



News Release

BLM, Alaska State Office, Office of Communications
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BLM announces public meeting schedule for Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS

ANCHORAGE – The Bureau of Land Management is engaging communities across Alaska in person to gather relevant comments, concerns and/or issues pertaining to the development of the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The BLM will host meetings in communities in and near the program area and additional meetings in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Utqiagvik and Washington D.C. The meetings in Anchorage and Fairbanks will be livestreamed to reach a broader audience.

At the meetings, the BLM seeks to identify relevant comments, concerns and/or issues that will influence the scope of the EIS and guide its development, including the formation of alternatives to the proposed action within the parameters outlined in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (Tax Act). The complete meeting schedule is available at the project website at www.blm.gov/alaska/coastal-plain-eis.

Those unable to attend one of the meetings are encouraged to participate via BLM's project website, which includes a project area map and frequently asked questions. Comments can be submitted via the project website or email to blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov. BLM will accept comments through June 19, 2018.

“We have already received a substantial amount of input on this project and look forward to these meetings and listening to the concerns people have,” said Acting State Director Karen Mouritsen. “It’s important that we take the time to gather all the relevant issues to guide our environmental analysis of the Coastal Plain. We realize the importance of this place to not only Alaskans, but the nation in its quest to responsibly develop our natural resources and achieve energy dominance.”

Meetings are scheduled in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Washington, D.C. from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Fairbanks meeting will take place May 29 at the Carlson Center at 2010 2nd. Ave., in Fairbanks and the Anchorage meeting will take place May 30 at the Dena’ina Center located at 600 W. 7th Ave. The Washington, D.C. meeting will take place June 15 at the National Housing Center located at 1201 15th St., NW. There will be scheduled speaking spots for representatives

of interested organizations and/or governments. All meetings will afford the public an opportunity to provide input on the process and anyone wishing to provide public comments will need to sign up in person. Public meeting procedures will be available on the BLM Alaska website at www.blm.gov/alaska. The Fairbanks and Anchorage events can be viewed live at www.blm.gov/live. Computers will be available for the public to comment electronically.

Meetings for Kaktovik, Arctic Village, Utqiagvik, and Venetie are as follows:

May 22: Kaktovik – Community Hall – 6:30 p.m.

May 24: Arctic Village – Community Hall – 10 a.m.

May 31: Utqiagvik – Iñupiat Heritage Center – 5 p.m.

June 12: Venetie – Village of Venetie Tribal Hall – 10 a.m.

The Leasing EIS will serve to inform the BLM's implementation of the Tax Act, including the requirement to hold not fewer than two lease sales area-wide. It may also inform post-lease activities, including seismic and drilling exploration, development, and transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain. Specifically, the Leasing EIS will consider and analyze the potential environmental impacts of various leasing alternatives, including the areas to offer for sale, and the terms and conditions (i.e., lease stipulations and best management practices) to be applied to leases and associated oil and gas activities to properly balance oil and gas development with existing uses and conservation of surface resources, and to limit the footprint of production and support facilities on Federal lands to no more than 2,000 surface acres. The area comprising the Coastal Plain includes approximately 1.6 million acres within the approximately 19.3 million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$75 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2016—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 372,000 jobs.