



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] AK Coastal Plain oil and gas leasing EIS comments1 message

Sue Hall <shall48@yahoo.com>
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Cc: Sue Hall <shall48@yahoo.com>

Sun, Jun 17, 2018 at 12:17 PM

To whom it may concern:

I worked as a summer biological technician on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain in 1994. I collected plant phenology data associated with the migratory caribou congregation and birthing, nesting bird surveys, grizzly bear density and caribou predation, climatic change and rodent density. It was the best and busiest field season of my life.

I knelt for hours on the tundra documenting the rapid spring growth of plants and witnessed the ensuing birth of thousands of caribou calves and their lactating mothers that is all perfectly timed to support one of the largest migratory caribou herds in Alaska, incredible nesting and feeding areas for birds, and forage for rodents, bears and sheep. The miracle of life that unfolds on the arctic coastal plain is what makes the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge a premier destination for thousands of visitors. It is also a major food source for locals and big game hunters from around the world. Any interruptions to this delicate balance can have devastating repercussions to the plants and animals that depend on the vast coastal plain for their survival.

The rapid climatic changes we are seeing in the arctic have already stressed polar bear and some bird populations to near collapse. It is not a time to increase disturbance to this fragile landscape. Caution and restraint is needed now more than ever to protect this crown jewel of the National Wildlife Refuge system. Seismic blasting during winter bear and rodent denning time could have detrimental effects on these important species. Fragile plant communities are already stressed by climatic change and would be further damaged by increased traffic by land and air.

It is time Alaska steps up to show the world that there are cleaner and less destructive ways to create energy. Wind and solar have huge potential if the State of Alaska would give them the same financial incentives they give huge oil and gas companies. Extraction of fossil fuels will only increase the detrimental climatic effects already stressing arctic plants and animals. I urge you to reconsider oil and gas development on this fragile coastal plain.

Keep the Arctic Wildlife Refuge wild!

I am retired from teaching and conducting biological surveys in Alaska but want my grandchildren and future generations to be able to witness the miracle of a wild arctic coastal plain that I was able to experience while working there and in numerous treks across its vast wilderness.

Sincerely,

Sue Hall-Goossen
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