	43:3 45:2	Amazing 109:15
affordability	79:19	allowed 53:4	ambushed 47:11
105:23	airborne 9:22	54:20 105:7	Amendment 94:4
		107:10	America 93:19
		118:3,5	97:21 98:2
			American 44:15

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: Americans..assessed

47:25 50:12	announcements	arbitrary	22:16 24:9
67:24 97:10	29:19,21	103:22	25:11,17
103:7 107:5	annually 44:13	archaeological	32:1,5 37:6
Americans	81:21	13:9	40:23 41:6,7
50:23 97:22	anymore 61:3,	Arctic 72:2	44:18 52:24
amount 51:12	14	87:4,10	54:1,21
66:3 72:25	apologize	area 7:17,20	56:17,25
amplify 23:25	115:6 117:8	13:5,15,16,	63:6,13,18
analyses 15:3	applicable	23 14:18,22	70:8 71:16
34:22	41:12	15:19,23	72:25 73:14,
analysis 34:11	applications	18:5, 20:8,	83:6,9,18
35:6,20 36:8	75:3	15,23 21:1,6	argument
39:10,13	applied 70:5	22:17,20,24	112:17
70:7	85:16	23:7,19	Arlyn 76:16,17
analyze 10:2	applies 33:11	24:12,24	Army 47:6
20:4 32:21	apply 20:17	25:13,15,21,	85:13 89:16
analyzed 36:18	33:19 80:20	24 26:4,5,6,	Arpaia 94:14,
analyzing 8:22	appreciation	15,18,24	15
Anastasia	68:22 76:9	32:8,25	array 12:17
55:10	approach	33:7,22 34:6	24:21,22
anchors 8:25	37:14,15	37:20,24	79:17 80:13
11:13,15	appropriately	51:4 52:12,	99:6,7
and/or 7:3	104:1	17,20 55:13	arrays 36:12
anecdotal	approval 73:24	57:2 62:13	article 78:17
73:25	approvals	64:2 65:1,19	aspect 20:2
animal 90:7	101:2	74:3,14,18,	59:13
96:9	approved 73:21	21 75:12	aspects 105:23
animals 19:3	April 20:22	80:17 85:3	assess 6:2
20:15 38:24	28:13 78:2,	100:14 105:4	30:18,23
39:20 60:23	12 79:8	areas 3:1 4:22	34:16 70:21
89:22 90:1	Arabia 96:21	6:9,12,23,25	assessed 27:21
91:17,19	109:19	7:6 12:23	55:20
		13:12,18	
		14:5,10,11,	
		13,22 15:20,	
		22,24 18:3	
		19:8 21:7,13	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: assessing..beaches

assessing 32:5 73:7	74:3,7,14,21 75:10 76:12 80:14 81:20 82:5 85:15 97:8 104:25 106:13	authorizations 33:19 40:5 41:2	44:22
assessment 2:8 31:24 33:15 35:23 71:8		authorize 6:21	baleen 33:1,25
assessments 43:10 45:11 74:24	atmosphere 56:11,12 87:13	authorized 6:18 19:14, 15,21	Bally 47:8
associate 50:10 65:4	Atmospheric 14:15 21:11	availability 5:5 43:12	bar 100:14
Associates 4:5 98:6	attached 58:18	average 38:18 112:14	Bardin 57:23, 24
association 68:20 69:6 104:12	attaching 77:23	avid 85:22	bargaining 61:2,16
assumption 59:22	attachment 78:11 79:7	avoid 24:21	based 34:19 51:7 71:9 78:13 95:23 100:7
assumptions 5:17 30:22	attachments 78:21	avoidance 17:4 21:15 41:4	basic 34:25 35:22
asymmetry 9:2	attendance 76:5	aware 88:13	basically 15:14 65:20 113:17
atlantic 2:25 3:1 4:20 6:6 7:8 13:14 14:4,18 17:10 19:13, 15 22:20 25:23 26:5 34:1,4 43:6, 15 44:3,11 49:19 50:18, 25 51:6,21 52:3,5,13,16 54:1,25 59:10 65:14 69:2,20 71:8	attended 55:15	awareness 17:6	basin 65:5
	attention 86:19	axial 86:12	basins 74:7
	audience 42:5	<hr/> B <hr/>	basis 17:15 19:22 52:10 100:19 116:2
	Augustine 55:11 61:22 88:6 94:16	baby 79:1 99:25	Battalion 47:9
	authority 7:22 66:23 68:1 86:6	back 12:4 20:6 24:24 30:13 77:5 89:10 102:7 116:2	bays 23:13
	authorization 39:10	background 47:2 114:17, 21	beach 62:2,13, 24 64:10 65:1 92:7,11 97:9 115:8,9 119:4
		bad 90:21 91:12 119:19	beaches 115:10 118:2,7 119:16
		balanced 43:1	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: bears..breathing

bears 13:1 96:7	115:1	94:14 97:5	booming 81:4 84:3
begin 11:14 17:12 20:5, 12 28:10,22 44:3 51:1 118:21	bidder 116:22	98:4 102:1 104:4,6 106:15,17, 20,22 112:5, 8 114:9	boot 31:3
begun 20:5 28:6 103:4	big 83:19 108:3 109:14	black 87:10 118:18	border 47:12
behalf 43:2 46:3 68:21 77:12	bike 58:8 97:12	blanket 101:16	borings 70:13
behavior 65:16 80:15	Bill 31:2 45:24 55:8,9	blast 65:21	born 79:10 85:12
belief 51:18	billion 44:12 54:17 56:19 81:21 82:7 105:18	blasts 79:18	borrowers 61:2
belt 22:18 23:8 25:22 26:13	bills 49:11	blocks 14:4	borrowing 61:15
beltway 25:16 26:1	biological 33:14 34:19	blue 33:25	bottom 8:25 9:4,5 11:9, 10,11,14,16 21:18 22:19 120:8
benefit 48:13 50:22 51:13	biologically 63:9	boats 11:20	bought 62:20 109:10
benefited 51:8	biologically-significant 72:9	Boca 85:16	box 22:22 29:13
benefits 53:11	birds 13:6 95:14	Bodge 98:4,5	BP 61:24 94:22,25 95:5 110:8
benign 10:18	bit 8:4 11:25 13:20 24:24 25:5 30:21 86:22	Boe 45:19,20, 24	BRA 68:18
benthic 12:24 21:16	Bjerstedt 2:11 4:9,10 45:19 48:17 55:8 57:23 60:3 61:19 64:22 66:20 68:15 76:16 77:8 85:9 86:8 88:3 92:25	BOEM 4:11 6:19 15:5 19:6 28:2 33:14 39:8 68:25 69:2 70:20 71:9 74:22 75:3 76:5, 82:11 84:13	Brazil 92:21 114:2,5
Berets 85:13		bonus 94:6	break 31:15,16 91:7
berth 11:20		booming 57:22	breaking 91:7, 9
bi-product 114:25		boom 58:12 79:1	breathe 18:24 63:22 80:10
bi-products		boomer 9:16	breathing
		Boomers 9:7	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: Brevard..cessation

65:24 81:2	burst 10:16	calls 63:20	cardiologist
Brevard 18:7	business 48:24	80:8	113:4,5
26:15 63:4	49:1 50:3	calving 65:23	care 42:7 84:4
Brian 77:8,10	55:11,16,17	79:11 81:2	90:13
briefing 86:16	59:16 60:6,	82:22	Cargo 67:4
bring 11:21	7,16 62:9	Cambodian	Caribbean
48:4,5 53:22	63:15 84:2	47:12	78:16
54:3	104:16 108:2	Camp 64:10	carried 67:12
bringing 45:21	110:6	Canal 108:11,	carry 10:23,24
102:13	businesses	13	cars 96:25
119:17	48:24 49:2,	Canaveral	cascading
broad 34:17	5,8,10,14,22	14:16 109:3	11:24
65:16	50:2,3 68:7,	cancelled 62:3	case 6:20
broke 62:4,8	8 104:13	capability	12:22 19:7
broker 61:21	businessman	37:10	case-by-case
brought 11:5	63:15	capacity 63:21	19:22 100:19
102:6	button 42:15	66:13 80:9	cases 20:13
Brunswick 23:9	buy 11:22	Cape 14:16	CAT 86:11
buffer 24:25	buying 110:2	109:2	catalyst 90:24
build 3:9 98:1	<hr/> C <hr/>	capital 53:18	categories
builds 59:15	cables 11:15	capitalism	34:16 36:8,
bulk 64:1	Cadillac	116:21	15
burden 67:19	109:14	capitalist	category 27:8
98:25 100:2,	calendar 29:6	117:4	CDS 76:6
21	call 3:11	caps 56:2	CEA 45:12
bureau 2:9	16:14 17:10	capture 120:2	cease 80:11
4:10 6:14,23	22:23 27:12	capturing	central 18:8
16:8 45:12	58:22 83:21	77:21	73:22 98:19
77:2 78:4	111:10	car 86:25	cessation
bureaucracy	called 9:16,17	carbon 56:10,	78:10
102:9,11	16:16 78:5,	12 87:11,13,	
	17 88:14	19 111:7	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: cetera..collected

cetera 65:7	choose 29:17	57:20,21	closure 18:5
Chamber 48:21	84:10	classified	23:20 24:6,
chance 23:4	chooses 64:20	35:7	10,14 25:18
42:6	choosing 42:19	classrooms	73:14
change 43:16	chosen 15:3	46:12	closures 17:17
55:4,21,23	36:10	Clay 48:21,23	18:2 20:21
56:3,4,5,8,	Chris 104:6,8	49:20 60:7	23:23 24:5
14,19 57:18	Christi 108:7,	clean 3:14	25:11
Chapter 77:12	10	59:5 85:24	Club 77:13
characteristic	Chu 109:15	95:4	91:18
18:20	circuit 9:10	cleaning 60:7	coal 87:12
charge 9:10	circumstance	clear 2:21	114:24
Charleston	10:6	23:18 71:15	coast 14:21
64:1	circumstances	clearer 71:13	23:9 58:2
chart 112:21	12:11 16:21	climate 49:4,5	78:9,16
cheap 58:25	38:25	55:21,22	80:14,22
cheaper 68:3	cited 100:6	56:3,5,8,	94:20 95:2,
Cheney 107:12	citing 74:17	57:18 104:14	7,25 96:5
Chevron 85:18,	citizen 47:25	clock 111:3	100:25
21,22 86:18	85:12 88:7	close 24:8	114:14 115:7
87:5 110:8	112:14	49:3 94:24	116:5
Chevy 111:9	citizens 44:8	113:23	coastal 13:5
chief 2:7	103:7 114:6	119:7,8	64:2 82:6,8
children 60:24	city 63:8	120:13	84:5 98:7
61:6 64:15	98:10 100:3	closed 41:6	coastline 21:4
chills 102:7	civil 88:7	118:2	22:19 24:7
China 89:2,10,	claim 55:22	closely 86:19	cold 87:7
13 92:17,19,	56:5	closer 13:20	91:10,11
22 108:9,16	clambering	80:18	collaboration
China's 89:5	107:6	closes 29:8	102:21
chirp 99:5	clapping 45:18	closing 29:25	collect 29:8
	48:16 55:7	101:14	46:15
			collected
			32:16

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: collection..conducts

collection 2:24 3:5, 35:23 46:24	commercially 55:12	compassionate 91:8	concerns 111:12 119:13
college 118:14	commercials 114:1	compensation 66:2 81:15, 25	conclude 41:10
collision 12:16	commissioner 48:23	complete 28:1	concluded 120:17
column 9:14 81:9	commitment 76:10	completed 32:16 43:7 102:13	conclusion 45:2 76:8
combinations 38:5	committed 75:19	complex 14:17	concordance 15:10
combined 38:6	common 97:2	complexes 22:1	condition 73:24
commend 86:8	commonsense 44:23	comply 33:15	conditions 38:1 39:4 88:16
commends 69:2	communicate 16:23 63:22 79:25 80:9	component 5:24 8:10 14:14 17:23	condominium 61:25
comment 28:5, 13 29:7 42:4 43:2 54:24 88:1 120:5	communities 9:5,6 12:24 21:17 46:14 88:18 100:3	components 11:19 12:21	condominiums 62:7
comments 3:21, 23,24 4:23 5:9,15 28:14 29:8,12 30:8 55:6 68:24, 25 76:14 77:11,22 98:8 102:19 106:11 110:25 119:22 120:3	companies 52:1,9,14,21 54:8 69:14 70:6 74:4,9, 11 75:6,13 82:14 83:20 103:18 105:14 115:25	composition 38:2	conducive 104:14
Commerce 48:22	company 110:8	comprehensive 51:23	conduct 10:20 15:8 16:15 20:12 50:16 68:2 74:22 78:6 104:23
commercial 12:25 13:2 66:3 81:18, 19 83:7	compare 52:23	compressed 79:19	conducted 6:5 9:19,21 37:19 43:8
	comparison 10:18	computer 51:9	conducting 10:11 69:19
		computerized 86:12	conducts 71:22
		concept 23:23	
		concern 107:3	
		concerned 61:12 65:8, 17	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: configurations..county

configurations 38:8	consumer 42:22 43:3 45:2 47:25 113:12	contractors 68:20 75:15	Corpus 108:6, 10
congressional 93:7	consumers 67:24	contrary 9:7	correct 91:23 107:4
connatural 80:3	consuming 42:25	control 49:16 50:5 85:3 108:12	correlation 116:8,19 117:5
connect 25:17	contact 2:12 22:2,3	controlled 8:15 53:8	correspond 21:9
consequences 56:22	contacts 34:25	controlling 16:3 68:11	corridor 23:17
conservation 54:15	contained 44:2	conventional 69:12	cost 49:1,8,12 74:13 98:25 113:14 116:9
conservative 51:14	container 59:7	conversation 59:9	costs 49:11,15 50:1,5 67:18,20,23 68:11
consideration 4:13 8:10 27:7 34:21 85:4	Continental 4:5 6:6 7:12 38:14,15 49:20 50:18 71:5,9 72:1, 3 98:12 104:25	convinced 52:2	
considerations 34:24	continue 27:1 65:6 72:16 109:23 110:1	coordinate 22:6	council 48:20 50:11 55:16, 17 78:25 107:9
considered 11:17 25:5 27:4 74:18	continued 67:19	coordination 21:25 22:9	countries 25:7 76:24 97:17
construct 54:10	continues 49:1	coordinator 2:11 4:12	country 58:24 60:22 67:12 95:24 116:19 117:4
construction 9:3 60:9 62:5 115:20	continuing 102:20	copy 29:24 83:4 85:6	
consultation 33:16	continuous 23:8 26:1	coral 102:23	
consultations 28:3,6,10 29:1	contractor 4:3,15 68:18	cords 87:6	
		coring 8:1 11:2,4,12	country's 47:19 50:21
		corner 104:19	county 18:7 26:15 46:2 48:21,22,23 49:21 63:7 98:11 100:14

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: court..Defense

119:1	69:25 70:10,	6:13 32:16	deaths 78:13,
court 3:12,18	24 74:8	46:8,15,23	19
112:6,11	111:24	47:4 51:2,5,	debris 12:8
114:10	critically-endangered	7 52:8,11,	17:6
coverage 73:12	82:17	15,22 53:1	decades 79:12
covered 36:7	critically-needed	69:8,18,25	decades-old
cranes 67:4	68:8	70:10,12,14,	51:7
create 3:10	CSA 30:24	18,20,24	December 29:5
48:5 53:3	Cuba 89:2	71:10,11	decide 113:2
68:9 105:5	current 19:12	72:4 74:5,6,	decides 7:21
created 3:25	33:9 40:25	10,16 75:5,	decision 5:13,
38:23 54:7	43:14 46:8	16,25 82:14	20 28:25
104:13	47:23 51:6,	83:19, 86:22	29:4 30:14
105:14	13 52:4,24	100:8,9	51:19 52:18
115:21	64:8 71:7	105:2 112:21	112:3
118:25	74:6 93:10	data-collection	
creates 44:24	cuspis 23:12	51:24	decisions 5:23
creating 3:17	25:17	dated 78:25	6:16 71:4
creative 66:9	customers	dates 4:22	93:12 103:13
creatures 21:2	52:14	daughter	decrease
64:17	cut 59:16	114:13	107:20,22
crescent 62:1	cutting 11:3	David 66:20,22	dedicated
64:10 65:1	cuttings 11:4	day 53:15	29:13 42:24
118:16,21	cycle 28:21	62:14 67:12	64:25
crew 11:22	87:9	95:21 118:13	deep 8:8 36:24
criteria		daylight 62:25	73:13 78:6
27:12,22	<hr/> D <hr/>	days 62:2	115:15
32:10 33:9		79:23	deep-penetrating
34:18,24	damage 96:9	de 101:16	18:12
critical 15:19	dangerous	dead 78:8	deeper 8:4,6
21:6 22:20,	83:12	95:14	deeply 2:14
22 25:13	darkest 37:6	deal 108:19	Defense 14:6
34:5 54:14	data 3:5,22	death 77:17	78:25
		80:19 91:4	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: define..disadvantage

define 32:10 36:16	describe 31:24	determined 103:25	device 9:1,3,9
defined 27:24 34:13,17	descries 77:20	determining 9:2,3 32:22 103:17	devices 98:22 99:3,5,17 101:10,18,21
definitions 35:10	descriptions 34:23	detrimental 79:15	devised 99:10
degrees 25:7	design 16:14 17:10 20:11 70:15	devastated 89:24	diagonal 89:3
delivers 53:15	designated 33:12 34:5	develop 40:16 50:21 53:5 75:6 105:7	dialogue 42:24 75:20
demand 67:5 106:4	designations 16:2,7	developed 17:2 34:18 73:25	diaphragm 9:12
demographic 101:3	designed 34:11 72:12	developing 32:21 39:11 49:24 52:20	died 78:15 91:12
Department 5:13 14:5 28:22 50:20	desk 77:25 120:10	development 43:17 44:10 45:7 47:19 51:4,16 53:7,22 54:7,12,19, 22 55:3 62:6 69:15 70:2, 11,17 71:5, 20 74:8 76:12 81:5 83:6 84:8 104:9,15 105:4,20 106:7	differences 38:3,12
depend 79:24	destiny 32:10	developmental 66:8	difficult 30:6 51:11
dependent 76:23	destroy 63:21		digest 30:6,12 89:25
depending 93:15	destroying 80:9		diminishing 109:21,22
deployed 17:14	destruct 81:1		dioxide 87:13, 19
deployment 18:18 21:12 23:21	destructive 64:19 82:23		direct 116:8
depressed 81:11	detail 30:17 88:1		directed 98:8
depression 88:21	detailed 84:19 87:22		direction 86:20
depth 38:1	Detectability 35:1		directly 44:16 54:5 67:9 105:13 119:3
depths 37:25	detectable 35:2		director 42:22 50:11
derived 39:1	determination 35:25		disadvantage 109:18

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: disappeared..earliest

disappeared 95:9	disturbances 11:8	domestic 46:9 49:16,24 106:4	driver 108:18, 20
disaster 94:22	disturbed 117:13	double 111:20	driving 86:25 92:11 108:21
discharges 11:13	disturbs 11:16	doubled 43:25	109:13 111:9,19
discourage 49:8	dive 39:3	Doyle 42:12, 13,17, 53:21	drop 14:9
discovery 70:1	diverse 63:9	draft 2:12,23 5:1,11 28:4 30:3 68:25	drove 97:13 114:12
discuss 38:16	diversified 104:12	dramatically 81:11	dry 71:19
discussion 2:13,15 3:4, 35:19	divided 36:8	drill 11:4 54:11 89:10, 11 91:22 96:15,21 97:3 117:7	dual-frequency 99:9
disgusting 115:10	Division 50:12	drilled 56:12 57:5	due 56:18 66:4
displace 81:7	Docking 76:16, 17	drilling 8:4,6 11:2,5,6,12 51:13 57:8, 14 82:7 84:3 88:11 89:3, 4,9 92:16,21 94:10,21,23 96:1,4,8 110:16,19,21 112:18 114:4 115:7,12,22 116:11,17,25 117:15 118:1	dug 58:12
displaces 77:20	document 3:16 4:12,24 5:20,21 6:19 8:11 27:15, 24 28:5,20 29:14 30:9 78:1 120:4		duration 35:2 72:22
disrupt 65:23	documentation 28:9		Duval 98:11 100:14
distance 24:19 40:22 73:16	documents 16:17 77:11, 23,24		dynamite 79:21
distances 82:18	dollars 54:17 68:8 109:19		<hr/> E <hr/>
distinction 99:14	Dolphin 78:3, 13		E&p 70:6 74:4,11 75:5,12
distributed 5:2	dolphins 33:2 72:13 77:19 78:8,15	drive 58:10,11 63:22 80:10 117:11	e-mail 29:12, 13 120:7
distribution 32:9 39:3			earlier 20:10 32:2 35:12 40:8 41:5 105:6,10
District 48:23 93:8			earliest 52:6
disturb 21:17			
disturbance 11:9			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: early..engineering

early 21:4 28:18 70:5	Ed 97:5,8	electric 49:11 89:19 96:24	13,24 79:12 80:3,14 107:5
earn 107:16	edge 7:8,12 25:23 82:21	electrical 9:10	energies 83:3
earth 64:17 87:1	educate 58:1	electricity 95:19 96:25	energy 2:9 4:11 5:12 6:24 7:1 16:8 19:9, 20,24 42:23, 25 43:1,3,6 44:2,7,23,24 45:2 46:9 47:24 48:9 49:11,16 50:1,5 51:24 53:19 58:17 66:7,9,11 67:3,17,20 68:3,4, 69:11,13,24 70:11,14, 74:17 76:22, 24 77:2 78:5 87:12 93:22 99:5,16,23 101:17 105:22 106:4,6,7,8
east 80:22 94:20 95:2, 7,25	educated 59:24	electromagnetic 8:15	
eastern 13:9 54:2,19 105:20	education 54:15	electromechanical 9:8 10:14 20:19 36:9, 12	
easy 30:9	educational 75:24	element 17:24 98:9	
eat 58:10 109:4	effect 25:24	elements 16:14 17:10	
eating 109:3	effects 39:5, 17 73:3	eliminate 6:11	
echosounders 9:1	efficient 67:17 70:1	elimination 71:16	
ecologically 102:25	effort 5:12 38:11 51:22 67:17	emissions 58:18	
economic 7:9, 16 44:5,17 48:25 49:3 59:13 88:16 104:13 105:24 107:9	efforts 68:1 69:3	employ 16:11	
economically 110:5	eggs 26:21 64:7	employers 50:2	
economies 81:6 84:5	Egypt 113:21	employs 72:11	
economy 50:23 53:14 60:11, 17 67:3 76:20 95:23	EIS 2:11,12 3:3,21 4:19 5:5 6:2 12:21 15:4 27:9 98:13, 18 100:7	encounter 17:4	engine 48:25
	elected 42:5	encourage 74:22 103:3	engineer 85:14,15 98:7
	election 94:17,19 96:14	end 14:17 25:20 29:5 79:23	engineering 8:19 46:13 86:1
		endangered 28:8 33:10,	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: England..exemption

England 21:3	109:1	32:12 37:13	events 10:9
enhanced 17:23	environmentalist	104:11	11:24 12:10
enlisted 47:6	95:3	115:25	41:4
ensure 70:22	environmentalists	establishment	eventually
76:2 101:4	85:22 109:11	35:24	52:20
ensuring 43:1	environmentally	estate 61:21	evidence 56:3
entering 39:21	68:2 72:5	119:5	72:7 74:1
entire 20:8	86:14 103:1	estimate 37:19	77:16,22
82:7	environmentally-friendly	38:21 51:12	79:13
entitled 56:6,	43:9	estimated	evolve 5:10
7 58:24,25	environments	107:8,18	examine 28:1
78:3,13	71:23	estimates	examined 99:8
79:1,4	envisioned	32:21 38:9	examining 8:17
entitlement	51:25	39:16 43:5,	excellent 86:9
58:23	EPA 95:13	14,22,23,25	exception
environment	96:6 102:22	51:3,7,13,17	41:18
9:24 10:4	equipment 54:8	80:24 105:3	Excise 110:1
12:18,20	99:7,14	estimation	exclude 26:12
38:23 73:4,9	105:15 110:2	36:5	Excluding
75:22 76:4	Eric 50:8,10	estuaries	52:16
environmental	eroding 65:19	23:13	exclusion 12:3
2:23 3:10,	eruption 91:15	et al 37:15	40:11
16,24 4:16	Escalades	Europe 107:8	exclusive 7:9,
6:3,16 7:20	111:9	euros 107:11	16
12:18 15:1	escalating	evaluate 6:10	excuse 83:13
27:5 28:4,25	67:20	evaluated 6:8	84:15,23
30:19 34:21	essential	35:11	99:18 110:19
39:4 54:15	12:25 45:8	evaluation	Executive
63:12 74:23	80:16	12:21 19:7	42:22
79:2 80:6	establish 33:8	28:2	exemption
82:12 83:5	40:21	evening 120:14	101:16,17
84:11 102:18	established	event 87:7	
111:6 117:23			
environmental-type			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: exemptions..features

exemptions 100:18	24	export 109:18	fact 12:6 30:2 43:20 51:24 102:16
exist 15:16	explanations 16:19	exposed 38:19	
existing 15:15,23 16:9 17:7, 16,19 25:18 49:9 84:20	exploration 14:24 36:23 43:13,21 44:7 50:24 51:15 55:2 57:3,13 65:18 66:5 68:18 69:15, 23 70:4,6,9 71:19 73:3 74:9,19 76:20 77:1 78:14 80:5, 25 84:19 87:3 88:11 92:17 95:25 102:16 103:5 106:2 112:15,18 114:24	express 68:22 76:9	factor 10:12 11:1 12:9 35:16 39:22
expand 46:21		expressed 69:19 78:18	factors 9:23 27:13,19 32:14 35:11 41:12,21
expanded 18:1 24:5 41:8 74:2		extend 74:13	
expanding 42:24 49:10		extended 7:12	
expected 10:7, 10 39:5		extends 22:17 23:10 24:11 28:13	facts 56:7
expeditiously 45:8		extensive 35:4 87:3	fair 70:23
expend 46:9		extent 26:5 35:4	fairly 48:5
expensive 113:6		extractions 86:14	fall 21:5 100:16
experience 59:5 71:25 72:2 86:17	exploratory 7:25 66:8 110:20	extremely 65:8	falls 51:22
experiencing 87:9	explore 100:24 113:16	eye 118:18	familiar 115:24
experimental 25:6	explored 65:11	eyes 23:18	families 113:10,11
expert 83:1	exploring 16:24		family 9:16 60:24 115:18 116:6
expertise 89:5	explosion 9:15	<hr/> F <hr/>	faring 80:11
experts 83:21	explosives 79:21	facilitate 11:6 56:10	farm 84:8
explain 75:20,		facilitating 57:7	farmer 46:1
		facilities 66:25 69:24 70:15 71:21	farms 84:7
		Facility 14:19	fashion 28:23
		facing 80:5	favor 97:23
			feasible 110:5
			features 52:23

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: fed..footprints

fed 39:7	file 5:11 75:3	fisheries 65:3,5 77:12
federal 5:6,22 6:14 15:7 28:15 29:21 33:10 70:19, 22 71:2 101:8 110:1	filled 48:6 62:1 filling 51:20 82:23 filthiest 58:16 fin 34:1 80:14 final 5:11 28:17 32:20 47:9 79:7 finalize 5:19 finally 74:18 find 61:7 88:24 97:14, 24 109:5 118:4 fine 85:9 fines 85:24 finished 29:3 108:14 fireballs 58:13 firefighter 119:2 fish 13:1 58:3,21 64:10 65:6, 16,21 66:3,4 77:21 80:4 81:8,12	fishermen 59:17 66:1 81:14,18,23 fishery 33:17 37:14 65:19 81:6 fishing 58:3 81:19 fix 98:1 flaws 98:19 fliers 31:20 Flight 14:19 floodgates 83:9 flooding 56:18 floor 11:8 38:1 65:14 84:7 Florida 18:8 22:18 31:1 42:19,22 44:8 45:22, 25 46:1,11 48:25 49:21 50:2,11 53:24 54:4, 18 55:14 60:8 63:4
federalize 116:25		85:15 88:17 91:2,11 93:12 100:4 101:1 102:4 104:10,14 105:25 107:9,14,16, 19 108:23 111:14,16,18 114:13 115:21 116:14 119:11,15,19
federally 53:8		Florida's 104:20
feed 79:25		Floridians 94:6
feeding 65:23 81:2		fluids 8:17
feel 61:9 72:15 86:16 91:12		focus 35:20
feels 45:3		focused 26:7 84:12
feet 8:5		focusing 70:7
fertilized 63:24 64:7		folks 22:4 30:7
festival 62:22		follow 20:24 24:9
FET 110:1		food 58:11,20
fewer 71:19		fooling 89:1,7
fields 108:22 110:3 111:23,24		foolish 87:20
fight 90:16		footprint 80:7 83:5
fighting 23:4		footprints
figure 37:1		
figures 38:11 63:18		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: forced..generate

71:20	French 47:17	future 33:18	25 53:6,12,
forced 49:2	frequencies	43:11 45:10	22 54:6 55:1
Ford-150s 59:1	39:25	47:22 52:3	57:3,5 60:14
forecast 29:4	frequency	57:7 59:4,24	69:23 70:3,
foreign 113:20	99:16 100:9	60:25 61:5	9,25 74:19
114:3	101:18	68:9,10 70:8	79:16 81:4
forever 101:1	frequently	83:11 84:20	82:7 83:2
	82:23	93:14,19,23	84:18,22
form 21:18	friends 120:15	106:3	87:15 88:22
formal 28:9,10	front 110:25	<hr/>	94:1 98:21
46:4	120:10	G	99:20,23
formation 8:17	fronts 110:12	G&g 21:19	101:22
forms 53:18	froze 91:4	69:1 75:2	105:4,9,13
58:16	fuel 12:14	Gainesville	113:1 114:24
formulated	49:12 50:4	45:25 48:6	115:1 116:7,
101:15	67:6,10 77:3	gallon 56:11	13,25 117:1,
forward 45:7	89:21	88:22 92:16	6
51:18 66:14	fueled 90:4	96:24 107:7,	gasoline 58:7,
87:25 94:9	full 55:4 59:6	18 113:8	25 107:7,10
98:1	118:8	116:14	109:5 110:13
forward-thinking	fully 53:11	gallons 89:20	113:14
51:23	112:15	Galveston	116:9,20
foster 104:13	functions	115:8	gather 15:9
found 26:8	13:25	gap 53:1	52:15
35:16 43:20	fund 54:13	74:11	gathered 28:16
78:8	fundamental	gaps 24:8	37:8
foundation	98:19	51:20	general 3:6,7
70:15	funded 83:2	Gary 2:7	35:10 36:15
framed 15:14	funding 14:24	gas 3:6 6:25	72:19 94:7
19:10	furiously	19:9,12 27:1	106:1
framing 5:18	29:24	43:15,24	generally
free 116:21		44:10,14	24:19 29:22
		49:25 50:19	52:9 81:5
		51:4, 52:21,	generate 12:5
			44:11 52:8
			53:3 54:13

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: generated..greenhouse

105:6,11	geologically	God 57:10	government's
generated	87:6	Goeke 2:2,7	5:22
44:21 54:18	geophysical	31:5 41:23	governments
105:19	2:24 3:4,22	42:10,14	71:2 100:22
generates	6:4,21 7:25	45:17 57:21	grab 11:10
44:16 81:21	8:12,18	60:1 66:18	graduated
generating	50:17 52:22	68:14 77:7	85:14
51:2,5	54:25 68:18,	84:15,23	grandchildren
generation	20,21 69:7,	85:1,5 94:13	60:25
58:22,23	9,17,19,22,	101:25	granted 44:19
93:14,18	25 70:3,10,	110:22,24	grasp 112:23
105:1	12,18,20,24	111:3,22	gravel 7:3,4
generations	71:11,24	114:8	99:19,21
59:4 93:19,	73:8,21	119:21,24	100:5,10,25
23	74:4,16,	good 2:4 4:9	gravity 9:18
genetic 63:10	75:25 76:1	22:7 26:22	Gray's 13:15
genius 66:11	78:6 104:24	27:17,25	great 31:1
gentleman	106:12	30:8 48:18	52:19 61:11
97:16 107:4	Georgia 47:6	50:9 63:11	65:20 75:12
gentlemen	geotechnical	64:14,18	107:24
77:10	70:13	66:21 68:16	114:19
geoengineering	Ggeis@boem.gov.	77:9 85:11	117:24
8:23	29:13	104:7 111:19	greater 30:17
Geographic	give 5:18	goods 49:13	greatest 37:7
40:25	59:14 114:17	67:8 113:12	73:12 87:15
geological	giving 88:5	government	greatly 50:1
2:24 3:4,22	96:3 112:6	44:12,20	98:18
6:4,21 7:24	114:16	52:8 53:10,	green 82:2,13
8:1,9 50:17	glad 93:1	16 70:19,20,	83:3 85:13
52:21,23	global 56:24	22 73:2	greener 83:14
54:24 73:8,	57:18 78:5	95:11 96:2,	greenhouse
20 74:25	86:23 87:1	11,20 98:25	83:13 87:15
87:4 104:24	91:10 106:6	100:21 101:9	
106:12	globally 56:15	102:8 103:15	
	71:23	106:9	
		117:17,22	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: Greenland..highest

Greenland	65:12 71:25	happened	58:15	hearing	2:6
55:25	73:22 82:9	95:5 113:21		37:10 39:22	
grew 58:3	89:17 94:23	117:24		42:20 57:15	
114:22	95:1 105:20	119:11		79:25 80:19	
	114:14 116:5	happening		hearings	3:15
grocery 77:4	gulfstream	13:21 19:18		45:21 56:9	
grossly 82:17	63:25	31:13 117:3		57:7,14 93:4	
ground 2:16,22	guy 90:21	happy 110:18		heart 15:1	
61:6,8	guys 93:1	harassment		112:25	
grounds 82:22	118:11	34:12 37:13		heavily 55:12	
group 42:24		hard 85:5		heavy 67:3	
46:4	<hr/> H <hr/>	120:2		held 57:8	
groups 13:7	habitat 13:1	harder 7:11		helicopters	
growing 49:10	15:19 21:6	harm 82:11		10:21	
growth 64:4	22:20,23	96:6		helpful 19:2	
68:10 104:14	25:13 34:5	hatch 26:21		helping 60:17	
105:25	63:23 80:11,	hatcher 25:14		helps 71:1	
guarantee	17	hatcheries		Herald 78:12	
110:10	hail 104:18	81:11		hey 22:7	
guess 88:10	half 56:16	hatched		hidden 118:17	
108:14	114:22	22:17		high 48:5	
110:13	Hamilton 50:8,	hazard 16:5		85:20 99:16	
119:12	9,10 55:8,9	hazmat 118:9		100:9 101:17	
guest 55:18	61:19,20,21	He'll 30:20		high-level	
guidance 17:8,	hand 3:22 29:9	health 13:1		86:9	
11 21:14	86:7	hear 18:16		high-resolution	
41:3	handed 120:9	39:24 91:17,		8:18 20:20	
guidances	handled 85:20	18 92:9		40:7 70:12	
17:18	happen 29:9	109:10		higher 48:10	
Gulf 16:11,13	52:1 90:11,	heard 63:18		88:18	
17:20 43:23	91:23 93:21	88:12 95:13		highest	
54:2,20 58:2	110:14			116:18,22	
59:11,15	119:11				
61:25 62:3,4					

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: highly..implement

highly 87:22 101:14	hours 117:11	<hr/> I <hr/>	impact 2:23 3:10,25 4:16 15:2 27:5 32:11,23 33:8 34:16, 22 35:2,17 36:5 37:11 39:10,13 41:11,19 45:5 49:14 59:21 72:18 83:25 84:12 101:19,21 117:23
hire 108:23	61:25 93:6	IAGA 73:10	
history 13:10 16:12 50:20 51:15	houses 62:7,19	IAGC 68:21 69:2,5,13, 75:18 76:8	
hit 64:1	huge 49:13 80:6 87:14 95:20 98:25 102:15	ice 56:1,24 87:7,10	
hoax 55:23 56:5	human 12:7 13:24 90:10	Iceland 56:1 90:17	
hold 3:15 4:22	humans 79:20 90:23	idea 22:7 26:22 64:14, 18	impact-producing 9:23 35:11 41:12,21
holding 2:13 28:17	humpback 34:1 80:15	identified 21:8 35:12, 13	impacted 12:19 32:18
holds 11:7	hundred 95:4,8	identifies 15:21	impacting 10:12,25 12:9 27:13, 18
holes 71:19	hundreds 80:21	identify 19:2 32:8,14 48:12 68:1	
home 89:10 114:14 116:2	hurting 113:17	ills 98:2	impacts 6:3,11 30:18,23 31:25 32:5, 15,19,21 34:11 35:7, 20,23 36:1 37:17 40:3 63:5,12 64:11 72:10 73:8 79:3,5 81:17 83:22 99:15 100:6
home-to-home 60:15	husband 60:9	illuminate 70:7	
homosapien 88:14	husband's 60:10	images 71:13	
hope 45:6 59:4,12	Hussein 89:17, 23	imagination 66:14	
hoping 52:10	Hutton 42:8 48:17,18,19	imagine 79:21, 24	
horizon 115:16	hybrid 89:19	imaging 71:15	
horizontally 81:8	hydrocarbon 69:16 75:7	immediately 103:16	
Hormuz 113:24	hydrophone 18:18		implement
hosted 55:15			
hot 87:7			
hotels 62:7			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: implemented..information

44:22	incentive	110:6	Industrial
implemented	52:15	increases	87:11
40:4	incident 47:1	56:13,14	industries
implements	incidental	increasing	53:23 82:8
76:2	32:22 33:19	49:16 50:3	104:10
import 17:8	39:8,9	67:16	industry 8:16
import/export	include 7:20	incredible	24:18 25:9
68:6	10:11 21:14	66:13	44:14 50:19,
important	24:3 25:16	Incredibly	23 51:10
5:21,24 7:1	33:1,25	83:16	53:9,13 55:1
31:17 34:9	39:16 40:7	incremental	66:2 68:22
47:18 49:23	41:3 73:23	74:13	69:6,12
51:5 52:7	74:3 86:4	incur 85:25	71:22,24
58:6 70:13	included 22:9	independence	72:11 76:2
72:20 93:9	38:25 73:17	93:22	79:16 81:15,
101:22	74:22 98:12	independent	25 82:4 83:3
importantly	includes 11:12	76:22 83:21	84:22 99:20
60:22	36:2 40:14	113:20 114:3	101:23
imposes 82:3	73:13	Indian 33:4	104:15
impractical	including 18:5	34:3	industry's
46:24	32:6 40:10	indicating	84:1
improvement	53:19 54:14,	110:18	Infantry 47:7,
71:18	19 55:25	indication	9
improves 44:24	69:12 81:20	100:18	infer 18:21
impulses 10:3	83:2 86:3	indifference	influencing
impulsive	income 60:18	84:1	10:5
10:16	111:21	indirect 11:23	informal 28:6
inaccurate	incorrect	12:1	information
47:16	97:20	indirectly	5:19 6:13
inadequate	increase 56:15	44:16 54:7	15:9,11
82:18	94:5	67:5 105:14	17:19 29:20
inappropriate	increased	individual	35:24 36:2,4
57:3,4	43:21,24	74:23	37:2,8 41:25
	51:16 93:25		47:21 51:20
			57:17 69:9

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: infrastructure..Jineane

72:24 73:1,5	intensity	introduced	46:25 48:7
76:4 78:24	34:25	9:11	Island 14:19
79:4 93:11	interest 12:23	introducing	55:10 81:13
112:20	32:9,25	10:3	Islands 96:3
infrastructure	33:23 34:6	inventory	issuance 50:16
54:11	37:21,25	46:20	104:23
inhabit 13:5	69:19 75:12	invest 50:24	issue 86:7,10
initiating	86:15	55:2	issues 5:18
51:23	interested	invested 53:17	13:8
injure 65:22	31:6,12 76:7	55:12	items 75:24
80:25	interference	investigate	
injured 119:3	24:21	60:20	<hr/> J <hr/>
injury 77:18	Interior 5:14	investing	J-a-k-e 114:12
80:19	28:22,24	75:15	Jacksonville
innovation	50:21	investment	21:5 22:17
66:13	intermediate	95:20	42:19 48:1
innovative	38:10	invisible	66:22 67:25
66:9	international	90:20	76:18 79:8
input 6:13	7:15 30:25	involve 8:1,3	93:2 97:7
inshore 13:20	48:3 68:19	14:23 36:25	98:6,10
instability	69:5	involved 2:14	100:3 102:4
56:13	internationally	102:9	107:14,15
Institute	55:21	involves 12:7	111:17
50:13	interpret	30:3	112:14
instruments	16:25	involving 71:4	Jake 114:11
30:5	interpretation	ipads 59:1	James 94:14,15
integral 69:14	69:9	Iran 109:20	Japan 90:18
integration	intimidating	113:23	jargon 9:24
38:17	9:8	Iraq 89:17	Jason 106:20
intend 83:10	intracoastal	109:20	Jersey 81:21
intense 79:18	62:15 64:3	114:18	Jineane
	introduce 4:4,	irresponsible	106:15,17
	14 30:16		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: job..Libia

job 111:12	kids' 118:19	land-side 67:4	leases 16:24
jobs 44:12,15, 24 53:3,14, 23 54:3,5,7 81:22 93:25 105:5,12,13 106:8 107:22 111:15 115:21 116:4 118:23,25	kill 63:6,7 110:16 killed 47:13 kills 86:18 kilometers 24:17, 36:19,20 40:21 81:10 101:5	lands 15:7 53:8 lanes 48:3 57:1 large 14:3, 23:13 40:23 67:8 81:13 Lastly 75:2 late 60:8 latest 43:16 law 6:16 7:15 15:5 28:4 91:5,7,8,9 laws 28:11 87:16 lay 26:21 119:6 lead 46:20 51:19 106:7 leading 81:13 117:16 leads 51:16 Leanne 92:25 93:5 learn 44:2 59:23 117:25 learned 58:4 lease 19:14 43:11 45:10 52:5,12 75:8	19:12 46:21 52:12 94:20 95:2 99:3 103:16,20,23 116:21 leasing 52:2 75:13 94:10 leatherbacks 63:1,3 leave 31:14 55:6 77:24 93:16 led 38:8 43:21 106:2 left 47:17 66:16 93:18 102:22 legislation 6:1 legs 118:19 lessees 16:17 lessened 16:5 lessons 59:14 level 32:23 34:13 36:16 37:12 41:20 levels 34:16 35:8 37:5 38:13,20 41:11 87:13 102:11 115:3 Libia 113:22
Joe's 64:9	kind 8:8 10:16 16:11 25:4 28:23 57:15 101:2 102:17 103:22 113:2 117:10 118:23		
John 112:12			
Johns 67:1			
jump 88:9 102:12 114:4			
June 47:10			
junior 47:5	kinds 110:13		
Jupiter 87:1	Kischner 106:20 knew 110:9 114:20 knowledge 74:8 112:23 Kolb 92:25 93:1,5 Kuwait 89:23		
<hr/> K <hr/>			
Karen 102:1,3			
Kaufman 66:20, 21,22			
keeping 3:18 65:2			
Kevin 42:12, 53:21 98:4,5			
key 69:22 70:13 95:6 105:23	<hr/> L <hr/>		
kids 115:6 118:10,12	land 10:1 13:24 14:2 89:4		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: licensed..mail

licensed 75:5	literally	logistic	lover 90:7
licensing 69:10	63:20 66:16 80:8 112:16	115:20	low 99:16 101:17,20
lie 95:14	literature	long 13:10	low-energy
life 45:5 59:6 60:21 72:13, 19 80:4 84:5 114:23	73:6 120:9	16:12 35:3 50:20 91:11 111:2 120:1	99:2
light 82:2 118:19	live 9:5 11:23 55:10 62:12, 24 63:15 65:2 92:7 97:8 116:5 117:4	long-term 62:1 105:24	low-frequency 72:22
lighthouse 10:22	lived 76:18 115:5 116:13	longer 30:2	lower 49:7 94:1 99:5 117:6
likelihood 75:14	livelihood 64:14	longest 91:2	lumped 98:20
limit 20:8 40:23	lives 56:17 63:7 116:6	lose 107:12	lumps 98:22 99:4
limited 33:6 54:5 105:12	living 108:24	loss 80:19	<hr/> M <hr/>
limits 115:2	local 55:16 67:21 98:25 100:22 118:13,14	losses 81:16 82:1	M-i-l-l-s 114:12
lines 77:4 95:20	localized 35:4	lost 66:3,4 118:23,25	Mabus 55:17
link 29:14	located 23:12 30:25 37:4, 24 98:6	lot 3:7 5:12 23:14 41:25 47:4 88:15, 22 91:3,12 92:4 103:10	Mackenzie 44:9 53:20,25 54:16 105:11,17
list 31:10 42:11 87:18 106:24	location 105:3	lots 13:10 62:5,6,23	made 18:21 43:10 71:9 86:2 91:9 112:3
listed 32:1 33:17,23 36:24 73:10	locations 38:14 43:19	loud 63:19 80:7	magnetic 9:19 10:20
listened 86:15	loggerhead 26:17	loudest 79:20	magnitude 115:15
listening 93:3 102:18	loggerheads 63:1,3	Louisiana 78:9 116:3,7,10, 14 118:2 119:9	mail 29:17,18 31:10
lists 41:11		love 90:12 97:9 113:19	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: maintain..measurable

maintain 49:5 68:6	34:12 35:15, 18 37:9 38:19 40:4, 17 41:13 64:12 65:22,	24:9,13 86:11 87:22 110:9	94:16 98:9, 21 100:11 101:19
maintained 46:23	23 77:18 81:1 101:19	mapping 103:9	Marines 89:15
maintaining 65:3	manage 106:5	maps 3:2 7:6 47:16,17	Marion 46:2
major 13:7 35:9	management 2:9 4:11 6:24 15:20 16:9 18:3 20:23 21:1,7 22:15,24 23:7 24:9,12 25:13,15 45:13 77:2 78:5 99:18	Marcella 64:22,23	market 106:6 116:21
majority 36:21	manager 2:12	March 5:7	marketing 66:24
make 2:21 5:14 6:17 17:25 28:24 30:14 31:13 68:12, 23 71:3 79:20 90:23 93:9,11,22 102:23 103:12,15 108:20,24 110:4 120:2	manages 6:24	Marge 48:17,18	Mars 87:2
makes 90:11 91:10	managing 66:24	marina 62:18	marshes 64:5
making 5:22 6:16 60:18 79:10 87:21 117:22	manatee 33:4 34:3	marine 7:2 13:4,6,12, 13,17,18 14:3 17:5 18:21,23 19:9,20,24 28:7 30:18, 24 31:25 32:6,24 33:11,17,21 34:12,13 35:15,17 37:9,14 38:18 39:13 40:4,16 41:13 45:5 55:13 57:9 60:21 65:22, 23 67:2 72:10,13,18, 19 73:4 75:24 77:18 81:1 84:4 88:13 89:15	Martin 88:3,6 mask 63:20 80:8 masks 80:20 mate 79:25 material 30:6, 12 materials 10:25 36:3 mating 80:16 Matthaei 64:22,23,24 Matthew 68:15, 17 Mcminn 106:15, 17 means 68:2 meantime 95:11 96:20 measurable
mammal 18:23 28:7 39:14 72:10,18 81:1	mandatory 40:19		
mammals 13:4 18:21 30:18, 24 31:25 32:6,24 33:11,22	manner 21:18 43:9 46:10, 15 48:14 72:5 94:11 102:25		
	map 15:21 18:4 20:24		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: measure..months

35:2	76:13 97:16	military 14:12	mitigate 32:19
measure 36:16	105:6,10	21:25 22:3	mitigation
73:23	mentions 90:17	47:9 90:4	6:10 34:9
measures 16:10	mercury 58:20	114:17	35:25 39:6,
32:18 35:25	met 85:21	Miller 88:3,4,	12,15,17
39:6,16,17,	metallic 9:12	6	40:2,9,18
20 40:3,9,18	methane 87:18	million 44:15	45:3 72:15
45:4 72:15	Mexico 16:12	53:13,15	73:18,23
73:18 75:21	17:20 43:23	56:21 65:25	86:16
76:1	54:2,20	82:3	mitigations
medical 86:12	71:25 73:22	mills 95:12	24:3 30:10,
medication	82:10	114:11	12
113:7,9	mic 42:13	mind 120:5	model 38:17
medications	microphone	mine 114:18	84:2
113:5	112:10	mineral 7:2	modeled 37:23
meeting 3:6,7	Mid- 2:25 4:20	99:17	38:25
4:1,3,18	6:6 69:1	minerals 19:9,	modeling 22:10
29:19 42:4	81:20 82:4	20,25 98:9,	30:4,21
55:15 106:3	Mid-atlantic	21	37:18,24
117:9,12	7:5,7 13:16	minimal 74:15	38:11 39:8
120:14,17	14:22 20:23	76:2	51:10
meetings 4:21	23:6 24:8	minimis 101:16	moderate 35:9
28:16 96:18	25:14 26:3	minimize 83:22	63:5
member 48:19	migrate 21:3	minor 35:8,17	modern 71:12
69:13	26:22	41:20	75:24
members 11:22	migrating 21:1	misguided	money 62:20
104:18	23:16 26:7	51:22	117:17,22
mention 29:25	mile 89:20	missions 14:23	monitored
90:1	miles 23:11,13	Mississippi	86:19
mentioned 13:7	24:2,7,11	116:3 119:9	monitoring
20:10 22:11,	26:2,19	mistaken 59:22	18:16,19
16 24:4,	63:21 80:9,	mistakes 59:23	25:3 39:2
26:16,25	18,21		40:6,11
29:7 53:21			months 21:4

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: moot..north

78:16 79:23		nature 7:24,25	newer 43:12
95:9 118:7	N	8:19 91:9,13	news 31:20
moot 110:23	naked 118:18	nautical 20:8	78:13 118:3
moratorium	NASA 14:14,15	23:11 24:2,	newspaper
89:8	21:25 86:22	7,10 26:2,19	29:20 118:14
Morton 85:10,	Nathan 78:18	Navy 48:1	nine-year
11,12 102:1,	nation 44:8	55:18 56:22,	36:21
2,3 104:4,5	48:11 61:1,	25 89:16	no-action
motel 62:1	14,15,16	NC 85:2	19:5,10,
mother 60:22	105:25	Nebraska 95:17	41:17 46:23
motivation	113:11	necessity 47:3	NOAH 16:1
30:11	nation's 49:22	needed 46:15,	25:18
mountain	67:13 68:5	19 47:15	noise 10:19
114:23	national	50:25 53:23	12:3 30:4
move 42:3,11	13:13,17	74:24 89:21	32:15 35:21
49:18 66:14	14:14,23	needlessly	63:19 65:15
94:9 95:24	21:10 33:16	83:24	82:18 85:3
116:1	37:14 43:1	negative 35:7	noises 80:7
moved 46:1	44:23,24	59:21 81:17	non-exclusive
movements 39:1	68:4 88:19	negligent	75:4,16
moves 45:7	nationally	93:24	nonpartisan
moving 51:18	55:20	negligible	42:23
67:15	natural 43:15,	35:8,17	nonprofit
much-needed	24 49:25	41:20	42:23 64:25
54:13	50:19,22	neighborhood	nonsense 92:6
mud 11:4	51:4 52:21,	79:22	normal 10:8
muds 11:5	25 53:6,12	NEPA 5:25 9:24	Norman 60:3,4,
multi-specific	54:6 55:1	nest 63:1	5
16:20	69:23 70:3,	nesting 18:6	north 34:1,4
Multibeam 9:1	9,25 74:19	24:15 26:17	41:8 52:16
multistep 32:4	78:25 81:7	nets 18:10	63:3 65:2
	85:12 105:4,	net 108:20	74:3,14,21
	9 114:24		80:14 91:1,
	115:1		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: northern..ongoing

11		oceans 79:15	51:3,21
northern	<u>o</u>	OCS 6:9 14:11	52:20,24
14:20,21	Obama 94:19	15:16 19:21	53:6,12,22
15:18 18:2	107:11	43:6,15	54:6 55:1
22:21 24:5	109:16	44:11 50:25	56:11 57:4,
26:3 79:12	110:15	51:6,21 52:4	5,8 58:5,13
Norway 66:1	observed 18:11	54:25 55:3	59:6 61:24
81:14	observers 17:3	69:2, 70:21	63:14 69:23
not-for-profit	39:19 40:12	71:1 106:13	70:2,8,25
104:17	obsession	off-limits	74:19 78:14
note 88:17	117:25	44:19 54:21	79:16 81:4
113:19	obtain 113:17	offend 97:19	82:6 83:2,19
noted 81:22	obvious 60:14	offer 30:7	84:18,21
99:21	117:15	42:6 106:10	89:7,12,13
Notice 5:5	occipital 87:7	officials 42:5	92:1,18,21
notices 16:16	occur 32:25	offshore 10:23	95:1,5,6,9,
31:11	33:22 74:16	11:19 13:21	23,24 96:1,
Notwithstanding	occurrence	18:7 21:2,5,	12,16,17,19
73:20	33:6	23 22:17	99:20,23
Nova 74:6	occurring	23:10 43:22	101:22
November 20:22	81:24 101:7	44:7 45:1	105:4,8,13
112:2	ocean 2:9 4:11	52:24 54:1,	108:1,12,15,
NTLS 16:17,22	6:23 9:20	9,11,12,19	22 109:17,25
20:10 21:15,	11:19 12:7	69:16 71:5,8	110:3,5
21	14:1 16:8,23	72:1,2 74:6	111:23,24
nuclear 86:3	45:12 58:6,	76:19 84:6	113:21,24
number 36:20	9,19 59:5	85:19 100:4,	114:3 115:7,
38:18 95:17,	65:21 77:1,2	14 105:16,20	14,16,18
18	78:5 80:12	116:11	116:9,11,17,
numbers 26:16	84:7 85:15	oil 3:6 6:25	25 117:15,24
nursery 65:20	90:13 95:8	12:12 19:8,	118:1,9,16
nursing 98:14	110:11	11 27:1	119:3
	Oceanographic	43:14,23	oil-free 59:19
	21:10	44:10,14	oils 80:20
		49:24 50:19	Olsen 98:5
			ongoing 24:20

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: onshore..patrol

onshore 11:18, 19 18:11 54:10 105:16	106:10 107:1	oversees 99:24	11:24 14:20, 21 17:25 18:6,14 20:16 22:13 23:20,22 26:3,11,20 28:2,18 29:10 30:1 41:6 55:14 73:18 87:9 99:22
open 4:1 28:5 56:25 77:4 111:15 118:8 119:13 120:6	opposed 77:14 option 40:14 59:8 88:10	overwhelming 77:16 owe 59:2	
opening 54:1 83:9	oral 4:23 5:9 orally 29:9	owned 104:18 owner 55:11	
opens 82:6	orange 48:19 58:12	owners 67:15 ownership 69:10	
operating 101:11	orangish 22:21	oysters 58:3	participating 75:19
operation 12:6	order 30:23 37:16 38:20 86:13 93:11, 21 100:17	<hr/> P <hr/>	partners 53:11
operational 11:3 39:17 72:11	102:12 112:21	p.m. 120:18 Padon 68:15, 16,17	parts 43:22 81:14,23 pass 30:13 87:16
operations 71:22 73:17 74:25 76:3	organization 64:25 98:15 99:24 104:17	PAM 18:17 19:1 22:11 25:4 40:15, 19	passed 43:5 67:23 passive 18:15 22:10 25:3 86:5
operators 21:23 33:18 52:11 83:17	organizations 90:15	Panama 108:11, 13	past 48:20 69:18 74:5 patience 42:2 patient 112:25 113:1
opinion 56:6 78:18 94:8 98:17 99:12 101:13 112:1	originally 58:2	papers 78:22 Paradise 77:8, 9,10 84:16, 25 85:2,7	parameters 35:1 parenthetical 88:17 Park 48:20 part 5:21
opportunities 55:5	Orleans 2:10 osc 52:3 outer 6:6 49:19 50:18 98:11 104:25	OSC 52:3 outer 6:6 49:19 50:18 98:11 104:25	Patrick 61:19, 20 patrol 57:1 62:23,25 91:5
opportunity 42:18 44:6 49:15 50:14 54:23 57:25 68:23 76:9 88:5 104:21	outlines 79:2 outlining 79:5 outskirt 92:9 outsourced 115:23	organization 64:25 98:15 99:24 104:17	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: patrols..point

patrols 62:16	89:14 92:9,	personal 47:2	109:19
patroon 47:11	10,14 103:11	Petroleum	placing 8:24,
pattern 39:4	104:16	50:11,12	25
patterns 56:14	107:13,15,	58:16	plan 65:10
pave 75:10	17,21,24	pharmacy 113:8	83:16 84:20
pay 85:24	108:3,9,23,	philosophy	86:13
107:17 113:7	25 111:6,15,	17:21	plane 62:20
116:9,17,24	17 118:5,8	phonetic 47:8	planet 59:1
PEIS 35:12	119:6	63:24 64:5	86:25
45:7,13	peoples' 48:9	78:18 82:2	planets 86:24
50:15,25	perceive 97:13	118:16	planned 75:13
52:17 54:24	percent 43:24	physical 37:25	planning 3:1
69:1,3 74:2,	53:14 59:16	46:6	7:5 13:15,16
14 75:10	67:11	physicist	14:5,11,18,
76:12 104:22	107:15,16,	85:14,17	22 25:24
106:11	22,23 111:13	pick 108:5	26:4,5 52:16
pending 75:8	perform 74:12	piece 6:1	72:3 73:22
penetration	period 26:24	102:22	74:3,14,21
36:24 73:13	28:13 29:2,8	pinniped 33:5	85:19
78:7	36:17,21	pinnipeds 33:3	platform 86:3
Pensacola	47:19 103:22	place 6:9 10:1	platoon 47:11
118:15	120:5	11:2 13:22	play 69:14
people 5:3,	periods 21:8,	14:2,7,8,	pleading 59:18
13:25 16:23	13 23:1,22	17:9 18:14	pleased 43:2
21:22 23:17	26:13	19:11,21	plot 47:21
25:5 28:14	permanently	29:1 54:20	point 4:25
45:21 48:2,4	49:3	75:1 82:21	7:18 19:13
56:19,21	permission	87:19 95:18	22:2,3 27:4
58:22 59:18	100:24	98:24	30:16 34:8
62:4,5,6,11,	permit 22:4	Placement	41:24 42:3
16,17,19,21,	73:24 75:2	11:15	60:23 69:4
24 65:6 77:4	permits 50:16	places 11:23	107:10
86:21 88:12,	73:21 101:2	65:6 100:20	
15,20,22	104:23		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: pointed..process

pointed 56:16	position 60:10,11 112:17	preemptive 91:21	previously 43:18
polar 56:1 96:7	possibly 46:20	preparation 75:8	price 92:15 96:22,23 109:5
policies 55:4	posted 5:4 29:15	prepared 5:1 28:9 33:14 61:4 85:3	prices 60:14 113:1 116:7, 18 117:2,6
policy 43:1 51:24 52:4, 18 57:17 71:4	potential 6:3 12:8 14:12 35:14,20 36:1 37:17 51:3,20 52:14 53:10 70:21 73:3,7 75:8 106:3	prescribed 21:21	primarily 7:3 8:5,19 15:18 108:19
politically 97:20	potentially 12:19 32:17	present 18:22 55:5 77:11	primary 6:25
pollute 95:8 119:18	potentially-impacted 36:4 37:9	presentation 31:4 35:13 102:6	prior 97:16 103:23,24
pool 63:10 100:1	power 61:3 67:10 95:20 112:16	presented 42:1	private 14:23 104:20
poor 107:12	practical 46:18 48:14	presents 44:7	problem 77:1 88:22
poorest 79:11	practice 30:4	preservation 61:10	procedure 7:14
population 56:17,20 72:18	practices 16:10 17:2 72:12	preserve 68:6	procedures 39:20 40:13
population-level 72:9	pre-activity 39:18	preserving 65:1	proceed 85:1 103:3,18
populations 63:8,10	preclude 8:7	president 48:21 104:9 107:11 109:16	proceeding 98:1
porpoises 33:2	predict 38:18	pressed 42:16	PROCEEDINGS 2:1
Port 66:23 67:25	predicted 38:12	pressure 38:13	process 3:9 5:22, 19:25 32:7,13,20 44:4 45:6 51:1 70:5,6 75:18 114:4 120:1
portion 67:8		pretty 6:1 34:7	
ports 68:5		prevent 49:9	
pose 117:19		previous 24:13 37:3 94:18	
posed 55:19			
posing 5:12			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: processes..purple

processes 46:7	programmatic 21:12 26:18	82:25 84:20
processing 69:8,17 72:4	4:19 6:2 27:7 98:13, 18 100:7	protective 12:4 16:10 17:3 40:10
produce 32:14 53:5 65:6 71:12 110:8	programs 14:14 19:19 27:2	protocol 20:16 25:2 40:8
produced 37:21 39:25	project 19:23 29:16 40:5 98:14	protocols 20:9,17
produces 111:7	project-related 34:14	proven 17:18
product 69:11 116:20,23	project-specific 74:23	provide 5:10 46:14 70:13
production 44:19 46:10, 21 52:25 70:2 71:20 73:4 74:6,20 103:19,24 106:2 109:24 110:6 115:19 116:25	projection 6:8	providers 69:11
products 38:11 49:13 67:11, 20 108:5 113:15	projects 53:18	provision 7:18
professional 98:17	prolific 18:8 26:16	public 2:6 3:15 4:18,21 5:15 10:1 14:24 28:12 29:19 42:20 46:11 53:8 66:23,25 71:4
profiles 38:4	promote 82:13	publication 31:10
profit 84:1	propagation 37:19 38:6,9 39:2	published 5:4, 6 78:2
program 6:23 7:2 16:16 19:8,17,24 27:5 34:9 39:7 98:10, 21	proper 43:10 76:24 103:13	pull 2:17 92:1
	properties 8:23 39:1	pump 96:22 116:10
	proponent 88:9	purchase 52:12 94:21
	proposal 19:23 30:3 64:12 65:9 82:20 100:13	purple 7:10
	proposed 6:19, 20 11:25 15:4 17:16	
	proposing 9:25 15:6 21:17 23:19 24:18, 23 25:8,15, 25 26:11 94:4	
	prospective 70:8 71:17	
	prospects 52:2 64:13	
	protect 48:2,8 57:9,10 72:12 75:22 82:16 90:3, 22	
	protected 13:6,12,18 17:5 39:19 40:12 90:9 118:11	
	protecting 88:13 89:14 90:2,8	
	protection 17:23 28:7 34:14 63:2	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: purpose..regulated

purpose 6:2 15:11 75:4 118:21	rail 67:5	realty 93:23	105:24
purposes 35:6 47:4	ramp 20:15	reason 22:8 47:15 62:11 65:13 83:12 103:2	recreation 12:25
pursue 7:16	ramp-up 39:19	reasons 12:4 65:11,14	recreational 13:2,19 80:4 81:18,19 82:8
put 5:12 11:13 57:10 63:14 66:6 102:9,15 109:17	rate 88:19	rebuttal 86:21	reduce 6:11 67:18 82:11
puts 100:1	rates 48:5,10	recall 47:1	reduced 115:3
putting 30:2 56:10 58:19, 20	Raton 85:16	receive 82:25	reduces 87:1
	Raube 97:5,6,8	receives 70:23	reducing 40:3 84:21
	Ray 55:17 85:10,12 104:4	recent 34:21 78:16 106:1	reduction 78:23
	re-analyze 5:16	recently 73:21	Reef 13:15
<hr/> Q <hr/>	read 30:8 87:25 117:16	recognize 44:5 99:15	reefs 64:5
qualitative 27:11,21,23	Readers 89:25	recognizes 21:11 25:19	referred 18:17
quarter 28:19	reading 30:9	recommend 87:24 101:14	refineries 116:12,17
question 55:19 110:23	ready 50:24 55:2	recommendation 28:23 57:6, 12	reflect 34:24
questions 3:8 117:19 118:4	real 52:3 61:21 112:3 119:5	recommended 22:11	regard 5:25 8:7
quickly 51:19 67:22 103:4	realistic 87:21	record 2:3 3:11,12,14 29:4,10 100:20 111:19	regional 2:8 29:15 74:11
quo 20:1 27:2 46:23	reality 5:20 58:15	recording 79:9	regions 23:8, 12
<hr/> R <hr/>	realize 53:12 93:24	recovery	Register 5:6 29:21
Rachel 57:23	realizes 96:11		regulated 115:4
radical 109:11			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: regulates..respectful

regulates 98:16	remembering 89:15	21:16	reservations 46:6 62:3
regulation 17:16 114:25 115:2	removal 114:23 removed 94:22 95:2	reports 21:20 78:14 83:1 84:14	reshoot 83:17 resident 60:8
regulations 15:5,15 16:1,18,19, 20,25 33:10 76:25 92:19	remover 115:9 rendering 27:11	represent 60:6 104:19	residential 60:7
relative 37:5 38:3,12	renewable 6:25 19:9,19,24 41:4 66:8 69:13,24 70:11,14, 74:17 84:6 99:23	representation 37:2	residentially 55:13
release 84:11	rental 61:25 62:7	representative 36:10,14 37:21 93:7	resource 32:5, 11 34:20 43:10,21 45:10 60:17 70:21 75:7 99:22 103:25
released 94:20	repackage 83:19	representing 46:4 66:22 68:19 69:6	resources 6:12 10:5 12:19 13:9,19,24 27:14,18,19 32:8,17 34:19 36:5, 43:6,15,17, 19 44:2 45:1 46:20 48:4, 12 49:25 50:22 51:12, 21 57:10 65:4 67:7 69:16 70:23 71:1 77:3 78:25 86:15 88:23 97:18, 24 99:23 100:25 106:4,7
releasing 79:18	repeat 119:24	request 84:13 101:15	
reliable 67:6	report 78:1,4, 11 79:7 84:20 85:2 87:25 101:8 102:12	require 82:14 99:3	
relies 98:11 119:15	reported 18:11 89:24	required 5:2 6:22 18:15 19:6 22:12 25:3,4 28:3 41:1 54:11 70:14,16	
rely 100:4 113:11 119:1,16	reporter 3:18 112:6,11 114:10	requirements 33:16 40:10 74:17	
remain 53:2 105:23	reporters 118:3	requires 15:5 53:9 68:10	
remainder 35:19	reporting	rescue 91:16, 19	
remaining 65:21		research 32:1 99:19 110:17	respectful 64:16
remains 120:6			
remark 87:20			
remember 52:7 72:20 89:18 102:8 112:2			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: respective..sand

respective 34:22	resulted 38:5 71:18	rise 49:2	
respinning 66:15	results 34:20 39:2	risk 56:15 61:1 82:9	<hr/> S <hr/>
responds 9:12	retailer 67:21	risk-based 72:14	Saddam 89:17, 22
response 106:16,19,21 112:1 119:23	retained 4:16	risk/benefit 118:24 119:15	safe 44:6 46:10,15 55:2 67:6 86:14 115:13
responsibilities 6:15	retired 88:7 94:16	risks 106:6	safer 83:13 84:9
responsible 44:6 46:10, 18 48:12,13 56:23 57:11, 17 66:24 72:5 88:10 108:24	revenue 44:12 53:4 54:13, 17 105:6,18	river 65:5 67:1	safest 97:25
responsibly 44:25 53:4 105:7	revenues 44:21 53:16 106:9	roads 54:14	safety 12:3 39:18,21 76:25
restaurants 119:7	review 4:25 7:20 21:22 28:21 30:19 84:14	rock 81:12	Saint 66:25
restricted 15:24 17:17	reviewed 37:13	rode 97:12	sake 49:20,21
restriction 27:3	reviewing 4:17	role 69:14	safety 52:5,13 103:23
restrictions 15:16 17:25 21:10 22:25 99:1	revise 28:17	roll-up 28:1	sales 19:14 43:11 45:10 75:9 103:16 117:1
result 5:15 10:10 12:15 21:20 72:8 78:19 81:10	revised 28:20	rooferhead 63:24	sample 11:10
	Rhode 81:13	room 7:7 76:6	sampling 8:2 11:10 118:6, 9
	rich 65:18	roughly 56:16	Sanctuary 13:14,17
	ride 58:8	routine 10:7 72:8	sand 7:3 58:12,13 98:11,14 99:18,21 100:4,10,24
	ridiculous 64:12 111:8	rules 2:16,22	
	rig 80:20 108:21	run 4:3 63:12 80:21 118:18	
	rights 7:16 20:22	running 48:22 93:6 118:10	
	rigs 59:7	rural 63:6	
		rush 83:12	
		Russia 96:4	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: sanitation..services

sanitation	26:17 30:5	security	44:25	send	31:10		
66:10	38:1 56:24	105:22 106:8		48:1,9 95:19			
sat	62:16	90:15 91:3	sediment	8:24	sending	48:7	
Saudi	96:21	seabed	98:15	sediments	8:3	sense	17:25
109:19	seaboard	13:10	seek	7:21	68:12 97:2		
save	60:21	26:1 68:17	81:15		sensitive		
89:9	seaport	66:25	seeking	20:3,	18:18 21:16		
scale	65:16	seaports	67:14	22:4 66:2	82:12		
81:9	search	79:16	segment	68:11 81:25	sensitivity		
scan	86:11	searching	104:20	sei	37:11		
Scanning	84:7	97:24		34:1	sensor	86:4	
scare	92:5	season	24:15	seismic	18:12	sensors	11:15
scenario	47:23	79:10		20:17 24:16,		separation	
58:14	seasonal	15:20		20,22 40:6		18:13 24:16	
scenarios	38:6	18:3 20:23,		43:7,13 45:4		40:21,25	
scheduled		25 21:7		49:19 52:9,		73:16	
52:13		22:15,23		14 63:18		sergeant	47:11
school	46:1,11	23:7 24:8,		66:4 71:11		series	4:21
schooled		25:12,14		72:4,8,15,20		16:14	
114:14		26:18 38:2		73:13,17		servant	88:7
scientific		73:14		75:5,11,15,		served	46:2
73:1,6,25	seasons	79:11		77:16,20		47:7	
78:22 100:8	seconds	79:22		78:3,7,19,23		service	10:22
scientifically-supported	secretary			79:3,4,6,14		33:17 37:14	
28:24 55:18				80:24 81:17,		105:15	
72:7	section	28:8		24 82:2		servicemen	
Scotia	74:7	33:15 42:4		83:17 84:18		48:8	
scrambled		sector	104:20	105:1		services	
117:10	sectors	42:25		Selfishly		11:18,22	
screen	102:6	67:3 69:13		64:13		54:9,14	
sea	8:25 11:8	secure	67:6	sell	52:10	69:7,10 78:6	
13:5 18:6		68:3		85:23 96:24		113:15	
21:18 24:14		selling	103:19	115:9			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: set..small

set 2:16 15:18 16:1 68:9	ships 23:3 59:7 67:4 79:18	91:18	sirenian 33:3, 4
setting 12:4	shipwrecks 9:4 13:11	sight 40:17	sit 103:20
severe 77:18	shoreline 26:9,10	sights 68:9	site 8:14 9:20 70:14
severity 35:5	short 35:3 72:22 79:20	sign 31:8,13, 20	sites 37:24 77:14
Seville 109:14	short-sighted 52:18	sign-in 31:9, 14	siting 69:24
shallow 8:3,23 11:4,7	Shortly 94:21	signal 9:13 72:23	sitting 2:10 95:16
share 53:10 64:17 82:14	show 15:21 38:12	signed 42:12	situation 80:2 111:12
shared 74:8	showed 24:12 25:11 32:2 86:23 87:6 105:18	significance 27:12,22 32:11 33:8 34:17,18	size 36:24 65:17 67:16 80:18
sharing 83:22	showing 41:6	significant 53:1 72:17, 25 74:10 101:19	sizes 36:11 38:13
shark 100:1	shown 35:9 51:15 81:7	signs 59:18	slide 24:13 34:7 37:3 40:2 41:5
sheet 31:14,21 78:24 79:4	shows 47:2 79:13 100:20	similar 25:22 108:23	slides 32:2
sheet allows 31:9	shrimp 59:19	simple 12:6	Sloger 4:4,15 30:17,24 31:23
Shelf 4:5 6:7 7:13 38:15 49:20 50:18 71:6,9 72:1, 3 98:12 104:25	shut 17:13 20:3,14 94:25	simultaneous 18:13 24:17 40:22 73:16	Slope 38:15
shelves 67:21	shutdown 39:20 40:13	singing 80:15	slow 23:3
Shepard 90:16	side 115:19,20	single 80:13	slower 16:4
ship 67:9,13, 15	sidescan 9:2	sir 85:7 110:22,24 111:22 112:5	small 23:12 48:24 55:11 60:6 63:15 64:24 99:22, 25
shipboard 41:2	Sierra 77:12		
shipped 113:13			
shipping 48:3 57:1			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: smaller..St

smaller 7:1 8:21 71:19	source 8:15 38:7,25 72:22 117:17	spark 9:17	specifies 40:9
snail 29:17		Spatial 35:3	speculation 73:6
socioeconomic 13:8 34:19	sources 10:13, 15 26:23 35:21 36:7, 9,10,13	speak 4:14 42:6 45:14 46:3 50:14 86:6 88:5 104:21	speculative 52:10 100:12
soft 8:2,23	37:22,23	106:23,25	speed 15:24 16:3 21:9 22:25 38:4
software 39:7	38:24 41:19	112:10 114:9	spell 112:11 114:10
solar 86:24 87:6,9	68:3 108:1	120:12	spent 30:1
sold 116:22	south 3:1 4:20 6:6 7:8 13:14 14:4, 18 22:20	speaker 31:16 55:19 106:24	sperm 34:2
solely 104:18	23:6 24:11 25:23 26:5	speakers 42:11	spill 58:5 59:17 61:24 63:14 85:23 95:5,10 117:24 119:3
sonar 9:2 86:4	41:9 45:25 55:10 69:2	speaking 45:25	spilled 115:17
sonicfied 25:1		species 12:5 13:6 17:3,5 18:9 28:8 32:9,24 33:5,10,18, 21,24 34:4 37:9 39:3, 14,19,23 40:10,12 57:9 63:12 72:10 77:21 81:7,11 82:24 88:13, 14 89:15 90:3,8,9,10 107:5	spills 115:14
sonification 40:23	southeast 20:25 25:12 65:19 81:20 82:4		spoke 104:5
sort 2:15 7:21 9:13 17:8,15	southeastern 24:11 25:21		spot 62:18
sorts 10:2	southern 13:14 14:17 22:19 25:20,21,23 26:4		spots 26:17
soul 15:1	Southhall 37:15		spread 63:10
sound 10:13, 15,17 35:21 36:10,25 37:21,23 38:4,12,19, 23, 39:25 41:19 68:2 76:1 82:24 84:21 100:8 101:18 103:1	space 14:15,24	specific 33:20 38:24 107:14	spring 100:15
sounding 99:16	spar-tidal 64:4	specifically 98:9	Springs 114:13
sounds 79:20 100:9	sparing 80:16		square 80:18 81:10
			squeezing 84:2
			st 55:10 61:21 88:6 94:16

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: staff..supplement

staff 85:19	105:8 106:5	striking 16:5	subsurface
stake 71:3	113:20 114:6	stroke 112:25	71:13,15
stakeholder	115:24	strongly 65:9	success 25:8
75:18	status 20:1	struck 102:11,	successful
stakeholders	27:2 46:23	17	69:15 70:1
75:20 76:11	stay 50:3	structure 5:13	105:24
stand 61:6,8	96:22	structured	sued 3:13
standard 99:2,	stealing 92:18	15:14	suffering 96:9
9,10 101:3	step 24:23	structures	suffers 98:18
stands 50:24	32:7,13,20	8:24 70:16	suggest 31:6
55:1 109:6	49:24 51:1	87:23	101:14
start 109:2,3,	59:9 82:6	Stuart 31:1	suggested 46:7
11 114:4	92:22 117:15	students 66:12	suicides 88:20
117:12	steps 28:12	studies 43:7	suite 9:25
start-up 40:13	32:15 35:22	54:25 64:8	10:11
started 62:21	stop 80:15	97:14 106:12	suites 17:7
starting 49:9	92:17	study 37:18	86:5
state 15:17	Straits 113:24	44:10 50:17	suits 118:9
31:1 45:22	strategy 44:23	53:20,25	summarize
46:5,12	stratographic	54:16 104:24	105:22
70:19 71:2	8:8	105:11,18	summarizes
81:13 101:7	streaming	stuff 92:5,6	40:2
104:16,19	34:20	style 65:3	summary 27:17
107:13,20	street 28:5	subfloor 87:5	86:9
state-of-the	stressor 9:24	subject 101:20	summer 21:4
30:4	stressors 10:2	submarine 56:2	28:18
statement 2:23	12:17	submarines	summertime
3:10,25 4:17	stretch 78:15	86:3	21:2
15:2 27:6	91:2,11	submitting	superstructure
84:12	strictly 46:3	76:13	30:20
states 7:10,	strike 17:3	substantially	supplement
14,15,17,21	21:15 41:3	83:4	53:20
21:3 93:6,12			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: supplemented..technological

supplemented 68:24	surprise 67:22	78:7 79:3,6	89:7,13 91:6
suppliers 11:21	surrounding 45:6	80:22 84:18	97:17
supplies 49:17 50:4	survey 9:21 17:13 20:9, 11,12,17 24:20,22	99:11 100:23 101:6 114:20 117:14	talent 46:13
supply 54:8 105:15 116:8	25:2 36:17, 22 37:5,7 40:8,17	survival 60:24 80:2	talk 30:17,20 78:22 88:12 89:14,22 117:1
support 6:22 11:18 13:25 14:1 35:24 36:2 43:11 45:10 46:6 50:15 54:9 59:8 73:15 76:10 104:22 112:15	82:21 87:4, 21 99:10 100:13 101:3,4,6,9 117:10,21 118:14	susceptible 56:18	talked 30:19 40:15
supportive 106:11	surveyed 94:9	suspended 57:15	talking 3:3 7:23 8:13 10:6 31:7 57:2 90:6,7, 24 91:18 92:10 107:19 109:11
supports 44:14 53:13 68:1 73:11 105:1	surveying 8:14 51:9 52:19 99:3 110:11	sustain 66:10	tankers 108:3
supposed 91:4 115:12 117:18	surveyors 99:11	swim 39:3	tanks 89:18
surf 58:4 59:14 65:7	surveys 8:15, 18,21 9:19, 22 10:11,20 16:15 18:12, 13 20:18, 21:20,21,22 24:17 33:20 36:11,14,23 37:4 39:18, 21 40:7,22 41:1,2 45:4 49:19,23 69:22 70:3 72:8,16,21	swims 115:11	tapping 42:13
surface 14:7		swirl 64:2	tar 115:9
surfaces 18:23		system 20:1 86:2,24	Tarpon 114:13
surfboards 59:15		<hr/> T <hr/>	Tax 110:1
surficial 8:2		T-r-i-g-u-e-r-i-o 112:13	teach 64:15
surfing 59:13		table 27:16 28:1 41:11 102:15	teacher 46:2, 11
		tactics 92:5	technicians 18:19
		takes 11:2 39:9,15 60:20 82:5 101:1	technique 9:15 19:1
		taking 14:2 17:9 18:14 19:21 29:1 31:15 60:16	techniques 2:25 6:5
			technological

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: technologies..Tom

51:8 106:1	testing 77:16,	thought 43:18	15:23 19:16
technologies	78:20,23	47:14 84:3	21:13 22:8
43:13 67:17	79:14 81:17,	101:13	26:13,24
83:14 85:20	24 88:11	thoughts 60:2	29:2 36:17
103:10	tests 78:4,10	120:3	40:24 44:22
technology	Texas 95:16	thousand 80:8	47:19 72:6
43:16 46:14	108:2,12,19,	thousand-plus	74:13 94:12
71:12,18	22 115:5	105:12	96:11 97:2
84:8,17	116:3,12,13	thousands	101:24
85:19 92:2	119:9	18:10 63:20	103:22 104:3
95:13,21	theoretical	80:21 81:9	time-area
telling 92:6	85:17	95:14,16	15:15 16:2,7
temperature	theory 112:16	threat 55:20	17:17,24
38:2	there're	56:8 82:3	18:1 20:21
temporary	118:10	threaten	23:20,23
72:21	thermometer	113:23	24:5,14
115:22,23	99:9	threatened	25:10,18
116:2	thin 102:22	33:12 88:15	timely 45:22
tend 8:7,16,21	thing 59:3	93:17	times 65:25
13:19 26:7,	95:24 108:5	threatens 81:5	81:3
8,9	109:1,6,20,	threats 92:5	Times-union
tens 18:10	23,25 110:7	three-dimensional	79:8
term 35:3	111:20 112:2	8:13 86:11	tired 93:3
terms 27:23	things 10:5,6,	87:22	today 4:13,17
86:12	7,10 13:20	threshold	5:8 42:18
territorial	14:9 59:2	38:20	43:2 45:15
7:13	61:9 89:25	thresholds	46:7,16 48:6
test 8:3,8	92:12 102:24	37:12	50:15 51:10
91:24 110:1	109:12	thrive 49:6	68:19 71:10
tested 77:15	117:13	throws 99:25	75:23 92:3
testimony 4:24	119:10	tie 74:5	97:12 102:3
5:9	thinks 58:24	time 9:20	104:22 114:2
	Thomas 78:17		told 62:18
			108:8
			Tom 2:10,11

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: tomography..underwater

4:2,4,8,10	transcript	truck 108:18,	
31:5,23 32:2	3:19	20 111:19	<u>U</u>
34:6 40:8,15	transitory	trucks 67:5	U.S. 44:14
120:8	72:21	108:4	50:22 53:13,
tomography	transmission	Tsunami 91:16,	14,17 74:7
86:10,13	39:5	20	76:21 85:13
tool 9:17	transport	turn 4:2 42:8	86:2
tools 10:15,23	60:15	85:5	ultimately
69:22 70:4	transportation	turned 60:12	17:11 49:25
112:20	67:2,18,23	turning 2:19	93:13
toothed 34:2	transported	turnout 2:5,20	ultra-specific
top 26:3	67:9 113:13	turtle 26:17	16:21
42:15 114:23	transporting	62:23 91:5	unacceptable
topic 3:21	12:12, 49:13	109:6	47:24
45:23 56:9	trash 12:7	turtles 13:5	unavailable
86:22	17:6	18:7,9 24:14	54:3
total 27:4	travel 79:25	26:20 91:1,	uncertain
36:20	travels 82:19	3,6,12	75:17
totally 57:4	travesty 93:20	100:11 109:3	uncertainty
109:22	treasurer	TV 111:11	56:13
touch 31:11	64:24	114:1	underneath
91:5	tremendous	two- 8:13	95:15
tourism 82:8	44:5 106:3	type 8:20	understand
119:1,7,15	trenches 58:12	9:14,15	10:4 30:10,
towed 79:17	Triguero	20:16 29:24	11 37:16
town 48:1,19	112:12,13	36:11 103:9	58:17 71:3
toxic 115:1,3	trillion	108:4 109:25	96:2
track 31:17,	44:17,20	111:20 112:2	understanding
18,19	53:17	types 6:4 7:23	70:25 75:7
trade 69:5	triple 111:20	14:25 20:19	undertaken
traffic 10:19	trouble 98:2	30:5	45:4 72:17
12:2			underwater
			18:22 37:20
			38:3 75:25

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: undue..waves

84:21		view 37:3	62:9 90:22
undue 100:2,21	<hr/> V <hr/>	116:4	95:11 106:25
unemployed 107:24	valid 103:13	Virginia 14:20	wanting 108:12
unemployment 88:18 107:19 111:14	valuable 70:18	114:22	war 46:3 89:17 111:6
unique 114:21	values 75:18	virtual 38:22	warm 91:6
unit 36:16	vapors 87:16	vision 68:10 84:6	warming 86:23 87:8 91:10
United 7:10, 15,17,21 53:5 93:6,12 105:8 106:5 113:20 114:6	variety 71:23	visiting 97:7	warning 87:1
University 47:5 85:16	vast 14:10 80:11 81:9	visual 37:1 40:11	wars 114:18
unrecoverable 43:18	vehicles 49:12	vital 81:2	warships 86:4
untuned 102:23	verbatim 3:19	vocalizing 40:16	waste 12:5
up-to-date 93:10	Verlander 104:6,7,8	voice 76:10	wastes 11:3
uprising 113:22	versus 99:19	volcanic 91:14	watching 82:4 93:14 102:5
urge 103:15	vertically 81:8	Volks 109:9	water 9:11,14 10:17 12:2 14:8,10 17:5 18:19,25 38:1 78:20 79:19 80:4 81:9 87:15, 17 115:15 118:6,11, 119:16
urging 64:19 65:9	vessel 15:24 17:3 21:9,15 22:25 41:3 67:10	voluntary 104:12	waterhead 18:9
users 67:4	vessels 10:22 12:2 16:3,4 23:14 67:16	volunteer 62:20	waters 7:13 15:17 44:3 53:9 101:7 118:15
utilizes 70:20 71:12	veteran 114:18	volunteered 47:7	waterway 62:15
	veterinarian 78:17	<hr/> W <hr/>	waves 58:4
	viability 13:2	wait 42:8 103:23 117:12	
	vibrant 62:12	walk 58:8	
	vice 104:8	Wallops 14:19	
	Vietnam 46:3 47:7	wanted 2:15,21 7:19 34:7	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Public Meeting on 04/16/2012

Index: ways..Yvonne

ways 66:10	whaling 90:17, 18	Woods 44:9	wounded 47:13
wealthy 84:1	wheel 66:15	words 107:23	wrap 84:24,25
weather 56:14 100:17	whister 64:5	work 11:19 15:9 19:15 22:5 59:13, 14 60:10,11, 13,21 74:11 76:10 77:5 95:18,21 102:7,20 108:2 110:20 116:1	write 4:16
web 29:15	White 55:16		writing 29:10 76:14
website 5:4 120:7	wife's 115:18		written 2:22 4:23 5:9 68:25
week 108:21	wildlife 83:25		<hr/> Y <hr/>
weeks 79:23 88:21 100:15 120:6	William 4:14 45:19	working 10:22 14:1 16:23 50:20 108:10 111:16 120:1	y'all 119:25 120:16
welfare 104:15	Wilmington 23:10	workshop 84:17	year 16:1 20:25 23:1 26:20 29:6 30:1,2 44:18 94:17
well-thought 86:17	wind 84:6,7 95:12	world 48:2,3,8 55:25 56:20 81:15,23 89:6 97:17	years 19:16 43:4 56:24 61:11,14,23 63:16 71:10, 14,25 72:1 75:14 76:19 80:23 83:8 91:1,3 92:4 94:24 95:4, 96:8,13,15, 16,19 103:8, 20
West 33:4 34:3 95:6 114:22	windmill 95:15	world's 56:17	
Western 73:22	windmills 95:16	worldwide 109:17	
whale 22:21 24:6 34:2,5 62:16,22 73:14 79:12 82:3,17	windows 100:17	worried 12:14 108:25 109:24 114:5	
whales 15:18, 25 16:6 23:2,4,16,18 26:7 33:1,2, 25 62:19 63:23 72:13 77:19 79:9 80:3,8,10,15 82:22 90:12	WING 106:25 110:23 111:1,4,23 112:7	worry 92:8 107:3	
whales' 63:20	winter 21:5 79:10 91:2	Worry/stop 78:3	yellow 23:7
	wishes 76:8 106:23 120:12	worst-case 58:14	Yvonne 60:3,5
	wonderful 2:20		
	wondering 117:19		
	wood 53:20,25 54:16 87:12 105:10,17		

z

Zealand 78:12

zone 7:9 24:6,
10,25 39:21
87:11

zones 12:3
39:18

zoos 89:24