



CoastalPlain\_EIS, BLM\_AK &lt;blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_eis@blm.gov&gt;

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**[EXTERNAL] Scoping Period Comment for Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**1 message

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**zolotukhin-ridgway@comcast.net** <zolotukhin-ridgway@comcast.net>

Fri, Jun 15, 2018 at 9:26 PM

Reply-To: zolotukhin-ridgway@comcast.net

To: blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov

Dear Ms.:

I write to you to express my great opposition to any effort to drill in America's Last Frontier, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. You are charged to create an Environmental Impact Statement for oil and gas leasing in the refuge's biological heart, it's coastal plain. Because oil and gas drilling will despoil one of the last great ecosystems on Earth, I implore you to study the following issues in your EIS:

Impact oil and gas drilling will have on our climate: Air temperatures on the Arctic Refuge have already increased by several degrees and are projected to warm 6° F by 2040, shrinking habitat and food sources. Burning the Arctic Refuge's oil and gas reserves would exacerbate risks to polar bears and other species already struggling with melting sea ice. The EIS should study how oil and gas drilling will impact our climate.

Impact on wildlife of the Arctic Refuge: The EIS should study the impacts oil and gas will have on the hundreds of species that exist at the Arctic Refuge. Between Arctic Refuge and the adjacent Arctic Ocean, one finds 700 kinds of plants, 200 species of birds, 47 mammal species and 42 fish species. No other protected area in the entire circumpolar north has such abundant and diverse wildlife and oil and gas impacts must be studied to understand how this delicate ecosystem will be impacted.

Impact on Wilderness. With two adjacent Canadian National Parks, the Arctic Refuge ecosystem is the largest and wildest protected landscape in North America, affording unparalleled opportunities for those seeking the solace of undisturbed areas and vicariously enjoyed by many who may never personally experience it. Further, President Obama transmitted a Wilderness recommendation to Congress to designate the entire refuge as Wilderness. The EIS should study how oil and gas will impact Wilderness character and the ability for future generations to experience Wilderness areas and proposed Wilderness in the Refuge.

Threatening the Gwich'in Way of Life. The Arctic Refuge is the homeland for the Gwich'in people who have depended on caribou for their subsistence for thousands of years. Drilling in the Arctic Refuge will impact their way of life and threatened their very existence. The EIS must fully study how oil and gas drilling will impact the way of life for the Gwich'in people.

I strongly believe that there are places in our nation that are too important to exploit for short term financial gain. The EIS being prepared by the BLM must address the concerns listed above to show the American people the true impact of drilling for oil and gas in this sacred place.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment

Sincerely,

Erin and Mr. Andrei and Max Zolotukhin-Ridgway  
1849 Yorkshire Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55116-2405