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SELECT COMMITTEE REGARDING THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

Public Hearings: Evidence

Monday, July 7, 2014 — 7:30 p.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: Lee Carruthers
Peter Kazda
Murray Hampton
Russell Guspie
Dale Gibson
Kitty Sperling
Hartwig Schaupp
Russell Guspie
Katy Peeling
Gerald Erlinger
Lucy Moreira

EVIDENCE**Faro, Yukon****Monday, July 7, 2014 — 7:30 p.m.**

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Good evening everyone. Before we get started, I just want to remind folks that there's coffee, water and some snacks at the back. Please feel free to help yourself at any time.

I would like to now 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 of the Committee members. I am Patti McLeod. I am the Chair of the Committee and I am the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Watson Lake.

Mr. Silver: Hi, I am Sandy Silver, the MLA for Dawson City and the Leader of the Yukon Liberal Party.

Mr. Tredger: Good afternoon. I am Jim Tredger. I am the MLA for Mayo-Tatchun. I am honoured to be here on Kaska traditional territory in the Town of Faro. This area has always been very hospitable to me and I am looking forward to hearing your opinions and your thoughts on hydraulic fracturing and helping us make the decisions that we have to make. Thank you very much for coming out.

Ms. Moorcroft: Good evening. I am Lois Moorcroft. I am the MLA for Copperbelt South. I am the NDP Official Opposition critic for the Department of Justice, Advanced Education and Highways and Public Works. I am pleased to be here in Faro again and on Kaska territory. I look forward to hearing from you this evening. Thank you.

Mr. Elias: Good evening. It's a pleasure to be in Faro again. I've been here several times throughout my life, one of them being — playing in the Father Rigaud hockey tournament back when I was a little munchkin. I was also here for the select committee on the *Smoke-free Places Act*. It's good to be back here and it's good to see so many people come out and to hear your views on hydraulic fracture stimulation. Thank you for coming.

Did I say my name? Darius Elias from Old Crow.

Chair: Thank you very much. With us is Allison Lloyd, who is the Clerk to the Committee; Dawn Brown, who is the back at the registration table helping us out with logistics; and of course, 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 our website.

Finally, the third stage of the Committee's work is gathering input from the Yukon public, from First Nations, stakeholders and stakeholder groups. This is the purpose of today's hearing and, of course, the rest of the hearings that we'll be holding in several more Yukon communities.

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 of the information that 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 is the time allotted for the Committee to hear from Yukoners.

Normally, what we've been doing in other hearings is allowing five minutes per presentation. At this time, I have only two names of presenters so we're going to waive the five-minute rule on that. We're here for three hours. If you would like to present your opinion to the Committee, we are asking that you register at the registration table so that we can call you up as your name comes up or, failing that, we of course would invite you at the end to just come to the table and give us your name then.

I want to welcome everyone to this hearing and I look forward to hearing from the good people of Faro. I would just remind you to turn off your cellphone please. I guess I should remind you that everything you say at this hearing will be transcribed and recorded and put onto the public record. Thank you.

Now we're going to proceed with our first presenter. Lee Carruthers, please.

Mr. Carruthers: I don't have an awful lot to say. I'm sure you guys have heard a lot of the evidence about fracking — potential harm to aquifers, ground-level destruction of the environment, the heavy truck traffic on the highways, the high energy input for every unit of energy we get out of the resulting gas.

Basically, hydraulic fracturing is scraping the sludge off the bottom of the oil barrel. It is the last desperate measure to extract fossil fuels from the ground. It has pretty well been demonstrated it's a highly destructive process. The fugitive emissions from the process were recently found to be up to 1,000 times the levels reported by the fossil fuel companies. We know about the potency of methane as a greenhouse gas. Somewhere — it's debatable, depending on the time frame used, but it ranges from about 10 to 100 times the potency of CO₂. So when this stuff escapes into the environment, it's very destructive to the climate. There are — the recent

Stanford study and the Cornell study — these have all pretty well demonstrated that this is not good practice.

My main point here is that we shouldn't be wasting our time on this. The rest of the world is rapidly moving forward on alternative energy sources — clean energy sources such as wind, solar, tidal power, wave power, geothermal power, pumped hydro. There are many other options to us to pursue.

It has also been very clearly demonstrated that those energy sources create far more employment than fossil fuel extraction. Many, many more jobs come out of those processes. In the Yukon here, we have a very rich environment for exploiting those sources. My main point here is why are we wasting our time and energy destroying our environment — our relatively pristine Yukon environment which has a very high value as wilderness? That value is going up every day as the wilderness disappears everywhere else in the world. If we're going to let these people loose to lay cut lines and pipelines and roads — the huge networks of roads and drill pads that go in through the fracking process — we're just throwing away our future here.

We should be diverting our energies to exploiting clean energy sources. They're there. The rest of the world is doing it. Canada is rapidly becoming a dinosaur in the energy field. There are countries — Germany has one state that is anticipating being 100-percent clean-energy-sourced by — I think it was 2015. This is happening now all over the world. People are doing massive clean energy projects to supply their energy needs.

We've got a couple of governments in the Yukon and in Canada that are standing on their heads for the fossil fuel industry. They're riding around in their pockets and they are pushing for more fossil fuel exploitation. Meanwhile, the rest of the world is moving on. We have to think about our children and our grandchildren and their future. With a ruined climate, there's not going to be a great future for them. We can stop this right now and move on to other sources.

We're becoming the laughingstock of the world the way we are pursuing and digging out fossil fuels. It's time that Canada and the Yukon wake up and join with the rest of the world and create a world that uses clean energy sources. It's really a simple thing.

It generates so much employment. That's not even an argument that it's going to ruin the economy. Major international organizations such as the World Bank are now endorsing the fact that we can deal with climate change, get into clean energy sources and still maintain the economy and probably improve the economy. The costs of not pursuing that are going to be very high and that has been quantified as well by those organizations.

This is not light stuff. This is very important, and we shouldn't even be wasting our time talking about these outdated, bottom-of-the-barrel processes to get a little more gas to run our cars or run our generators. It's really foolish. So I hope you think about this. Thanks.

Chair: Thank you very much.

I would like to ask Peter Kazda to come up please. Whenever you're ready, please.

Mr. Kazda: My name is Peter Kazda and I live here in Faro for over 22 years. I have to say, it is one of the things which really touched me when I came in Canada, especially here in Yukon, was that beautiful nature and waters we have here. It's something so unique that you barely can find anywhere on the world. It's nothing like that anywhere, even if you look far away in Russia or something — really abundant places — but there is nothing like here. This one, it's so unique, so beautiful. We have so many animals here and untouched forests — it's gorgeous, gorgeous nature around. This is like a treasure what we should save, and we should keep it, because this one, if we would keep it so pure and so well, like we have it so far, this one would be like a diamond on the world. People would come here and have a look. This is so safe and beautiful and gorgeous. Why you would let somebody like these huge companies come and ruin our stuff here? They do — they will do that. They don't care about us. They don't care about the nature. They don't care about anything else. They care about money — about profit.

They would come and probably say, "You will have some drops of money from this huge pocket what we are going to made here", but as soon as — they're going to poison the water and make — and accidents always happen — none, any industry cannot go everything 100-percent pure, and fracking definitely is not 100-percent pure — and we are risking getting polluted water.

Water is our best thing we have. Pure water — without water, wouldn't be anything. Wouldn't be healthy people, wouldn't be animals, wouldn't be trees — wouldn't be anything here. Why we want to kill everything? Just for what? For some people come over and just make some kind of profit from this, and after that they wrap it up and go home and leave us here with a whole whack of mess behind, like what's happened before?

Fracking, it's really bad. I read lots of things about it. Of course do a lot of — they try to do some procedures and try to make it safe and try to make it whatever, but it doesn't work. If these companies are so keen to get this oil and gas, and they making billions of dollars every day, why they wouldn't come with something — develop something — which is absolutely environmentally friendly, which wouldn't harm anything, which wouldn't poison anything, which would keep everything so clean and good and keep this beauty for us?

As soon as they going to come and start slashing this forest and breaking everything, that would have a so big impact on all that nature that it's never been same any more. If you would keep it — our Yukon — clean and beautiful, the people from all world would come here and we would — in the future, we would make much more money on the travel business and showing our beauty around. We still would have something so beautiful and people would come and say, "Wow, why we were so silly to let them ruin our part, when somebody was smart enough to step up and say, 'No, we don't want you here.'" And we should have same beauty in our part.

And now everybody is gone and jobs are gone too, and our countries are ruined and look at that, Yukon is beautiful and pure. They have fish, they have animals, they have everything. They have hiking spots. They have trees. They have something what we don't even think about. You can climb on the mountains and you can drink from the creeks there. Why not? Because it's so pure. There is no contamination, no destroy everything like they did in other countries.

Why we wouldn't be smart? Why we want to listen these guys just because they are going to come and just waving with some bills and things? We can make money a different way. We don't need this one. Fracking is not the way how should we develop the Yukon — definitely not. There is hundreds other things how we can money here. If these people want to make this horrible thing and somebody else let them, that's their call.

Don't let them come here and destroy our beauty here. This is all we have. As soon as we lose that, we lose everything. We wouldn't have pure air, we wouldn't have anything left. This is so, so precious and so fragile. If you look at everywhere else on the world — they have trouble from Europe to Asia to South America — USA especially — with fracking. They have so many troubles everywhere you look. Why we need the troubles here? Don't we have enough to clean up the mess from the mines when they didn't have any plans — anything before to be responsible for the mess they did before? Why we wouldn't learn from this and just stay back and don't even try to get in the mess like that — even worse we have. We spending millions of dollars every year for fixing these old mines, and cleaning the water, and try to step ahead and stop any contamination — everything what was done already. Why we have to do more?

I think now it's time to think about it. I really ask you to think hard about that and I am pretty sure you did. This one is not the way how we should live here — with all destroyed there. This is why we here, because 99 percent people here — maybe 100 percent people here — love it here because of Yukon, how it is. If you would let them in, it's never been same. It will be just worse and worse, and we're going to pay in long term so big price it never, ever fix again.

I think that's all I can say for now. Thank you very much for listening to me, and I hope you're going to feel something true from my speech. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Murray Hampton, please.

Mr. Hampton: The thing that bugs me about a lot of this is that it's "not in my backyard." We all drive vehicles. We all use gas and oil — gas and, okay, not natural gas, because we don't have a pipeline around, but we all use propane — or most of us, anyway. I use propane at home in my barbeque and I use charcoal when I'm cooking elsewhere. But we have to have fuel from somewhere. There is some opportunity to have some from the Yukon. Most of our coal is not great. Oil is a little bit, I guess, and maybe with fracking we can produce some — maybe.

With fracking, I think for the most part what you are hearing is from people who don't know what they're talking about, and that includes me, because most of us haven't got a clue about fracking. Some of the stuff that's being done is yes, very secretive and they are using very nasty chemicals. The oil companies that are doing it are keeping this very much in-house and not advising anyone else about what they are using in case somebody gets a hand-up on them. So that's not being publicized. Our governments aren't telling us very much, if anything. The non-government organizations are falling into the same trap as our governments around the world. If you can keep your population in fear of something, you can control them. We get a lot of fear-stuff being preached by people who have picked up on that method. So that part of it bothers me.

Economic development, okay — I mean, I like it here. I've been here a very long time — longer than anyone else in this room for sure. I stay here because I like it. There are lots of animals wandering about that I can look at now and again. I'm not a hunter, but if I were, well, there's dinner ready. They are there and I appreciate the fact that they are there and I enjoy them. Things are green; I like that.

Fracking — whether it's going to ruin that, I don't know. Some of our geology here probably does not relate to being fracked. Probably there would be no point in it, but there is fracking and fracturing. A lot of fracking is done with water and sand. Well, okay, so you are disturbing things and you may create some tremors or whatever. Most of it has been done a long, long way down in the earth. It's probably not that much of a shakeup. Nasty chemicals — of course nobody is in favour of spreading nastiness around. We got a lot of that we don't need already. So I have very mixed feelings about — I can't say I am for or against, because I don't know what the heck we're talking about.

It wasn't too many years back that fracking was done with nitroglycerine — about 75 years ago or something like that. When oil wells were first being drilled — vertical wells — nitroglycerine was used to break open the zones and let the oil run more free, which is not a delicate substance to deal with. A lot of people were killed on the rigs. That's not happening so much. I am sure there's accidents, but you don't hear of too many people being killed with hydraulic fracking, so maybe the technology has improved a little bit in that respect.

Of course, now we're drilling thousands of metres deeper than they were back then and doing stuff a lot further down with horizontal drilling, which is — I've been around drilling a lot in my life and horizontal drilling is still a bit of a mystery to me is how they can steer those bits around corners and all that sort of stuff. By doing that, they are getting a lot more oil out of a lot of places where we depleted the field years ago — got maybe 10 percent of the oil out — and now we're back there with horizontal drilling in the same field, same rock, same everything, same wells in a lot of cases and getting a lot more oil out.

Yes, there are some people saying that a lot of damage is being done, but a lot of that is spooky stuff in a way. They are

saying that it is doing this and doing that, but there's not a whole bunch of proof about a lot of things being done. I haven't heard of too many cases where oil companies are being taken to court and sued and raked over the coals and having to go bankrupt to pay off fees for bad things they've done. So I just don't know about that — how much bad things are being done. I understand the idea and for sure, if the wells are leaking around the casing and whatnot higher up, that is for sure a huge danger. But the deep stuff — I don't know. I have not heard any reports or anything saying how it is.

As I say, what bugs me the most is people being told what's what and there's no proof that that is what it is or what is happening. It's a scare tactic that — I just don't like that. I don't like it from the government. I don't like it now from the NGOs. It's a bad thing. Before that, we had religious groups doing it. Well, I guess we still got that. But it's a control thing. I don't think that's very good for society.

I don't want to see the Yukon chopped up with a bunch of gridlines across it. I've put enough in, in my life, of my own. I am not happy about having done that, but it was, again, the way that things were done at the time and the rules that were in place. That's not great.

But as far as the big bad things that have happened, there's nobody in this room right now that could be here if it wasn't for the mine. Yes, they got a mess up there. Yes, there's a big taxpayer expense, but yes, the tax authority took a tremendous amount of money out of this place over the period of 30 years, so I'm not too concerned about who is paying what for what there.

As I was saying, no one would be in this room would be here now if it wasn't for that mine. The ones who live here, for the most part — I assume they all are — if they didn't like it here, they wouldn't be here. We love it here. Not one of us would be here if it wasn't because of that mine, even though yes, we don't like people messing up things around. We don't want our backyard messed up. On the other hand, we've got to have fuel. So somewhere there's got to be balance.

I think what we have to do is establish proper criteria for whatever. I don't know where that's going to come from, because I don't think anyone has come up with the science at the moment to say, "Well, okay this way of fracking is the way it should be done in this particular type of rock. If you got this type of rock it is at this depth, if it's that, it's something else." I don't think that has been done. The oil companies are experimenting with it all the time but it's hard to get good data out of an oil company. Why would they? Why would they give it to somebody else to take advantage of it and beat them on the next job? But somehow, that has to come out. I think the proper criteria should be established and we should stop fighting shadows and start dealing with real stuff.

Sure, when you say people around the world are doing this, that and the other thing — well, I've done a lot of travelling. Some would say too much, but I enjoy it, so I do a lot of it. I've been nowhere in the world where there's running clean, green machines. Everybody is using oil and gas. If they are nice and clean, where they are buying it from isn't so

clean. Germany was mentioned. They are doing a fine job on some things, way ahead on — they were way ahead on solar until it became uneconomical, the way they were doing it. They cut back on that. They've stopped all their nukes, which I don't think is probably practical or will last all that long. They use a tremendous amount of gas and most of it has come from Russia. That's not coming out of the ground without drilling some holes in it and breaking some rock. So, yes, they are trying to be clean, but they are still buying the gas from Russia. There's a big concern about when that's going to cross Ukraine and all that, but that's where it's coming from.

That applies pretty well around the world. If the country itself is not producing, they are getting it from somebody else. Somebody has to drill a hole in the ground to get it. I can't think of anywhere that's — some of the ones that are doing the most in the clean and green are the ones that have done a tremendous amount with oil in the past. The Arab Emirates are tremendous on green. They've got buildings there that are completely self-sufficient and whatnot, but they are using oil money to pay for it.

China is doing way more than anyone else developing green, but they are also the dirtiest production going. But they are so huge and they've got so much activity going on, even though they are doing the most in the green, it's still not much to what they are consuming and how dirty the rest of their system is. Around the world — I don't care where you go — nobody has solved this thing yet. Maybe we're clever enough in the Yukon to come up with a brainwave that will balance things.

Somewhere there has got to be a balance. No matter how many windmills you stick up — which they can be a blight on the scenery too and don't necessarily work that well — although as the years go by, I have found it gets windier and windier in Faro — they are not completely practical. Solar is iffy and expensive. Nuclear is already outlawed in the Yukon, which again, I don't know whether that one is the best law to have kicking around either.

Just as I came up here, I was listening on the radio about the problem of nuclear waste disposal. Nobody has come up with anything close to a solution on that yet, but it is something to be worked on. We can't just go, "Not in my backyard." We can maybe come up with some balance that will work. I don't know. I think we should try to make it on a balance that will work without destroying everything. I certainly don't want to see the country destroyed at all. As I say, I enjoy it all. That's why I am here. Bad things have been done and bad things will continue to be done, but we've got to try to balance it out and make the best of it. I don't think at any point we should be acting from fear in any part of our life, let alone this part that we are talking about tonight.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Does any other person wish to address the Committee at this time? Please state your name for the record.

Mr. Guspie: Yes, it's Russell Guspie. I'm here in Faro.

My question is, What is the hurry? The rest of the world seems to be making — I've not heard much good about fracking. I wish there was somebody that here I could run it back and forth. He could tell me what's good about it and I could tell them what's bad about it. We've heard horror stories. Just recently this week, they are discovering earthquakes in Oklahoma and they think it's a very good possibility it's because of the fracking that's been going on there.

Peter Lougheed was a great man and he said one time in Alberta — he said, "Why do we have to get it all out? What is the hurry?" I think that recently — last week — there was a bunch of important people that came up with a study — it said the same thing: Why are we in such a hurry to get all of those oilsands going? In the article I read, they are even importing workers — bringing them from outside of Canada because they don't have enough in Canada. What is the hurry except for that shareholder and the CEO who need their million-dollar paycheque?

It's a beautiful country up here. I think that if you do allow it, do it on a test basis in one area of this Yukon and see what happens in 20 years. Otherwise, if you let it go, I am sure you will hear stories about a grizzly mother and two cubs dying from drinking out of a pond near a fracking operation and things like that. Maybe 15 caribou up in Old Crow will die from drinking out of a pond where there was a fracking operation. What is the hurry? Let's sit back for 20 years and gather more and more data because I have not heard anything good about this operation yet. Okay?

Chair: Thank you very much. I think maybe we will just take a recess for 15 minutes. Maybe folks can do a little chatting around, and maybe after that some other people would like to sit down and talk with us. So, 15 minutes. Thanks.

Please remember, there is food and drinks.

Recess

Chair: Okay folks. We're going to get rolling again here. We didn't receive any new names over the break. I want to ask again if there are any members of the public who would like to address the Committee?

Please state your name for the record.

Mr. Gibson: Yes, I'm Dale Gibson. A few questions that's on your paper here, and I don't know if any of you folks can answer, but in your 70 hours that you've got put in on this Committee, have you come up with any suggestions or solutions?

Chair: No, sir.

Mr. Gibson: You haven't?

Chair: We are not finished our community consultations yet.

Mr. Gibson: Okay.

Chair: Sorry, I shouldn't call them "consultations." They're public hearings. We have a number of communities yet to go — Whitehorse being one of them — so, no, the

Committee is not in a position to make any kind of statement or recommendation at this time.

Once we finish with the community hearings and should we feel that we have all of the information that we can get or that we wish to have, then the Committee will start its deliberations as to what recommendations we wish to make to government. Then the government — and of course, we're mandated to submit a report by the end of this fall sitting which traditionally has wound up in mid-December. The government will decide how and when or if to move forward.

Mr. Gibson: Okay. Another question I have is: On existing gas wells that are sour — you know, they have signs up "Do not enter" because the gas is odourless and you know, two breaths and you're dead — and they post it: "Do not enter." But our Yukon animals can't read. Do they fence these areas off?

Chair: Again, we don't know how that would be managed. Of course, you know that Yukon doesn't have any specific regulation to deal with hydraulic fracturing. There are regulations to do with oil and gas wells. Any project that is approved for a go-ahead, of course, goes through an existing process called YESAB — the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board. They're the ones that would do a consultation and make recommendations to government as to which mitigations should be in place or indeed, if the project should go ahead or not.

Mr. Gibson: Okay. I thank you.

Chair: Okay. Thank you, sir.

Ms. Sperling: My name is Kitty Sperling. I want to thank you for coming to Faro. I want to thank everybody here for coming to this hearing. I think it's really important that we all have our voices heard. I think it's particularly important at this point in time to talk about hydraulic fracturing.

I just want to address the fact that I'm not an expert. I don't profess to be an expert at all. I want to touch on the fact that I'm suspect when people call themselves "experts." I'm suspect because of drilling down into their backgrounds, what's — do they have an agenda? Is it something that's a pure knowledge that they're imparting? I find it interesting that you've been exploring and trying to gain an understanding of hydraulic fracturing. You have a couple of pages of people that you've talked with and you have something on the website as well. I think it would be interesting to find out backgrounds of the folks that were talking and that you have knowledge of so that at least I would be able to make an informed decision about where their knowledge came from. I think that would be important to have as well, and sort of a bio or something, you know. That's one thing.

I want to thank everybody for speaking. It is quite difficult to come up and speak. I do want to acknowledge that there are some voices that perhaps will not be able to be heard at this Committee.

As I understand, I was in the Ross River community meeting and I learned there that there are some individuals there that were unable to impart their information because of

their employment and their employment was dictating how their opinions will be received or perceived or presented. I find that in my limited background that even people who work for YG can have some — can be silenced in terms of presenting an open and honest opinion about certain things to do with YG. Perhaps I just want to acknowledge that maybe those voices will not be heard — all voices will not be heard.

That kind of links me with what Murray had talked about in terms of “not in my backyard”, because I really think that I don’t want it in my backyard. I wholeheartedly agree that it’s not going to be in my backyard. But what I can envision is the whole of the Yukon — people linking together and saying “not in my backyard” and then linking that to the whole of the rest of Canada — the whole of the rest of North America — the whole of the rest of the world — and saying, “not in my backyard” and then that’s it. Where does the government go with that? It’s not in our backyard.

I respect the fact that I’m not talking scientifically at this point in time, but I do think that it’s important to speak from the heart about these matters and that it’s not about who has the best knowledge, the almighty story, the one thing. I think that what you’re doing is incredibly important because you’re linking stories together of people’s knowledge and I think that’s very valuable.

I think that — while I was sitting there, all I could think about was David Bowie’s song, *Changes*. You know, we’re looking at the same thing: oil and gas, propane, natural gas. We’ve been doing this forever, okay, and we’re not looking at the alternative sources out there. Quite frankly, the information that I’ve read has shown that there are electric cars, there are wind turbines, there are geothermal — just like was mentioned earlier by individuals. There are alternative sources out there. I think Einstein said — I can’t remember what the phrase is — but if we think the same way, we’ll never get out of this problem. Bad phrasing, but it sort of is what he kind of said. I think we’re still thinking in the same way and we’re not going to get out of the problem.

The fact of the matter is that fossil fuels have gone by the dinosaur. It’s gone. We need to think differently. We need to have a government that has a vision of how to step forward. I mean, we’re talking 10 years, 20 years. We’re talking time, but right now, we have technology that can be built upon and we’re not looking at that. Why is that, you know?

For me, the “why” boils down to economics; it boils down to money. By God, you can’t drink money, you know. You can’t eat money — although I suppose you could. That would be kind of weird. How can we afford not to look at alternative sources? How can we afford not to look at different ways of being, different ways of exploring energy? Just because we don’t have an economically viable electric car or a way to heat our houses without using diesel — doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist. Why aren’t we looking at those other ways of being — those other energy sources?

The Yukon has an opportunity, like everybody has mentioned — the Yukon has an opportunity, because of our small nature, of being able to experiment with those things.

Somebody had mentioned Germany. They’re doing it right now. Why is not possible to take a smaller community like Faro and creating sort of an opportunity of having Faro be sustainable in its energy source? Because if Faro can be sustainable at 380 people, that can branch out eventually, you know, to other communities.

Rather than thinking of this giant big picture of — my God, how are we going to get the whole of the Yukon under, you know, green power — whatever you want to call it — renewable energy — any type of other energy than oil and gas and natural gas and those things that are by the way of the dinosaur — how are we going to do that if we don’t start somewhere? I’m not hearing that we’re starting anywhere other than backward — the same. You know, it’s time to change. David Bowie was right. I mean, changes are happening. We need to go and explore other ways of being.

The one thing that people are saying in this town that I’m hearing is that the land is really important. We are mostly comprised of water. We’re drinking water. If we don’t drink water, we die, right? If even one drop of water that goes down in that pipeline or pit or whatever you want to call it — down to be used as part of the hydraulic fracturing — if that comes back contaminated — which I’ve been hearing it does — if there’s no way of cleaning that water — which I’ve heard that it cannot be cleaned fully; we can’t be assured that it’s going to be clean — then how are we going to survive? I don’t know what the answer to that is.

I just think that when we talk about risks and benefits, the benefits are economic, they’re money. They’re based on corporation; they’re based on an old way of thinking. When I look at the risks, how can we possibly take those risks? How can we possibly take even one drop of water and put it down there and risk that it’s not going to come back in a clean fashion? Quite frankly, if an expert tells me that they can do it, I want to know their background. I want to know who is paying their wage. I want to know if there’s any agenda connected with that and it’s very difficult to find that.

I want to challenge the Committee to go back and say to the powers that be that we need to think differently. We need to think in a way that is — where we’re all linking arms going “not in our backyard” and then forging ahead and finding out how it is that we’re going to enjoy that backyard for this generation and seven generations down the road. Because it’s not just me — I’ve got grandkids. Everybody around here has kids or connected to family. It’s not just about one voice saying this. The voice is connected to the elders. It’s connected to the past and the future all at once. We have to think with that responsibility and that respect. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much.

Does any other person wish to address the Committee? Please state your name for the record.

Mr. Schaupp: Hello. My name is Hartwig Schaupp. I’m not really good at public speaking but I try to give it my best. Just sitting here listening to what people say, you know, it just gave me food for thought and a few thoughts came to my mind.

I've been in Faro since '87 so I've seen that mine start up, go down, start up, go down, you know. We've got that big hole in the ground up there that's being paid for — I don't know many — 100 years, 450 or whatever — with government money because the guys that made the big money up there — they're all gone, you know. They're in Toronto — wherever they might be. They made their big killing, you know, and they're gone and as soon as the company goes belly up, nobody is responsible any more. They made their million bucks a year — maybe three. They live a good life and here the hole is. I can't really say, you know. There's been people that made money. They made their living. I was working there; I did well.

But another thing is: who is really benefiting from that fracking? Is it the people of the Yukon or is it just those corporations? It's only my opinion what I say here because I'm not an expert. It's only an opinion, and you know what they say about those.

But who is making the real money off that and in whose interest is this going to be done? Is it going to be done in the interest of the Yukon people — of the people that live here? Or is it only done in the interest of the big corporation? I believe it's only done for the money, you know. In Germany, they got a saying, "Money governs the world" and I believe that. The more — the older I get, the more I watch, the more I see — what really runs this world is money.

Speaking here is good. I have a voice — I can speak. But how much weight does my voice have? Does it have the same weight than the guy called a lobbyist that whispers in politician's ears — maybe takes them out to a nightclub or whatever — have a good time — the guys that get paid by the big money people to talk to politicians — I bet his voice has a million times more power than mine. And those are the guys — they only look that Yukon with a big dollar sign — how much can we get out of it? I bet there were contracts in place with Curragh, with Anvil Range — they put so-and-so much money in an account for cleanup — how far did that go? It didn't go very far.

If that happens with the fracking — this mess might be cleaned up or maybe controlled — if something goes wrong with all these things — I'm not an expert, but if something really goes wrong, how are they going to fix that again? But then maybe the Yukon is a good place for that because it's so big, nobody can see.

I work out in the bush in the fall. I'm a guide. I've seen gas drums — thousands of liters — sitting there from 1973, from 1980. Just too expensive to haul them back out — just leave them there. There is lots of big messes out there nobody knows about. Why would we as Yukoners just invite another thing like this come in to the Yukon, destroy things and then get out?

I've been thinking lots about that mine. If that hole would have never been dug and they would have just given people the money that they spend now, when would the point be where we would have been even? What's the benefit and what's the risks?

Of course, we talk here out of emotion. Most of us don't know all the facts. Most of us don't know any facts. How can we get the facts? If we get it from the corporation, it's propaganda 100 percent — outright lies most of the time. I don't trust those guys at all. So we have to educate ourselves, and when it comes down to it we have to make a decision. Are we going to allow it or not?

Lots of things have already been said. It might not affect us. It might affect our children, their children. It might be huge mess that's going to be left over for hundreds of years, just because of the money. I also have to acknowledge I drive a vehicle. It needs gas. But maybe, as already said, maybe there is other ways and maybe the Yukon — it is a beautiful place — there is lots of tourists that come here just to look at it.

I come from a place where they fit 85 million people in a space like the Yukon. Those people come — they pay lots of money just to see something that's not been destroyed. Why would we go ahead and do something like that — just destroy everything just for the money — just for a little short time — 10 years, 20 — what is 50 years in the whole life of the planet? Lots of things — once they are done, it's done — there is no return any more.

So that's been some of my thoughts. Usually I don't like doing that. I'm getting too nervous. I guess I said my few words and that's it.

Chair: Thank you very much. Is there anyone else who would like to address the Committee?

Unidentified speaker: (Inaudible)

Chair: Yes, please. State your name again, please.

Mr. Guspie: It's Russell Guspie. I just wondered, when you finally make a report, will you have consulted with geologists and the like, people that understand? Because my understanding of the whole of the Yukon is that it is not very stable. There are various plates underneath, moving around, that Kluane is moving, I think, five centimetres a year — the mountain range. Will you be consulting geologists that can give you information for your report on the dangers of messing around with these rock formations wherever they are going to do it?

The other thing is that I have been up near Keno. I've seen rockslides. That land is very unstable up there. Again, my question is will your report include professional opinions on what fracking would do underneath the ground? Is it possible to have a volcano form afterwards when they break open the earth or shifting, like they are having in Oklahoma? That is my question.

Chair: I can tell you that the Committee is not made up of experts. Just like everybody else, we are just folks.

Mr. Guspie: I mean, will you be consulting experts before you submit your final report?

Chair: Yes. I can tell you who we have, to date, consulted with. That has been the Alberta Energy Regulator, the Sindre Petroleum Operators Group, Alberta Surface Rights Group, Schlumberger Limited, who is an operator, ConocoPhillips, Alberta Health Services, Alberta

Environment & Sustainable Resource Development, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Cochrane Area Under Siege coalition —

Mr. Guspie: I don't know any of these businesses. My concern is if any of them have a geologist on their crew? Is your report going to contain a report from a geologist here in the Yukon about this country, not the Alberta country?

Chair: We have consulted with our own geology department, along with the Water Board, Department of Environment, the Department of Justice, Energy, Mines and Resources, as I mentioned, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, the Chamber of Commerce energy committee, Yukoners Concerned about Oil and Gas Exploration/Development, Yukon Conservation Society, the chief medical health officer of the Yukon and many, many others.

Mr. Guspie: They are really a bunch of people. The chief medical officer of health can't tell you — and in your report — whether there is going to be an earthquake over at Kluane because they fracked nearby. So I don't know what that has to do with the geologist, but anyway, there was a man I was talking with during the break. He can tell you what is happening in northern Germany where they invented the fracking procedure. The whole north end is falling into the sea as a result of fracking. So I just found this out.

It's very difficult for most of us, I think, not knowing all the details. I would sooner have a pro-fracker here to throw the ball at me so that I could throw the ball back at him. He would probably enlighten me more than what I've read in a newspaper or heard at this meeting. Does that make sense?

Chair: Certainly, and I can assure you and all Yukoners that should the Committee feel that there is a hole in the information we have received, we will fill it before we proceed to give our report to the Legislature.

Mr. Guspie: Okay, thank you.

Chair: Yes, sir. Can we have your name please?

Mr. Carruthers: Lee Carruthers. In the beginning of February, I moved into my small passive-solar-heated house. I haven't burned a watt of electricity or any other fuel to heat that place since. Of course, this is the sunny time of year and so forth, but this stuff works. I have lived on my sailboat for three years. It had a wind generator and it had some solar panels on it. I could quite happily sit out there on the anchor chain for months on end. In the summertime, the sun provided my power. In the winter, the wind provided my power. It works. There is no magic about this. This is nothing special. This has been around for years. As Kitty said, it's time to start thinking differently about energy.

There are all kinds of opportunity out there for alternatives to fossil fuels. As the international climate change panel said, we've got to leave 60 percent of the fossil fuels in the ground or we are in big trouble. It's time we started thinking about other ways to generate our energy. People are doing it all over and it works. Thanks.

Chair: Thank you.

Is there anyone else who would like to speak? Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Peeling: Katy Peeling. She's got my name and address up there. I just felt we didn't have enough girls up here.

I explained to a couple of people I got so mad this afternoon, I nearly lost my voice trying to scream about fracking. I didn't want to scream now or sound emotional, but emotion is about the only thing I can offer. However, there's a little bit of experience involved.

I was in southern Colorado some years ago. Almost 15 years ago, there was a conference there on fracking. One of the reasons I went is that some guys that we had run into were welders on the fracking lines that were being done around there and they kept saying what a mess it was. They couldn't believe that anyone would be doing this, but of course they were doing it for wages, and invited my husband and I out to see one of their little operations. Now, granted, this is 2001-02, so it's not considered to be the modern way of fracking was doing, but these guys were appalled at what they were shoving into the ground and what they were working on. They wanted us to see just how vile it was. Perhaps things have improved since then, but it was pretty impressive at the time.

We went out there on a lark, and were horrified and so forth. A couple of months later, the county had a conference, sponsored by the local college, which was sort of like Yukon College, and the county — the Las Animas County. This conference was held in the Town of Trinidad, Colorado. I am sure you can read all about it and maybe you actually have, I don't know. It involved six or seven states and it was about three or four days of people bringing evidence of what exactly had actually happened, to their horror, in their states where streams had dried up, and they were losing habitat and they were losing animals, birds and water supplies.

Now I assume you have done enough research into what has happened in the western United States with water supplies and you know something about the very involved water rights that go on there, where it's like having your own little ranch, where you buy and lease out the water rights and these things are held by families, and corporations and various things under a huge number of laws for a couple of hundred years — about as long as we've been using oil and gas, which isn't new technology. We really have to get over ourselves here.

The water rights wars that go on in the western United States are pretty amazing. The damage to the habitat is pretty amazing. I was so relieved to get back to Canada because I thought that after all the information that I had heard about this, after everything I had seen, thank God, Canada was doing no fracking. There wasn't any fracking in Canada. Yes, that is "not in my backyard", but it's also learning from somebody else's really horrible experience. Now we are. I just sort of went into shock a couple of years ago when I found out that, my God, it's not only happening all over western Canada, but it's coming to the Yukon. This is insane.

I do feel that emotional about it. It just seems so stupid. I mean, if you are going to drill into the earth, you are not going

to have a perfect hole that you put a perfect pipe into and everything fits. We all know that there are leaks like that. We've got homes and we have got bodies and we know piping leaks. When you think of how much underground water there is compared to just what we see on the surface — I mean, to say nothing of the surface damage, which is incredibly gross. When you have seen it for yourself, you've seen it for yourself. Seeing is believing and I believe, but that was 15 years ago. When you see what is happening there and you realize that all of those underground waters — the rivers that run parallel to our surface rivers and they are underground — why in the hell would we want to pollute that and turn earth into Mars? I do not understand why anything like this needs to be done now or ever — but why now?

Like some of the people have said, it's money for a very short time that goes into somebody's pocket because it is being sold to Asia. It has nothing really to do with us. I don't get the cerebral logic. I don't get the emotional logic. I don't understand the spirit of this at all. If anybody is going to be able to tell you from personal experience what happens when you have something like what we have had up the hill, it's going to be people from Faro. We live with this all the time. Yes, we have 40 or 50 people in the community who have employment for life and maybe their kids as well, trying to clean up. All that is, is a hole. It's a big hole, but it's not a whole series of pipes going into the ground in places where it cannot be monitored. Yes, we have acid runoff up there, but that we can see. As for fear of the unknown, God love Murray, but we need to — we don't need to do this kind of thing now, where we can't see it, where we haven't got a technology that would monitor it, when there are obviously — to the rest of the world — better ways to deal with our lives than what we've done in the last 200 years. Okay? Thank you.

Chair: Thank you very much. Is there any other speaker before the Committee?

In that case, I want to thank the Town of Faro. Oh, please state your name for the record.

Mr. Erlinger: Gerald Erlinger. I don't want to speak, but I will do it. I've heard a lot of interesting things and a lot of good and also a lot of bad things.

All I want to say is that fracking — we are not talking about an energy resource; we are talking about an attitude. Fracking is an attitude for me. There is no doubt that fracking is a bad attitude. There is many studies that prove that fracking is a bad attitude when it comes to our planet and to our future — and to the future of animals and our children and everything — plants, flora and fauna.

I just want to ask you, as the Committee, to wait for the permit of fracking in the Yukon and also oilsands and these evil attitudes, which they are, for another 10 years. It will be all resolved, because we all know — and there was always talking about money — that our money — and every economist will prove that — doesn't have any value any more. We believe in our money and this is the only thing why this money has still a value. But economically, without that,

money is not the thing. It's all about power for a certain kind of establishment. It's not about money.

Secondly, there is an international study, because fracking is not a new energy resource — there's an international study — about 50 regions worldwide where you had fracking the last 15 years and the fracking stopped — and I'm talking about money right now — and property prices dropped at least ninety percent. Nobody wants to live here. So please ask yourself why this is.

Chair: Thank you very much. Is there anyone else?

Sir, up to the microphone, please, and state your name again?

Mr. Guspie: Russell Guspie. Down the road here toward Watson Lake there, you can't get there any more. You can get to Francis Lake, the road is pretty good, but from there down, the trucks have all ruined that road. I am sure that the Yukon government gets royalties from that new operation there. What I can't understand is why they don't put that money back into the road so the guy from Faro can make the shortcut to Watson Lake instead of having to go all the way around. I understand what Murray was saying — that we need gas and oil — but for the time being, there is no hurry. It's coming from Alberta. We can last another 20 years without having to do our own.

I know that the Yukon government wants to switch the generators to natural gas, so I'm sure they are going to be heavily influenced by the ability to draw natural gas out of the Yukon Territory for their own sake, for their own usage.

Anyway, it gets back to what does the Yukon government — if they allow fracking — do with the royalties? How is it going to benefit us? As far as I am concerned, they haven't done a think with the royalties to fix that road from Francis Lake down to Watson Lake.

Okay, that's all.

Chair: Thank you. Just a note about royalties in the gas fields there. The oil fields in southeast Yukon have generated approximately \$46 million which has been distributed to Yukon First Nations.

Yes, ma'am, to the microphone please, and state your name again.

Ms. Peeling: I'm sorry, I should say this again — Katy Peeling. When I was talking about the fracking in Colorado, it just reminded me when he was asking about earthquakes and shifting earth — the conference was called coalbed methane and what deals with that — fracking is the way you get it. Yes, in that part of Colorado, we had what is called an earthquake swarm. It's called a swarm because you get hundreds of small earthquakes. Little old ladies in adobe houses that they've lived in for two or three generations were shaken apart — cracks in the walls and stuff like that — and earthquakes that were certainly monitored by the Colorado Springs — whatever it is — thing, because of that. They put up seismic monitors, and this was all started because of coalbed methane exploration, which was basically fracking. I thought maybe I would just tell you that, so that if somebody cares to look that up, they can look it up.

Chair: Thank you. Is there anyone else?
Please state your name for the record.

Ms. Moreira: My name is Lucy Moreira. I have heard people say that — people who are pro-fracking — that it is cheap. It's cheap resources. It is cheap to bring in. It's cheaper than other things. I would suggest that the cost of that cheap resource is too high. It's just way too high. I don't want to see fracking in the Yukon. I don't want to see fracking anywhere.

What we have here is — well, that's just basically it. The cost is too high. The cost of that cheap is just too high.

Chair: Thank you.

Is there anybody else? Okay, in that case, we really are going to adjourn. I want to thank you all for participating tonight and providing the committee with your comments. I know I speak for all of the Committee that it has been a pleasure to be here. Thank you very much.

The Committee adjourned at 9:13 p.m.