



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

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**[EXTERNAL] Comment Submission: DOI-BLM-AK-0000-2018-0002-EIS (Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing EIS)**

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Khalial Withen &lt;kwithen@alaskalaborers.com&gt;

Tue, Jun 19, 2018 at 11:15 PM

To: "blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov" &lt;blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov&gt;

Cc: Joey Merrick &lt;jmerrick@local341.com&gt;

Please see the attached comment from Laborers' Local 341 on scoping issues for the proposed Coastal Plain Leasing EIS. Thank you.

Khalial Withen, General Counsel

Alaska District Council of Laborers

2501 Commercial Drive

Anchorage, AK 99501

907.276.1640 (voice)

907.274.7289 (fax)

[kwithen@alaskalaborers.com](mailto:kwithen@alaskalaborers.com) (email)**LiUNA!**

Laborers' International Union of North America

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**Local 341 EIS Public Scoping Comment Coastal Plain Development Signed.pdf**

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# LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA **LOCAL 341**

2501 Commercial Drive, Anchorage, AK 99501  
Phone (907) 341-0341 Fax (907) 341-0342  
[www.local341.com](http://www.local341.com)



June 19, 2018

Attn: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS  
222 West 7th Avenue, #13  
Anchorage, Alaska 99513  
Submitted via email: [blm\\_ak\\_coastalplain\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov)

Subject: Support for Coastal Plain oil and gas leasing and request for review in EIS of economic benefits of project labor agreements for construction related to the Coastal Plain leases

Dear Ms. Hayes:

Laborers' Local 341 represents construction, service contract workers, healthcare workers, and pipeline workers from Valdez to Kodiak. In addition to representing our union members as Business Manager, I am commenting from personal experience working on pipelines from the Valdez Marine Terminal to the North Slope. I also serve as the President of the Alaska Petroleum Joint Crafts Council representing around 20,000 workers including teamsters, electrical workers, pipefitters, laborers, and operating engineers.

Local 341 requests that the EIS include analysis of the economic and social benefits of Coastal Plain oil and gas leasing. From the lease sales to post-lease activities such as seismic drilling and exploration, development, and transportation from the Coastal Plain—development of this area means economic opportunity. To maximize this economic opportunity, Local 341 is further requesting that the EIS process include research and analysis on both the economic and social benefits of using project labor agreements for major construction that would most likely result from Coastal Plain leasing. By enhancing labor-management cooperation, project labor agreements enhance safety and compliance with the highest environmental standards.

Potential Coastal Plain development could yield many economic and social benefits for Alaska and the entire U.S. The potential oil and gas development will bring jobs to Alaskans. Today Alaska has the highest unemployment rate in the country—over seven percent. As Alaska workers struggle and unemployment in our state climbs even higher—it is more important than ever to consider the immense job gains from oil and gas leasing on the Coastal Plain. Coastal Plain development could also bring the U.S. closer to energy dominance.

JOEY MERRICK  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

LARRY MOONEY  
PRESIDENT

MIKE PIEKARSKI  
VICE PRESIDENT

PETE DAHL  
BUSINESS AGENT

SERGIO ACUÑA  
BUSINESS AGENT

BRANDON CALCATERRA  
BUSINESS AGENT

GRETA WADE, RN  
HEALTHCARE  
REPRESENTATIVE

The proposed leasing program would allow development on up to 2,000 acres of the 1.6 million acres of the Coastal Plain. That is just 0.01 percent of the entire refuge. Thanks to advances in technology and best management practices—there is an exceptional track record of safe and responsible oil and gas development in northern Alaska. Over the past 40 years, work on the North Slope has shown that energy development and stewardship can and do coexist.

While working the field, I have personally witnessed this coexistence. I have built caribou crossings and other mitigation measures, and I have observed caribou and other Alaska wildlife thriving around responsible oil development. Based on collaboration with agencies and local communities, I have seen first-hand that industry has achieved a record of responsible development in sensitive areas including the Arctic.

Responsible development in this sliver of the refuge will help ensure energy security for the United States. Not only will Coastal Plain development enhance our country's energy security and bring jobs to Alaska—it will fuel Alaska's economic engine—the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. The Pipeline is now running at three-quarters empty, and new production on the Coastal Plain will add throughput in the pipeline—which is a critical component of our country's energy infrastructure. Alaskans stand to win from oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain. Leasing on a fraction of the Coastal Plain would create thousands of jobs across the country, generate billions of dollars in revenue, and keep energy prices low for consumers. By extending the life of the Pipeline, Coastal Plain development will generate jobs and economic activity benefiting Alaskans and their families.

Given the range of potential benefits from Coastal Plain development, Local 341 is requesting analysis in the EIS concerning the job creation and other economic and social benefits of leasing on the Coastal Plain. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A.J. Merrick II". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a double underline at the end.

A.J. "Joey" Merrick II