



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] EIS Statement for the Arctic Wildlife Refuge1 message

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Wed, Jun 13, 2018 at 11:13 AM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Dear Persons in the position to affect change:

I have been traveling on foot and self propelled watercraft for close to 40 years in the ANWR. I am president of Pack Paddle Ski Corp. We have brought hundreds of people over the years to this remarkable place. In the last year, I was on all 7 continents. ANWR is both one of the most amazing places, most precious and most fragile places I have been. So I am speaking from a place of must greater personal knowledge of our world then most will ever know.

I suppose one could make a case that for the hundreds I have experienced a deep connection and love for this land, that opening it to access for drilling and mining might serve larger numbers.

However I ask, serve the greater numbers in what way? Do we really need more cars, oil and things? Or does our world need to respond in humbleness and respect for the sacred places we have left?

I have seen how one vehicle driving across the tundra can leave scars for years. How easily frightened caribou herds are.

I can only assume that those who would open this land to development have never spent time in it. It is a powerful place. I dont think it is possible to be part of this landscape, to live in it, feel it and then still decide to bring in powerful machines to tear it up.

So I ask you if you are one of those who have the power in your position to alter this course, please, go there, be part of it for yourself. Stand as thousands of caribou walk past, their tendons clicking, their breathe and snorts around you. If you can stand in a moment like that like I have and still believe it is best for us to access with machines this environment, my letter will not help.

However, if you have not had the experiences that I have, I ask you to consider what I am saying about the majesty and beauty of this place. Please leave it unaltered. We are only stewards here. We do not own the earth. Be humble.

I am sorry you are in a position to have the power over the direction of ANWR. It must be a great weight to carry.

Sincerely,

Rick French
President
Pack Paddle Ski Corp