



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

1 message

Mary Hertert <colorcreek49@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 28, 2018 at 6:37 PM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

I am truly dismayed that BLM is moving so swiftly to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. To put into perspective – this puts America's fragile wilderness on the chopping block for pennies on the dollar. As recent Alaskan transplants to Colorado, my husband and I fully recognize that those who have never visited Alaska, let alone the Arctic Refuge, might not understand how critically important this piece of intact wilderness is to the nation.

Wilderness is at a premium and this nation cannot afford to bite into our last remaining and most vulnerable region. My husband and I moved to Colorado from Alaska six years ago after a collective 50 years living there. Our work and recreation took us across the state, including the Arctic Refuge and the North Slope's oil fields located not far from the Refuge. We were on the gravel bar on the Aichilik River in 2005 with 65 reporters and legislators during the last rush to open the Refuge. They came for the story—the conflict of environment as represented by the migrating caribou vs versus human need for oil but missed the true story: The tremendous wildness of the place, its stillness and its grace in the face of human assault. And because they timed it wrong, the media missed both the story and the caribou that year. The Arctic Refuge persisted and was left in relative peace until now.

I've been to the North Slope's 'oil patch' – Prudhoe Bay. Carved out of the northern coastal plains, the big mechanical straws provided Alaska great wealth and the nation its oil. With productivity declining as Prudhoe Bay plays out, the Alaska Legislature coupled with our federal government are looking to keep the state's oil money flowing regardless of the price the nation would pay. We don't know how much black gold lies under the Arctic Refuge, but we do know that the refuge's coastal plain has value far beyond whatever oil might lie beneath it. It is the calving ground of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and provides vital denning habitat for endangered polar bears. We will pay a disastrous price if we choose to develop our last true wilderness. There is not a worse thought for me then to think of terminating any part of this priceless, breathtaking landscape and converting it an industrialized oil field with rigs, roads, pipelines, and spills.

The battle over the Arctic Refuge has been fierce and complicated since its inception in the 1960s with a strong demarcation line separating the value of intact wilderness and this nation's hunger for oil. And now, on the cusp of expanding renewable energy sources and extremely low oil prices due to an oversupply, the thought of trading our last wilderness in exchange for a few dollars seems horribly out of balance.

With our arctic climate in a precarious position of melting ice and radical changes to start new drilling now is gross mismanagement of resources and baseless energy planning. It is apparent that you are not visioning a world of a future to managing to the money interests of today.

Mary Hertert
929 Crown Ct

Fruita, CO 81521

--

Mary Hertert (970) 778-5985

5/9/2018

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - [EXTERNAL] Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

"Impossible" rewrites to "I'm possible"