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SELECT COMMITTEE REGARDING THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

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Thursday, June 26, 2014 — 10:00 a.m.

Chair: Patti McLeod

**SELECT COMMITTEE
REGARDING THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF
HYDRAULIC FRACTURING**

Chair: Patti McLeod
Vice-Chair: Lois Moorcroft

Members: Hon. Currie Dixon
Darius Elias
Sandy Silver
Jim Tredger

Clerk to the Committee: Allison Lloyd

Speakers: Julie Frisch
Jim Taggart
Kath Selkirk
Sebastian Jones
Terry Shädda
Kathy Webster
Shirley Pennell
Joyce Caley
Suzanne Guimond
Jerry Mosure
Darren Taylor
Elaine Gaudet
Wanda Roe
Byrun Shandler
Chris MacLeod
Joanne Bell
Bill Kendrick
Jason Vassallo
Wayne Potoroka
Elizabeth Bell Engle
Evelyn Pollack
Chris Clarke
Leslie Piercy
Jay Farr
Ben Horodyski
Eddie Taylor
Betty Davidson
Rebekah Watson
Faye Chamberlain
Roberta Joseph
Brennan Maletta

EVIDENCE**Dawson City, Yukon****Thursday, June 26, 2014 — 10:00 a.m.**

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Good morning, everyone. I would like to call to order this hearing of the Yukon Legislative Assembly's Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing.

I'm going to start with introductions to the members of the Committee. I'm Patti McLeod. I am the legislative member for Watson Lake and I am the Chair of the Committee.

Mr. Tredger: Good morning. My name is Jim Tredger. I am the MLA from Mayo-Tatchun. It is a pleasure to be here in Dawson City, home of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, on their traditional territory. I am honoured to be here and I look forward to hearing your stories and your thoughts as we contemplate the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing. Your stories count. Thank you.

Mr. Elias: Good morning. My name is Darius Elias. I am the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin.

Ms. Moorcroft: Good morning. I am Lois Moorcroft, the MLA for Copperbelt South. I am the Vice-Chair of the all-party Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing. I am pleased to be here this morning on the traditional territory of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. I would like to thank all of you for coming out and I look forward to hearing what you have to say. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I'm Currie Dixon. I'm the MLA for Copperbelt North and Minister of Environment, Minister of Economic Development and minister responsible for the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Silver: Hi, I'm Sandy Silver. I'm the MLA for Klondike and the Leader of the Liberal Party.

Chair: Also with us is Allison Lloyd, beside me on my left, who is the Clerk to the Committee. Dawn Brown, who is at our registration desk, is assisting us with keeping organized. We've also, of course, brought our sound and recording staff.

On May 6, 2013, the Yukon Legislative Assembly adopted Motion No. 433, thereby establishing the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing. The Committee's purpose, or mandate, is set out in the motion, and it includes a number of interconnected responsibilities. The Committee has decided to fulfill its mandate in a three-phase approach.

Firstly, the Committee endeavoured to gain a science-based understanding of the technical, environmental, economic and regulatory aspects of hydraulic fracturing, as well as Yukon's current legislation and regulations relevant to the oil and gas industry. Secondly, the Committee pursued its mandate to facilitate an informed public dialogue for the purpose of sharing information on the potential risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing. The Committee invited experts to share their knowledge over four days of proceedings which were open to the public and are now available on-line.

Finally, the third stage of the Committee's work is gathering input from the Yukon public, First Nations, stakeholders and stakeholder groups. This is the purpose of today's hearing and the nine other communities that we'll be visiting next. After these hearings, the Committee will be in a position to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

A summary of the Committee's activities to date is available at the registration table. All information the Committee has collected, including presentations from experts on various aspects of hydraulic fracturing, is available on the Committee's website.

The Committee will not be presenting information on the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing at this hearing. This time is allotted to hear from as many Yukoners as possible. The format for today's hearing is to call people to the table. You will be allotted five minutes per speaker and that way we can ensure that everybody has a chance to be heard.

If you would like to present your opinion to the Committee, please ensure that you have registered at the registration table. Please note that this hearing is being recorded and transcribed. Everything you say will be on the public record and posted on the Committee's website.

I would like to welcome everyone here in Dawson City and ask that you respect the rules of the hearing. Visitors are not allowed to disrupt or interfere in the proceedings. Please refrain from unnecessary noise, including comments and applause, and please mute all your electronic devices. Please help yourself to coffee and snacks at any time. Thank you.

I'm going to start with our first presenter then. Julie Frisch, please — whenever you're ready.

Ms. Frisch: Actually, I'm not ready. I discovered I left my notes out at the cabin this morning when I rushed off. So I'm just going to speak from the top of my head, the bottom of my heart. Anybody who disclaims emotional comments, I say everything we do is based on emotion, so forget that one. Don't criticize me that way. I'll just criticize you back.

Anyway, I did jot down a few things while I was locking up the dogs in the car. But you folks have been hearing from experts from around the country. I don't have to tell you how dangerous hydraulic fracturing is. You've heard from experts. I don't know that you've heard from anybody except for maybe Northern Cross and EFLO and other people who stand to gain from hydraulic fracturing what the benefits are.

You've heard a lot about what the risks are, especially to our water. It uses massive amounts of water — locks them up with toxic chemicals, either — mostly underground so that it's no longer available for us. We all know that water and water issues are becoming more and more important around the planet. People have predicted that the next wars — God hope we don't have any — may be fought over water. So for technology to be taking massive amounts of water and poisoning them and then putting them underground — Monty Python could not have come up with a more insane idea, as far as I'm concerned.

Anyway — but — and more recently, we've also been hearing a lot about air and the fact that hydraulic fracturing produces methane in the process of bringing it up out of the ground — not only in the water, but also in the air — and that methane is a much bigger climate changer than carbon dioxide. I think people are saying 20, 21 times more effective at producing whatever it is that carbon dioxide does — locking the heat in the atmosphere. Anyway, methane is a lot worse and, of course, hydraulic fracturing is going to release methane in to the atmosphere. So those are two of the big things.

The other — the big thing, being a resident on the Dempster Highway, that I always think about — even though Northern Cross says it's not on their shopping list, they don't intend to frack — but they are doing horizontal drilling to protect the environment. Their drilling fluids are not accommodated by the environment. So I asked them — I said, so what's the difference between that and fracking fluids, and oh — miles apart, I guess. But anyway, I don't trust them.

So being a resident on the Dempster Highway, I think also of the infrastructure involved and the amount of traffic that hydraulic fracturing takes, because all of this water going in and then the half of it that comes out and then has to go down to Fort Nelson or someplace to be buried underground because it's not accommodated in the environment — there's a lot of traffic going past my door. I know when Northern Cross was setting up their operation up on Eagle Plains two years ago, you could hardly fit a tourist vehicle on the Dempster Highway, there was so much — the big rigs going by. Anyway, they said they're not going to frack, but I don't know if I trust them.

But beyond that, I guess — so I guess what I'm trying to say is you've heard all this from people who know a lot more than I do about the risks of hydraulic fracturing. Lo and behold, the — what's it called — the Council of Canadian Academies, which was commissioned by our previous Environment minister — I can't see what that says.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Ms. Frisch: Oh, that's the book? I mean, they're telling us — or they're telling the government, you know — we don't know enough about this process. It's new. People will say, "Oh, it has been going on for 60, 70 years." Well, that's — I won't use that word — that's not true. What we're talking about is this horizontal, high-volume, slickwater, high-pressure fracturing. That's maybe a decade, a little bit more, old. In Canada, not even that. It's not — we haven't even been using it in Canada for 10 years. So it's still an experiment, and the experiment is on us.

I guess I want to thank you for coming here, because although Dawson is not one of the locations where hydraulic fracturing is close, hydraulic fracturing around the world is affecting us around the world. It's in all our backyards because it affects the planet. I for one don't want to move to another planet. I like this one and I think we need to stop destroying it. Rather than investing in more fossil fuel extraction and burning of fossil fuels, we need to take that

time and energy and that money and that encouragement and put it in alternative energy sources. Let's stop destroying the planet with fossil fuels.

So that's what I would like to encourage you all to do: to join the planetary movement — from Patagonia to Bulgaria to New Brunswick to B.C. People are realizing the risk to their communities from this terribly dangerous process. They are speaking out. More and more people are speaking out. As I said, hydraulic fracturing has only been going on for a decade. It's sneaking up on all of us. It's going on around the world. It's like a disease, a mania, that's infecting the whole world. We need to stand up and be counted with the sensible people — sensible and emotional people — who are going to stand up and say, "No, not in our backyard, not in your backyard, not in anybody's backyard."

This is a dangerous process. We don't need it. What we need is to figure out alternative sources of energy. The only people, as I said, that I think are encouraging you to move ahead are the people that are going to make money off of it — the corporations, the companies, the people that make money off of fossil fuel extraction.

I think that's all I have to say. Like I say, I forgot my notes. So that's it. Thank you very much, again, for coming. Please put the Yukon on that list of folks around the world — and most of these reactions to hydraulic fracturing do start among folks — communities — and then it spreads. They inform their governments and they encourage their governments — some states, some countries, some communities — to put a ban on fracking — and not just a temporary ban on fracking — not just a moratorium, but a ban on fracking. So I am encouraging the Yukon to do that.

As you all know, I have these. Anybody else who wants one, see me afterward. I also gave Sebastian a bunch. So I'm not sure what your — whether or not — what, come fall do you deliver your suggestions to the government? A couple of months ago, Mr. Pasloski told me in a constituency meeting that boards and committees and whatever are not accountable because they're not elected. But you folks are all elected. You are accountable to us — especially you, here — although I vote in Whitehorse. I'm sorry about that, but I vote in Whitehorse. Anyway, you are accountable and it's up to you to put us on the map as one of those areas where fracking is banned, and I hope you'll do that. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much. In order for us to keep to our timetable — I didn't want to interrupt you, sorry — but I have this now and I will let you know that you have one minute left. How is that? If we do have time at the end and if people want to get up again, that would be fine. I just want to make sure everybody who has registered and wants to speak has an opportunity to speak.

The Committee will sit for a maximum of three hours, but if we don't have any more speakers, then we may close off the proceeding.

Carrying on — Jim Taggart, please.

Mr. Taggart: Good morning. I want to thank you for the opportunity to present to the Committee. I have to

apologize. I'm going to use my notes because there are quite a lot of things to get through in a very short time. As Mr. Davidson reminded me, we do only have five minutes.

So I'm not likely going to tell you anything that you don't already know or you shouldn't already be aware of. There are certainly a lot of issues relating to hydraulic fracturing and they're numerous and they're complex. I appreciate you have your work cut out trying to resolve some of the issues that get raised.

My main kind of environmental concerns really relate to the kind of exorbitant amount of water that gets used in the process — literally astronomical volumes that are used, impacted and effected during fracking. This water obviously becomes contaminated beyond use — basically in perpetuity removed from the water cycle. I know proponents have often pointed to waterless fracking as an alternative. But this generally utilizes propane or other chemicals that by themselves take a huge amount of water to produce. So I don't necessarily believe that waterless fracking actually significantly reduces the volumes of water that are made available or used in the process.

The chemicals used in both water-based and waterless fracking are recognized as toxic and carcinogenic to humans and flora and fauna. There can never be any guarantees that contaminated water will not infiltrate the water cycle or aquifers and thus enter the larger water cycle. I think the effects of contaminated water in any aquatic systems are likely to be severe.

Little is known about underground water cycles and the flows and the connections of the underground sources and surface sources, particularly in the Yukon. There was a recent report I'm sure you're aware of that identified this as a particular issue. This uncertainty and kind of lack of understanding means that there can be no accurate monitoring of water — particularly contaminated water from fracking. The movement of water throughout the ecosystem can never really be fully identified and certainly not controlled.

Fugitive — I can never say that word — fugitive emissions from fracking release large amounts of natural gas consisting mostly of methane, and this goes directly into the atmosphere. While the local impacts might be limited, research has indicated that it does have an adverse impact on climate change and that impact is considerable and is growing.

The impacts of fracking in permafrost are unknown. Again, I believe you have seen recent reports on this. So fracking in much of the Yukon would be done without the proper knowledge of effects on permafrost, the effects of thawed ice and thawed soils, and the effect on the fracking water and chemicals themselves and indeed on the equipment that's being used. So much of the Yukon is covered by continuous permafrost and we don't know — as far as I can gather and as far as the scientific data points out — we don't know what the impacts will be on the permafrost and on the process itself. I believe that's something else that would need to be clarified in advance.

The evidence for human harm in fracking is contained in a considerable amount of medical literature. There are literally hundreds of peer-reviewed studies out there. Altogether, this really reveals the potential for multiple health problems associated with drilling and with fracking operations. It also makes clear that the relevant risks for harm haven't really been fully identified or fully assessed. Again, that's something that I believe needs to be addressed before any decision is made on fracking.

There are numerous other concerns relating to ecology and climate change that we don't necessarily have time to get into, but I believe you'll be fully aware of. In the light of context, fracking to produce what's called "transition fuels" really is an issue and there have been numerous reports — particularly the report from Cornell University that indicates that methane emissions associated with fracking and the emissions associated with LNG — which comes from fracking — really does have a huge impact — more of an impact even than coal and the burning of oil.

Just to summarize, uncertainty is really the key issue here. The precautionary principle is really at the heart of environmental law internationally. I'll just quote what it says: "Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing...measures to prevent...environmental degradation."

So the Yukon must ensure it is applying the precautionary approach in the public interest. Fracking cannot be permitted until there is certainty that it will not produce adverse impacts and irreversible damage to our environment.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you, Mr. Taggart.

Kath Selkirk, please.

Ms. Selkirk: Good morning all and thank you.

I don't have a detailed scientific knowledge of fracking. I have been reading extensively on the Internet about that. But what I wanted to look at today is the decision-making — putting myself in your shoes — how to balance arguments to come to a decision. I don't know — from my point of view, it's pretty clear — the decision that would be the good decision in this case, but I'll just walk you through it.

As Jim said earlier, it's the uncertainty — the lack of knowledge, the lack of technology at the moment — the lack of ability to protect the environment, not only now, but in the future — 80, 100 years down the road. That is the main factor here, I think.

What we're looking at is a bit of a gamble here. What are we going to be gambling with? To me, it looks like it's a balance of a certain method of energy, of power, versus clean groundwater. Boiled down to the crux of the matter, to me, that's what it is. It's energy versus groundwater.

If we look at the hierarchy of needs, the very, very most basic needs are for water, for the food that comes from clean water, and for clean air. So we're balancing that against one method of generating power. That's not very high upon the hierarchy of needs compared to the need for water, the need

for clean air and clean environment. It's a bit too much of a gamble. Can we really gamble our clean environment in the Yukon that we are so fortunate to still have against the very clear likelihood that somewhere — maybe 80 or 100 years down the road, or maybe the day that procedures start — at some point, there is going to be contamination of that water? I really don't think that's a gamble that should be taken.

It's an easy thing for a corporation to decide that they are willing to sacrifice our Yukon clean environment, our Yukon clean water, for their profits. You can understand their reasoning. They have balanced up the pros and cons and think that they could maybe live with that, but that's not something we can live with. We must look to our own protection and, as I said, the hierarchy of needs is that our clean water and clean air are the most basic here.

You are here to represent us, to represent Yukoners. We are voters. We are taxpayers. Compared to these big corporations, maybe as individuals we can't contribute too much in taxes or maybe we are too young to vote or whatever, but each individual in the Yukon matters. I just wanted to say that I want you to think of the human impact. Think of the people before the corporations. Think of the water before this one option for energy production.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Sebastian Jones, please.

Mr. Jones: Good morning and thank you for coming to Dawson, Committee. I appreciate that conducting consultations is hard, and conducting good consultations is really hard. We do it a lot in the Yukon. We have a reasonable idea of it. I would point out, however, that holding a meeting at 10:00 in the morning on a business day is not the time that most people putting together consultations would have recommended. I am impressed how many people have shown up for this meeting, despite those constraints. It shows just how important the work that you are doing is.

So I don't think it will come as any surprise to you guys that I don't think that fracking is a good idea for the Yukon. I urge you guys to recommend against it when you make your report.

I have several reasons for coming to this perspective. I am going to start with the climate. We have to remember that fracking is an extremely energy-intensive form of energy extraction from the ground. Every time you have an energy-intensive method of doing something, it produces more greenhouse gases. So fracking, by its general nature, is an energy-intensive way of producing energy and we should find less energy-intensive ways of doing it.

Other people have mentioned the effects on water, which are not all known. It's very difficult to know how water moves around underground. As you guys have heard several times over the course of the last year, it's difficult to know what is happening underground until after you have drilled wells into the ground, which by their own very nature, are going to be perforating these aquifers and altering the way that the water moves around underground. We recently had a presentation

from Northern Cross/CNOOC, who are conducting advanced exploration up in the Eagle Plain area, and they described how the surface water that they are using up there is really highly mineralized, which indicates to me that this water is connected to some underground aquifers, and therefore, puncturing more holes in it is likely to increase inadvertent transfers of water between aquifers.

I want to talk a bit about the land footprint of hydraulic fracturing. Fracking isn't something that you can do a little bit. You can't just say, "Well, we don't need a lot of oil or gas in the Yukon. We'll just do one or two wells and frack them and call it good." It's not the way the economy of scale works when it comes to hydrocarbon development, particularly in hydraulic fracturing. The costs are so high to frack that it has to be done thousands of times — there have to be thousands of wells in operation to even have a hope of paying back the costs. Therefore, frack fields tend to be really big with thousands of wells and thousands of drilling pads. The land footprint of this is not consistent with intact ecosystems. It's impossible to imagine how the Porcupine caribou herd could occupy its winter range in the Eagle Plains area if you have a fully developed frack field there.

The *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan* acknowledges this when it developed thresholds for allowable levels of activities. Those thresholds of activities laid out in that land use plan will make it impossible to fully frack out a field and comply with the plan.

Fracking is, as I said, a big business. Thousands of people would be needed to staff a big fracking operation. We don't have those thousands of people here in the Yukon. We would have to import a tremendous number of people and this effect would upend our society. Some people would appreciate it. Many people would not. It will change our demography violently, both with our gender proportions, our age proportions, and our cultural and racial proportions as well. There would be winners but there would also be many losers. Many of the winners will be non-Yukoners who bring specialized skills, and therefore, they will get work. Remember that Northern Cross was only able to hire 25 percent of their workforce locally from the Yukon, and they are just a small little operation. When you start hiring thousands of people, that proportion is going to get way smaller.

I could go on, but I think I'm about out of time. So thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Terry Shädda, please.

Mr. Shädda: Good day, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to thank everybody for showing some participation in this outing. I have many stories, but I'm going to sum it up to fracking and I'm going to use two words: peace and goodwill. Out of that, my question would be — first one would be: Who brought this to the table of the legislation, according to your adopted Motion No. 443? I feel that these types of things — when you attack the basic needs of all humans — because attacking water is an attack on basic needs

— and not just humans — it's also an attack on the environment, fish, birds, four-legged, trees, tall-standing ones — and what are we sending in there to replace 443? We eliminate all the habitats and we bring in loaders, Cats, dump trucks and drills. To me, these things have no heartbeat, and something that doesn't have a heartbeat shouldn't be on the agenda of the Canadian government. What should be on the agenda of the Canadian government is what has a heartbeat, and we vote everybody in to work for the heartbeats of our country — the children, the unborn. How is this Canadian government giving this back to the unborn? When we, as First Nation people, already have a treaty with water, with the tree — we have a history. You can't replace that history in 100 years. We have a history with the silvertip grizzly bear. We have a treaty with the caribou. The caribou has a treaty with the wolf, which we have to acknowledge. These two have a treaty with the raven, which we have to acknowledge.

Through all this, it still doesn't show us — who does the government work for when they put stuff like this on the agenda — when it's an attack on basic needs of all humans and animals and flowers and bees — and yet that's no environment at all. Who is going to be able to work here in 20 years if you have no environment? A lot of these jobs that created from the government are supposed to be for our best interest. How is it our best interest when everything is being depleted?

In 1911, there were 850,000 caribou documented from the government studies. Today, there are less than 25,000. This is what we are paying the government to do? I think we want our jobs back, and I think that a lot of this is a breach of contract because we pay human rights 100 years of wages. We pay YESA Board. We pay DDRC. Yet why aren't these people here? This is an attack on basic needs, and yet none of these people, who in the last 30 years have taken wages, have even put a sign up to say stop. We have to consult. Consult with whom?

Especially when Motion No. 443 was brought by whom? Was it brought by the First Nation people? Was it brought by the public? Or was it brought to you guys by industry? Who is putting this stuff on the agenda? That is what we would like to know. Not only would we like to know who is putting this on the agenda, how come we're not seeing any minutes on who is making decisions to bring this stuff in?

Like I can go to a meeting at the general assembly of CYFN, and I will never see chief and council meeting minutes. I will never see director meeting minutes. Even here at Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, you will never see director meeting minutes, and if you do see them, it's vamped. So how can we, as public people that really love to vote all you guys in to represent us — and yet we have nothing but complications once you are in for three years. If you look at all the writings in the newspaper — none of that stuff should even be on the agenda when it's an attack on basic needs.

When you say that we have feelings — I'm real. Joe Henry and Annie Henry were real. When you give into artificial heartbeats — you tell me that CCP has a heartbeat. It

doesn't. You tell me that the Canadian government has a heartbeat. How can it? We have the heartbeats. An artificial entity is an artificial entity. It doesn't breathe. It doesn't eat. It doesn't drink. Why do we have to give up all our basic needs to feed something that doesn't even breathe and pay taxes into something that doesn't even breathe, doesn't have feelings?

So today I figure that fracking should have never been on the agenda of the Yukon government. What still should be there is homeless. We are still hungry. We're still jobless. The First Nation people still can't shovel their own snow. They can't secure their own buildings. There's no job for us. So we're actually drifting farther away from all this stuff than coming together.

We already come with a treaty. We are born to a history and you can't replace it by adoption of rules. I still see the caribou feeding everybody. No one person can claim caribou when he goes around to feed everybody. That's his job. We can't replace that. Today, you've got less than 25,000 caribou out there. If Calgary wanted to eat our caribou, we don't have enough to feed Calgary any more. This is what — they're slowly passing legislation from Ottawa — none of those people live here. They should live here six months before they make any decisions over our — we've been here for over 52 snows — some of us 1,000 snows, some of us 300 snows. Yet you're not seeing our history or the bear's history or the caribou job description or even the wolf job description.

Like, none of this stuff is here. All you put in is what industry wants and that's not going to have a heartbeat. So I'm going to have to say no to all this stuff — like I always have been saying no since '99, because we are here for the unborn, as it states in this book. Everything I read in this book is not happening.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Peggy Kormendy, please.

Unidentified Speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: Okay. Thank you very much.

Suzanne Guimond?

Ms. Guimond: I don't have a presentation. I think everything has been said that can be said, but I just want to have it down on record that I oppose fracking in the Yukon. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Darren Taylor, please.

Mr. Taylor: I'll actually defer my comments. Five minutes isn't enough, so I'll just put in a written submission.

Chair: Thank you.

Byrun Shandler. Is he here? He's here but he has just stepped out? Okay. We'll come back to him.

Chris MacLeod. Whenever you're ready, please.

Mr. MacLeod: I'll make this fast. I'm sure you've heard all of it before at some point. I was reading the Yukon water strategy put out by the Environment department recently. I just wanted to draw attention to something that appears in that report, which is, we know absolutely almost nothing about groundwater in the Yukon, and yet we're sitting here talking about the possibility of allowing an industrial

process that can have profound effects on groundwater. Based on the fact that we don't have hardly any baseline data that would allow us to assess what those effects are, it seems pretty crazy that we would be considering allowing hydraulic fracturing in the Yukon. So put me down for no thanks. That's all.

Chair: Thank you.

Jerry Mosure.

Mr. Mosure: Yes, hello. I hope some of the people that do pass you have time — I hope Sebastian gets more time up here. I think he's better prepared than most of us. Got to remember to breathe. I too thank you for coming. I agree with what was said — 10:00 in the morning is kind of an unusual time to hold one of these, when better than probably three quarters of our community couldn't attend.

I did attend that Yukon Legislative Assembly one on May 27 and 28. Except for Mr. John Hogg, nobody was in favour of it. Perhaps the closest you came was Dr. Brendan Hanley, who basically says perhaps it could be a good thing. We might be able to address some of our issues — because energy is expensive in the Yukon — if it was properly regulated.

None of the people that presented advocated any kind of a — everybody was against it. Nobody suggested there was even a way to regulate it. The Yukon government is not capable of regulating it. Industry is not capable of regulating it. If you get an independent in there, I mean — they're lobbyists, they're going to be bought off. It can't be regulated.

You had — from a previous one, Gilles Wendling, a hydrogeologist — like it was pointed out here, he doesn't even know where the groundwater is. There have been no studies done. He has no idea where the groundwater is, where it goes, how it flows. Industry says that they're a mile or two in the ground so the water you're going to be — down there would be useless anyway, except apparently we're pumping anywhere from 12- to 80 million litres of water per well that will never be used again and it's contaminated. There was one that said we have no idea of the amount of chemicals or what they are going down. Hogg says there is a list of the ones. But your toxicologist who came up from Saskatchewan has no idea how they would affect a human being, if, and or when it was exposed to the public. They have no studies. There's none available. They have no idea. The risks and benefits — it didn't sound like there were any benefits.

The fellow that you had there — Mark Jaccard, who is a professor of social resources — I liked a lot of what he had to say. He said basically you put a time frame of 25 to 30 years on this fracking natural gas before they have to reduce it. The planet is going to demand it. The world's going to — we're going to have to change because we're going to have to change. He said methane will make this happen much sooner and natural gas is methane. All that permafrost — when it melts, that's methane. That's not carbon monoxide. What you want to burn in your LNG plant down in Whitehorse, that's methane. Forty-plus million dollars — that worries the general public because we've got to keep trucking in natural gas.

He also said for that same amount of money, he could devise renewable resources for the Whitehorse and Yukon area. He's a consultant. With that kind of money, he could put in renewable resources. You got the water, you got the air. All the baseline data they have is funded by the industry.

Yeah, I wasn't totally — I loved what another one had to say — Dr. Badenhorst from Fort St. John. He said to listen to him — that natural gas isn't going anywhere. He saw it first-hand in Fort St. John. What was brought up there about the amount of people coming in — I've got one minute left, yes — 10 percent of people make 90 percent of the money. It's all going out. Down there, they had higher welfare costs, higher addiction costs, more crime. He said, "Listen to us." Check with them. Wait.

Dr. Cleary, medical officer from New Brunswick, wished she had held off — they want to stop it. I don't think we're going to hear from anybody here who is a proponent of it. I'm a little concerned that the Minister of Environment is also the Minister of Economic Development. That seems like a contradiction to me. I got a lot of faith in you, a lot of faith in you, and you have guaranteed the water for seven generations. Better say no.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Byrun Shandler.

Mr. Shandler: When I retired, I think for the second time — Parks Canada — I became a "manny". I became a caretaker to a little kid and he's almost nine now. So I take my responsibility pretty seriously.

I am not for fracking. I think I have an adequate amount of knowledge. I certainly have been involved in large projects and I know how much I can trust the people who say, "We've got it all covered." The latest one is the sewage treatment plant where I was one of only two people in this town that said, "It will not work. You do not have the science." So it's proprietary knowledge and that's what we're hit with. "We know what we're doing and we can fix this." Well, you can't.

I'm opposed to fracking anywhere in the territory. Thank you. I won't take my five minutes because I am a "manny" and it's my best responsibility yet.

Chair: Thank you, sir.

Bill Kendrick, please.

Mr. Kendrick: I also won't take very much time. As far as I can tell, if we don't have all the evidence about the process and about how our groundwater works — about how to regulate it, it seems that what you folks might end up deciding — and what I guess I want to you talk about — is the selling of your decision. You know, if you come out with a ban — a moratorium on the process, it's very easy to appeal to — it has been brought up before — the precautionary principle, which is the duty, of course, to prevent harm when it is within our power — your power — to do so, even when all the evidence is not in.

Now, I found it curious that this government does occasionally make an appeal to other jurisdictions when it comes to making decisions — for example, the percentage of

protected areas and comparing it to other jurisdictions. In this case, when it comes to fracking, it would be a very easy thing to do — to make an appeal to other jurisdictions and some of the moratoriums and bans that have been put in place.

A lot of people point to the U.S. as being a place where fracking is sort of a free-for-all. But I just did a quick, simple look on the Internet. There have been over 400 specific actions against fracking in the U.S. Just for the record, I'll point out the various states in which they have occurred: California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming. So in all of these states, there have been specific actions against fracking — they would be the moratoriums in particular counties, statewide, et cetera.

In Canada, we've got Newfoundland — and I believe New Brunswick has taken action. Across the world — and this is just a partial list: Spain, France, Bulgaria, South Africa, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, North Ireland, Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand. I forgot about Quebec too.

So it's certainly easy to appeal to other jurisdictions when rationalizing a moratorium or a ban on the process of hydraulic fracking.

A couple more comments: if the process isn't in place to do it safely, there's value to leave these resources in the ground. Make an appeal to sustainable development. You know, there's no sense — if we can meet the needs of our present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and leave these resources in the ground for a later date — you look around the world today. As quickly as many of us want to get off of fossil fuels, they're a part of our existence right now and they're going to be for some time. So with that in mind, they're going to be of great value for some time.

Again, I guess that's all I have to say. I don't think I took my five minutes, so I'll leave it at that. Good luck with your decision. It's a very tough decision. When you consider a moratorium or a ban on the process, I think you have a lot of good company in doing so. Thanks.

Chair: Thank you very much.

I have one more speaker on the list. Wayne Potoroka, please. Then we will recess for 15 minutes.

Mr. Potoroka: Hello everybody. It is good to see you all. I too won't take much of your time.

I have to admit, I don't have a lot of information about fracking, what is involved in the process. It's not something that the municipality really deals with a lot. Our main responsibilities are, of course, dogs and dumps and roads and sewage and things like that — and, of course, water. It is difficult to not be sensitive to some of the concerns that are raised about how this process can affect water supply, and so, whichever way this goes, I think there really has to be a little bit more work done to ensure that water supplies of

downstream municipalities are protected, because that really is one of the most important things that municipalities do, and we need to have some assurances that our water will be drinkable.

Thanks.

Chair: Thank you.

All right. As I said, we are going to recess now for 15 minutes. We are finished with our list of presenters; however, if others wish to present after giving a little thought over the recess, then we would be happy to hear from you.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Excuse me, folks. We are going to get started again. We have some new presenters who would like to address the Committee. Thank you for that.

We are going to start with Joanne Bell, please.

Ms. Bell: Hi, I am a writer; I'm not a speaker and I feel extremely shy and awkward coming up here, so sorry about that. My grandson, Wesley, is here with me today, partly because I feel that protection of the land — while it's important to me as an individual — I'm an old lady, and it's the future generations here that it is going to matter to for we humans.

The one thing I wanted to say — and, again, I feel ridiculous saying this — is that I spent a lot of my adult life in the wilderness off of the Dempster. When I say "the wilderness", I mean that it takes about a week to walk into our cabin. I raised my children out there and I spent a lot of time listening and watching, and I spent years doing that. I have two books out about the area and I'm writing a series of books at this point about different mammals that live in the wilderness off of the Dempster.

I guess I feel like I want to speak right now for not just humans. For me, I spent, like said, about eight months sometimes without seeing anybody else outside of my family, and it's not just a human-centric issue. We humans are important — I mean, nobody is more important to me than my children and grandchildren — but there are other species on this planet and, to be quite honest, we humans are doing really well on it already. I wrote this week — I've been working on a book about a pika. There are pikas that live on the tops of the mountain.

Unless you can give us a guarantee that the water and the land are safe and are not going to be contaminated, then I oppose fracking. The people who make the decisions about it — I wish that they could come out there. I wish they could spend some time out there. I wish they could listen to the voices on the wind. I wish they could listen to the birds that are there, to the migratory birds that come back. I wish they could listen to the American dipper that fishes out of those creeks. If those things aren't important to us, if those things aren't a core value, then I'm not sure how to make them become a core value to people.

Again, I could go on for hours but I'm going to spare you all that. I just came up here because, without guarantees that

this pristine wilderness that has become so rare in our world is going to be protected and that there will not be contamination from the slurries of chemicals that we know come back up and that the permafrost can withstand those concrete wells, then I am completely opposed to developing without those guarantees — and I mean real guarantees. The kind of guarantees that, you know, I would stake my firstborn on this because, for many of the species on this planet, it is their firstborn being staked on this.

Sorry to be emotional, but thanks.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Elizabeth Bell Engle, please.

Ms. Bell Engle: I kind of object to being staked on this, just for the record.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Ms. Bell Engle: Yes, that was my mother, so I am her firstborn.

I just want to say that I grew up here, and I've come up here every summer with my kids. This is the only place that they can still see, I guess, Canada. They can still see moose and foxes, and they can still have a lynx run across their yard. They still see black bears in our shed. I mean, this is one of the only places that's left. I took them both out to the cabin that it takes a week to walk out to, and it's just — this is something special that there is — there is nowhere else like this, and it's our job to protect it. I just want to go on record as saying that this is a bad idea and we need to treasure what we have.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Evelyn Pollack, please.

Ms. Pollack: I just want really to echo the concerns of my community members who have already spoken — that I have concerns about fracking.

The other thing I want to say — and I'm going to particularly direct this at Sandy and Currie, because you have a more direct link to our political decision-makers — my expectation, participating in this, is that the voices you have heard will be listened to. Yeah, so I just really want the Yukon government to listen to the recommendations that you make. That is my expectation. My expectation is not that they just go ahead and do whatever powerful stakeholders tell them to do anyway, regardless of the input here today. That's all.

Chair: Thank you.

Chris Clarke, please.

Ms. Clarke: Hello, members of the Committee. What can I add? I would like to concur with my community members' grave concerns about the prospect of even engaging in some kind of dialogue about this. I think the main thing that I would like to add is that I am completely befuddled as to why we are spending exceeding amounts of energy, resources, your time, our time and our tax dollars to explore an industry that is pretty much conclusively harmful, expensive and devastating. So, to me — just sort of straight up — it doesn't make any sense. I wonder, at this critical juncture in humanity and with the state of the planet —being in a very precarious

state — why we are taking time to even consider this. That's what I would like to have on the record from my perspective.

I would also like to extend my concerns — my belief that it is your responsibility — yours, yours, yours, you elected members — and that you are representing our interests as community members, you are representing the interests of the land, the health of the land, and that you don't have a right to be auctioning off our future. You don't have the right to make those decisions that are going to impact — negatively impact our future — my grandchildren — our collective future. You don't have the right to make that decision that is going to negatively impact that. Your responsibility is to make decisions now that will consider the well-being of the future generations. That is your job. That is your job. Your job isn't to negotiate with big corporations the possibility for them to make big money. You can't do that because that's not your job. We didn't elect you to do that.

You're the — for you — I am directing these comments to you as you can clearly see. I believe that, you know, you are in an awkward — we'll say — position as Minister of Environment and Minister of Economic Development, but all the more reason for you to be duly concerned with both of those interests, and one should not outweigh the other, so that when you make an economic decisions, it is clearly with the environment in mind.

To me, fracking doesn't weigh out in good favour. Of course, I'm on the record as being 100 percent against it — and not just a moratorium, but for all time, until such time as we can clearly demonstrate and prove that it's not going to bring damage, bring harm. So, yeah, those are my thoughts. I hope you make a good decision and the right decision for all of us, and not for a small interest group.

Thank you for your time. Safe travels.

Chair: Thank you. Leslie Piercy, please.

Ms. Piercy: I just want to say thank you to everybody for coming. I am definitely against fracking. Just say no.

Chair: Thank you.

Jay Farr, please — Deputy Chief Farr.

Mr. Farr: Thank you. Thanks for coming, Committee. I'll cut it short and sweet here. If you don't ban fracking, there will be another court case on your hands. You know that, right? Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in passed a resolution in place to ban fracking in their traditional territory. We're going to stick to it and we're not going to be budging. We're fighting it left and right, right down to the nitty-gritty.

Mahsi'. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Wanda Roe, please.

Ms. Roe: I would just like to thank all of the articulate speakers and I concur 100 percent with everybody that has been up so far. I'm not an articulate speaker but I would like to go on record as being 100-percent against hydraulic fracturing in the Yukon. Let us not experiment with our fragile ecosystems up here. Let us learn from the mistakes that others have made before it's too late. There's no turning back. I would like to advocate for the mammals, the birds, the

fish, the flora, the fauna, the people who have spoken. I want to see it 100-percent frack-free.

I would like to also agree with Sebastien and whoever else said that this is a poor time to hold an important hearing such as this at 10:00 a.m. on a workday where a lot of people can't make it. I also have a problem with the Hon. Currie Dixon having those Economic Development and Environment portfolios. I just don't see how that should go together.

Thank you for coming and heeding — paying attention to all of the letters we had to write to get you here. I wish we didn't have to fight our own government so hard on every little issue. It almost seems like there's always a hidden agenda beforehand. We shouldn't have to fight the people that we're paying to represent us. Everybody is getting really tired of hearing after hearing after hearing, but we all come out anyway because we all feel very passionate in protecting our Yukon. I would also — and protect the Peel.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Elaine Gaudet, please.

Ms. Gaudet: I would just like to go on record as saying I oppose fracking. I don't trust the oil companies. From what I've heard, there is a lot of problems with drinking water and people's lives being destroyed — their homes. When they get the oil out, it doesn't mean that we're going to have the oil. Maybe they're just going to sell it to the highest bidder — to Asia or something. Please stand up for us and fight for us.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Ben Horodyski.

Mr. Horodyski: Hello. I don't have anything to add to what many of the members of the community have stated already. I just want to add for the record that I'm completely opposed. I also speak for many community members and friends who weren't able to make it to this oddly-timed hearing.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Chief Taylor, please.

Mr. Taylor: Good morning. I too am also glad you guys made the time to come up to Dawson and hear from the citizens. First and foremost, I totally oppose fracking. I agree with all the comments stated already. I want to make it clear I'm speaking on behalf of over 1,000 citizens of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

First and foremost, not in our backyard — this fracking — as our deputy chief stated earlier, it will lead to litigation. Clearly in my mind, between now and that day, there's going to be a ton of litigation if you guys go there. It's an unhealthy situation. You're playing with our water.

I think all of you sitting there know better so I hope you make the right decision — the right recommendation. That's what also concerns me. We just went through this public consultation regarding the Peel. There were thousands of people speaking and I don't think any one of those voices was heard by the Yukon Party government. I believe it fell on deaf ears. The result will end up the same here with fracking. It

will be litigation. TH and, furthermore, CYFN, have passed resolutions: no fracking in our traditional territories. So that's nine First Nations for sure that have passed resolutions. To us, that's the ultimate law — our resolutions — so we're not backing down if you guys — if the territorial government decides to frack. We will litigate. We will be there. We will answer the bell.

What also concerns me and should concern Darius — and all of you, for that matter, especially the Environment minister — is that if you open up fracking in the Eagle Plains Basin, 20, 25 years of lobbying that the Vuntut Gwitchin people did in the States to stop drilling in Prudhoe Bay — the calving grounds — I believe this here is going to open that right up. I believe you're opening that door for them over there and that's not going to help anybody.

Ninety percent of what you guys allow — the territorial government and the Canadian government allow to be extracted from our homelands, from our grounds — 90 percent of it, you basically — they turn into toxic poison and then they try to put it back in the ground and tell us it's okay. It's not okay.

Fresh water is our most valuable resource. Our ecosystems, our animals, our homelands — they are our most valuable resource. Do not expose any of that to industry unless you have the okay from local people who use the homelands, and that is everybody here.

We're all in this together. I hope you guys make the right recommendation to the territorial government and I really hope they listen this time because we don't want to have to answer the bell again. But if we have to, we will.

Mahsi' cho.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Betty Davidson, please.

Ms. Davidson: Hi. Thank you for coming. I'm sorry that it was at this time. It's difficult for many people in our community to be here. Those of us who are here have made the effort to come. I want to go on record as being in opposition to any fracking in the Yukon, or in Canada, as far as that goes.

I think the evidence is clear that people are suffering, the land is suffering, and animals are suffering. We have a responsibility as people, as humanity, to stand up for the land.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Rebekah Watson, please.

Ms. Watson: Hi. I would just like to be on record that I'm against fracking.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Okay, we are at the end of our list of people who have not presented, so we're going to return to see if Kath Selkirk would like to speak again for five minutes.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: Sorry, can you state your name for the record please?

Ms. Webster: It's Kathy Webster. Again, thank you for coming up. But you — the Select Committee Regarding

the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing — for the many reasons you have already heard, please recommend no fracking. I hope to goodness the government will listen to your recommendation of no fracking.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Caley: I'm Joyce Caley. I've lived in the Yukon for 58 years. I love it here — the clean air, the good water, the precious commodities. Unfortunately, dollars seem to take precedence over a good life, healthy life. I just think it is such a shame that this idea even has come forward. I would love to have cheap electricity too, but not at such a huge price. I am definitely against fracking.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Would you please state your name for the record?

Ms. Pennell: Yes. Greetings everyone. Like everyone else, thank you very much for the time you've taken to come to Dawson. My name is Shirley Pennell. I have been in the Yukon for 40 years, and 38 years in Dawson City.

I cannot express my gratitude to the presenters for stating exactly what I think as well and stating it so eloquently. It's true that our environment in the Yukon is extremely precious. No matter where we travel in our country of Canada or overseas, it's always proud to say that I am from the Yukon, a wilderness area that has animals that are still prevalent and not — are free to roam and healthy. However, I want to express to this board that I am totally against fracking for the same reasons as the citizens have presented to you. I truly hope that you will be listened to by our government.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Is there anyone else who would like to present to the Committee who has not presented yet?

Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Chamberlain: My name is Faye Chamberlain. I would just like to thank you for being here today.

We talked a lot about how our water will be affected by the fracking but I also find that the geology and the air will be really affected a lot with the methane gases. It's not a matter of whether well casings will leak; they will leak eventually with time. There has been more earth tremors found in areas — there are higher earth tremors and minor earthquakes in areas where there has been a lot of fracking.

Also, up the Dempster Highway in the Eagle Plains area, the caribou come through there as part of their range — not annually, but every now and again. We've spent a lot of years with committees and boards trying to protect this herd. We're dealing with international; we're dealing with the U.S.; we're dealing with First Nations — and it's like that with the Fortymile herd. We're slowly building up these herds and managing these herds. What does that show the rest of the world and the United States, as the chief mentioned — that once we do — if we do open this up to fracking? To me, it's just a steppingstone away from going into the Peel because the Committee has not taken the considerations of Yukoners.

We're going to be showing that we are just pro-development and humans and the flora and fauna and mammals are just expendable resources.

This is a finite resource — this fracking, this oil. We need to do more sustainable types of sustainability industries and whatnot. Tourism is great. I've watched the Dempster Highway over the years — the traffic increase many, many-fold up there with the Tombstone Park. These are things that people can enjoy. Humans need areas that are not tampered by industry to actually re-heal and renew their spirits. We have these up there. This is really precious — one of the last precious landscapes in the world. We need to leave that alone for our children and our future grandchildren. I'm against fracking.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Joseph: Roberta Joseph. I've attended a number of presentations and reviewed a number of documents and things on the Internet in terms of fracking activity. What I see elsewhere in Canada and in the States is — I think it's a really huge mistake that governments are supporting these kinds of activities that are negatively impacting humans and wildlife — wildlife habitat, more particularly. Whether fracking activity is considered in the southern part of the Yukon or the northern part or central part of the Yukon, it will affect all Yukoners at some point in time, and as well, our water quality.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people, our citizens and in my job, we put a lot of effort into ensuring that our wildlife habitat is protected. We want to see our wildlife populations increase, to remain healthy — not only for us today, but we're always thinking about the future generations. Just recently, we're having a closure on salmon because of the declining populations. We put a lot of effort — we made sacrifices for the Fortymile caribou. We've sacrificed our tradition, our culture and our lifestyle so that we can see the Fortymile caribou increase in its population again and expand toward its historical habitat. We've put a lot of energy and effort into co-managing and collaborating with other organizations and First Nation governments and governments in regard to the Porcupine caribou.

Should fracking become something in the Yukon — whether in the north or south or central Yukon — it will affect wildlife species, habitat particularly. Fracking activity takes up a lot of land, a lot of water, and provides for a huge — numerous amount of chemicals which will probably deplete our wildlife and create diseases in those who are affected around the areas where the activity is taking place.

You have an obligation to take into consideration — whether you're an advisory committee or not, you still need to take into consideration the objectives of our final agreements, particularly chapter 16 where it speaks to protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat as well as the cultural lifestyle and traditions of Yukon First Nations in terms of sustainable food sources of fish and wildlife.

Those things need to be taken into consideration just to ensure that fracking activity doesn't affect — if there are adverse effects — fracking goes forward and there are adverse effects on our fish and wildlife, then our agreements are not being honoured. Those chapters are not being honoured. Those objectives are not being honoured and considered.

So I oppose fracking, just for the record as well. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: I'll just reaffirm for the folks that for those who are not comfortable speaking in this venue or who would like to make a written submission, there is a form on the Committee's website for you to do so. However, you may also communicate with the Committee by e-mail or letter.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: All of the letters and comments are considered by the Committee and are available for the public to review.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: There is no deadline for a submission, other than the Committee is tasked with producing a report and submitting it to the Legislature by the end of the fall sitting.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: All written submissions, all verbal submissions, and all hearings and presentations will be on the website for the future as we know it. Just to clarify, that will be part of a permanent record.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: Can I get you to come to the microphone please and state your name?

Ms. Frisch: It is Julie Frisch again. I would be interested to know, since we have a little bit of time and nobody else has more questions, how you will carry on your work. How will you prepare your report and deliver your recommendation to the government? Can you give us a little bit of an idea of how that is done?

Chair: I can certainly tell you that it will involve a lot of discussion. We are tasked with presenting a recommendation or a series of recommendations to the Legislature. I cannot tell you at this time how that will go, because the Committee is not at a stage where we have begun to write that report yet. We are still listening to Yukoners. Once we have listened to Yukoners and heard what folks in all communities have to say, then we will be in a better position to know how we are going to proceed with writing that final report.

So, I'm sorry, I can't really tell you how that process is going to work out, but I can tell you that the Committee has learned an awful lot and we have heard an awful lot on this topic, and we will give all information its due consideration — absolutely.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: By the end of the fall sitting.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: Generally speaking — we don't know.

I am going to ask a couple of folks to come and speak again, and that would be Kath Selkirk.

Unidentified speaker: (inaudible)

Chair: Thank you very much.

Terry Shädda, if you would like an additional five minutes, we can give you that.

Mr. Shädda: There are a couple of things that I forgot to mention with you guys, and one of them is — this book that I'm reading from is called *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*. All the stuff that we're witnessing today has still not been addressed. It still lingers. I could read a chapter out of this book to show you that we are still asking for the same things that we were asking for in 1973, but yet I'm not going to worry about that because today I feel that the word that should be heard is neishou, and according to our elders, neishou is a language. Neishou is not a human language. Neishou is animal talk, and we hear about all industry needs, human needs, but yet they want us to respect their job. The Prime Minister wants us to respect his job. Chief and council want us to respect their job. Sandy — all of you want us to respect your job — as we have been told to respect your jobs from the time you are voted in.

But our elders always saw 200 years ahead, not like legislation and political powers where they only see for a three-year term. The elders knew that it took 200 years for one spruce tree to show up in the forest. How many of these politicians or legislations today can see that far ahead? Yet 100 years ago, that's how far our elders saw ahead. For one spruce tree to show up in the forest, 200 years of planning.

When we say neishou, that's animal talk for the reason of — they have a culture, and yet we are not respecting that culture. We use the word "culture" for ourselves, but we don't have the caribou job description here — 100 years and we don't even have the job description of the grizzly bear.

But if you had a job description of one of these species — let's pick one out: the birch tree. One birch tree alone in one year will feed squirrels, butterflies, caterpillars, ants, caribou, moose, lynx, owl. That's in one year. What do we do to help that? Neishou — it's a language of the animal and it says walkers are coming. That's us. That's the first time this planet has seen walkers, and it's the animals saying neishou. Walkers are coming, and look what we've done to them. Our elders always respected the grizzly bear job description, the birch tree job description, the butterfly job description, the squirrel job description. They are the ones that purify your water, your food, everything we eat and drink.

If fracking is going to allowed in the Yukon, I feel the fracking should be set up first at the Yukon Legislature building, second at Sandy Silver's, Darrell Pasloski's — and if they can live with it for 20 years, we'll allow it. They are not allowed to move. They are not allowed to sell out.

Thank you.

Chair: The Committee is going to recess for 15 minutes now. There may be some folks who want to come in at noon, at lunch hour, so we certainly want to wait to give that opportunity to some people.

Fifteen minutes, please. Thank you.

Recess

Chair: Welcome back. We're going to call on a couple of speakers who have presented but would like an opportunity for five more minutes each.

Sebastian Jones, please.

Mr. Jones: Thank you. Most of the arguments you have heard here, and elsewhere, no doubt, against the idea of hydraulic fracturing have listed arguments related to the environment, climate, society, people and wildlife. I am quite sure you must have heard arguments in favour of fracking or you wouldn't even be bothered to go around and do all of this work.

The arguments in favour of fracking are unlikely to have been using the environment or effects on fish and wildlife as a reason to go fracking. They are generally related to money — the amount of money that can be generated through hydraulic fracturing. I would like to talk a little bit about that right now.

It's easy to be swayed by the visions of huge amounts of wealth that could be generated through hydraulic fracturing. The amounts of money that are bandied about by advocates of fracking, especially down in northern B.C. and next door to us, are staggering — like multiple billions of dollars of revenue for a government. It's a tremendous amount of money. It's enough to make me go goofy. It's an unbelievable amount of money.

The costs associated with those revenues, however, are equally staggering. For example, it costs billions of dollars to rebuild the roads that will be destroyed by thousands of heavy trucks trundling up and down them every day. I didn't pull the word "billions" just out of the air. Billions is the amount of money that came from the Texas Department of Transportation when they were addressing their legislature in Texas, talking about how they were going to try to repair roads destroyed by fracking trucks.

Yukon government's Department of Energy, Mines and Resources in their testimony to this Committee spoke of who is responsible for paying for roads impacted by hydraulic fracturing, and those costs reside within the Yukon government. The industry might be responsible for building its all-season roads to its drilling pads, but it is the government that has to pay for maintaining public highways, like, for example, the Alaska Highway or the Dempster Highway, that are going to get — for want of a better word — destroyed by thousands of heavy trucks trundling up and down them every day.

That's one set of billions of dollars that could detract from the potential billions associated, coming in from fracking. The other set of costs that I think are associated with fracking and are direct monetary outflows is even more serious, and it's not closed-ended. These are the legacy costs associated with old projects, projects that have shut down — things like Faro, things like Mount Nansen. The king of them all is not actually in the Yukon — it's in Yellowknife — and that's the Giant Mine.

Somebody earlier talked about how we tend not to plan for anything more than 15, 20 years at the very most, and all too often our plans are just related to the lifespan of a legislature — you know, no more than five years. For the remediation of these large mines, like Faro and the Giant Mine, we have been forced to look at time frames in the hundreds of years, if not indefinite. To take the example of the Giant Mine in Yellowknife, there is no prospect of ever having finished dealing with that operation and it's going to cost millions of dollars a year forever. What the heck does "forever" mean, and how much does that add up to?

Faro is 500 years. That's what it says in their remediation plan — 500 years of millions of dollars a year. This adds up to billions of dollars really quickly.

Inevitably, with an operation associated with the size of hydraulic fracturing, there will be billions of dollars associated with it. The reason why Yukon isn't bankrupt paying for operations like Faro is because they are the responsibility of the federal government. Since devolution, Yukon has assumed responsibility for these kinds of costs. Future costs — like the ones, for example, that we had to pay — \$2 million to just recently to remediate an oil well that was drilled up in Eagle Plains by Exxon back in the early 1960s — are borne by Yukoners, not by the federal government.

Should this Committee come down on the pro side, you will have been responsible for committing all of us and future generations of Yukoners to pay for cleaning up the inevitable messes associated with hydraulic fracturing.

Hydraulic fracking is an incredibly expensive operation. It's expensive for companies to perform. Companies are losing money down south — hydraulic fracturing. Quotes from — the chairman of Exxon has said that they are losing their shirts on hydraulic fracturing. This is down south, where they have a lot more infrastructure than we do here. So if it's expensive to something down south, it's going to be a lot more expensive up here.

Just to conclude: you would be doing, not only the environment and Yukoners, but also the industry, a favour by not allowing fracking here — by recommending against introducing hydraulic fracturing to the Yukon. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Jim Taggart.

Mr. Taggart: Thanks for allowing me to speak briefly again. You have heard a pretty consistent message — I would almost say a unanimous message — this morning that certainly the residents who are here today and the community are opposed to hydraulic fracturing.

It really is more of a question: I was wondering how you address and consider and give weight to public views and public opinion like you have heard today? The reason I ask is that during one of the last big public consultations in the Yukon for the Peel watershed plan, the Yukon government stated quite clearly that numbers don't matter, it's not a popularity contest. How do you reconcile that view with the need to address the concerns that we have raised today?

Chair: While I appreciate your question, obviously I can't answer that question and I don't think anybody else on the Committee could at this time either. I have said already that we have a deliberation process that we'll have to go through. The Committee is mandated to provide one or more recommendations to government, and it is up to government — whichever government that may be — to make a decision on the matter. Thank you.

Does any other person wish to speak?

Please state your name again for the record.

Mr. Mosure: My name is Jerry Mosure.

Just on that point that was brought up about the infrastructure: we basically only have on road in and out of the territory — the Alaska Highway. There is no other way, if we are going to drive, that we can get from Dawson to Vancouver. We have the odd option once you get to Watson Lake, obviously, of going down the Cassiar.

My understanding is those wells — each well uses up toward 2,000 trucks per well. Most well areas are like a thousand well pads. You're taking 200,000 loads of trucks into every area. I can't imagine what that would do to the Dempster or the Klondike Highway.

The Klondike Highway this year, I think, is the worst it has ever been from the extra traffic that went to Old Crow and up to Inuvik for that highway between Inuvik and Tuk. I don't think it has ever been this bad. Part of it was due to just years of neglect. Anybody who has travelled it, it's as bad as it has ever been — if you can imagine multiplying that.

Somewhere in the paper I read that to resurface it now would be upward of around \$60 million.

Unidentified Speaker: (inaudible)

Mr. Mosure: — \$100 million.

Unidentified Speaker: (inaudible)

Mr. Mosure: That's where I read it. Like was said here, when you're talking billions of dollars, all of a sudden, that's enticement, right? \$100 million to rebuild a highway would probably fit into that budget that the oil companies would bring in from fracking — but yeah, it would be ongoing forever.

The other thing that Badenhorst from Fort St. John pointed out is what some of the impacts were to health care. People there can't even get a doctor. They're waiting for hours and hours in emergency rooms because the health care in Fort St. John is pushed to the max.

The cost — again, 90 percent of the money goes to 10 percent of the people, so everything goes up. Property goes up, rent goes up, then 90 percent of the people are having trouble finding residences and dwelling. Their cost for rent has gone up — everything — clothing, gasoline. Along with that, he points out the crime — the addictions have gone up. There's way more, he pointed out, with drunk driving, et cetera, et cetera.

He said for us to wait, that the natural gas wasn't going anywhere. Why not sit and wait and see what happens? Let them be an example for us. I think that was pretty near my

only point. You pointed out something else to me — did I miss it?

Anyway, you've already been reported on. You were all sitting at the same time that those people were there. The only other thing I wanted was John Hogg, when he was questioned on well integrity. He said — and I got the feeling that might have been the only honest thing he said — was that he figured maybe two generations. Wellheads — you can point out that it's two miles deep, but there's cement and casing all the way down to it, and then it's plugged off. Well deterioration, as was pointed out, is going to happen. It's going to happen after probably one generation, two generations. Any seismic activity, that cap comes off — I would think it would be like a bottle of champagne opening up. Let alone, where is it going to go when it's in there under pressure?

They can guarantee it for two generations. That's not a legacy or a footprint I hope we leave. We're going to leave this problem to our grandchildren and our grandchildren's grandchildren.

That's about it. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

I guess there's nobody who just joined us for lunch, is there? Does anybody wish to speak who has not presented to the Committee?

All right. Can we break for five minutes, please?

Recess

Chair: We're back. I would ask the Committee members to resume their seats please.

Does any person wish to address the Committee who has not already presented?

Please state your name for the record.

Mr. Vassallo: My name is Jason Vassallo and I'm a Nova Scotia resident. This is my second summer coming up here to Dawson City. I plan on calling this place home eventually. I would love to raise children here and create a family and call this home. I really hope that — I've seen it in Nova Scotia; I've seen it in New Brunswick; I've seen the devastation that this creates. Yes, you say, "Oh, it will be good for, you know, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years," but for a lifetime, these things will not go well. There is no way that you can do this clean, that you can do it right, and I think you all know that. I hope that you will take this into consideration and understand that you're creating a war, not only with the community, but with the animals as well. This will not be an easy process if this does go through, just so you know.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Is there anyone else?

Please state your name for the record.

Mr. Maletta: My name is Brennan Maletta. I wasn't expecting to speak today but I feel that I'm here, I should. I've travelled all around Canada and I've seen all the different environments that this country has to offer. One of the reasons I keep finding myself back up in the Yukon is that you get a

sense the land is still alive here. It's not protected within a park surrounded by, you know, the slow crawl of parking lots and strip malls. To want to destroy that seems short-sighted. The benefit you will get from fracking will be temporary and then what will be lost won't be able to be brought back again in any of our lifetimes.

I think that's just something that we should think about. I don't have the answer but go out into the forest — it's easy — so that you can do a day hike and be in the middle of nowhere. Sit quiet for a bit and kind of listen to the silence and think if you still want to continue with the fracking. That's it.

Chair: Thank you very much.

I would like to thank the people of Dawson City for participating so fully in this process. We appreciate it. We appreciate the comments that we've heard today. Certainly, we'll give it every consideration with the other information that we've heard.

Again, I thank you very much. The Committee will be carrying on its public hearings the week of the 9th and 10th of July in the areas of Pelly and Faro, and in that area, and ultimately in Whitehorse at the end of September — I believe that was. September for Whitehorse, Haines Junction and Carcross.

Thank you very much. We appreciate the hospitality we've seen here. You know, I love Dawson City; keep up the good work. Thank you very much. This hearing is adjourned.

The Committee adjourned at 12:35 p.m.