



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Comments on Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS on Oil and Gas Development in the Arctic Coastal Plain, Alaska

1 message

Nancy Gloman <njgloman@gmail.com>
To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Mon, Jun 18, 2018 at 6:53 PM

This proposed action is directed by Congress through the Tax Act and not proposed through an agency initiated, scientifically rigorous evaluation of the need for the action and the impacts of the action on the important and unique resources of the Alaska Arctic Plain. The resources of this area individually and collectively as an important and intact ecosystem necessitate that the Bureau of Land Management determine through the scoping process that the proposal will lead to unacceptable impacts on important resources and must be abandoned before an EIS is prepared. I have been to the Coastal Plain and besides supporting an abundance of wildlife it is a spiritual place--one of those places where you just have to say "no" to development because of the uniqueness and importance of non-oil and gas resources in the area.

The Coastal Plain is the biological heart of the Arctic Refuge and provides important habitat for polar bears, caribou, muskoxen, and hundreds of species of migratory birds that travel from all 50 states and 6 continents. Oil and gas would harm the most important onshore denning habitat for threatened polar bears in the United States, further placing this imperiled species at risk. Oil and gas activities would also further exacerbate climate change, which is already causing temperatures in the Arctic to rise at twice the rate of the rest of the country. Oil and gas activities are completely at odds with the protection of the wildlife and other values in the Refuge, and with the urgent need to

The Coastal Plain is the calving ground for the Porcupine Caribou Herd, an important subsistence resource for the Gwich'in Nation. The Gwich'in people have relied on the caribou for millennia and consider the Coastal Plain to be "the sacred place where life begins." Protecting the caribou is a matter of basic human rights for the Gwich'in. Protection of the herd is one of the original reasons why the Arctic Refuge was set aside, and there is treaty between the U.S. and Canada to protect the herd. Interior needs to gather the best possible scientific information and err on the side of caution to ensure that the herd is fully protected from harmful oil and gas activities.

Interior needs to consider the impacts from all stages of oil and gas, including seismic activities, leasing, exploration drilling, and development, as well as any related infrastructure or other activities. The environmental impacts from oil and gas will extend well beyond the footprint of any actual developments and will harm the wildlife, water, subsistence, and other values the Arctic Refuge was set aside to protect.

In summary, the Arctic Refuge is no place for oil and gas development. Oil and gas activities should not be allowed on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge. This is the single most destructive attack on the wilderness, wildlife, and subsistence resources of a national wildlife refuge in modern history. The Administration is putting politics above protection of one of our most treasured public lands. Rushing into leasing is not what the Refuge deserves or what the law requires. The administration needs to comply with all the important legal protections that are in place to protect caribou, water, subsistence, and other sensitive resources of the Coastal Plain. Therefore, the administration must abandon this proposal.

Sincerely,
Nancy Gloman