



Charles Okakok
<cokakok@hotmail.com>
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To R10OCSAirPermits@EPA
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Subject shell permit

My name is Charles Aanalliaq Okakok. I was born and raised in Barrow, Alaska. I remember the day Alaska became a State and I was only 12 years old. I have spent all of my life here in Barrow. I am a hunter and do respect nature and am a steward of this northland. I went to Wrangell, Alaska for my eighth grade year and the next four years at Mt. Edgecumbe where I graduated. After I graduated I was drafted into the U.S. military where I spent four years as an aviation electronics technician in the U.S. Navy. I was awarded an honorable discharge for my service during the Viet Nam War. I can proudly say I served my Mother country and protected the freedoms accorded all Americans.

Today our nation has a most important challenge facing us, and as the northernmost indigenous peoples where this permit is being applied for, has implications the threat to us as indigenous peoples of the North. This is a challenge to act against our pristine climate, which is exasperated by the global climate change. The act is to protect our environment which we should embrace to create a better world for us and our children and their children. This challenge is being exasperated by the oil companies wanting to drill and produce in our fragile waters which will probably harm our ecosystem as we have known it. The harm will be in our "garden", in the bethnic communities on the arctic ocean floor. This, in the long run will harm the marine mammals we live on, which depend on the communities of marine mullusks and corals.

I have been fortunate to see the difference in the waters south of Kotzebue and our Arctic Ocean. I traveled from Dutch Harbor to Prudhoe Bay in 2008. Starting from Dutch Harbor I saw murky green waters with debris of plastics and occasional pallets. This was observed by myself and it went on all the way up to Nome, Alaska. When we went past Kotzebue the debris went away and as we went further north the waters became clean blue waters. It made me see why marine mammals such as whales, seals, walrus, and other marine mammals go north to nurture their young. The marine mammals know the cleanliness and pristine conditions of the Arctic Ocean will provide their young clean waters to become adults or sub-adults. And they come back each summer knowing this. This is now being threatened by the oil companies and the very government agencies, which are supposed to protect this area, according to law which was passed in 1972. And there is additional threats from the barging industry and travel industry (which has a record of dumping trash in the waters) as the climate change has extended seasonal travels.

The State of Alaska has embraced the oil companies to drill and produce in our pristine waters to "create" jobs for the country and better their "coffers". Not to mention monies in their pockets as has been found recently. The State has no infrastructure that has been put in place to protect the fragile Arctic environment. Not to mention any oil spill response infrastructure nor capabilities that have been shown.

In March 2008 the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment Commission in their final report said, "Global climate models have projected that the Arctic is an area where changes to the climate are the largest in the world. The models predict a greater warming in the Arctic than the rest of the world. Observed data indicate that over the last 50 years, mean annual surface temperature have increased 3-5 degrees Celsius, with some of the largest increases in the Arctic North Slope."

"Arctic coastal ecosystems also continue to be threatened natural and manmade hazards,

including and not limited to tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, severe storms, harmful algal blooms, invasive species (including pathogens) and oil spills, among others.

It also states "**the State of Alaska is not prepared and is not informed in the change of the global climate, especially in the Arctic.**" The Commission also *supports an establishment of a regulatory regime that will prevent unrestricted exploration and exploitation of marine species until sufficient research has been conducted* ."

The report also had a section on Ocean Acidification which states "approximately 30-50 % of global anthropogenic CO₂ emissions are absorbed by the world's oceans. Increased CO₂ uptake by the oceans is expected to reduce surface ocean pH by 0.3-0.5 units over the next century, which could be the largest change in the pH to occur in the last 20-200 million years. Ocean acidification reduces the calcium carbonate (CaCO₃) saturation point.

Dramatic reduction in calcium carbonate saturation has been observed in the Northern Pacific Ocean since the industrial revolution, but the concern is that with warmer oceans increased absorption of CO₂ likely will impact the ability of the marine calcifiers, such as corals and mollusks, such as mussels, crabs, oysters, and clams. (Walrus live on clams.) This will greatly impact the ability of our marine mammals to survive in the fragile Arctic Ocean.

Questions arise. Such as to "How much does EPA know about this? Has EPA included these factors before they give out permits?"

Protect the Arctic environment so the Arctic can remain pristine for the future generations to see our wildlife undisturbed by oil monies.

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