



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

**[EXTERNAL] Attn: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS**

1 message

**Glenna Gannon** <glennagannon@gmail.com>  
 To: blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov

Wed, Jun 20, 2018 at 2:03 AM

I would like to submit the following comments to the scoping of the proposed opening of the Coastal Plain to oil and gas development.

The Arctic Refuge is an iconic wilderness that is sacred to the Gwich'in people and a precious ecosystem for numerous species. Furthermore, our country is at a critical time when we have the opportunity to seek new renewable energy solutions, and become a world leader in a burgeoning economy, rather than engaging in an old one that does not add to our future economic or environmental security. Opening the Refuge for oil and gas leasing would be a step in the wrong direction, and keep our country in the dark ages.

Therefore, I urge you to not open the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas leasing. Instead of moving forward with drilling, we must protect this land, as it is critical to the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the Gwich'in people continuing their subsistence way of life, as they have for generations. There are costs greater than the worth of the oil in the Arctic Refuge; for example, ecosystem services that we don't yet understand the consequences of destroying, and what effect that will have on our climate, ecosystems, and the species and people who depend on them.

The Department of the Interior should be doing more to protect this sacred space, not putting the needs of Big Oil before our communities and ecosystems. We are at a cross-roads, for the three reasons outlined here, I implore you to do everything in your power to protect the Arctic Refuge.

Specific concerns include:

- Habitat destruction, through motorized vehicles such as ATV on sensitive tundra flora.
- The impact of seismic testing on marine mammals, which is known to cause inner ear and brain hemorrhaging in cetaceans: see a well-researched book with resources on how human seismic activity has resulted in thousands of mass-strandings world-wide: <http://warofthewhales.com/>
- And a scientific report on the effects of underwater sound on cetaceans with the use of MRI scanners, which reports the most sensitive range for species, such as the Minke whale is between 40 Hz and 15kHz:

[https://gissserver.intertek.com/JIP/DMS/ProjectReports/Cat2/JIPProj2.4\\_KettenMountain%20MinkeHearingModels\\_2011.pdf](https://gissserver.intertek.com/JIP/DMS/ProjectReports/Cat2/JIPProj2.4_KettenMountain%20MinkeHearingModels_2011.pdf)

- The further melting of permafrost as a byproduct of increased human activity, which is known to release methane, a greenhouse gas, and deleterious effects on the landscape, such as land slides, that block waterways for migrating salmon and other fish species.
- The social, cultural and economic impacts of potential threat to migratory species, such as caribou and birds, on indigenous populations that rely on them. This includes all communities that rely on the species that migrate through this area, including, the Athabaskan, Inuit, Yupik, and those Tribes in the lower 48 that may rely on these species when they have migrated south.

I suggest the following issues to be researched in detail and exhaustively prior to any leasing in the Alaskan Coastal Plain:

- Impact of access including by; air, terrestrial, and marine on species such as, migratory birds, migratory and localized terrestrial species, such caribou and wolves, and to marine mammals.

Sincerely,  
 Glenna Gannon