

**Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force  
Alaska Regional Public Meeting**

**August 21, 2009      1:30pm – 4:00pm**

The Dena'ina Civic & Convention Center  
600 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Anchorage, AK

**Sutley:** Good afternoon everyone, if you can find a seat we'll get ourselves started here. We have our panel in place.

Good afternoon everyone, I'm Nancy Sutley, I'm Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality and also the Chair of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force and I want to thank you all for being here today for the first public regional meeting of the President's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force.

Joining me today on behalf of the Task Force are: Doctor Jane Lubchenco, Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of NOAA.

Admiral Thad Allen, Commandant of the US Coast Guard, and David Hayes, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Interior.

We're very honored to be here in Anchorage and I want to thank our distinguished host Mayor Dan Sullivan and ask him if he'll join us and give us a couple of words before we get started. Mayor Sullivan.

**Sullivan:** Well thank you very much and thanks to all of you who have come from so far away to join us in beautiful Anchorage, Alaska.

I tell people every time I speak, I wake up everyday and I go, "What a great day to live in Anchorage" it really truly is a blessed place and we're very lucky to live here, and for those of you I hope you feel that you're lucky to come visit us.

One of the things that comes to mind is that there's probably no better place in Alaska to discuss ocean policy, with more coastline than the rest of the United States combined, we touch an awful lot of ocean from the north of Alaska, all the way down to the Aleutian Chain where you really cover several different oceans, several different climates all within one state and so I think it's very important that you're here in Alaska to discuss ocean policy.

I've seen the agenda that you're tackling.

It's a very ambitious, very important agenda and it's very timely, so good for you for taking on these tough issues and for doing so here in Anchorage.

In particular I'm glad to see the group address important issues like off shore energy, fishing, ports, shipping, and of course local government and it's also encouraging for me to see that you're dedicating time to hear what our native population has to say about these issues; probably no one knows more about our ecosystem and certainly the value of our oceans than our first people.

So I look forward to hearing their remarks and hopefully you'll learn an awful lot from them because we do everyday.

I also look forward to hearing what can develop from this about the twin goals of development and environmental responsibility.

It really is a tough balance sometimes but it's very important that we get it right and at the same time it's very important that Alaska continue to be a state that can develop its resources.

So hopefully we can find that balance.

Time is of the essence on these matters, we've got some critical issues ahead of us so your work and your policies could not be any more important or more timely to the people of this city and of this state.

Hopefully you're also getting a fair amount of time to get out and see some of the natural wonders that surround our great city.

We've got the beautiful Chugach Mountains off to the east, we've got countless lakes and streams within our geography and we've got the Pacific Ocean right at our doorstep out there

with Cooke Inlet, abundant wildlife that hopefully you'll see but not too close, and we've got a good dose of daylight, although everyday we're losing a few minutes, so you'll probably still be amazed at how late the sun stays up and a good chance to get out there and if you can get out on the bike trails for a hike or out in the parks that would be a great thing to do.

So hopefully you'll see all this, want to return to our fair city and as the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce constantly reminds me, there are some good shopping opportunities in Anchorage so those of you who are visitors, I hope you'll take advantage of them.

We have some very unique products here, locally made products and hopefully you'll find some bargains as well.

So with that I won't be staying but I do have members of our administration are here.

Governor Sheffield from the Port of Anchorage, Stacey Shubert who's my Intergovernmental Affairs Director, so we'll be well represented here and they'll be reporting back on the great work you do and thank you so much for allowing me to welcome you.

Welcome to you.

Thank you.

[applause]

**Sutley:** Thank you very much Mayor and thank you really for hosting us and the warm hospitality we've received.

I wanted to just quickly recognize a few elected officials who I understand are in the audience.

Representative John Harris, Representative Reggie Jewel, and Mayor Edward Itta who a number of us have had an opportunity to meet earlier in the week.

We're very pleased to be here in Anchorage at the Denaina Center and we have had the chance this week to spend a few days traveling throughout Alaska.

We started out in Nome and visited Shishmaref, Fairbanks, and Barrow and have had the opportunity to get a first hand look at this beautiful state.

The value of regional prospectus is very important to the success of our process.

Your real life experiences will help us ground our work in reality.

So let me now give you just a brief background on the task force and the format for this afternoon.

On June 12<sup>th</sup> of this year President Obama issued a memorandum establishing the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force.

The Task Force is comprised of 24 senior policy level members from executive departments and agencies across the federal government.

The President charged the Task Force with developing recommendations on the following issues: Within 90 days to develop recommendations for a national policy for the ocean or coasts and the great lakes.

A framework for policy coordination of efforts to improve our stewardship of oceans, coasts and the great lakes and an implementation strategy that identifies and prioritizes a set of objectives the US should pursue to further this national policy.

And within 180 days the Task Force is to provide a recommended framework for coastal and marine spatial planning.

Today's public meeting is part of a broader effort to engage stakeholders and the public and to hear your views and suggestions to inform the Task Force as it develops its recommendations.

A foundation has already been built by earlier US Commission on Ocean Policy and PEW Commission Reports and the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Recommendations which also

took a great deal of public and stakeholder input into consideration when making their recommendations.

Some years have passed since those reports were completed and there were a few issues that were not fleshed out as others or were important scientific or technological developments have occurred.

Therefore we've been engaging stakeholders and the public in a variety of ways.

In addition to the regional public meetings, we will convene like this one today in Anchorage, we have already held 24 expert stakeholder round tables representing areas such as commercial and recreational fishing, energy, conservation, human health, science, boating, recreation, business, Alaska native ports and shipping.

We are likely to hold several more expert stakeholder briefings related to marine and coastal spatial planning in the next few months.

We have also set up our web site to receive public comments and I encourage you and any interested persons or organizations to send your input there.

The web site is listed on the one page information handouts that are available here today or to go [www.whitehouse.gov/oceans](http://www.whitehouse.gov/oceans).

As we are nearing the end of our first 90 days, we will soon be shifting our focus to developing a recommended framework for marine spatial planning and we expect that some of your comments today will be on this topic.

However we continue to welcome your comments on the policy, coordination and implementation strategies to consider as we finalize our first set of recommendations.

We have had a number of requests for additional public input on the first set of recommendations.

The task force has decided that once it submits its recommendations to the President they will also be issued for public comment.

This additional opportunity for public engagement will further inform the President on what action to take in response to the full set of Task Force recommendations.

I would now like to give my fellow Task Force members an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves.

First Doctor Jane Lubchenco, she's the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

**Lubchenco:** Good afternoon everyone.

It's very encouraging and heartening to see such a wonderful turnout.

We very much look forward to what you have to tell us, we're here to listen and so I will keep my remarks very brief.

On behalf of Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke and all of the employees at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, it's a deep pleasure for me to be here in Anchorage and in Alaska as part of this listening tour of the Ocean Policy Task Force.

As we have moved around the state in the last few days we've had an opportunity to talk to many people around the state and to learn from them, to hear about many of the issues that relate directly to the task at hand for the task force.

It's been my pleasure as part of that to also have an opportunity to visit and see many of the NOAA offices, facilities, and people here in the state that provide a wide range of services to all of you.

As a science, services, and stewardship agency, I take great pride in our mission to protect lives, to protect property, to protect the environment.

I've had an opportunity to thank the NOAA employees that do that on all of your behalf.

As I mentioned we are here in listening mode.

We have an important task ahead of us.

We've had multiple discussions within the task force, across agencies about how we can work together more collaboratively, more cooperatively, but we do need to hear from you as we frame those national policies because they need to be responsive to your interests and your needs.

That's why we're here and I look forward to what you have to say.

Thank you.

**Sutley:** Thank you Doctor Lubchenco.

I'd next like to introduce Admiral Thad Allen, the Commandant of the US Coast Guard.

Allen: Thank you Madam Chair and good afternoon.

I represent today not only the United States Coast Guard, and the men and women who serve in Alaska and elsewhere, but Secretary Janet Napolitano in the Department of Homeland Security. For that reason it's a distinct honor to be a member of this panel and to be here today to listen to what you have to say and understand your concerns.

In regards to the Coast Guard's mission set in Alaska and elsewhere, I would group it into three major areas.

One is marine safety, marine security and marine stewardship.

In many cases we say we protect the man from the ocean and the ocean from man.

This is a very challenging environment for us to operate in, so this is a very, very good place to start the listening session of the Ocean Policy Task Force.

The challenges the Coast Guard deals with in this part of the world are what I would call the tyranny of distance and the operating environment of high latitudes.

This week we have talked with you around the state, we have talked about forward operating locations in the Bering Sea and in the Northwest and off the northern slope.

We have talked about ice breaking and the need to operate in an ice mission environment.

But through all of this one thing is abundantly clear to me as Commandant of the Coast Guard and that is the entwined histories of our service in the state of Alaska.

Back just after Alaska was acquired by the United States revenue cutters, which were the predecessor of the Coast Guard operated up here providing services, postal services, bringing doctors and providing basic governance in Alaska and federal services.

We have grown through the centuries together.

We are entwined, our service DNA is entwined with the DNA of the state and we're very proud to serve here.

It is my honor to be here as a Commandant today to listen to you.

Thank you very much.

**Sutley:** Thank you Admiral.

I'd next like to introduce David Hayes, the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Interior.

David.

**Hayes:** Thank you Nancy, it's great to be here on behalf of Secretary Ken Salazar and the Department of the Interior.

It was in this room two months ago that the secretary and I were here for a public meeting on the outer continental shelf and a proposed five year plan.

So that underscores the appropriateness of the Interior Department I think being part of this Oceans Task Force.

We're very interested in hearing your ideas on how we as part of the Obama administration can work together across the federal government in a highly coordinated way and with you for whatever station in life you are in, whether you are a state official, an academic, native Alaskan, to which we in the department have a special trust responsibility, an NGO or whatever.

The oceans can no longer be an orphan.

They need our concerted and organized and thoughtful attention and what you see here today is a manifestation of that from the Obama administration of which I am proud to be a member.

So we look forward to your comments today and follow up in the weeks and months ahead.

Thank you.

**Sutley:** Thank you David.

Going to talk about the structure of today's meeting.

We'll have two parts, and this is the same format we'll be using in all of our regional meetings around the country.

First we'll hear from a panel of local experts on a variety of topics.

These presentations will provide the Task Force with information on some of the key issues important to Alaska and the region.

Then we'll move to hearing your thoughts and comments.

Doctor Jim Balsigar, the Acting Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries will lead that part of today's meeting.

During the public comment we would ask that you try to limit your remarks to three minutes to ensure the maximum number of you having the opportunity to provide us with comments.

We're going to try to wrap up by 4:30, we'd like to get through all of the public comment, but if you would be conscious of everyone's time, I think that will help us get through all of that.

There are cards available at the front table if you would like to speak with baskets for collection.

If you would like to submit your comments online there are computers in the lobby just outside the doors that you can use now or you can submit them later at the web site indicated on the handout that you've received.

If you have written materials with you today that you'd like to share with the Task Force please make sure that you leave a copy at the front so we can make sure it gets into the record for this meeting.

So I'd like to ask Doctor Lubchenco now to introduce the first four panelists.

Lubchenco: Our first panelist today will be Vera Metcalf.

Vera is the Chair of the Alaska Eskimo Walrus Commission.

She's also an Arctic research commissioner and a member of the North Pacific Research Board Advisory Panel.

She's on the Executive Committee for the Indigenous Peoples Council for Marine Mammals and today she is speaking, representing Native Alaskans.

Vera thank you for being with us.

**Metcalf:** Good afternoon.

Madam Chair and distinguished guests, it was good to see you in Nome and welcome to Alaska Admiral and Doctor Lubchenco and Nancy.

As the a Commissioner of the US Arctic Research Commission, and as the Director of the Eskimo Walrus Commission, and as an Alaskan native that resides in the state region, I offer these comments.

I truly appreciate the review of the ocean policy.

The US Arctic Research Commission has worked with the Ocean Commissions in the past and is a member of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership where we have been urging its commissioners to pay attention to the Arctic Ocean and the Bering Sea.

These waters provide strategic amounts of energy and protein to the United States even as they undergo a large amount of changes and become more accessible.

There are real research needs in both physical and biological oceanography including the important work of the law of the sea.

As a Representative of the Eskimo Walrus Commission and in support of the coastal marine mammal hunting communities, I would add what's important to us is securing and preserving these and other natural and cultural resources for our future generations as we continue to rely on a variety of resources found in the marine waters.

This dependence is a significant cultural foundation to us because without them we as Alaskan natives are even more vulnerable to the many changes to come, like climate change and ecological changes.

I truly believe this dependent relationship holds valuable insights for evaluating the quality of our stewardship of the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas.

Among the five goals that the US Arctic Research Commission, I emphasize the need to incorporate these into your ocean policy.

One, climate change in the Bering Sea.

Two, Arctic human health.

Three, Arctic infrastructure.

And four which is very dear to my heart is indigenous languages, cultures and identities.

Each of these research priorities aims to understand the health and well being of the Arctic, from its natural resources and processes to its human components with the understanding that these are all interconnected.

The Arctic observing network and AOOS, Alaska Ocean Observing System need long term funding.

Bering Sea integrated research program, funding primarily by NSF and North Pacific Research Board needs continued funding and should be replicated for the Arctic Oceans Chukchi, Beaufort, and Bering Seas.

This data gathering is critical, especially for a change in Arctic.

So how does the human component fit in?

The Arctic is home to cultures, languages, knowledge, people who have survived many changes already through the millennia and who will continue to be at home in the Arctic for many years to come.

If there are any who are interested in the health and well being of the Arctic, it is us who live here. I believe maintaining the strong fundamental link that we have with the natural world will be a measure for how well we take care of the Arctic and its seas.

The Marine Animal Protection Act, MAPA, including its section 119 amendments to provide for a cooperative management of species with Alaska Native Organization like my walrus

commission, is necessary and valuable for including the Arctic residents in the stewardship of the Arctic Seas.

Recognition of consultation with and funding to AOOS for a lot of things that we're doing in our work with the federal agency is very vital, and finally I'd like to add that there is a need for the US Coast Guard to patrol and protect our resources.

Finally my recommendation for Ocean Policies that along with specific research priorities and plans, and policies, that it includes our Arctic People, support our unique cultural traditional bond with our world, support our languages, and with that I would like to encourage you to come back.

I do have a letter for the CEQ and the Chair from our US Arctic Research Commission.

Thank you.

**Lubchenco:** Vera thank you very much.

We greatly appreciate your wisdom, your eloquence, and the knowledge that you bring and are willing to share with us.

Our second panelist is Larry Hartig.

Larry was appointed in 2007 by former Governor Sarah Palin as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

He's here today representing state government.

Thank you Larry.

**Hartig:** Well Madam Chair and distinguished members of the Task Force, good afternoon and again on behalf of Governor Parnell and the people of Alaska, thanks so much for visiting us and listening to us here.

My name is Larry Hartig, I am the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, I also sit as a member on the Governor's Natural Resources, Oceans, and Climate Change Sub Cabinet.

I am here today to provide testimony on behalf of the State of Alaska.

A common theme throughout my testimony, the one I will begin with is the need for a strong federal state partnership and the involvement of our local communities in the development and implementation of a national oceans policy.

In section 1B of the June 12, 2009 memorandum issued by President Obama, he directs the Task Force to develop a framework for national oceans policy that includes specific recommendations to improve coordination and collaboration among federal, state, tribal, and local authorities including regional governance structures.

There are good reasons why a strong federal state partnership should be the backbone of a national oceans policy.

First, coastal states like Alaska share jurisdiction with the federal government over ocean and coastal activities and ecosystems.

Alaska's jurisdiction includes uplands, wetlands, tidelands, and extends out to the three mile territorial limit.

Within these areas, Alaska manages and leases lands and with federal agencies permits or restricts activities that could impact the environment.

Second, Alaska shares a common responsibility with the federal government to maintain healthy, resilient, and sustainable oceans, lands and coasts.

Thirdly, state government works closely with communities throughout our state and is in a good position to help evaluate how a proposed national oceans policy will work or not work in the many diverse areas around our state.

With a state as large and diverse as Alaska it will be particularly important to capture the experience and wisdom of the state and our local communities, particularly our tribal members in developing and implementing an oceans policy.

We encourage the Task Force as you develop the framework for a national oceans policy to build it from the ground up.

Lastly, success.

There are already a number of successful partnerships in Alaska among federal, state, local governments, tribes, organizations and concerned citizens.

The aim of the national oceans policy should be to build on the strength of these existing partnerships.

In the time remaining I want to highlight three areas of particular importance to Alaska and the nation.

First resource development.

Alaska is a resource storehouse.

Our oceans and coastal watersheds produce approximately 14% of the nation's domestic oil production in over 50% of the nation's seafood.

In addition Alaska has a vibrant cruise ship and tourist industry attracting visitors from around the world.

As the nation looks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there is no better place to look for relatively low carbon fuel, natural gas, than Alaska.

Alaska has the ability to provide 5% to 8% of the nation's natural gas supply.

The Alaskan natural gas pipeline will also enhance the economics of continued production of oil from the North Slope.

With proper resource management and responsible development, a portion of the estimated 45 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil on both state and federal acreage in Alaska could help further reduce the nation's dependence on imported oil.

This takes pressure off opening new areas of high potential that are particularly sensitive, say like the off shore California oil development.

To succeed broadly the Task Force must think broadly, looking at long term economic, energy and security needs of the nation, and create a framework so those needs can be realized alongside of the sustainability goals for our oceans and coastal areas.

Fisheries, our record of sustainable management of fisheries and the protection of the marine environment has led to national and international recognition of Alaska and the North Pacific as a leader in these fields.

Experience in Alaska has shown that a strong regional model can be very effective in the responsible management of fisheries.

Next, a warmer and more accessible Arctic.

Recently the nation caught up with the 21<sup>st</sup> century, updating and revitalizing the nation's Arctic policy.

Alaska as the nation's only Arctic state had a strong interest in that policy and participated in its development.

We believe it will serve the nation well and we'd like to see that the national oceans policy be consistent with it.

Lastly, data monitoring, mapping, and research needs.

While Alaska is rich in its natural resources and in our collaborations among our federal, state, and local leaders, we fare far less better in terms of baseline data, environmental monitoring, research and access to high resolution mapping and imagery.

We ask for your support in the national oceans policy to identify the gaps there and help us fill those gaps.

Thank you again for visiting our state and listening to us.

The state will also be submitting more detailed written comments.

**Lubchenco:** Thank you very much Larry, we appreciate those perspectives.

Thank you too for meeting with us in the Governor's office with him this morning and also for joining us on part of our trip the last few days.

We appreciate all of that.

Our next speaker is Dorothy Childers.

Dorothy is the Executive Director of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council which works to protect and restore the marine environment through sustainable fishing practices, habitat protection, and local stewardship.

Today she will address the topic of conservation.

Thank you for joining us Dorothy.

**Childers:** Good afternoon.

I work for the Alaska Marine Conservation Council.

We are a community based organization made up largely of fisherman, subsistence harvesters, and other coastal Alaskans who rely on the ocean for our ways of life.

We very much appreciate the Task Force coming to Alaska for this listening session and for taking the extra time to travel around the state and to see first hand some of the early consequences of climate change.

We can have all the best ideas for managing uses of marine resources, but none of that will matter if we don't avert climate change and ocean acidification.

Climate change is happening at a bewildering pace.

Clearly the consequences will be immense in so many ways, and it's harder to see ocean acidification, but scientists here warn that failure to reverse the proliferation of carbon dioxide in sea water, will likely push oceans past the tipping point and committing ecosystems and our fisheries to irreversible harm.

We ask the Task Force to make emissions reduction a feature of US ocean policy.

I also want to make a plea for a commitment to funding as it relates to ocean monitoring.

We can not successfully meet the challenges we will soon face without better understanding of the natural systems and the processes we're dealing with.

Until we have better understanding of our oceans large scale undertakings with significant environmental risks seem especially unwise.

MMS's recent lease sale in the Chukchi Sea flies in the face of a profound ignorance of what the effects might be coupled with the certainty that we can not clean up spilled oil there.

We need to put the brakes on the pace of development in the Arctic until a comprehensive approach to all Arctic matters can be settled.

I want to provide you with some Alaskan contacts for developing policy and some key concerns that we have, we hope that policy can address.

Alaska has magnificent marine life and unique marine habitats.

We have the cold water corals of the Aleutians and southeast waters, we have the wide continental shelf of the Bering Sea dropping into huge marine canyons where 200 year old rock fish are still found, a massive annual bloom of phytoplankton at the retreating ice edge of the Bering Sea forms a green belt of primary production that fuels our fisheries and feeds the walrus, ice seals, and the threatened spectacled eiders, all of whom spend winters at sea foraging on the bottom and resting on the sea ice.

Then to the north we have America's Arctic Ocean.

This is the, excuse me.

We have also many communities that are unique to Alaska, so it's not just the living marine resources that we draw your attention to, but it's also the communities.

We have communities around the vast coast accessible only by air, water, or by snow machine across frozen rivers and tundra.

We have indigenous cultures who have been living off the sea for at least 8000 years.

We have fishing communities with diverse fleets where young people grow up working on their family vessel, and where an enterprising deckhand can earn his way to the captain's chair.

So with regard to ocean policy it's not just the natural world, but it's our people, the economies and the cultures and traditions.

This is the infrastructure of life in coastal Alaska.

We want US policy to seek to support our communities.

For example, policies need to be in place that enable future fishermen fair opportunities.

The momentum toward limited or privatized access to the public's fishery resources may harm independent fishing families and communities and may not achieve promised conservation results unless catch share programs are designed extremely carefully.

We need to forego new industrial developments that pose substantial risks to the resource base we rely on.

Proposed lease sales in Bristol Bay are especially egregious.

The fisheries there including the world's largest wild salmon run, herring, king crab, cod, halibut, all sorts of ground fish, these are renewable resources that if managed carefully will support us far longer than oil and gas.

It is striking to contrast high level policy goals to the nitty gritty work of applying them to the real world, so let me end by telling you about efforts evolving in the Bering Sea where fish are expected to move north with warming conditions.

We are working on a plan to protect ecologically and culturally sensitive areas before large scale fleets arrive.

Federal fishery managers are engaged in this discussion and consultation with tribal governments should be a centerpiece.

This is an example of fisheries management adapting to climate change.

To conclude, we strongly support coordinating the currently fragmented array of agencies and jurisdictions under a common framework to protect ecosystems but we want to urge you also to include specific focus on coupling ecosystem protection with maintaining the social fabric of our communities, ensuring that a governance system contains mechanisms for seeking community perspectives on a continuing basis and including national carbon emissions reduction as a featured objective of US marine policy.

Thank you.

Lubchenco: Thank you very much Dorothy.

We appreciate all of your words.

Our next panelist is Fran Ulmer.

Fran is the Chancellor of the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

She also serves on the Board of Trustees on the National Parks Conservation Association, on the Advisory Board of the Union of Concerned Scientists, and on the Alaskan Nature Conservancy Board.

On this panel she's addressing the topic of research.

Fran.

**Ulmer:** Hello and welcome to Alaska.

I want to personally thank you all for taking the time to come here so that you can better understand our state and some of the challenges that we face here.

You have undertaken a very important and very challenging assignment.

I would say that it is long overdue for the United States of America to address ocean policy in a comprehensive way.

So I want to thank you and I would like to offer just a few words on the topic of the importance of research.

I suspect that there is not a single person in this room who would disagree with me that it is incredibly important that we do more research to better understand the Arctic and the Arctic Ocean and certainly to understand the complexities and the inner relationships of the ecosystems and their relationship to humans, to human needs.

After all the Arctic is home to four million people and those people and their lives are intimately integrated with ice, and with Arctic conditions that are changing rapidly.

I think the challenge is how can that research be funded, and how can that research be organized so that it can be policy relevant, and how can decision makers who have a stewardship responsibility to make science based decisions take advantage of the research that has been done, and is being done and use it in a way that benefits both the short and the long term interests of the people who live in the Arctic, and the globe?

We know of the importance of the Arctic to the global climate system.

I believe that is the challenge and that is what I would urge you to consider.

How can we better use existing data and existing research and make it available in timely and scale appropriate ways to decision makers?

How can we stimulate new research that is not only relevant, but that can be done in way that provides those people not only in the United States of America, but other nations because the Arctic is a shared resource?

We may think, those of us who live in Alaska that it is ours.

But the reality is that it belongs to all of the nations of the Arctic as well as all of the people of the world.

Research is needed in three areas.

In physical sciences, in biological sciences, and in the social sciences, often left off the equation.

In physical sciences there's a wide array of needs.

Coastal erosion, thawing permafrost, ocean acidification, ice, melting glaciers.

In the biological arena, marine mammals and fisheries, availability of food and habitat.

In the social arena, the importance of subsistence and native peoples reliance on Arctic conditions.

Communities' health and well being, transportation, international agreements, the law of the seas.

There are many, many needs and if you'd like to see a document that was prepared actually for Commissioner Hartig and the Adaptation Commission listing all of the very much needed Arctic Research, I think it's about 100 pages of very specific Arctic Ocean and Arctic Climate Change related research that we recommend to policy makers and to funders to put as priority areas.

The good news is that there is a lot of work being done, no where near enough, but I would note that at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, the Geophysical Institute, the International Arctic Research Center, the School of Fisheries, and Ocean Sciences at the University of Alaska Anchorage, a lot of work in coastal erosion, marine mammal research, high resolution weather modeling, ecotoxicology and socioeconomic studies.

Work is certainly being done, being done in partnership with the federal agencies, with the state agencies, with the Alaska Ocean Observing System, AOOS which is an excellent networking opportunity.

But the list is still long of what needs to be done and must be accomplished so that policy makers such as yourselves have the benefit of information in a timely way.

In closing I would like to just urge you to consider adopting a comprehensive strategy to coordinate research and monitoring.

I would urge you to renew our commitment as a nation to research, everything from basic data to human health and the coordination of information and I think that we need to find a better way to use local knowledge and traditional knowledge because so much of the monitoring that must take place happens on the ground at a very local level.

Again I thank you very much for your willingness to undertake this responsibility and I will hand out simply one of what could have been literally hundreds of research projects and products from the University of Alaska.

This one a survey of living conditions in the Arctic that was done in combination with indigenous people all across the Arctic.

Thank you again for your work and for coming to Alaska.

**Lubchenco:** thank you very much indeed Fran.

We had earlier in this week an opportunity to hear from some of the researchers at the University of Alaska and have already benefited from the insights that they have and their understanding of changing conditions in the Arctic.

Fran, as you know President Obama has said many times that he believes that good government depends on good science and so your recommendations to us are particularly appreciated.

As a former researcher I also appreciate your dual focus on making better use of knowledge that's already in hand, and at the same time in parallel having research efforts to get new information that could help us make even better decisions.

So thank you very much for that.

**Allen:** Thank you.

I've been asked to introduce the next four experts.

First is Marilyn Crockett who is the Executive Director of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association and Marilyn will be discussing how oil and gas relates to our oceans and coasts.

**Crockett:** Well thank you very much and on behalf of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association and our industry here I welcome you to Alaska and appreciate you taking the time to travel around the state and listen to the interests and concerns of Alaskans here.

I am the Executive Director of AOGA, we're the trade association for the oil and gas industry here in the state of Alaska and clearly the health and vitality of our nation's oceans is of paramount importance to the oil and gas industry.

Evidence of our focus on environmental protection is apparent when one considers that with all the oil produced in the OCS since 1980 less than one one thousandth of a percent has been spilled.

So prevention measures employed by the industry in carrying out its operations in over 40 years of production in our local offshore oil and gas industry here at Cooke Inlet have proven again and again to be successful.

President Obama and Secretary of Interior Salazar have repeatedly stated a commitment to include oil and gas, along with renewables and conservation in the nations offshore energy program.

The Alaska OCS will play a critical role as Alaska's off shore is home to some of the most prolific undeveloped hydrocarbon basins in the world.

Of the total US OCS estimated reserves of 86 billion barrels of oil, Alaska's OCS basins are projected to contain almost 27 billion, a third of the nation's total, and for natural gas Alaska is estimated to contain 132 trillion cubic feet, about a quarter of the nation's total.

So clearly Alaska's oil and gas off shore resources are important to the nation's economic and energy security.

So obviously it's critical that as the ocean policy program is implemented that energy be included within the mix and that all parties and users be included to ensure that multiple use of the nation's oceans continues.

As you move forward on the very tight timeline that you have in front of you, it will be important to incorporate processes already in place that have been successful.

In fact there's a robust effective system currently in place to balance environmental stewardship and responsible energy development of the OCS that takes into account considerable multiple uses of the ocean that is not often recognized.

The leasing process established by the OCS lands act requires the Secretary of Interior to conduct environmental studies in consultation with other agencies and to obtain information pertinent to sound OCS oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development as well as to monitor the human marine and coastal environments.

The Minerals Management Service is also obligated to incorporate public concerns and potential conflicts between different users groups and public participation in the process.

So we encourage you to include that as part of the program that you move forward.

Future national ocean policies must be transparent in simplified ocean management processes, incorporate both political representation and involvement and ensure public participation.

Additionally a new national ocean policy should mandate that agencies with oceans responsibility work cooperatively to assist in timely development of offshore energy and provide for other ocean uses.

Utilizing marine spatial planning is a tool and ocean governance makes sense as a concept.

However, the details of developing and implementing new national ocean policy will create many questions that must be answered in a thoughtful and inclusive manner.

Finding the answers to those questions raised by an ocean policy that incorporates multiple use planning is not an easy task, but the US is at an advantage in that a great deal of work has already been done by the US Commission on Ocean Policy.

We also have the opportunity to learn from what other countries like Norway that have already implemented marine spatial planning.

We don't need to reinvent the wheel, and we should build on the work done by the US Commission on Ocean Policy and examine the best practices developed by other countries and also learn from their mistakes.

Any new system of ocean policy should be well funded and staffed.

Inadequate funding of current ocean research, surveying and monitoring left gaps in the past and necessary information from making informed resource development decisions in the regulatory system.

I very much support the remarks that Chancellor Fran Ulmer made earlier, that research is a critical component.

The focus of new research and policies should be on discreet aspects of particular activities that actually have an impact on the ocean rather than all aspects of activity.

Doing so allows for the development of appropriate mitigation measures and operational strategies that meet the specific impact requirements of the activity without excluding the activity entirely.

Again, multiple use of the nation's oceans is critical.

With that I will conclude my remarks, thank you very much for having us here today.

**Allen:** Thank you Marilyn.

We'll next hear from Joe Childers who is President of the United Fisherman of Alaska, speaking on behalf of the fishing community.

**Childers:** Thank you Madam Chairman and members of the Task Force.

My name is Joe Childers, I am President of United Fisherman of Alaska and I guess that's as good as we could come up with for representing the fishing industry which is extremely diverse. But United Fisherman of Alaska is an umbrella association with 37 member commercial fishing organizations and together we represent fishermen that fish in every major fishery with every gear type in every region of the state, in the state of Alaska waters and of the exclusive economic zone that's open to fishing.

We represent every gear group from diverse to factory trawlers and everybody in between so it's very difficult for our group to come up with decisions on allocation issues, but when we do come up with common themes, they're very powerful themes across the industry.

The Alaska Seafood Industry produces about 5.8 billion dollars worth of seafood a year which is about 60% of the total in the United States and the seafood industry remains the largest private sector employer in the state of Alaska.

We realize in the fishing industry that we're all employed extracting a very valuable natural resource from a very rich and dynamic public resource and that things change.

So for us to operate in Alaska successfully since the advent of statehood the underlying theme has been that in all decisions, for fisheries decisions in the state of Alaska the decision has been based on the concept that the fish always comes first.

In other words the management is based on the best science to preserve the fish for the long haul and that decision has been carried out pretty thoroughly, it's underlined every major decision that's happened in Alaska.

But that has included things like for fisherman, a lot of very limiting and restrictive things like limited entry which limited our access to various types of fisheries input controls.

It's also gone to things like output control fisheries like IFQs which are extremely controversial and its now gone further into community development quota systems which have been designed to try to assist communities in the Bering Sea region to participate in fisheries at a better level and now they're looking at a lot of sector allocations.

But in every one of these decisions the fish was first, but no management plan has ever been advanced without a lot of consideration about the communities and the industry that's dependent upon it.

So there's been a tremendous effort all the way along to A preserve the fish first, with the understanding that if there's no fish we don't have a future and to do that you have to have the very best available science but you have to recognize that in a dynamic situation where management measures are made that allocate a resource, the resource itself is dynamic, the environment that we work in is dynamic and society's needs are dynamic.

So all of the management measures that are made need to be reviewed and revisited and understood to be dynamic themselves, they have to be able to be modified.

So fishermen have been restricted dramatically over the years in Alaska but we've done this with limited entry and IFQ and sectors.

Each step being far more restrictive than the one before on fisherman's ability to access the resource, but we've done it because there's been an underlying theme of the fish being first and there's been an acceptance of this policy because we have bought in, as an industry to the idea of sustainability and that the sustainable resource is going to allow for a larger, better opportunity for everybody.

So we know now that we have to accept the concept of these hard tax, the limitations to harvesters, but we also recognize the need to move for an accounting for total removals from all types in the ocean, we need to know everything that's going on.

We need to know about the bycatch issues of all fisheries, we need to know about everybody's removals from all sectors, commercial, recreational, and subsistence and we need to recognize that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has been a very successful model for fisheries management in Alaska and we're already managing for sustainability at a very successful way and we're keenly aware of the need to further refine our understanding of the ecosystem so that we can manage better.

I'm out of time, thank you.

**Allen:** Thank you Joe.

Next we'll hear from former Governor Bill Sheffield who is the Director of the Port of Anchorage.

He has spearheaded a master plan for the development of the port and is overseeing a large expansion of the port.

He's going to speaking on the topic of ports and shipping.

**Sheffield:** Well thank you very much.

Welcome to Alaska and we're glad that you made Alaska your first stop on your tour of public hearings.

We live in an ever changing world and Alaskans are probably more keenly aware of natural changes to our environment than anywhere else in the nation.

We have an issue on the horizon that will greatly impact our coastal communities and in another life, probably beyond mine, but especially in the communities of southwestern Alaska, northern Alaska, the melting of the sea ice that will lead to the opening of the Northwest Passage.

With the Arctic ice loss the shortcut will be created between the Pacific and Arctic Oceans, increasing opportunities for ships to cross over the top of the world from Asia to Europe.

This means that with time there could be 4000 to 5000 ships crossing near our communities and our islands.

Actually there's 4000 ships coming from Asia now, go through Unimak Pass next door to Dutch Harbor and on down to California or through the Panama Canal, up past New York and over to Europe.

Creating these shipping lanes will come with some cost that will impact our communities in coastal Alaska.

More escort vessels I imagine would be required.

Staging in ports will have to be developed and safe havens for ships to retreat because of bad weather or something going wrong with an engine or something.

It's important, if we're going to do this, it's going to happen, to make it safe.

Alaska is in a good position to begin a new stage of development in our coastal communities with the capital investments needed for ports and harbors.

We also need to continue working with and supporting the work done by NOAA.

There's a huge need for more monitoring of ocean conditions to remote safe and coast effective navigation.

In order to meet the needs of an increasing shipping trade, we must encourage our leaders to make the investment in our ports, in our harbors, in our navigation routes.

It doesn't only benefit industry and trade, but it will also open up communities connecting to our other communities.

We need smart development in combination with a balanced protection of our environment and marine transportation corridors.

Global warming is important to Alaskans.

It has already had an impact on us and will continue to do with the melting of the polar ice cap.

For example, 25% of the world's undeveloped oil and minerals lie under the polar cap and no doubt the United States is going to want to be a part of that sometime.

There was a picture in a construction magazine a couple years ago looking into the ocean.

On top of the ocean was this Canadian vessel with somebody out on the bow saying, "We're out here all by ourselves" and below the ocean on the bottom was all these submarines running around planting flags on the bottom of the ocean underneath the polar cap.

Developing a new ocean policy will also have an impact on our military.

The military heavily depends on ports and harbors.

Take the Port of Anchorage for example.

The Port of Anchorage serves 85% of the state of Alaska and it serves all five military bases in Alaska.

That's about 55,000 military personnel and families.

The port serves south central Alaska by truck and rail, and it serves western Alaska by water and air.

Everything we do depends upon marine navigation and the issues that the ocean policy task force will impact the future of commerce and transportation in our state.

Thank you.

**Allen:** Thank you Governor.

Our last panelist is John Binkley, he's the President of the Alaska Cruise Association and Chairman of the Alaska Railroad Corporation.

He will represent the tourism industry in his remarks.

**Binkley:** Well good afternoon, Madam Chair and panelists, we really appreciate your participation and the opportunity to speak before you.

My name is John Binkley, I'm here representing the Alaska Cruise Association, but primarily I'm here as an Alaskan.

I was privileged to be born here.

Our family has been operating on the rivers and coasts of Alaska since the gold rush days through five generations and it's really from that perspective that I address you as the policy council this afternoon.

Our family provided freight transportation to communities throughout Alaska for many, many years and then in 1950 my parents started in addition to that, a tourism business.

Sternwheel River Boats that we operate on the rivers out of Fairbanks, Alaska and I grew up in that business really and that's been my perspective over the years.

But in growing up I can remember much wisdom that my late father imparted upon me, but one of the most intriguing ones, after the construction of our Trans Alaska oil pipeline was of his informing me of a second pipeline that we had in Alaska, a very important pipeline, and maybe you're not aware of that as well.

But it's the pipeline that brings over a million visitors a year to Alaska.

It's the ships, it is the air craft, it's the highways that bring those visitors to Alaska, and as he imparted to me, if we take care of the things that are important for people, that drive them to come to Alaska, the vast wilderness of Alaska, the tremendous wildlife that we have, the cultures of Alaska.

If we take care of those things that pipeline will never run dry.

And that really is a perspective I believe that the vast majority of Alaskans have, that we need to take, regardless of what the economics are, we are here by choice and we are fiercely defensive of those things that make Alaska so unique and we as Alaskans are always going to fight to protect those.

I can relay a story about the cruise industry.

In the late 90s, in 1999 under the Noals Ulmer Administration, after a series of discharges, illegal discharges by the cruise ship industry, the state of Alaska stepped in, they formed a scientific panel, they did the research, and they came up with recommendations to the Alaska State Legislature in 2001 for the strictest set of standards for the discharge of wastewater in the world. Those were passed by the people of Alaska through our legislature and through our governor and that really set the standard for the world and the industry stepped up to that.

They have spent over 200 million dollars in developing the technology to put aboard the ships of retrofitting older ships and of putting them on new ships and that really has moved us forward in the quality of the discharge of wastewater from cruise ships around the world.

That is something that I believe we should take note of that that's the way in Alaska that we work, that we protect those things that are important, whether it be in the ocean resources of the seafood, of protecting and making certain that the harvest of the seafood that we have is done responsibly, whether it's those resources that are under the ocean of the oil and gas, we more than anybody else have the most critical stake in that and we are the most fierce in defending that.

So if there is one thing that I can impart on you to take back to President Obama, is that Alaskans care more about what happens in our oceans than anybody else in the world, and listen to the first Alaskans as Vera said.

Listen to Alaska Policy Makers as the Commissioner said.

Listen to our Governor, resolutions that come from the Alaska State Legislature, from local communities on the coasts of Alaska.

They care more than anybody about what happens to our state and the future of Alaska and I hope that you can incorporate that in your presentation back to President Obama.

Our thanks to you for coming and listening to us, I'll be happy to answer in the question and answer period anything that you may have as far as specifics about the cruise industry, at least as it relates to Alaska and please enjoy your stay here and come back and visit and come on a cruise ship someday.

Thank you.

**Allen:** John we thank you for that presentation and for the second panel let me congratulate you on your presentations too, you have collectively represented a diverse cross section of interest. Marilyn, we note your admonition to take a look at processes in place, transparency and cooperation by the federal entities which I take to mean a whole of government approach which we have talked about.

Joe, we roger your message on catch allocation and sustainability and bycatch issues have been discussed throughout the entire week I can assure you.

Governor we appreciate your comments as well and we understand the potential for military out load ports and one thing you mentioned about the maritime transportation system and we appreciate that as well.

And we roger the message on the tourism pipeline and water discharge, but more importantly we roger the notion that Alaskans care, so thank you very, very much.

It's been a very informative session and we appreciate you taking the time to express your views. I'd like to move things along now and turn the mike over to Jim Balsiger who will lead the public comment portion of today's meeting.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Admiral.

I appreciate having been able to be in the audience and hear the insight of these people, it's been a good start.

We have some 65 people that would like to testify, as Chair Sutley said at the beginning we would like to restrict each individual to 3 minutes.

If you do the math real quick you can see we probably won't get through all of these people. So we'll try to do it as perfunctorily as we can, as efficiently as we can.

We have three microphones in the audience so I'm going to name six names, the first six and perhaps they'll line up two behind each microphone and we'll go through the process. Watch the timing and I'll also try to remind you and wave at you as you get to the end of your time.

So starting right off we have Edward Itta, Myron Naneng, Susan Childs, Ian Dutton, Tom Lakosh.

That might be just five, the sixth one would be Carol Holly.  
Mayor Itta.

**Itta:** Good afternoon, I didn't expect to get called first.

Hello Admiral, good to see you again.

Madam Chair, Doctor Lubchenco and Assistant Secretary Hayes, good to see you again today. I'm going to make my comments very brief here today but again to firstly start off by thanking you Madam Chair for allowing me to address this hearing.

My name is Edward Itta, I'm the Mayor of the North Slope Borough and I'm going to be submitting my written comments to you so I'll keep my comments very brief.

Again, I want to thank you for showing up in Barrow the other day and it was our privilege and honor and I will have you know that even for the short amount of time that you were there, just your presence indicates not only to us as Inupiat Eskimos, but to all Alaskans of just how important the issue is now today in not only the President's Cabinet but also to America as a whole.

I hope your visit has given you a better sense of conditions and challenges along the Arctic Ocean Coast and as I said I'm glad to see that the Obama Administration is giving special attention to the protections of America's waters including the Arctic Ocean with an emphasis on better mechanisms for planning as a way to balance competing interests.

I'm very encouraged by that.

There are plenty of reasons for concerns over stresses to the Arctic Ocean.

Many of them stem from the dramatic impact of climate change to our multi year polar ice cap. Suddenly new areas of ocean are exposed and potential access to resource development expanded.

There's increasing talk of Arctic shipping lanes, expanded fisheries, new tourism opportunities and other competing uses.

In the midst of all these claims we are trying to preserve our traditional use of our ocean as our garden, and it truly is a garden to us because we live off the marine mammal resource of our ocean, our culture.

In the context of change we are not afraid of change, as Inupiat Eskimos.

It's done a lot of good things for our people, but all of us know that change involves risk and the risk of some of these potential activities in the Arctic are substantial.

We just want to make sure that risks are controlled and mitigated as well as humanly possible.

Again in the interest of time I would just like to say that when you consider all the agencies and organizations that need to be together, remember that we as a people are a part of the environment and must be factored in accordingly and we want to be a part of your issue.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mayor Itta.

Myron Naneng.

**Naneng:** [foreign speaking]

I'd like to thank you for coming here and welcome you here to Alaska to listen to things that I know the council is going to have to learn about.

My name is Myron Naneng, Senior; I'm the President of the Association of Village Council Presidents representing 56 villages on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

Our villages have been dramatically impacted by what's going on in the oceans.

If you saw the article yesterday regarding the Yukon Chinook Salmon, that is one big issue that has been building up for many years.

It's probably at least 20 years or so.

In 2000 Alaska Department of Fish and Game along with the Fish and Wildlife Service imposed windows on people who fish for salmon, especially the Chinook salmon in order to rebuild the Chinook salmon stocks.

They were allowed 36 hours per week to go subsistence fishing.

This past summer that number of hours was reduced to two 18 hour periods per week and because of the management system that the state of Alaska has, which I take exceptions to saying that Alaska has the best management system, our people were people closed for subsistence fishing for ten days, only to find that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game tool and management was not reliable nor functional until six days into closure, complete closure.

This impacts families, their ability to harvest food, their ability to work as a family, especially when they're paying for high fuel costs, as much as over \$8 per gallon for many of them, some of the villages.

Even today with the delivery of fuel the gas prices have not gone down, there's still as much as over \$5 per gallon and our people also lost commercial fishing opportunity.

We're caught in the middle.

There's a trough laid out there in the Bering Sea that is allowed to bycatch and throw away the fish.

Our people in the villages, in one village caught 100 fish for subsistence and passing it out to the elders.

They were pursued by law enforcement people as criminals and this is food for the elders in our own villages.

Now the Canadians on the other side are benefiting from what our people had to sacrifice in the river and one of the other things that I would like to emphasize and ask for, for some of these councils that have an impact on our people and use of some of these resources, that they have, we need council members like North Pacific Management Council for one.

We need subsistence users to sit on those councils because they are impacting the daily livelihood of our people in the villages.

You can't just have a federal representative, a state representative or the industry representative will say that they'll do something, yet when it comes down to implementing, they're doing something that drastically impacts the livelihood of our people.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Naneng.

**Naneng:** So I request the council to consider representatives of subsistence users on any federal agency or council that impacts the livelihood of our people.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Naneng.

I will remind people that there are other opportunities to put in comments.

There's laptops in the hall, so if you get cut short of your comments please feel free to send them in as well and those will be considered.

For the panelists I see you're awkwardly turning around, you can turn your chairs around or go out in the audience, whatever is more comfortable so you don't have to sit with your heads turned if you'd like.

Next we have Susan Childs.

**Childs:** Good afternoon.

My name is Susan Childs and I work for Shell Exploration and Production here in Alaska.

I want to thank the distinguished panel for allowing us to give these comments and I want to thank the audience for coming in to have this very important discussion on this very beautiful Alaskan day, so it means a lot to the people that are in this room.

So I just want to start by telling you that we believe that the vast majority of our coastal waters and oceans should be available to the American people for multiple uses which include recreational and commercial.

So in saying that, we believe that the oil and natural gas resources from the outer continental shelf are a vital component to meet our nation's energy security and economy.

So with such a vital resource such as our oceans with its economic, recreational and national security implications to this nation, we are concerned that the Task Force may be rushing to a conclusion in trying to complete it's work in 180 days.

A new prescriptive framework might create burdensome bureaucratic constraints and prevent agencies from adaptively developing comprehensive multiple use approaches.

So an effective system of marine spatial planning and adaptive management is already in place for oil and now gas extraction.

The OCS through the five year leasing program.

So right now no one federal agency is giving primacy over the oceans.

The system of laws and regulations have been developed over decades to balance the needs of ocean users.

So in order to continue to understand our oceans and to have the information for future management and resource decision making, significant new money must be appropriated to support the agency's missions and to support the ocean and graphic community tasked with gathering this information.

Well the oil and gas development play a critical role in supplying the funding necessary to achieve these.

Renewables will be an important component of our future energy mix, however, a quick transition to renewables is highly unlikely.

So therefore our economy and national security will strongly depend on oil and gas for heating, transportation, and industrial operations for decades to come.

So the US Minerals Management Service conservatively estimates the federal waters adjacent to the state of Alaska Arctic Ocean contain 25 billion barrels, you've already heard that today, of oil and 122 million cubic feet of natural gas, a much needed supply for our rapidly declining trans Alaska pipeline system.

In addition a recent study by the University of Alaska Northern Economics estimated that activity in the Alaska off shore could produce an average of 35,000 jobs on an annual basis with a payroll totaling over 72 billion dollars.

So considering our current economic situation these are significant figures.

For these and other reasons we urge the Task Force to pursue a measured and thoughtful process to address the policy development for ocean management and stewardship.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment today and we will be supplying more detailed comments in the future, thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Ms. Childs.  
Doctor Dutton.

**Dutton:** Thank you again and I'd like to amplify that, welcome to Alaska.

I'm Ian Dutton, I'm the President of the Alaska Sea Life Center.

The Alaska Sea Life Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to understanding, maintaining the integrity of the marine systems of Alaska.

We achieve our mission through research, rehabilitation, conservation, and public education.

We previously made a submission to the interagency task force related to marine spatial planning but today I would like to amplify two particular aspects of that submission.

Firstly in the relation to the complex issues we're addressing here today, such as ocean acidification, we believe and our research here in Alaska supports that belief, that there is a genuine lack of public understanding of our oceans and of their importance to the quality of life that we all enjoy.

This lack of ocean literacy is both a major impediment to the ability of the public to engage in a process such as this and an impediment to improved ocean management generally.

Funding for ocean literacy programs that address these needs at a meaningful level are currently ad hoc and insufficient.

For example, in partnership with the Anchorage School District, and with our generous private and public donors, we have conducted a sea training program over the last five years that has provided instruction to some 10,000 fifth grade students here in south central Alaska.

Due to budget restrictions this year, that program has been cut back to less than 250 students, so a 90% plus cut in our ability to deliver public education to schools and to the youth of Alaska.

We urge the Task Force to give priority to rapidly upgrading ocean literacy in Alaska and America generally and point out the unique role the aquaria play into providing an insight into otherwise inaccessible marine life.

My second point relates to the first.

As the Task Force may be aware, aquaria are specifically prohibited from receiving any stimulus funding currently.

That has made it very difficult to compete for research, education, and conservation infrastructure such as the innovative ocean thermal energy project that we have ready to go at the Sea Life Center.

That project, taking heat from the sea around Resurrection Bay would save us something like 57,000 gallons of fuel oil, and save about 1.2 million pounds of carbon emissions per year.

That renewable energy technology would be a first in Alaska.

We have it ready to go, we have the infrastructure in place, but we can not access the funding because of stimulus limitations.

We find it unacceptable that a museum or even a visitor at a visitor center in a national park is not subject to the same restrictions.

We urge the Task Force to employ its influence to ensure that aquaria operate on a level playing field with other educational institutions to help us promote ocean literacy which must underpin any improvements in ocean governance.

Thank you for the opportunity to give this input.

We'd welcome the opportunity to show you our cutting edge work in research and education, rehabilitation and conservation next time you come back to Alaska.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Doctor Dutton.

Next is Tom Lakosh.

**Lakosh:** Thank you for this opportunity to address this prestigious council.

I'd love to address fishery practices and climate change issues, both the need to prevent the adverse climate change and for alternate energy production from one wave, and tidal sources in our oceans, but unfortunately I have the sad task of reporting a very serious derelictions of duty on behalf of the Coast Guard and the Department of Interior Minerals Management Service which I request immediate action to correct.

Particularly for, if nothing else, other than the obligation to promulgate and enforce, promulgate regulation and enforce regulations in accordance with statute, but because in these times the United States has a very serious national security problem associated with energy.

Any day now Israel may take it upon itself to protect its interest by attacking Iran for its nuclear facilities.

Iran can turn the Strait of Hormuz into the Cuyahoga River with its silkworm missiles.

We could easily see a doubling of last year's 147 dollar peak oil price.

We can not, our economy and our way of life, and the world's way of life will not survive unless we can gain lawful access to our offshore resources which are presently being prevented by a failure of the Coast Guard and MMS to enforce its regulations with regard to access with protection of environmental concerns.

I'll start with the Coast Guard and the Commandant and I had a minute or so to discuss this and I appreciate his interest in saying that D17 fully make itself aware of all tank vessels crossing its exclusive economic zone and apply regulatory requirements there too for either applying for and complying with vessel response plan requirements or leaving Alaskan waters, or otherwise stay out of the waters without the ability to comply.

The other shoe to that Admiral is the fact that the Coast Guard itself is required to have equivalent resources under 40CFR300 the NCP for mystery spills and for those vessels that are truly in innocent passage to other countries and it requires response throughout the EEZ and none of the resources in Alaska, even our best resources in Prince William Sound are capable of operating out at the EEZ because they rely on small vessels that can not operate that distance from shore.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Lakosh.

**Lakosh:** I would like to meet with the representatives and have their contact information to further delineate the derelictions of duty which should be addressed by their internal inspector generals.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much.

Carol Holly will be next.

The second group is going to consist of Jim Ayers, Doug Johnson, Caroline Cannon, Everett Thompson, Jeff Kinneveauk, and Ed Page.

Carol please.

**Holly:** Hi, my name is Carol Holly, I'm a private citizen and I've been very lucky to live and recreate here in Alaska which depends very heavily on the health of our oceans.

Alaska's oceans make up one of the most pristine and abundant marine ecosystems in the world. They hold tremendous economical, cultural and ecological value and their lifeblood of Alaska native communities whose residents have relied on the sea for cultural and nutritional subsistence for thousands of years.

However these oceans are faced with unique challenges including increased shipping in Arctic waters, climate changes, ocean acidification and increased industrial development such as oil and gas drilling, off shore drilling.

I have five key recommendations for the Task Force.

One, yes, there are competing uses for our oceans, but there are some places that are just so unique and so valuable that they must be protected.

So one, I would recommend that Bristol Bay be permanently protected from off shore oil and gas development.

Second, the Task Force should recognize and highlight the unique circumstances in the Arctic Ocean and take a special approach there to ensure that the region is managed sustainably.

The Task Force should recommend comprehensive scientific research for the Arctic Ocean so we can make informed decisions there.

We just don't have the knowledge to go forth with any activity in that area.

Fourth the Task Force should recommend the establishment of a coordinated management structure for the Arctic.

The precautionary approach is essential.

Ecosystem based management decisions is essential.

It's essential that management is made in an integrated manner that includes federal, state, local and tribal government in decision making roles.

And finally the Task Force should recommend deferral of all industrial activities in the Arctic until we can take a science based precautionary approach.

Thank you very much for your time.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Holly.

Jim Ayers.

**Ayers:** Good Afternoon.

Madam Chair I'd like to thank you and the members of the Task Force for being here today.

I want to say also how much we appreciate you picking up the yoke of public service at a time when our country and our planet face such daunting tasks.

I want to thank Doctor Balsiger and you Doctor Lubchenco for the recent swift action in approving the fishery management plan to protect the fisheries of the Arctic.

For the record my name is Jim Ayers and I'm with Oceana, an international conservation organization dedicated to protecting our oceans.

We have a staff in Alaska of some ten people including Alaska Indian, Eskimo, and other scientists with western degrees of two doctorates and three masters.

We work daily on ocean issues and in particular in Alaska in protecting our oceans and bringing management strategies forward that would protect the ocean while maintaining a viable economy.

You've heard the discussion of the all in wonder from some of the speakers of Alaska's resources, and in many ways Alaska has been a model for others.

The North Pacific Management Council has led the way recently on protecting essential fish habitat, on moving forward with ecosystem based management and away from single species or money fish management.

We've done big things in Alaska like move world class tugs to protect our oceans from oil spills. But in many ways we still suffer from the same pressure the rest of the nation does, the pressure to drill till we spill, the pressure to fish till it collapses.

We are driven by the old Maslow's Hierarchy of filling our needs first and that need now has become our own personal portfolios.

We've lost sight of wisdom and it is wisdom Madam Chair, and members that we need to move towards sustainable living.

We're a species who must learn faster to make decisions based on reason and prudence.

Specifically Madam Chair, based on the PEW ocean commission, US Ocean Commission and Ocean Policy, regional forums like this to discuss the regional environment make the goal of marine special planning identifying and protecting ways to maintain the health and biodiversity of the ocean, beginning with identifying important ecological areas.

Responsible and sustainable fishing, establish a national bycatch reduction program.

Limit over fishing before we reach the over fishing mark and address a national policy for foreign species.

Move forward with the FH immediately.

With regard to CO2, ocean acidification and global climate change, a simple matter in Alaska is realizing that natural gas is 50% of the carbon production compared to coal.

I'll wrap up thank you.

And we have that natural gas and recommend the President move forward with natural gas and that we immediately move forward with a consideration in the Arctic.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Ayers.

Doug Johnson.

**Johnson:** Hello, good afternoon.

My name is Doug Johnson, I'm the Alaska Development Director for Ocean Renewable Power. We're currently developing tidal energy projects in Maine and here in Alaska and my comments are specifically to the marine spatial planning issues.

As a nation industry, the Tidal Industry, Tidal Energy Industry and Marine Hydrokinetics, want to participate fully in this.

We believe that this has an opportunity to make our industry stronger and also feel that we need to be very inclusive in this approach.

It's kind of one of those things where it's a double edge sword.

If we do this well and correctly it can really work for us.

If we don't do it well it can tremendously work against us.

One of the things that we want to look at is how can small industries like ourselves or new industries like ourselves, a renewable marine, be part of the game?

How can we have a seat at the table?

As we look at this one of the things that we've seen is that we believe that science needs to be in place and to do that it's going to need significant funding and be assured that that funding will continue through the duration so that the effort isn't something that's just started and stopped. So that need for funding is really imperative.

The other component that we feel is important here is that projects that are already in place or started like two of our projects, one here in Alaska, one in Maine, wouldn't be put under any kind of a moratorium.

We sense that there may be an idea that, yeah, let's just stop everything now and just take a longer look at it.

We feel like we're in process right now, we're working well with the agencies and we'd like to be able to continue that.

So for our industry, being able to continue and develop would be really important.

And lastly I'd like to say that it's a real pleasure to have you here in Alaska, thank you for taking the time to come and listen to us, and thanks very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Johnson.

Next is Caroline Cannon.

**Cannon:** My name is Caroline Cannon and Madam Chair, distinguished guests, thank you for taking this opportunity to hear us.

My name is Caroline Cannon, the President of Native Village of White Hope, a whaling community of the Arctic slope.

I stand here representing the 975 tribal members of our tribe to protect our Inupiat tradition and our way of life.

Our people have a sacred relationship with the ocean and the marine mammals.

We depend on the Arctic Ocean to sustain us.

It is a delicate system of the Arctic species.

We know as people who whale and are on the ice every spring that drilling, seismic testing, eventual oil spill all have a far reaching and permanent impact on our land and waters.

In 2008 Mineral Management Service stated in their EIS, there is a 40% chance of a large oil spill in the Chukchi if exploration and drilling was allowed.

Our whaling tradition would be wiped out and an essential element of our cultural identity would be lost.

How would we teach our children their history, their ancient custom of their people?

We witnessed many changes in recent years, the ice become more and more unstable, hunting seasons shorter, drastic changes in the animal population, the migration such as the polar bear and the walrus, the health impact that comes with a climate change.

We ask the Obama Administration to abandon the efforts to drill in our ocean to protect the indigenous people of the Arctic.

The species we depend on, the life giving tradition of our people.

Thank you for honoring us with this public forum.

We hope this will begin a productive and historical relationship with the Alaska tribes.

And I also would like to thank you, the Task Force.

I would ask the Task Force make recommendations on the ocean policy, we hope that you will ensure that the ocean plan is in place before making decisions about the oil and gas development.

I just like to quickly state that I'm going to hand you this Artic Sounder, there's two critical respected elders that made some comments and I think that they couldn't be here because of the high cost of travel, so if you would take this please.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much.

Please do submit that.

Next is Mr. Everett Thompson.

**Thompson:** I'm Everett Thompson, this is my daughter Lacoda Love Thompson, we're from Naknek, we just flew into town here about an hour ago to show up for this event.

I'm a lifelong fisherman from Bristol Bay, originally from Naknek and my daughter goes to school there.

I've been fishing every season all season since I was seven years old, and that's been 26 seasons this year.

My daughter is eight, she came on the vessel with me this year so she could start with the tradition too because she's a captain in training.

Anyways I have a couple issues of concern I'd like to bring up with you and I thank you for being here to listen to them.

First off for oil and gas exploration development in the Bristol Bay and I oppose this oil and gas development in my region.

It poses a threat to our fish and vertebrates and our marine mammals that live in and migrate through this north Aleutian basin.

And remembering the Exxon Valdez in 1988, a catastrophe that wasn't supposed to happen, this could have a huge impact on the marketability of our seafood and damage our subsistence lifestyle most Alaskans depend on.

I want to also say that we're both tribal members from Naknek Village Tribe and I'm a shareholder of Bristol Bay Native Corporation.

Since Exxon Valdez in 1988 our salmon prices have dropped for some reason due to price fixing, and some due to replication of wild salmon in Alaska from one major incident.

I received a settlement from the Exxon Valdez from '89, '90 and '91 when I set net in Bristol Bay at age 14, 15, and 16, right in my own boat.

I got this check right here.

It's for 261 bucks.

This doesn't make up for hundreds and more thousands of pounds I have caught at a lesser price.

To top off drilling for oil and gas in general, we must move away from creating all this extra carbon that is internally absorbed by our oceans, acidifying them and slowly creating our own species' and many other species' genocide, just along with climate change as well.

My second area of concern is the possible mining district in Bristol Bay.

The proposed pebble mine and the two million acres set aside from VLM for mining.

This poses inevitable risk and could do irreparable damage to our fish habitat.

Bristol Bay has the largest Wild Sockeye run in the world and the rearing area should not be put at risk.

Again I repeat my concern on resource development that threatens Bristol Bay fisheries and habitat and stand besides those with areas of concern and the rest of the state of Alaska will stand together.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Thompson.

Next is Jeff Kinneveauk, thank you very much.

**Kinneveauk:** Don't judge a book by its cover.

[laughter]

I am here, my name is Jeff Kinneveauk, I am Senior Vice President for ASRC Energy Services and one of the members of the native village of Point Hope that Miss Caroline Cannon was talking about.

I'm here on behalf of ASRC Energy Services.

ASRC Energy Services is the largest oil field contractor in the state of Alaska.

It is owned by the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation which is comprised of Inupiat Eskimos of northern Alaska.

AES has special expertise in onshore and off shore development projects in the Arctic.

Decisions about ocean policy effect development.

We are here to remind you that one of the many aspects of development that is often overlooked is the value it can bring to the residents of our region.

I am talking about jobs, careers, and opportunities where there are few choices.

Once a decision is made to develop the resources of OCS in the Arctic, don't forget about the residents who live there.

North Slope residents depend on development of their economy and livelihood.

There is no timber, no agriculture.

Tourism alone can not support more than a handful of people in each community.

Oil and gas and its revenues have funded our government, and built our schools which I went to school in Point Hope so thank you for oil and gas for helping building my school and sanitation facilities.

It has offered employment to our people.

If and when development comes to the seas of the Arctic Ocean the position of our owner company is that it happens in our terms to the greatest degree possible.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much.

Next will be Ed Page, third group of six will be Michelle Ridgeway, Randy Hagenstein, Dave Harbor, Adelaide Herman, Jason Brune, and Harry Brower so they can work towards the microphones.

Please Ed.

**Page:** Thank you.

My name is Ed Page, I'm Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Alaska which is a non profit maritime organization established to provide information and communications in a safe secure and efficient environmentally responsible maritime operations.

As mentioned so eloquently by John Binkley earlier, Alaskans are fiercely protective of our environment and very sensitive after the Exxon Valdez of what maritime casualties can cause. To that end there have been chances to work with the maritime community of Alaska, the coastal communities, the maritime industry, environmental non-government organizations, the Coast Guard and the state of Alaska in developing and accelerating implementation of vessel tracking system to help ensure, make informed decisions, know where the vessels are, identify the risk, manage the risk and ensure that any measures that are taken are in fact enforced as a level playing field.

So we've been developing a system using the Automatic Identification System which is required by vessels by international law and Coast Guard regulations to transmit their positions.

We have some 70 EIS sites ranging all the way up to Arctic, above the Arctic, all the way up to the Aleutian islands and down south, and continue to expand and build through this collaborative cooperative partnership, public and private partnership and all we do is urge that the Coast Guard and the other agencies involved continue and work with us in the State of Alaska, develop this capability to manage the potential risks of the maritime trade which certainly in light of some of the comments earlier, the pain of the Exxon Valdez is still felt, and several other instances have happened in the past that many of which could be prevented through better information and better technology.

So to that end we urge the continued partnership from the federal side in working with the maritime community and the locals in the communities and the environmental organization of Alaska to help prevent oil spills in the future and better information.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Page.

Miss Ridgeway.

**Ridgeway:** Hello, for the record my name is Michelle Ridgeway, I'm a marine ecologist from Juneau.

I was raised in southeast Alaska and I've worked throughout the state of Alaska my entire life. Thank you very much for making the effort to travel so far to come and visit not only our communities but to look out over the waters and try to gain some understanding of the marine environment that we all live in and around.

I want to touch on four points.

The first is regarding the ongoing discussion about marine spatial planning.

I strongly encourage the Obama administration to engage all organizations that are at the table now, DOI, NOAA, and the Coast Guard as well as other agencies in the marine spatial planning process.

I think we need to accelerate the marine spatial planning process to protect some of the more sensitive regions, certainly that we're more familiar with here in Alaska.

I think that we have a lot of energy needs in this country that are being aggressively pursued and for that reason we may have some new risks for some particularly sensitive habitats and I would strongly encourage that in that process both the DOI partner with NOAA in pursuing this scientifically based discussion that you consider ecological function of the regions being examined.

I understand that you're looking at preserving habitats for individual species, that's more straightforward.

It's very challenging but absolutely essential to also examine the deeper underlying ecological function of areas that may be considered in the marine spatial planning process.

There are several areas I think that should be considered sooner rather than later in that process, from my own backyard where I was raised in southeast Alaska, we have rockfish issues.

We've overfished some of our rockfish, we had declines in some rockfish, small system of rockfish restoration reserves in southeast may serve to benefit these very long lived habitat specific species.

Up in the Arctic of course there are many very sensitive habitats that may be considered but sort of the gateway from the south through the Arctic, the Bering Strait may be a region which should be very carefully considered for protection of habitats in that area.

I also want to strongly encourage each of your agencies to pursue partnerships with coastal communities in doing monitoring as well as marine research and education.

Not only to engage the local communities and tap into the local knowledge, but to use a tremendous labor force that needs jobs and has tremendous sophistication and skill sets that can be used very effectively for achieving what we need, which is year round data sets.

Ask anyone that does research in Barrow, it's the local people's assistance that helps get the work done.

Finally, I understand my time is up, I'd like to strongly encourage the Obama administration to carefully consider the largest living habitat on this planet which is the deep ocean and encourage you to look at our lack of deep ocean research technology in Alaska.

**Balsiger:** It's important to understand when your time's up, but it's important to stop talking then too.

**Ridgeway:** Thank you very much, I appreciate your time.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Michelle.

Michelle's a good friend of mine, so that was a little sassy and I apologize.

[laughter]

Randal Hagenstein please.

Hagenstein: Thank you very much and thank you for coming all this distance to hear the concerns and perspectives of Alaskans.

My name is Randy Hagenstein, I'm the Executive Director of the Alaska Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy has had a chapter here for just over 20 years now.

We are led by a local board of trustees that represents a cross section of business, civic, and conservation leadership for Alaska.

The Nature Conservancy has provided comments I believe in other venues.

I'll try to reinforce some of the comments and also give a little bit of an Alaska flavor to it.

Improved ocean policy matters to Alaska and Alaska matters to improved ocean policy framework.

We've got more coastline than the rest of the United States put together.

Our marine waters similarly dwarf the marine ecosystems of the rest of the country.

We've got some phenomenal and unknown ecosystems out there.

Michelle who just spoke before me is one of the few people who's actually been into the bottom of Zhemchug Canyon which is a canyon that could hold two Monterey Canyons within it. So a virtually unknown but an enormous and valuable marine resource there.

Second point is that the Arctic as you've heard is growing in global strategic importance for a variety of reasons.

Strategic resources, expanded shipping, etceteras.

We're seeing very, very rapid ecological change driven by climate change, a cascade of effects on all manner of species that use the Arctic.

The changes in many cases are more rapid than even the most aggressive models that have predicted changes to those systems are predicting.

Some very, very rapid change.

This speaks particularly to a need for precaution as we think about how to manage these coastal and marine ecosystems.

The fisheries moratorium in the Arctic that the administration just affirmed I think is a fantastic example of the kind of precaution that's necessary, putting the horse before the cart, waiting until the appropriate science is put in place before engaging in expanded industrial activity in the region.

So I applaud the administration for that precaution.

We need a much deeper investment in science in monitoring, particularly given the dynamic nature of these environments, particularly given the pace of change.

We need improved governance models that better integrate the disparate missions of the agencies tasked with managing marine resources, that reflect local needs and concerns, particularly for subsistence uses and that recognize the national interest inherent in many of these areas.

Recognize please that Alaska is unique.

We're the United States' foothold in the Arctic.

Our communities are more reliant than many, many other communities throughout our coasts and last and by no means least, perhaps most importantly the native peoples of Alaska have a unique relationship to and knowledge of these areas and I ask you to listen to them, hear their wisdom and reflect their concerns.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank your Mr. Hagenstein.

Mr. Dave Harbor.

**Harbor:** Madam Chair I'm not a personal friend of the Chair and therefore I hope I don't go over.

I'm Dave Harbor, retired Alaska Regulatory Commissioner and I'd like to offer you a few thoughts on process.

I also serve on the National Board of Advisors of the Consumer Energy Alliance.

I hope you'll be able to subsume the testimony offered to the US Senate Appropriations sub committee on Homeland Security yesterday.

All of the witnesses gave accurate and compelling testimony that fits well within the charter of the Task Force.

In addition I would urge the Task Force to also create a full and equal portion of the study an analysis of the social, economic, cross polar, cultural, energy, and national defense implications of America's oceans policy and Admiral for one thing in the three missions that you mentioned, I

didn't hear a fourth mission, that of preserving the sanctity of American land and reaching out from there.

So that would be something perhaps to consider.

You have a noble goal, all of you to ensure the protection, maintenance and restoration of oceans and our coasts, however, just as no person is an island, so can no oceans report be complete without considering the social, cultural, the economic, energy and national defense implications. For example, I'd urge your consideration of the following addition to Mayor Itta's and the other testimonies of yesterday in the senate testimony.

An economic analysis has just been completed by Doctor Scott Goldsmith, a well known economist in Alaska that underscores Alaska's state government dependence on the oil and gas industry and also the dependence of about a third of the jobs in the state of Alaska one way or another on that industry.

A national association of regulatory utility commissioner's study is underway to determine the economic and environmental and social costs of maintaining moratoria on the OCS's and also on onshore federal lands.

That study will be complete in the fall and should be taken into consideration as well, as recent studies by the Minerals Management Service defining the OCS oil and gas resources.

You know with trans Alaska pipeline throughput dipping at 6% annually, America's dependence on these sources increases proportionally just as Alaska's state government revenue over 80% dependent on oil creeps dangerously lower.

I see that my time is complete and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Mr. Harbor.  
Miss Adelaide Herman.

Herman: Thank you Madam Chair, members of the Task Force and Mr. Balsiger.

For the record my name is Adelaide Herman, I fish commercially in Bristol Bay and am also a tribal member of the native village of Naknek.

Recently I've been studying for my doctoral dissertation looking at oceans and looking at the sea grant colleges in the Pacific Northwest to determine if they're building the capacity to have students that are going to be able to protect, rebuild, and maintain healthy oceans.

I have some direct recommendations that I'd like to read.

I'd like to see you know after looking at all the information I would like to make sure that the President has – to make sure that ocean policy activities are at the highest level to the President.

That the President be aware of the issues and have a chain of command that can take action on issues without too much bureaucracy involved, and from my studies I see that there's a lot of people studying the oceans and a lot of different groups and I hope that as others have mentioned that there will be a cooperative approach that all that information could be brought together.

While I'm concerned about the environmental issues in Bristol Bay, I want to concentrate on giving you some information on the educational aspects of the oceans.

I hope that EPA and others that, NOAA and others that are involved in looking at the ocean that there be an educational policy developed and the National Institute of Health has an excellent model there.

Other things that I'd like to see happen is that the trust responsibility with the tribes, that that be beefed up, that the native American policies be looked at because those policies need to have implementation plans, and those implementation plans, the government should help the tribes

work on those implementation plans and lastly I'd like to see that the North Pacific Management Council have an indigenous panel much like the panel in Hawaii.  
Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Herman.  
Next will be Marliana Soto for Jason Brune.

**Soto:** Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today.  
My name is Marliana Soto, I'm a projects coordinator at the Resource Development Council. RDC is a statewide non-profit, membership funded organization founded in 1975. Our membership is comprised from individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries as well as Alaska native corporations, local communities, organized labor and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to link these diverse interests together to encourage a strong diversified private sector in Alaska and to expand the state's economic base through responsible development of our natural resources.  
It is on behalf of this diverse membership that I present testimony today.  
As noted earlier Alaska possesses more coastline than all other states in our nation combined. Subsequently the impact of any ocean's policy will affect Alaska significantly so I'm grateful your first public meeting to develop oceans policy is here today.  
RDC urges cautious development of a national ocean policy and encourages the task force to take into consideration programs that have already been established and proven to protect and manage the oceans.  
National oceans policy should include measures to address the need for more research and data collection in the oceans.  
Any ocean policy should coordinate with existing management programs and stakeholders with a focus on avoiding redundancy and maintaining access.  
Increased bureaucracy would hamper already slow processes, delaying projects vital to Alaska's economy with no added benefits to the environment.  
For example, Alaska already has the best managed sustainable fishery in the world.  
The North Pacific Fishery Management Council uses science as the foundation for their decision making process.  
We ask you to consider what another bureaucratic layer would add.  
Indeed fishing in Alaska provides over half of the nation's harvest of seafood landings and is a significant employer in our state.  
Proactively the Arctic fish management plan was developed closing the Arctic to fishing until further research is completed and data is collected.  
This action should not imply endorsement of an permanent closure of the area, but rather the need for a better understanding of the ecosystem prior to management decisions being made.  
The ocean, specifically the nation's outer continental shelf can also go a long way to helping the United States reduce its dependence on foreign sources of energy.  
Emphasis in any ocean policy must be placed on allowing access to these resources while protecting traditional uses as subsistence hunting.  
Because of the vast natural resource development potential in Arctic waters off the coast of Alaska, RDC is also very supportive of increased Coast Guard presence.  
With this presence must come additional infrastructure.

In conclusion RDC applauds the administration for asking for input from stakeholders across the nation and we thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Soto.

Harry Brower will be next and then the group of six following that will be Sean Doctorman, Marilyn Hyman, Jill Klein, Nicos Pastos, Monty Worthington, and Philip Monger. Harry Brower please.

**Brower:** Thank you.

Good afternoon my name is Harry Brower, Chairman of the Alaska's Eskimo Whaling Commission and the Deputy Director of the North Board Department of Wildlife Management. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today on these issues that are the heart of my people's survival.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those who visit our Arctic home this week, thank you.

We were very fortunate to have you from the Obama Administration in our areas, it's rarely seen other than our Alaska delegation that we get to have other constituents from the administration in our homelands.

The AWC was created in 1979 by our whaling captains and our tribal governments for the purpose of protecting the bowhead whale and the bowhead whale subsistence hunt.

The AWC exercise delegated federal authority for management of bowhead whale hunt and the bowhead whale subsistence quota through an AWC cooperative agreement.

Our AWC bowhead whale subsistence hunting are spread along the coast from Kaktovik on the Canadian border to the Saint Lawrence in the Bering Sea region.

Our new administration has indicted its commitment to the twin concepts of marine spatial planning and ecosystem based management for addressing impacts to our oceans for onshore and offshore development and other uses.

In the Arctic we have been practicing this approach to the management of offshore activities for many years.

Working in cooperation with National Marine and Fishing Service in the offshore oil and gas developers, we accomplished this work through the AWC open waters season conflict avoidance agreement which we use to manage offshore oil and gas impacts every year since we first created it in 1986.

The CAA is a regional management tool that applies to all offshore oil and gas related activities in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.

The management techniques used in the CAA are based on sound science informed by direct observations and experience of our hunters.

We use the CAA to protect our marine ecosystem, to reduce the rest of our hunters from interference and to promote public education on the wise management of the Arctic Ocean ecosystem.

Through the CAA we employ the concept of flexible spatial planning to schedule incompatible activities in times and in areas that avoid conflict.

In this way we can allow multiple uses of the ocean while protecting our migratory marine resources and our use of them.

We have used the CAA to protect multiple species and our uses of them from noise impacts including bowhead whales, beluga whales and fish.

Wee have a long established communication system and procedure for managing open water vessel traffic.

**Balsiger:** Mr. Brower I wonder if you could summarize very briefly and then submit your comments please.

**Brower:** Yes, I have provided them and submitted them and I'll just continue if I could. We have a regulatory mission for vessel speed and movement, we have developed shipping lanes, we have limited accumulative impacts to those ecosystems by limiting the numbers of simultaneous operations in the Beaufort and Chukchi Sea. As exploration development interest increases we are looking to other national systems particularly in Norway for practices to address pollution control in the Arctic Ocean. We have created our own private insurance again to provide logistical support to our hunters in the event an oil spill damages their hunting areas. As more companies look forward to production in the Arctic we will employ a more stationary form of spatial planning.

**Balsiger:** Mr. Brower I'm wondering if you could wrap up, we have a long list of people left yet.

**Brower:** All right, I'll just stop here and like I stated I did supply a copy of my presentation.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much, I appreciate that and that will be useful.  
Sean Doctorman.

**Doctorman:** Good afternoon Madam Chair, Doctor Lubchenco, Admiral Allen and Deputy Secretary Hayes and Doctor Balsiger.

My name is Sean Doctorman, I'm from Kodiak, Alaska.

I've commercially fished in Alaskan waters for 31 years and I am here today representing the Crewman's Association.

Alaska's Bering Sea crab fisheries are an example of a failure of the catch share programs as over 1000 crew members lost their jobs due to privatization.

Ninety percent of the crab that are harvested must be delivered to an oligopsony of processing interests.

Crew members are also losing jobs as other management programs such as the Rock Fish Pilot Program get politically privatized without adequate scientific justification.

Total allowable catches are already in place.

This public larceny hides under the theoretical joys of privatization to benefit non participating investors.

A recent study by the University of British Columbia indicates that small scale fisheries are more efficient and better at meeting socio-economic needs than large scale fisheries.

When the Bering Sea crab catch share system was implemented, crew members were denied a historical participation share of over 400 million dollars of individual fish quotas while roughly 1 billion dollars of catch share rights were given to vessel owners.

Many of these vessel owners are large corporations, now high lease fees paid to quota holding sea lords come right off the top of our vessel trip settlements costing independent contracting crewmen another 35 to 40 million dollars per year compared to before privatization.

Vessel owner group representatives have committed perjuries on the federal council record and crew members have been coerced into not giving public testimony for fear of losing their fishing jobs.

NOAA has failed to prosecute these criminally false testimonies and coercions.

The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NOAA have ignored 46 USC section 10601 and other federal laws requiring fairly contracted lay shares for crew.

Individual crewman who used to net five to six percent are now lucky to get one to two percent of the adjusted gross revenue from crab fishing trips.

Some quota shareholders presently scalp upward of 75 percent of the gross revenues while an entire crab crewman and skippers collectively receive only 12 to 15 percent.

Without required active participation, without caps on ownership, without limits on consolidation, and without adherence to the national standards of a fair and equitable distribution of rights, catch shares will clearly lead to more socio-economic harms.

And independent review by the United States Department of Justice and Anti-Just Division and Government Accountability Office of strengths of trade and ownership structure is overdue and in closing we have great concern over OCS gas and oil exploration and the proposed pebble mine and both of these resource extractions could easily damage the renewable resources of the Bering Sea, Bristol Bay, with only one disaster.

Therefore we urge this panel to do the right thing and never let non-renewable resource extraction take a front seat to the precious renewable seafood of Alaska.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Doctorman, and I know you have that in writing, so please submit it. Marilyn Hyman.

**Hyman:** Good afternoon, my name is Marilyn Hyman, I'm the US Arctic Program Director for Pew Charitable Trusts and I want to thank you all for coming today and listening to Alaskans.

A national ocean policy for our country is long overdue.

We have seen across our country the degradation of our oceans due to unplanned development.

Places like Chesapeake Bay, Peugeot Sound and Gulf of Mexico all come to mind.

What we have in Alaska is the chance to avoid this fate.

The marine ecosystem is still relatively pristine here.

We have salmon runs and marine mammals, the likes of which can not be seen anywhere else in the United States and maybe the planet.

Walrus, bowhead whales, polar bears, ice seals, and species that are threatened by climate change, and we still have intact indigenous cultures which rely on the bounty of Alaska's oceans.

Over 50% of American's seafood comes from Alaska's oceans.

There could not be a more compelling place to have oceans policies and programs and tools such as ecosystem based management and marine spatial planning.

Yesterday NOAA took an important step in that direction by adopting the Arctic Fisheries Management Plan.

This is a historic decision and I want to thank Doctor Lubchenco and the Department of Commerce for the foresight to protect and ecosystem by taking such a science based precautionary approach.

I urge the Department of Interior, NOAA, CEQ, the Coast Guard all to work together, and the other agencies to manage our oceans and make decisions based on the needs of the ecosystem and not on the needs of the individual industries.

In Alaska particularly the Arctic Ocean and Bristol Bay there's just too much at stake. During the last administration leasing increased by eight fold in the Arctic Ocean and what is being proposed in Bristol Bay and the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas is unprecedented both in scale and pace.

It is unthinkable to propose leasing in Bristol Bay, home of the largest salmon run, world class halibut and crab fisheries that are valued at 2 billion dollars a year.

We already bought the leases back once at taxpayer's expense!

It seems there's a disconnect between the goals set out by the President for this group and the route being taken in Bristol Bay and the Arctic Ocean where exploration drilling is being proposed for next summer.

I urge the Task Force to ensure that oil and gas development in the Arctic not move forward without a comprehensive science based ocean plan and to recommend to the President that Bristol Bay be permanently protected through a Presidential withdrawal.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Hyman.

Jill Klein.

**Klein:** Good afternoon and thank you for coming to Alaska.

My name is Jill Klein, I'm the Executive Director for the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association.

We've been working for the past 20 years as a non profit that works on behalf of subsistence and commercial fisheries along the Yukon River which is Alaska's longest river.

We promote healthy wild salmon fisheries.

Yukon River salmon spends most of their lifecycle in the marine environment.

The people of the Yukon River depend on these salmon for their food, their income and their culture.

In recent years low run sizes have led people to be restricted.

They have not fished for enough food or income to sustain themselves in rural Alaska.

A recent issue of importance to us is salmon bycatch and the Pollock fishery.

With runs so low it is hard for people of the Yukon River to see any fish taken as bycatch and to not return to their rivers.

Bycatch had increased in recent years and led the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to implement a hard cap in addition to an industry incentive plan to reduce salmon Bycatch.

But this hard cap is too high.

We would like the secretary of commerce to reconsider a lower hard cap to protect Yukon River Chinook Salmon stocks.

Chinook Salmon on the Yukon River have been dwindling and low returns of Chinook Salmon are happening all over the state.

We support the need for research, for the coordinated research and funding to support coordinated research to learn how to sustain these wild salmon, how best to manage them, and how best to include local people in the management system.

We would also like to see a more coordinated state and federal management system for the Yukon River salmon.

The entire life cycle must be managed to protect the salmon and the people in western and interior Alaska.

I just want to thank you for listening.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Klein.

Nikos Pastos.

**Pastos:** Hello, my name is Nikos Pastos, I'm the tribal liaison for Alaskan Inner Tribal Council. We abdicate on behalf of tribal government statewide including over 200 federally recognized tribes and unrecognized people.

I wanted to Council on Environmental Quality here and extend a thank you from our staff and the tribes that we work with.

It goes a long way when you come this far.

We're always concerned at the expense and the distance that it takes to bring tribal leaders to meet with people who direct federal agencies so we take very seriously your presence here in Alaska and again want to thank you.

I have a short list that's incomplete as far as tribal policy comments.

We're polling tribal leaders across the state, so I'm going to read that list and I have a couple other comments.

The number one tribal ocean coastal priority for tribes in Alaska is probably emphasizing lack of tribal recognition by the state of Alaska.

Tribes are omitted and there's an inconsistent tribal community inclusion in the planning process.

There's three natural resource trustees in the United States.

There's the federal agencies, there's state governments and there's tribal government.

There are long standing tribal governments that have existed long before any western form of government was in Alaska.

It's a little disappointing that we don't see any formal inclusion on tribal panel from people from Seldovia, Nilmilcheck, Tionic, Chicaloon, Ekutna, Kanick, Knitze, this is their traditional established territory.

Cooke Inlet is one of the most polluted bodies of water and most unique estuaries in the world.

Currently due to industrial pollution as well as offshore oil development we have our sacred neighbor the Cooke Inlet Beluga Whale which is a unique sub species is on the endangered species list.

We just need to look out the windows here to see one of the most fantastic places on the earth.

I've got to hurry up here.

All right, here's the short list.

Ocean acidification, effecting microfauna, megafauna fish whales are especially effected.

Rapid changes in marine mammal habitat, Cooke Inlet Beluga whales, polar bears, walrus', seals are all examples.

We're having predictable and unpredictable food supplies for traditional subsistence communities.

Coastal erosion is affecting coastal communities, marine shipping and safety response preparations and regulations as well as commercial fisheries are one of the main, and I'm not talking about industrial fisheries are one of the most significant sources of income for many of the coastal communities.

**Balsiger:** Mr. Pastos we're out of time but please be sure.

**Pastos:** We have an open door policy and would like to recommend that we could help with communications with over 230 tribal governments in Alaska.

Thank you for your time.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Mr. Pastos.

Monty Worthington.

Mr. Worthington?

Put his name at the back so the next will be Philip Monger.

The next six people will be Alan Parks, Earl Krygiev, Stan Center, Chris Oliver, Dave Bedford and Ray Metcalf.

**Monger:** This testimony is offered in memory of Segundo Strongheart of (inaudible) who passed away early this past Tuesday as he struggled to support his family and heritage.

My name is Philip Monger, I live in Wasilla and teach Cultural History at the University of Alaska at Anchorage.

I'm best known as a composer of classically based music.

In 36 years in Alaska I've also worked in many other fields including 26 year relationship with commercial fishing and other blue water maritime activities.

I have a strong love of science and have raised my two kids to be scientists.

One is now a graduate of the Huxley School of Environmental Science, the other is pursuing studies at Humboldt State University in green fisheries restoration.

I've observed the degradation of the overall habitat upon and around the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers as the ongoing catastrophe has accelerated.

It is increasingly clear that unless something radical is done soon to assure far higher returns of salmon to these and other areas, the runs will be ruined forever.

Of particular concern is the decimation of the Yukon River Chinook and Chum Salmon Stocks.

I am one who strongly believes the Bycatch paradigm of the Bering Sea crawlers has crossed the area from very poor policy to cultural genocide.

Salmon are the basis of some of the most beautiful long lasting resilient of the world's existing cultures, the Yupik are emblematic.

When Phoenicians and others were cutting down the vast cedar forests in Lebanon, the Yupik were beginning to fish the lower Yukon.

When the Roman Empire and vernacular Latin were dying, people had been speaking a language today Yupik would recognize as their own for over 1000 years.

When the Norse navigated the north Atlantic, the Volga and the Black Sea, the Yupik were expanding up the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

When a language we can now recognize as English began to exist, Yupik culture was thousands of years old.

Yet within a mere past 25 years the foundation of this vibrant culture has been ripped apart. I've never seen a better example of how governmental jurisdictional problems can be used by an industry to destroy one of America's first peoples.

Nancy Sutley, Doctor Jane Lubchenco, David Hayes, Admiral Thad Allen and yes, Senator Mark Begich, and President Barak Obama, unless you act soon and very, very sternly to end the degradation of the Bering Sea and other Gulf of Alaska trough fisheries, the miserable survivors of this once proud vibrant culture will soon sing imprecatory damning songs to your eternal memories, blaming you for their holocaust.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Monger.  
Allan Parks.

**Parks:** Thank you, my name is Allan Parks, I'm from Homer, Alaska.

I'm a commercial fisherman, I've been fishing since 1975.

I have a wife and two kids.

Fishing provides the food and the clothing and the shelter for my family.

I think through the course of my career in Kachemack Bay and Cooke Inlet I've seen the king crab disappear, I've seen the tanner crab disappear, the dungeness crab disappear, herring fishery doesn't take place there anymore, so these are a total collapse of these fisheries and have not returned to commercially viable levels and I think in my humble opinion there's two reasons why fisheries collapse.

One is that there's a lack of understanding of the species, the life cycle, the reproduction when management decisions are made.

So then the other is that there's a lack of political will to manage the fishery in a responsible way and one of the issues that is really important to me at this point is ocean acidification and global climate change.

I think that the solution to ocean acidification is fairly simple, it's to cut emissions and in my recommendation to you to take back to the administration is that we need an energy plan that reduces emissions to the scientific recommendations of the IPCC, and the timeline and that will be a start, a very good start on curbing ocean acidification that is happening at a rate that is faster than what has been predicted.

It's going to have effects that are going to be profound and lasting.

It's extremely important for the health of these fisheries, the salmon fisheries for one are going to be hit hard possibly with their impact to their food source from terra pods which is important for juvenile pink salmon.

So it's really important that you take back a message to the administration that we implement an energy policy that takes into account the scientific data.

I think the other important point I want to have you take home is that I do fish Bristol Bay.

Offshore oil and gas development in Bristol Bay is a bad idea.

You need to put that off the table, it's very important for the sustainability of that fishery.

So thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Parks.  
Earl Krygiev.

**Krygiev:** Good Afternoon.

My Name is Earl Krygiev, I come from Point Hope, Alaska.

I'm a member of native village of Point Hope.

Ocean policy is something we all can not understand, us natives from the villages.

We see that President Obama has established a Task Force that will open the doors for development in the ocean we love the most.

The ocean is our garden that keeps our lives going for thousands and thousands of years.

We don't want our ocean to be polluted.

We don't want our ocean to be developed.

We live a lifestyle with an animal that lives out in the ocean.

We're part of the ecosystem and you should understand that.

For the people that live in the coastal villages could you all please stand because this is ocean policy that will be impacting us.

I'm not only talking about the coastal villages, I'm talking about the commercial fishermen.

Please stand and let the people up there see who you are.

You can see there's a few of us.

There's a lot of people out in the coastal villages that will be impacted on your policy you'll be making.

If you have a chance, go out to the villages and see how important the ocean is for them, including the fishermen.

I had met with you Nancy, Madam Chair in Washington, DC a week on your job, thank you for coming to Alaska.

Our invitation was honored.

Something I don't like to explain and understand is this Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Our ocean in the Arctic is so precious we don't want no Exxon Valdez oil spill in my area.

Where was EPA, where was NOAA, where was Coast Guard, where was BIA when the Exxon Valdez oil spill happened?

We're still suffering in Point Hope of what happened with that Exxon Valdez oil spill.

You can see the species that are still missing, not coming to our community.

It puts tears in our eyes when we start thinking about Exxon Valdez oil spill and development being happening in our Chukchi and Beaufort and Bristol Bay.

Thank you again Madam Chair for honoring our request to come to Alaska.

And welcome aboard to our new man on BIA, we are tribal members.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Krygiev.

Stan Center.

**Center:** My name is Stan Center, I'm Executive Director of Audubon Alaska which is the Alaska state office for the National Audubon Society.

Thank you very much for coming today.

Audubon Alaska supports your efforts in shaping a national ocean policy.

We ask that your recommendations, specifically recognize and highlight the unique circumstances and situation we have in the Arctic Ocean.

Another core recommendation or another principle on which your recommendations should be based is that good science precedes decisions about development and other activities in the Arctic and elsewhere in the marine environment.

In 1976 I attended an international symposium on sea birds in the north Pacific Ocean and Nat Reed who was then Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior led off that symposium by saying that a book on the sea birds of the north Pacific read like a compendium of ignorance.

Now we've learned a lot since 1976 but that remark is yet not that far off target and this is particularly true when we look at the Arctic from Saint Lawrence Island north.

There is so much more we need to learn.

At Audubon we have spent 18 months compiling a series of maps depicting the biological and other resources of the Arctic.

One of the things that became quickly evident is how big the data gaps are and how many there are.

We have maps for which the most recent information comes from the 1970s and 80s and much of that was gathered in the outer continental shelf environmental assessment program which happened to pay my bills as a graduate student at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

It's simply unacceptable to have a data set for which some of the most recent data are 30 and 40 years old.

We need to understand natural change to say nothing of the change that's coming as a result of the changing climate.

We need baseline information to make wise decisions about if, when, where, and how to develop.

Lastly I would say we also need baseline information in the event that we have to evaluate the impacts of catastrophic spills and other events.

It's inevitable.

I spent many years working for the Exxon Valdez oil spill trustee council.

There wasn't a single day we didn't regret not having better baseline data and that was in Prince William Sound, a much better studied environment.

Thank you very much.

The cost of those science studies by the way is nominal in comparison to the billions of dollars at stake.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Center.  
Chris Oliver.

**Oliver:** I think I'm down to two and a half minutes.

Thank you Doctor Balsiger and members of the Task Force.

My name is Chris Oliver, I'm the Executive Director of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

I did have the opportunity a few weeks ago to speak with representatives of your task force on a teleconference with the other representatives from the regional councils across the country and the state marine fishery commissions and as with that it's challenging of course to speak to these kind of issues in a few minutes so I want to take just a minute to reiterate a basic theme that came out of our discussions and it's a perspective that I've heard a couple of times here today

from public testimony and from one of your panelists and it's a perspective that's shared by all eight of the nation's regional fishery management councils.

We recognized the desire, the need for a more comprehensive, broader ocean policy and we certainly believe that fisheries are going to be a critical component of that and we want to embrace that and be part of it.

We ask that as you approach this, we urge you to recognize the significant progress that's already been made and is currently underway by NOAA for one, and many other research and management entities and we urge you also to recognize and identify the successful processes that already exist and as perhaps an efficient step toward achieving your mission to look at coordinating and leveraging those existing processes and expertise and knowledge that exists and I'll use an example from our council's experience, relative to our fishery management plan and what we've done in terms of habitat closures, marine spatial planning and partnership with NOAA fisheries and while it was done with a more of a specific focus of course on fisheries and it wasn't necessarily done in a comprehensive long range plan, but rather over the years on an ad hoc basis the net result is we have over half of the area we manage half of the EEZ off Alaska is closed to fishing.

Either closed to fishing entirely or closed to bottom contact gear types and while we don't pretend that's the end all marine spatial planning approach obviously, I think it's a good example of what can be accomplished with existing processes.

We urge you to be very cautious about looking at the establishment of large new bureaucratic and regulatory processes as a way to approach this, and rather than establish those new type of bureaucratic processes that will dilute and divert resources, to look at leveraging existing processes including regulatory and non-regulatory, government and non-government as an efficient way to approach this issue that you have before us.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Oliver.  
David Bedford.

**Bedford:** Madam Chairman, members of the Task Force, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you.

I serve as a deputy commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and in that capacity I have various roles that underlie for me the kinds of complexities of the problems that you're confronting.

On the one hand I serve along with Chris Oliver and have in the past with James Balsiger on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

I also work on behalf of the Department of Fish and Game with the Alaska Board of Fisheries process.

I serve on behalf of the federal government as a commissioner on the United States section of the Pacific Salmon Commission which is charged with implementing salmon agreements between the United States and Canada.

I wanted to make comments in four different areas.

First off in terms of the process that's being utilized here.

I appreciate that this is a daunting task that you're undertaking and I want to echo one of Commissioners Hartig's comments that we really encourage you to seek as you're doing this appropriate ways to involve the 50 co-equal sovereigns, many of whom have jurisdictional

authorities over lands and waters that will be immediately implicated by the activities and the policies that you're currently undertaking and that for you to effectively implement a program will require a good cooperative enterprise with the states.

On marine spatial planning I think that the same element has to be taken into account.

Marine spatial planning from the perspective of someone involved in fisheries management, we look at this again as being a tremendously complicated regulatory enterprise which looks at all human uses in the marine environment and again in a very complex natural environment.

So when you look at the socio, political, and then also the scientific and environmental issues, this is again a very daunting undertaking.

The experience in other areas in trying to deal with marine spatial planning has suggested that fisheries poses one of the more challenging areas in to try to integrate into this sort of more comprehensive kind of planning process.

So on that I'd underscore what Chris was saying just prior to me that you can look towards existing regulatory bodies, existing processes and so on as being potential very important contributors to your enterprise.

One final comment.

There's been a number of comments about the efficacy of fisheries management in the north Pacific and then also in Alaska.

We have fishery management processes that are based on a number of premises that we view as being very important.

We have a science based process that places the resource first.

We look at a long term interpretation of what constitutes a benefit from the resource and from the marine environment.

And so we look again towards what is a long term sustained productivity.

But in doing that kind of management one of the strategies that we utilize is catch share programs and again to underlying comments that have been made by others we council certain caution in using that as a strategy, it's one that can have unintended consequences.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Bedford.

The last in this group will be Ray Metcalf and our fifth group will be Lakisha Harrison, Steven Tolfin, Karen Gillis, Shawna Larson, Rebecca Noblin and Beth Stewart.

So please Mr. Metcalf.

**Metcalf:** Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen thanks for the opportunity to speak.

Just before this started I laid a little brochure on everybody's desk up there and it had to do with FBI investigations and I'm sure that most of you probably have read about the FBI investigations that have rocked this state from our US Senator to include several state legislators and lobbyists lobbying those legislators, etceteras.

I was the whistleblower in much of those investigations and what I laid on your desk is something to bring to your attention that involves a lot more than just oil.

If you take a look at what I put on your desk there's an article written by a Washington reporter, he's a nationally known reporter, it probably appeared in hundreds of newspapers.

I don't know how many, but if you turn to the third page of what I laid on your desk you'll find a chart and that chart lays out an elaborate kick back scheme of millions of dollars of federal money.

These monies were appropriated and put under the control of our US Senators boy, Ben Stephens and he was handing it out to a group of processors and you can see right in that chart where they were handing money back to him and how much they were handing back to him and that's what's discussed in this FBI investigation that's on the cover of what you were looking at. If you go on back a little further you'll find that six months after I released this report and delivered it to the FBI, the FBI raided several fishing interests in Seattle and wanted to get a little more information on these issues and what these people were getting for their money. If you go on back, further back you'll see an article that was on the front page of the Daily News and this article was a huge article, one of the biggest articles to ever hit the front page of the Daily News, it was carried I believe in two newspapers, a Sunday and a Monday, two days in a row.

But what it outlined is how Ted Stephens had appropriated money to a corporation in the Aleutians who had prior thereto contracted with their son that if he ever got those appropriations delivered to them they would be further assigned to a corporation that his son sat on the board of, who when they got those rights further assigned it to a fishing coming that he owned part of. So when you're looking at this privatization of our fishing interests, keep in mind that the state of Alaska has a constitution that prohibits privatization of those interests that are inside the three mile limit.

If you privatize what's outside of it, it's going to clash and it's going to be in the hands of people who are desirous of exploiting it.

We here in Alaska are desirous of protecting our resources and we do a good job of that, don't privatize our resources please.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Metcalf.  
Lakisha Harrison.

**Harrison:** Thank you.

My name is Lakisha Harrison and I'm speaking on behalf of the American Petroleum Institute which represents nearly 400 members, companies involved in all aspects of the oil and natural gas industry.

The ocean's ecosystems are an integral and vital to the health and well being of the planet and the world economy and all sources of energy including oil and natural gas production will be needed to fuel economic growth.

The oil and natural gas industry has proven that offshore energy resources can be produced in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

Alaska is rich with crude and it produces 14% of the nation's entire domestic supply and you've already heard that Alaska's outer continental shelf is estimated to hold undiscovered, technically recoverable resources of approximately 26 billions barrels of oil and 132 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

API supports the development of a national ocean policy but we would be concerned about one that significantly increases bureaucracy, delays permitting processes or that zones off areas holding significant oil and natural gas.

The current MMS five year leasing program is an example of a system that already balances multiple uses of the ocean and can be used as a basis for implementing marine spatial planning without creating an entirely new policy structure.

The US should also examine marine spatial planning best practices developed by other countries.

Additionally it is important to recognize that any ocean policy or multiple use plan developed for US oceans should account for ecosystem, marine technology and industry changes over time. US ocean policy should utilize adaptive management that is based on the best available science at the time of policy and regulatory development and implementation.

Inadequate funding of current ocean research, surveying and monitoring have left gaps in necessary information for making informed resource management decisions in the existing regulatory system.

These gaps should be filled before new research is conducted and any new system of ocean policy should be well funded and staffed.

API encourages a transparent, well thought out, and systematic plan with trained agency staff and a public process.

It is important to engage all industries and stakeholders from the beginning including the oil and natural gas industry.

In summary the US oil and natural gas industry has a vested interest in the continued health and economic viability of the oceans.

API and its members fully support the development of a comprehensive national oceans policy that helps maintain the health and viability of the oceans while recognizing the substantial benefits that these offshore waters provide to us everyday.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Harrison.  
Steven Tolfin.

**Tolfin:** Mr. President and Task Force members, in order to protect the oceans you must protect the money, the economy.

I'm Steven Tolfin of the Ground Swell Fisheries Movement, a repeat whistleblower to the IRS Criminal Investigation Division about foreign controlled fishing corporations who use illegal accounting practices to launder profits across borders among their global affiliates.

These restricted business practices also eliminate competition and have cost us over 50 billion dollars since 1977 in the fisheries.

We still lose 2 billion dollars annually plus economic multiplier effects.

That would pay for a lot of good science.

Yet knowing this the North Pacific Council repeatedly gives coercive buying monopolies and quota allocations to those same foreign corporations.

It's no wonder fishermen don't receive an equitable ex vessel fish price.

A transfer price is one among related parties, affiliates across global borders when they allocate the revenues and expenses, like sending wholesale fish out of Bristol Bay at about a third of the price it should command.

The pebble mine developers will also practice aggressive transfer pricing to bleed tens of billions of dollars in profits outside the United States.

Leon Panetta emphasized a fish expo in 2002, this is an important topic, but there are people willing to spend 35 to 40 million dollars a year in Washington DC to beat you on this issue alone, so you will have to bang the drum louder.

In March President Obama promised to seriously address transfer pricing issues, but by May it was apparently backed out of his global tax recovery plan.

Why?

At a mutual and hedge fund meeting this April, the Milken Institute and consultants from the ill named Environmental Defense Fund outlined the tremendous opportunities for investors under a national catch shares regime.

I immediately notified the Securities and Exchange Commission that convicted felon Michael Milken was involved.

Their 1990 lifetime ban order still forbids Milken from “association with any broker dealer investment advisor, investment company or mutual securities dealer.”

What did you do?

Accordingly we are thoughtfully concerned about Doctor Lubchenco’s association with the involved environment NGO’s.

Is it this administration’s intent, they’ll become the new rulers of the company store, dominating share cropping fisherman?

Or are you truly here for best science and to represent the people?

We’d like to give you that chance.

In closing Chair Sutley, please assure us that the Obama Administration will use its power to stop abusive transfer pricing in Alaska’s ecologically interconnected fisheries, timber, oil and gas and mining industry for the sake of citizen taxpayers.

Welcome to occupied Alaska.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much.

Karen Gillis.

Karen leave?

Shawna Larson.

**Larson:** My name is Shawna Larson, I’m (inaudible) on my dad’s side from the village of Chikalun, and (inaudible) on my mom’s side from the village of Port Graham.

This is my daughter Saywa.

As a mother and a tribal citizen who is expected to pass on my cultural heritage I’m here today to ask you to protect the oceans that have sustained indigenous people since the beginning of time.

Indigenous peoples and our way of life depend upon healthy oceans and waters and we know the health of our oceans and waters are being threatened by many issues.

For example, we are seeing species that we have never seen before in our waters, the ocean temperatures are warming and impacting our salmon returns.

Global warming is accelerating ocean acidification.

The ice is melting and making it more dangerous for our hunters to go out to get our traditional foods which sustain our people and our culture.

The oceans are being over fished and poorly managed.

The ocean is full of toxic chemicals which work their way up the food chain to our most vulnerable populations causing things like lowered IQ’s, cancer and other health impacts.

The United States government agencies in charge of protecting the oceans have repeatedly broken treaties and promises.

Scientific uncertainty has been misused to carry out economic, cultural, and political exploitation of the ocean which we depend on.

Please note the following.

In 1992 the United States ratified the international covenant on civil and political rights.

Article 1 states “by no means may a people be deprived of their means of subsistence.” Disproportionate impacts to Alaskan native people which must be addressed by federal agencies under the environmental justice executive order, the federal government also has a legal trust responsibility to consult with tribes in matters that impact them as also stated in executive order 13175.

Tribes are not merely stakeholders but have a legal relationship with the federal government. A national oceans policy should work to increase the understanding and the protection of the marine environment, be developed based upon principles of an ecosystem based management and a precautionary approach, phase out a fossil fuel development and a moratorium on new fossil fuel developments on or near indigenous lands and territories.

Develop marine protected areas, respect tribes and indigenous people’s unique understanding and relationship with the ocean.

It’s interesting to think about the endangered species act when people work very hard to protect any animals that might be endangered, but in fact if devastation comes to the oceans, indigenous peoples will also be like endangered species except without the protections in place.

I hope you’ll work to prevent harm to protect our oceans and our culture.

Tribes have the right and obligation to protect our land, water, and future generations.

In order to accomplish this tribes must have a seat at the table.

I hope you will be able to put economics aside and allow your decision making process to be guided by the consideration of the welfare of not only my future generations to come, but also yours.

I don’t have a fancy study, I don’t have a fancy study to hand over to you, but my daughter and I brought you something maybe more important, fish that we’ve prepared to share with you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Larson.

It is 4:30 but I’ve conferred with the task force and they’ve agreed to stay one more hour.

So I still have a lot of cards left here yet, and I’m going to be even meaner when it gets to three minutes because we’re going to get through as many as we can.

[applause]

So next is Rebecca Noblin.

**Noblin:** Good afternoon.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak especially now that we’re running overtime and I hope we finish up soon and we can all get out and enjoy this beautiful day in Alaska.

I work for the Center of Biological Diversity here in Anchorage and on behalf of the Center of Biological Diversity and our members I’d like to focus on one particular issue and that’s ocean acidification.

I’d like the Task Force to make ocean acidification a high priority in your considerations.

Ocean acidification poses serious threats to the world’s marine wildlife and the fisheries and marine resources upon which America and Alaska in particular depend.

According to the national oceanic and atmospheric administration, the world’s oceans have become 30% more acidic since the industrial revolution.

The Arctic is acidifying more quickly than the rest of America’s oceans.

The resulting acidification is fundamentally changing our oceans, threatening to impact nearly all marine wildlife.

Nearly all species studied, including plankton, corals, shellfish and fish have shown an adverse reaction to all levels of ocean acidification that are predicted to come before the end of the century.

As ocean acidification progresses it could have consequences for Alaska's ocean ecosystems with impacts on marine life, coastal resources, the people and our economy.

As a scientific understanding of ocean acidification has developed, it's become very clear that this is a crucial issue to the future of our natural environment as well as our national food supply and economy.

It will take executive agencies, congress and states working together for solutions and responses to this problem.

Because of that I'd like the Oceans Policy Task Force to develop recommendations for protecting our oceans against further ocean acidification and some specific recommendations are to promote scientific research and monitoring of ocean acidification and its impacts on marine ecosystems.

Evaluate the impacts of ocean acidification for various targets of atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations, develop guidance on evaluating ocean acidification and environmental review documents for projects with significant carbon dioxide emissions under the national environmental policy act.

Promote approaches for addressing water quality problems associated with the ocean acidification under the clean water act.

Support rapid and deep reductions in carbon dioxide emissions under the clean air act and other climate legislation and finally strengthen protection of water quality against ocean acidification in ecologically sensitive protected marine areas and also expand protected areas.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Noblin.

Next is going to be Beth Stewart and then the next group of six will Vi Wahii, Shanda Mik, Gail Vick, Tara Sweeny, Thomas Tildey and Joe Gelthof.

I can't help but notice that Beth out of all the cards had the neatest handwriting of all 65 of them.

**Stewart:** we aim to please.

Members of the panel we'd like to thank you.

Oh, I'm testifying today on behalf of the Mayor of the Aleutians East Borough who couldn't be here because the Aleut Corporation is holding its own meetings today.

Mayor Mack is Mayor of the Aleutians East Borough which encompasses the communities of Akatan, Cove Bay, Falls Pass, King Cove, Nelson Lagoon and San Point.

All of these communities except Cove Bay are Alaskan native villages who have depended on marine resources in the Bering Sea and the western Gulf of Alaska since well before European discovery.

Our families rely on subsistence and commercial fisheries.

Today's communities within the borough reflect that dependence.

Many smaller villages coalesced around psalteries and canneries that were built in the late 1800s.

We have relied on sustainable fisheries and healthy oceans throughout the modern era.

In Alaska federal management has been a conservation success.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has recognized the importance of relying on good science to set catch limits and none of our stocks are over fished.

Recently NOAA entered into a cooperative research program with the local fishing vessel. This program has demonstrated that with today's technology using a local vessel to perform hydro acoustic surveys for Pollack is feasible.

Perhaps more importantly for fisherman, this program has developed a better understanding of the role surveys play in setting catch limits, and for the scientist has provided them with an opportunity to explore new areas.

We hope that NOAA will continue to see the value of cooperative research programs.

Involving local communities ensures that traditional local knowledge can play a vital role in managing our fisheries.

Such programs create opportunities for fisherman and scientists who work together in this process.

Alaska like other regions has unique circumstances that call for local expertise.

When designing any governance structure please keep in mind that one size does not fit all.

Any comprehensive national ocean policy needs to recognize the differences among regions and the differences within a single region.

Coastal fishing communities not only need to have a seat at the table when decisions are being made, but a voice within the agency on issues that will directly effect their survival.

Many times it seems to us as if the agency and the public see Alaska through the lens of the Deadliest Catch and other distant water industrial fisheries.

As ocean dependent communities we also face threats from the huge amount of ocean shipping traffic that pass by our communities.

For example the soy bean vessel wreck in Dutch Harbor.

We hope you will see the need to complete the ongoing risk assessment process and place response capabilities in this region.

Our community of Falls Pass is well suited as a staging site because it straddles the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea.

And we are submitting written comments so I'll stop there.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Stewart.

Vi Wahii.

**Wahii:** Thank you my name is Vi Wahii.

I am from Saint Lawrence Island, I'm a mother of four.

I'd like to welcome you on behalf of the first people of Alaska and thank you for coming to our beautiful state and giving us this opportunity to hear about our concerns.

Many times people miles away make decisions for us that affect us in our way of life without our participation at the table.

My people have lived traditional subsistence lifestyle for many generations with utmost respect to our environment, our lands and the wildlife that have sustained us.

We are connected to our lands, our environment and the wildlife traditionally, culturally, spiritually and also for our well being.

Our subsistent way of life is our identity.

I urge this Ocean Policy Task Force in your role to obtain immediate ocean policy to protect our people in the Arctic and in the northern hemisphere.

Our people live off the land and ocean.

One of our elders on the island compared the ocean to a farm.

I'd like to talk about the contaminants in our traditional foods.

The traditional foods we live off the land and ocean.

I work for Alaska Community Action on Toxics where we have been working with Savoonga and Gambell on Saint Lawrence Island with a community based participatory research project funded from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the contaminants in our traditional food study we have identified in our preliminary data show serious levels of concern. Saint Lawrence Island has had this four year grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to address contamination from two formerly used defense sites on our island, also from global transport of contaminants.

We've identified PCB's, pesticides, heavy metals from local sources like the military, and also from trespassing contaminants that come in from global transport.

We have high rates of cancers and other health effects never seen before.

I urge the Obama Administration to ratify the Stockholm Convention to eliminate toxic chemicals that are ending up in the Arctic that come in through air and ocean currents.

You've heard of climate change from a lot of my constituents, I'd like to mention however that villages that are falling into the ocean, like Shishmaref, in the lower 48 when natural disasters occur, impacted communities get immediate aid.

Whereas villages like Shishmaref have been trying to get help for a long time and I would just like to also leave with you persistent organic pollutants in the Arctic.

I was one of a few people that went to Geneva for the conference of the parties four, and I urge Obama Administration to ratify the Stockholm Convention because we're finding contaminants in our traditional foods.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much, please leave that material with us.  
Shanda Mik.

**Mik:** Hi, my name is Shanda Mik and I'm an Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks in the Department of Political Science.

I am providing input on behalf of myself, colleagues within the north by 2020 forum at the University of Alaska, and the Strengthening Institutions Project at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

We believe the following three components are essential to a robust ocean policy that fits the Alaskan context.

The first is democratic regional governance structures, the second is a policy framework that provides flexibility to manage in a temporally as well as a spatially variable setting, and third is improved policy linkages and communication channels between observation networks, multiple constituents and decision making processes.

On the first point, in Alaska comprehensive ocean policy reform will require democratic regional systems and I looked at HR21 bill recently and it seemed that the regional government systems that were proposed in that bill were on the right track though they do concentrate on the federal and the state levels and in Alaska as you've heard the tribal and the local government and the regional borough levels they all work best when they work together in a nested set of institutions that can react at different spatial and temporal scales.

So for instance, if there's a local community that needs to move a sleeping polar bear across the street because it's sleeping either on the sidewalk or in the middle of town, that local level

community is going to be best able to do that in a way that's sensitive both for the animal and for community safety.

The vision for governance should be to foster the resilience of the ocean to provide ecosystem services rather than managing each sector to sustain a particular level of resource extraction. This vision will shift governance from maintaining population sizes of animals to managing places, to reduce known hazards and vulnerabilities.

So in terms of managing for temporal and spatial variability, when designing a spatial management plan it's important to remember that ice cover as a significant element of seasonal and inter annual variation that requires thinking about how to account for temporal as well as spatial planning and my colleague Hiel Eiken can provide other comments on that.

His point was mainly that sea ice and ocean use up here involves driving things, putting things on the sea ice, using it as a platform, and those specific Alaskan components will be different and we need a framework that's more flexible than some parts of the lower 48 that won't use those types of ecosystem services.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Mik.  
Gail Vick.

**Vick:** Madam Chair and members of the council thank you very much.

I'm sorry, Task Force, I'm so used of speaking in front of the North Pacific Council.

But thank you very much for coming to Alaska, we hope that you come back, I think you're probably find out if you haven't been here before how big our state is and you're certainly hearing from a lot of the folks here about some of the vast problems that we have.

I'm Executive Director of the Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition, that's an organization of 45 communities in the Gulf of Alaska.

Our voting membership is boroughs, cities, tribal organizations, corporations.

One of the things that – we've got a long list of things of course that we'd like to discuss with you and we're going to be submitting written comments – but one of the things I'd like to leave you with is that Alaska more than any other state is not only affected by any federal decisions, we are, in some respects, very close to those decisions because we spend a lot of time with people in congress and with people in the federal government.

We very often find that decisions that are being made on one hand don't connect with decisions made on the other hand and we suffer because of it.

We would really like to see a more coordinated involvement in Alaskan issues and a more direct involvement.

The impacts of the decision making is so strong on this state that if you have a national policy that tries to be very inclusive in the entire country it will not fit Alaska and I think you've been hearing that today.

With that I want to leave you but thank you very much for listening to all of us.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Miss Vick.  
Tara Sweeny.

**Sweeny:** My name is Tara Sweeny, I am the Vice President of External Affairs for Arctic Sub Regional Corporation, an Alaskan native corporation.

We own and manage approximately five million acres of land on the North Slope and represent the business interests of our 10,000 Inupiat Eskimo shareholders.

And Inupiat our people are closely connected to the land and adjacent seas and our ancestors have walked, lived, and hunted across the tundra and on the Arctic Ocean over countless generations.

We still do.

As the United States determines new initiatives in ocean policy for the Arctic Ocean, our people want to help.

First there is a need for greater understanding.

Before new policy is developed regarding the Arctic marine environment, we believe that government should do all it can to understand it.

A greater understanding means more research, more research infrastructure, and more interaction with our local experts.

Second, look ahead.

Sometimes well intended protectionist efforts have unexpected consequences, like restrictions on the economic self determination of the coastal residents.

Third, avoid stereotypes.

A reduced perennial ice cover in the Arctic does not mean that the Arctic is ice free.

Our ocean still freezes every year, in fact it freezes far south into the Bering Sea.

Many outsiders neglect this fact and focus on the maximum ice cover retreat that annually occurs about this time of the year.

We are grateful that government agencies like the Coast Guard and NOAA are trying to understand our environment like the Inupiat do with careful observation before any unnecessary action.

Finally, the debate about OCS development is active across our region now.

Modern technology, vigilant local oversight, and good neighbor relationships with the operators seem to have forged a good result for onshore development.

In the case of onshore the stakes seem to be higher.

It is clear that we take on the majority of the risk.

We believe that we have a special right to a seat at the discussion table.

As coastal residents of the Arctic Ocean, we have the most at stake.

We believe our role can be recognized through a four pronged approach.

One, working with the industry to abdicate for the sharing of OCS revenues with nearby impacted communities.

It is necessary to provide direct impact aid to the effected communities outside of the state process.

Two, contracting and job training opportunities that are meaningful in scope and not fractured.

Three, an opportunity for equity participation by our people and the resources and facilities that are necessary to allow responsible development.

And four, mutual support of a North Slope Community Foundation that has the financial capacity to last beyond any development and continue to support cultural and non profit activities for the long term future.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Sweeny.

Thomas Tildey.

**Tildey:** Thank you very much for adding additional time so some other folks could testify, and welcome of course to Alaska.

I'm glad that you were able to feel Alaska by going to the colder region and then of course coming here where it's a little bit warmer.

I'm glad that you were awed by the sights of what you saw and the people that you saw.

I'm glad that you were able to hear the testimony of the people that live along the coast and live along the oceans, and I hope that you'll also take time to taste what we have here in Alaska and eat some of our salmon, eat some of our crab as well as some of our halibut and clams.

I know that research has been pointed out many times and I hope that in doing the research that you research how the Alaska natives contribute to the oceans and how much more we can contribute to the oceans.

I know that we contribute a lot of salmon in the Bristol Bay area and when you look at it medically you see that salmon oil has a lot of omega 3 in it and contributes a lot to medicine in America here.

We also know that crab is worth looking at because the crab out of this area has a tendency in one of the very few animals that will grow a leg back again and I think that would contribute greatly to science if we could find out a little bit more about the crab.

So research is very, very important.

When we take a look at some of the plants that have contributed medically to the Alaskan native people, there are many plants out there, the seaweed that plays a part in some of our medicine, so I hope that you will research what Alaska native people already know.

We hope that you will protect the Alaska native cultures, the Nupiak, the Yupiks, the Aleuts that live along the coast of Alaska here and I hope that you'll also ask them for their saints because they have saints that are very knowledgeable in a lot of the species, the migration of the whale, the migration of the salmon, the migration of the birds.

They can tell you some of the migration patterns that they already know about.

But it's going to take research and it's going to take asking and I hope that you will ask the people that live along the coast.

I hope that along the research that you'll be able to identify what contributes, why is the ecosystem so healthy out there?

Is it the eel grass that protects the salmon as they migrate down the coast?

Is it the spawning areas?

What makes Bristol Bay so rich?

Is it because of all the rivers that pour nutrients into the ocean there?

There are certain parts of the ocean that needs protection, and Bristol Bay is one of them, Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, we need to really take a look at that and how can we protect those and I hope that in addition this visit, come back again and I'm sure that more people will be able to testify.

Get more out into Alaska the next time you come.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Tildey.

Next will be Joe Geldhof and then the group of six following that will be Neil Rodriguez, Andrew Hartzig, Bruce Wright, Kelley Harrell, Karen Pletnicoff, and Whit Sheard.

Mr. Geldhof.

We may have gone too late, Neil Rodriguez.

**Rodriguez:** Thank you Madam Chairman, members of the Task Force.

My name is Neil Rodriguez and I'm here representing Coastal Villages Region Fund, CDQ Group.

Coastal Villages Region Fund is a community development quota group that represents 20 Alaskan communities and 9,000 Alaskan residents who reside along the coast of the Bering Sea and Nunivak Island.

Our 20 member villages include Scammon Bay, Kvichack, Hooper Bay, Nutauk, Tanoonack, Toksook Bay, Nightmute, Cheformack, Kipnuk, Kwigillinock, Quinhagak, Tuntutuliak, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville, Eek, Goodnews Bay and Platinum.

These communities are amongst the poorest in Alaska and the nation.

Our residents are first and foremost subsistence users of marine resources of the Bering Sea.

Throughout the region economic resources are severely limited and the health of the ocean is critical to the long term sustainability of our 20 communities.

A major glimpse of economic hope for our people has been the CDQ program and our investments in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands ground fisheries.

For the first time in history our residents have a stake in a large scale ground fisheries happening off our shores.

These investments provide jobs for our people, new in region economic development and a market for local salmon and halibut fleets, scholarships and training for our people and hundreds of employment opportunities at the plants within our communities.

The only economic development opportunities that currently exist in our region are directly related to commercial fishing both near shore and off shore in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands fisheries, Pollack, crab, cod.

In a region where jobs are scarce, commercial fishing brings much needed income to our poverty stricken communities.

The community development program began in December of 1992 with the goal of promoting fisheries related economic development in western Alaska.

Today CBRF now has 10.2 stake in the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Pollock fishery and it is this fishery that provides all the funding for all the community commercial fishing and economic development opportunities we provide in the region.

Without the CDQ program, without healthy oceans and healthy fisheries, both near shore and off shore, more than 100 of our region residents would lose the opportunity to work, fish, and provide for their families.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Rodriguez.

Andrew Hartzig.

**Hartzig:** Hi, my name is Andrew Hartzig, I work for the Ocean Conservancy here in Anchorage and Ocean Conservancy works to promote healthy and diverse ocean ecosystems.

First off I want to thank you all for staying and thank you for extending the time.

And then thank you for making ocean and coastal health a priority for the administration in working toward marine spatial planning and I wanted to let you know that we sincerely appreciate and support those efforts.

As you've gathered today Alaska is big and has many issues. I'm only going to focus on the Arctic right now. I hope that you've also heard today that the Arctic is different. Arctic communities rely on the sea for their subsistence way of life in a way that other communities in the lower 48 may not. It's got incredible wildlife, but it's also a very vulnerable ecosystem. Compared to other ocean areas there's relatively little development or industrialization in the Arctic and we also have relatively little scientific information, I think that was a pretty consistent message that more research is needed. At the same time the Arctic is facing warming and this incredible level of seasonal sea ice melt, there's ocean acidification and then as the sea ice melts, there's increased potential for industrialization in the Arctic. So I think between the lack of scientific knowledge and the incredibly rapid pace of change, it really does argue for a precautionary approach in the Arctic and a great and timely example of that is the recent approval of the Arctic Fishery Management Plan so we want to thank the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA, thank you Doctor Lubchenco for your work in passing that and getting that approved. That's going to stop potentially harmful commercial fishing in the Arctic at least until we gather more information and know more about the ecosystem. The Task Force work on a national ocean policy and marine spatial planning is another step in the right direction and it has great potential, but we're worried that other government agencies have the potential to undermine the work of the Task Force. For example the Department of Interior is poised to make a series of important decisions that could allow an onslaught of oil and gas activities in the Arctic and that's before we conduct adequate science or planning and it's going to take a significant course correction to prevent this and I hope that the Task Force members will take that message back to Washington with them. I think the bottom line is that we still have the chance to do the right thing and to do it right in the Arctic and I hope the Task Force will do everything it can to ensure that we don't squander that opportunity. Thanks.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Hartzig.  
Bruce Wright.  
Bruce will provide written comments.  
Thank you to Bruce Wright.  
Kelly Harrell.

**Kelly:** Hello distinguished members of the Task Force, thank you for being here in Anchorage today. My name is Kelly Harrell and I'm testifying on behalf of the Friends of Bristol Bay. I would like to provide you with a poignant example not only of the imperative to effectively implement a national ocean policy that prioritizes ecosystem health and to reform ocean governance from the ground up, but also the need to use tools that the administration currently has at its disposal to protect some of our most important ocean resources. Bristol Bay and the southeast Bering Sea waters of Alaska are like no other on earth.

The region which encompasses the large, shallow, and incredibly productive Bering Sea shelf supports the most productive and valuable fisheries resources in our nation, providing more than 40% of the domestic sea food harvest and valued at more than 2 billion dollars annually. Included amongst the regions fisheries are the largest runs of wild salmon in the world. Native villages in the region continue to rely on subsistence harvest of salmon and the region's fisheries are the backbone of local economies. However, Bristol Bay currently faces tremendous threats from large scale industrial development proposals.

At the headwaters of Bristol Bay plans are being laid on state land to develop potentially the world's largest gold and copper mine known as the pebble mine.

On Federal lands, home to fresh water lakes and streams that provide vital habitat for Bristol Bay's sockeye salmon and drain into marine waters, the Bureau of Land Management is poised to open up over a million acres to mining.

At the southern end of Bristol Bay in a 5.6 million acre block of rich marine waters, off shore oil and gas lease sales are proposed for 2011 and 2014.

The proposed drilling area, an envisioned oil and gas transportation infrastructure directly overlap vital habitat and fishing grounds not only for salmon, but for Pollack, cod, red king crab, herring, flat fish, and pacific halibut.

These fisheries represent renewable resources that are the backbone of Alaska and the nation's fisheries economy and provide tens of thousands of related fishing jobs.

But how are we deciding the fate of Bristol Bay and the many species, communities, economies and cultures that rely on it?

We're entrusting the State Department of Natural Resources, the Bureau of Land Management and the Minerals Management Service who all have directives that prioritize mineral and oil and gas development to make these decisions.

While MMS, BLM, and DNR are all required to consider other uses such as fisheries, their decision making frameworks remain largely sectoral and singularly focused.

To highlight that point, the National Marine Fishery Service recommended deletion of Bristol Bay from the nation's five year OCS leasing program but MMS did not heed that advice and has moved forward in violation of the very agency who was charged with the protection of our living marine resources.

I urge you that outside of the failure to address climate change and ocean acidification one of the single biggest failures that we can make with regards to ocean policy is failing to protect the world class resources that we have in Bristol Bay.

There are a number of things the administration can do but at the top of that list I would urge the Department of the Interior to remove Bristol Bay from current and future leasing programs.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Harrell.

Appreciate the comments.

Karen Pletnikoff.

**Pletnikoff:** Doctor Lubchenco, Doctor Balsiger and Task Force members I appreciate the gift of your time so thank you for this opportunity.

I'm Karen Pletnikoff with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

Our native non profit provides essential services and advocacy for the Aleut People.

Our history and future are entirely dependent on the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

Our primary economic drivers are fisheries, many of which are struggling to support us despite some of the most conservative and proactive management on earth.

We're being crushed by ever increasing fossil fuel costs, despite working as quickly as possible to implement renewable energy projects.

Our approach to ocean policy needs to help us find new clean resources that don't imperil our ocean's delicate chemical balance.

Latest models continue to predict Arctic Sea reductions that retard Bering Sea ice development, ice that is essential to primary production species success, community protection from powerful winter storms.

Half of our villages won't survive a three meter increase in sea level including North America's oldest continually inhabited community Nakulski, all respect to Point Hope.

But we're not waiting for somebody else to solve this for us, we're actively involved in research, particularly community based monitoring so that we can better understand and adapt to these changes.

Some of our efforts include search, best, the Bering Sea sub network, our own research initiatives on traditional foods contamination, ocean oil monitoring, paralytic shell fish poisoning and other harmful algae blooms.

But what about the across the board declines of charismatic mega fauna like the Stellar Sea Lion, the North Pacific Wright Whale, Walrus, Sea Otter and the Northern Fur Seal.

We will have failed if it takes an extinction before we scrutinize the impacts of fisheries that damage habitat the extraordinary growth of innocent passage and potential offshore development, not to admit the specter of ocean acidification.

The northern fur seal hasn't been this bad off since we were still shooting females at sea.

The need for additional research coupled with innovative regulation is clear.

The treaty of the sea is one place to start.

The Coast Guard is chronically under funded despite all the lives they save and the magnitude of their enforcement responsibility.

The scientific community knows how much more work there is to do and are ready to proceed.

Our region and villages across Alaska are ready to work with you to protect America's largest fisheries.

So include us in your development of ocean policy.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Miss Pletnikoff.

Whit Sheard will be next and then the next group of six will be Monica Riedel, Terry Haines, John Oswald, George Edwardson, Peter VanTyne and Tim O'hern.

Whit please.

**Sheard:** Thank you Doctor Balsiger.

My name is Whit Sheard, I'm the Alaska Program Director for Pacific Environment.

Previously I served as the North Pacific Fish Management Program Director for the ocean conservancy.

I've had the good fortune the last ten years to travel to a lot of remote communities in Alaska and meet a lot of folks that live in these communities and I've been extremely humbled and awed by the powerful storehouse of knowledge that these communities, some of these communities having existed longer on this continent than any other communities.

The dark cloud around that silvery lining for me has been that last four or five years and the plans by the Minerals Management Service to develop Alaska's outer continental shelf. These plans were met with resounding "no's" from the communities who said, "too much, too soon, too fast" communities that said we're already facing the impacts from climate change, and communities that have already faced onshore development pushing up against their resources on one side.

In many ways it's almost as if we're seeing manifest destiny now coming to its logical conclusion.

We've pushed all the way up with onshore development, now we're going to squeeze in from the Arctic Ocean down.

Very troubling policies and very troubling the way the Minerals Management Service went about implementing these policies.

The reason I bring this up is I think it's a perfect example of what's wrong with ocean policy.

There is no inner agency coordination and in the Arctic Ocean for example the Minerals Management Service has simply asserted primacy in terms of who's in charge and in doing so they have unilaterally zoned almost the entire Arctic Ocean for off shore oil and gas development and they've done this over other federal responsibility such as the trust responsibility to protect the subsistence traditions of these cultures.

Sadly the environmental analysis shows that one of these traditional communities will lose their subsistence resources.

Many of these communities, this is half of their food and as you've heard I think quite distinctly this is also the heart of the tradition and in my belief this should be treated as a national treasure, not merely an impediment to development of oil and gas and an increase in our addition to fossil fuels.

Sadly also we've seen a lack of commitment to environmental justice, the last eight years the Bush Administration simply ignored the communities and went forward with many plans that will have a disproportionate impact on minority and low income communities, again I'd say no where is this more prevalent in the country than in the plans to develop the Arctic Ocean.

On marine spatial planning, we have no marine sanctuaries, we have a couple postage stamp marine reserves.

I would suggest that Doctor Lubchenco's research be presented to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council who didn't follow through on much of it last time when we submitted it. In closing I have five quick recommendations.

The first is that the Arctic Ocean should be a case study for all that's wrong with national ocean policy and a failure for agencies to coordinate.

Number two, marine spatial planning should include marine reserves, marine sanctuaries.

Number three there should be substantive environmental justice standards.

Number four there should affirm the public trust standards, there is a level of mismanagement below which the government can not go.

Again, I think the Arctic Ocean is the perfect example, and finally affirm the federal Indian trust responsibility and a firm tribal sovereignty.

Make no mistake, Alaska is largely a resource colony and there is a profound role the federal government must play in working with indigenous communities to protect cultural traditions.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Sheard.

Monica Riedel.

**Riedel:** Thank you Doctor Balsiger, Doctor Lubchenco and distinguished panel members. My name is Monica Riedel and I am the Executive Director of the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission.

Thank you for this opportunity to allow me to provide my comments today.

I'd like to introduce my niece Jasmine Clock who attended four of the cultural spirit camps that I was part of this summer and I will talk about that in a minute.

I'd like to encourage this Task Force to number one, honor existing co-management agreements between Alaskan native organizations and the federal agencies of the Department of Commerce and Department of Interior, and two, support section 119 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act by fully funding the research priorities identified through the co-management process which includes tribal consultation.

Three, support science and spirit camps which are developing curriculum that will allow high school and college credit to students participating in these culture camps.

The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission partners with scientists who teach scientific protocols and the collection of tissue samples from subsistence caught seals during these camps. Through these outdoor classrooms we can impact students to conserve our marine and cultural resources.

We can encourage stewardship and we can practice a century's old way of life that includes sharing and non wasteful take.

These camps encourage direct participation by Alaska natives in to research.

By collecting biological samples and attending meetings to design research projects, they have an opportunity to contribute their unique traditional knowledge to finding solutions to the challenges that we will all be facing regarding our oceans.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Monica.

Terry Haines.

**Haines:** Thank you.

My name is Terry Haines, and I'm a Kodiak commercial deck hand, I also serve on the Kodiak City Council, I'm here speaking for Fish Heads which is an advocacy group for coastal communities.

I'd like to address catch shares as a fisheries management tool specifically.

I know Doctor Lubchenco has been personally involved and very intimately in helping to shape catch shares and I also know that the administration is now very much in favor of in general in using catch shares as a management tool.

I'm here to tell you; don't.

It might work, but the prototype that's on the table now doesn't.

It doesn't work well and right now you're getting ready to put a deeply flawed prototype into mass production.

Right now over in Massachusetts fear and desperation is forcing and compelling those folks to form into those sectors and then the council is going to then privatize the fishery and give the fish to those people in those sectors forever.

The idea that you would privatize those fish just to try to save the stocks is really, really badly flawed logic.

It reminds me of something that Joe said when he was doing his comments, he said that the fish were always first and that reminded me of a cartoon that came out a long time ago in which there's a crocodile standing in front of a lectern with the little half glasses and he's shuffling through his papers and around the table are all these different crocodiles and he's saying to them, "of course our primary concern is the resource."

When you privatize these fisheries you make fishermen into crocodiles.

What we've seen up here and the lessons that should have been learned from crab rationization and other experiments that we've had up here, which have been experiments, or supposed to be experiments, have not been learned, they've not been written down and they've not been used to reshape these catch share systems.

We're using the same exact prototype that has worked so poorly for us here in Alaska.

These catch shares might be good for the stocks, they are definitely good for certain corporations, but they are a death mill for our coastal communities.

They mean a loss of opportunity, and I think it's very important to point out that fishermen are independent contractors.

Every single one is a business.

So what you're doing is the federal government is allowing an SEC like body that's completely dominated by industry to write its own rules and those rules that they write are of course to their own advantage.

When it comes down to it the basic argument for catch shares is that we can't stand up to industry.

Regulators can't stand up to industry.

That, to me, is such an awful thing to admit and when you empower these sectors and these corporations and these people and when they have consolidated and have even more money and more power, how long are we going to stand up to them then.

In conclusion, I know my time is up, please come to Kodiak, please visit coastal communities.

Send anyone, send your aid, send the parking lot attendant in your building.

If you want to shape fisheries policy you've got to come to Kodiak.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Haines.

John Oswald.

**Oswald:** Thank you for the opportunity to present some comments.

I have written about seven pages, two in text and some graphics.

A couple of speakers have touched on this today.

I'd like to talk about some data gaps that is something that primarily NOAA is responsible for, but the Coast Guard industry and everybody in this room needs, and that is charts.

Anyway, my name is John Oswald, I'm President of a small company here in Anchorage.

Formerly I've been involved in surveying and mapping, charting all my life.

I'm a registered surveyor in this state.

I've been doing this for about 36 years, the charting stuff in Alaska, in the United States and in the third world.

I'd like to just point out that we do have a very robust ocean industry in Alaska which consists of the University of Alaska, non-profits such as Molly's group, the Alaska Ocean Observing System federal and state agencies and the private sector which I'm somewhat representing now. Many reports have been written about this charting and data gaps in this state by NOAA and others and I think enough reports have been made and we need to do some action here. Recently, like the last 10 years NOAA has made some major advancements here in this state. The NOAA ship Fairweather was rehabilitated, 18 million dollars approximately, it's based in Ketchikan.

It primarily works in Alaska.

The NOAA ship Rainier, another 225 foot vessel is I think scheduled for major upgrades with stimulus funds and others that works in Alaska quite a bit.

The water level system, nobody's really mentioned water level here, but sea level rise is in every newspaper in the nation and that system that measures that, NOAA is the primary agency for this in the country, has been increased by 50% in the last five or six years here in Alaska.

Current meter observations, the new current meter program happened in Alaska at NOAA recently.

NOAA is using contractors and others to help fill these data gaps.

I'd like to point out one thing that NOAA or the President actually submitted a budget to congress in May for next fiscal year and NOAA reported on their goals.

Thirty-one major goal areas in a 4 billion dollar budget.

The only goal that NOAA did not meet was hydrographic surveying.

So I would ask Doctor Lubchenco to submit an adequate budget to the administration next year.

Thank you for letting me speak here.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Oswald.

George Edwardson.

**Edwardson:** I came here to speak to you, I don't have a prepared speech but to just look at you and talk to you.

I'm the Vice President of Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope.

We're a regional cardinal government, our jurisdiction is north of the Arctic Circle, 90,000 square miles.

We are the residents of the Arctic Ocean and when you look at us 84 out of every 100 within this region is family.

When you look to the Canadian side in the northwest territory, two out of every three is our family.

Look at the northwest region, three out of every four is our family.

From Nome down to the Uniclete, two out to every three is our family.

We are one family that lives on the Arctic Ocean.

We might have been subdivided by the federal government but we are one family.

We have lived on this ocean ever since it was a freshwater lake.

Our oldest community Point Hope existed before Siberia and the United States fell apart.

We are home, this is our home.

We have lived here through, this is our 7<sup>th</sup> ice age we're coming out of as a people.

And in this moment the Arctic Ocean is in its most critical danger it has ever had.

As a human specie we have learned to destroy it and the direction our government is going is going to destroy it.

When Prudhoe Bay was developed there was no baseline done.

It has been pumping for almost 50 years and it still has no baseline, it can't make one because the animals have died in that region and under all the environmental regulations put down by the United States a baseline has to be made.

When we look at the lease sale 193 there was no baseline.

This is a serious matter.

When you look at oceans between Siberia and the United States, that is the nursery for the salmon stock that Bristol Bay fishes.

Your fish grows in this water and if you destroy this nursery you will destroy the last third of the world's commercial fish and at the same time you will starve me to death.

That's just one of the big dangers we're having.

Another is the pollution coming out of red dog.

The salmon stock is being affected by it but nobody is bringing it out or doing anything about it.

The state of Alaska court system recommended that the contractor build a 30 inch pipeline 30 miles out into the ocean to dump their ground water out of there.

**Balsiger:** Mr. Edwardson, this is very powerful testimony I urge you to try to get it in writing and submit it, but we have run out of time.

**Edwardson:** Okay, I came from there to come to talk to them, so I didn't put it in writing.

I came to talk to you and as far as I'm concerned this is a government to government confrontation.

I am a federally recognized government just like you are, and we need to continue this statement.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Edwardson.

Peter VanTyne.

**VanTyne:** Always tough to follow George.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk with you, my name is Peter VanTyne, I'm a conservationist and environmental attorney based here in Anchorage.

I'd like to make four points today.

The first is from the big picture perspective, what the United States really needs is an ocean ethic.

It's long overdue, we've had one, it's defined one of the core principles of the United States for terrestrial lands for a long time.

The United States is the envy of the world in that respect, other countries have followed the United States' lead in that respect.

We can do the same with the ocean.

Protect, restore, and maintain our ocean waters is a critical ethic for the United States to have along with the recognition that you've heard from many people here today that people on the coasts are part of those ocean ecosystems and that's another critical component I think you'll take home with you from Alaska.

I think the second point is that Alaska and the waters off Alaska is an excellent place to start when you apply this ethic.

You can show how it can work both to protect the environment and support coastal communities and sustainable economies.

We've got global warming with its disproportionate impacts in the Arctic.

We've got development pressure whether from commercial fishing, from increased shipping, or oil and gas.

If we can make this ethic work here, you can make it work elsewhere as well and we've got Americans that are at risk in very fundamental ways both in terms of our Alaska native communities and our sustainable and large economies.

Number three, time is of the essence.

We've done some things right in the Arctic, the Arctic FMP which was just approved yesterday and thank you very much Doctor Balsiger and Doctor Lubchenco, that's a phenomenal decision. We've also done some things wrong, despite a universal acknowledgement that you've heard here today and throughout your Alaska trip of gaps and baseline data and an inability to clean up oil spills in the Arctic environment, we rushed through a lease sale in the Chukchi Sea.

This is wrong.

This is the exact opposite of the precautionary principle.

An ocean ethic requires that precautionary principle.

We've shown how we can do it right with the Arctic FMP and we've shown how we can do it wrong with the Chukchi Sea lease sale.

The thing for you folks to do with your ocean policy and applying it in the Arctic is to stop, think, and then make decisions and if you do that I think that common sense will lead you to the right conclusion.

Finally in addition to working with people in the North Pacific and in the Arctic, I work with people in the western Pacific, when I ask them their opinion about national ocean policy and what input they provide to you people, the one word that I heard which was unfortunate was that they felt disenfranchised that no hearing was going to occur in the western Pacific.

I know that you folks don't intend that, I know that you folks don't want people to feel that, I encourage you to spend a little time in the fall perhaps in the western Pacific to hear their concerns as well.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. VanTyne.

Tim Mahearn will be next, I'm going to have two more for the final group, although I haven't talked to the panel, but it will get us to 5:30, so Tim will be followed then by Mead Treadwell and Margaret Williams.

So please Tim.

**Mahearn:** Hello my name is Tim Mahearn and unlike many people here and I was not born in Alaska and I haven't lived in Alaska all my life.

However, I ran a dive shop in Western Pacific in Japan, I ran one of the safest diving operations in Japan, although I'm an American citizen and I lost my business because a Japanese farmer forgot to screw down his little well thing that blocked off the water and what that did was all the insecticides and all the things in his field went into the reef that my dive shop used to use and 35 species of coral gone in about 8 hours.

That was it, so I went into environment affairs in United Nations and coincidentally I worked mostly with CITES Convention, international trade of endangered species and this is why I want to speak with you guys.

The most frustrating thing working in the United Nations in environmental affairs is the lack of enforcement.

I've seen time and time again seen country after country after country struggle to get one inch of progress perhaps to protect one species like Australia worked to protect the great white shark for over eight years before they got it on the agenda.

Well where's the enforcement?

The answer is basically the US Coast Guard, or perhaps the Japanese version of the US Coast Guard gets a whistle, and people misbehave, companies misbehave, someone comes out and blows the whistle and that's pretty much enforcement.

So I guess I'd like to ask the President of the United States this question in reference to drilling because I've seen time and time again, I have over 5000 hours underwater around the world, I think there's maybe two or three seas I haven't been underwater in, and this would be my question to the President.

If he were to return to his office on Monday and find that his desk had been removed and that that beautiful blue carpet with that beautiful seal was now down in the gym where they're using weights and the picture of Thomas Jefferson was removed off the wall and George Washington was gone, and the reason why was because they discovered oil under the White House and we had to drill baby drill.

I just wonder how he would feel about that.

He could no longer do his business there because, well they were having meetings down at Starbucks, secret service would be there, and that's the way a lot of people in Alaska live, and I just wanted to say that, thank you very much for coming.

Truth is if you touch it, it will never be the same, even watching it changes it.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mr. Mahearn.

Mead Treadwell.

**Treadwell:** Thank you.

Jim and I just want to say to the panel, first off I know enough about your jobs to know that to get you to sit in a room for five hours to listen to a group like this is very, very rare and thank you so much for being here.

I hope when you get back to Washington that there are a couple of meetings that you call that don't need to take anywhere near as long.

Three of the members of the panel sit on an interagency Arctic research policy committee and that committee is the one that is supposed to bring together an integrated Arctic research plan and I think from what you have heard today we have the makings of a good plan.

We know we need an Arctic observing network.

We know we need to do the ocean acidification work, we know we need to follow up the fisheries management plan in the Arctic with good baseline studies for that.

We know because you're going to Copenhagen in December to look at climate change that the big wild cards in climate change are the loss of the albedo and the methane release that you may have there and we need to have good science to back that up.

So when you get back to Washington if you could have one of those committee meetings I think we could get a very good active Arctic research plan to follow up the needs that you've talked about.

Another committee that all of your agencies sit on is an interagency oil spill research coordinating committee and that's one that congress set up after Exxon Valdez in 1989 and said let's have an oil spill research plan for the country.

To the best of our knowledge we haven't been able to find that that committee has met recently but there is money available and I think we could develop a very good oil spill research plan that would at least begin to address the questions that may happen here because of changes in shipping and oil development and so forth.

This is not a closed ocean, whatever the Russians do may affect us and so forth.

So that group I think would be very important to have.

I don't know what committee to suggest get around to a decision that we've had a national academy study done now, we've had an interagency committee on Arctic policy, but somehow we have to decide to give the Coast Guard the icebreakers that they need to do their job in this newly accessible ocean and Chairman Sutley I hope that there's some way that you could broker that decision to move that forward, it's a very, very important decision.

And then finally a much harder meeting to have, but one that is very important is you know the joke on Saturday Night Live is you can see Russia from here.

Well, the fact is that we share these oceans with the Russians and we still have a big set of challenges there.

We should go ahead and ratify law of the sea but we can't get access.

Eleven of the last 13 attempts of the State Department has told me for access into Russian waters, we haven't been able to get.

We have the polar bear treaty that we need to make work, we have to get a number of other things, and last but not least, I'm very interested in oceans because I enjoy them as a boater in Prince William Sound and so forth.

When my wife died she said, you know one thing that I hope you can do in my memory is get these kids down to the sea life center that we worked very hard to build and that sea train that Ian Dutton talked about which has taken 10,000 5<sup>th</sup> graders down there.

We are in a coastal community right now where a lot of kids don't even know they live on the ocean and I really just want to underscore the ocean literacy part of making your ocean policy successful.

**Balsiger:** Thank you Mead.

So Margaret is going to be next, the Task Force has consented to finishing up this list in sort of a speed dating mode so even though there's 8 left we're going to give a minute and a half to everyone just so they could say their top things.

That will include Trish Rolfe, Harold Shepherd, Victoria Hieksteer, Norman Van Victor, Patricia Olfeen, Henry Huntington, Sharon Lowe, and Chris Keens.

We're going to do that group very fast.

So Margaret now in the last of the traditional style.

**Williams:** Thank you very much I'm Margaret Williams of the World Wildlife Fund and I represent our international Bering Sea and Arctic program.

We appreciate your visit and your collective leadership and collaboration on behalf of our nation's oceans.

I think if there's any one take home message from today's hearing, it's the uniqueness of Alaska, the uniqueness of our oceans and coastlines, of the relative intactness of our marine ecosystems, of the remarkable cultural diversity in our coastal communities and its very unique in that we do have an opportunity in the Arctic in particular to get things right before there is increased off shore oil and gas development and increased shipping and perhaps some conflict over maritime boundaries as nations clamor to claim their extended continental shelf.

To do this we believe one priority is to address the uniqueness of Alaska's oceans, we believe that one priority is for the Task Force to recommend the development of a comprehensive management plan and that's been described and recommended earlier so I won't go into that in detail.

We don't have time anyway.

But while a set of solutions must be considered holistically we believe that in the very near term there are tools that are available immediately to secure our marine resources.

Those include independent compulsory marine pilotage, beyond Alaska State waters.

The identification and designation of particularly sensitive sea areas, for areas such as the Bering State and Unimak Pass where there is extensive marine traffic and little oil spill response capacity right now, and continuation of the Coast Guard's Arctic Domain Awareness Program.

We're very pleased with the great attention toward the Arctic, however it's important to remember that the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea and waters surrounding the Aleutian Islands and equally remarkable in their abundance and importance for the holistic ecosystem management we hope the Task Force will implement.

We've heard about many recommendations and actions which are being considered today for Alaska's oceans and of course a big question will be how to fund them.

One important funding mechanism is the oil spill liability trust fund which funds response and restoration activities after an oil spill in our nation's waterways.

That fund is going to sunset in 2014 and while it may seem a long way away it is important to work on extending that fund source and also we need policy leaders to look at that fund source to ensure that it can be used proactively not reactively to fund activities for marine conservation.

So I'll end there, thank you again for your patience and glad to have you in Alaska.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much Margaret.

Now very quickly, so try to make your big points first.

Trish Rolf.

Trish is gone.

Herald Shepherd.

**Shepherd:** Thank you to the Task Force for extending this time rather briefly as it may be.

My name is Harold Shepherd, I'm the Executive Director for the Center for Water Advocacy.

We have projects throughout the west in addition to the representing tribal members who are members of our organization in the coastal states of Oregon, Washington, Alaska and Hawaii and we've heard an awful lot of discussion this afternoon about the tremendous impacts that have been taking place on depletion of the ocean and habitats and also in addition we would like to emphasize the native cultures that have been here for time and memorial.

We would suggest that this Task Force charter has an opportunity to give back to some of those communities and lessen some of the stresses that they are facing through by involving them in this process and the biggest problem against that is that the states do not recognize tribes, also the coastal zone management act alarmingly does not include consultation in tribes.

There are many tribes in Alaska that have watershed management plans, have developed water cods, have jurisdiction that look at the resource in a holistic manner and those jurisdictions we would suggest could be used by the Task Force to protect species and strengthen tribal sovereignty.

Thank you.

**Balsiger:** Thank you very much for being brief.

Victoria Hikes Steer.

Norman Van Vector.

Patricia Ofeen

Henry Huntington

Sharon Loew

Chris Krenz.

Chris you can have like three minutes.

**Krenz:** For the record my name is Chris Krenz, I'm the Arctic Project Manager for Oceana, international non-profit ocean conservation organization.

Thank you very much for coming to Alaska, for coming to Anchorage, for opening your work here.

We also thank you very much for your leadership and for recognizing the importance of protecting, maintaining, and restoring the health of our oceans, coasts, and great lakes ecosystems.

I will be quick.

I will echo a lot of what people have said, that's one of the advantages of going last.

I'm going to focus on policy recommendations for the Arctic Ocean.

A lot of people very eloquently, much more eloquently than I can, spoke about the importance of the Arctic marine ecosystem to their lives and to the climate system and to the animals that live there.

People also highlighted that the Arctic is warming extremely fast and ocean acidification is likely to come to the Arctic before other regions.

Those things as well as industrial development are coming to the region and those are imminent threats and immediate action is necessary to avert serious consequences.

The inner agency ocean policy task force should recognize and highlight the unique circumstances in the Arctic Ocean and give the region a special focus.

The Task Force should recommend that the administration and congress do three things.

One, conduct or require the scientific research necessary to make informed decisions in the Arctic Ocean including the development and implementation of a comprehensive Arctic Ocean Plan.

Two, should establish a coordinated management structure for the Arctic to lead development and implementation of a comprehensive Arctic Ocean plan that ensures industrial activities will not harm the health of marine ecosystems or opportunities for the subsistence way of life and three, defer offshore industrial activities in the Arctic until such a plan is in place.

I'd like to thank you very much for your work in finalizing the Arctic Fishery Management Plan Doctor Balsiger and Doctor Lubchenco.

The Arctic FMP really is a model, it's a pathway to sustainable living.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries really recognize that science is lacking in the region and that that science is needed to be completed before a real plan is put in place but a plan is really needed before fishing activities occur and until that plan is in place the region should be closed to fishing.

On the one hand the administration is putting forth the Arctic FMP, on the other hand there's concerns that the administration is leaping without really looking on oil and gas issues.

This region really needs a time out and inner agency focus for making sure that we manage the Arctic sustainably into the future.

Thank you very much.

**Balsiger:** Thanks Chris.

That concludes everyone that wanted to talk and it's too late probably because everyone is gone, but let's give the Task Force a hand.

[applause]

**Sutley:** Just before everyone runs out the door, thank you very much for coming and those who were here before but I just wanted to recognize a couple people.

Amy Holman the NOAA Alaska Regional Coordinator and Molly McCammon from the Alaska Ocean Observing System, have put a lot of this meeting together.

All the folks from the agencies who helped staff this and Jim Balsiger who did a great job of running the public comment so thank you all very much.

This concludes our hearing.

End.