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[EXTERNAL] Arctic National Wildlife Refuge1 message

Paul Huddy <pasha3m@aol.com>
To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Thu, May 3, 2018 at 6:31 AM

Subject: I oppose efforts to develop an oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

I strongly oppose efforts to develop an oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Department of the Interior must closely examine the science and fully evaluate the impacts at every stage of energy development on the Refuge's wildlife, water, subsistence, and other values for which it was created. The Trump administration has indicated an intent to expedite the review process and hold lease sales by next year. This rushed timeline will not allow for the full analysis required under the law and which is necessary to meet the Department's obligations to responsibly steward one of the crown jewels of the nation's National Wildlife Refuge System.

Energy development raises a suite of environmental issues that forecasts permanent harm to the Arctic Refuge's fragile environment. Scars on the tundra from heavy seismic equipment will remain visible decades later. Nesting birds will be vulnerable to numerous, inevitable industrial oil spills and increased predation. The Porcupine Caribou Herd will face potential population-level impacts from roads and pipelines displacing the herd from calving grounds on the narrow coastal plain. The long-term conservation of a holistic Arctic ecosystem in the U.S. will be significantly jeopardized by embarking on this oil and gas program in the Refuge.

These and other impacts must be evaluated for their effects that will extend far beyond the footprint of any physical development. The Refuge should remain a place in America's Arctic for birds and wildlife seeking refuge from the pressures of climate change and development. The Department must carefully collect the science and consider these issues, which clearly indicate why an oil and gas program does not belong in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

However, most importantly, we have no need, as a nation, to sacrifice our most important refuges and public lands for such a thing. Any oil from there would literally be a drop in the bucket. We have much better alternatives than drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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