



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS comments1 message

Becky King <rskadventures@yahoo.com>
To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Tue, Jun 19, 2018 at 6:02 PM

Thank you for taking comments and for attempting to do an EIS on The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain.

As an Alaskan who works and plays in the outdoors I know the immense value of the untouched Arctic, the potential risks associated with oil and gas development, the fragility of the arctic ecosystem, and the economic value of wilderness and wildlife as it relates to tourism.

Given the timeframe, I don't believe it is possible to do an effective, comprehensive, or adequate environmental impact study or statement on drilling and development in the proposed area.

I am also concerned that current studies in the area will be cut short or invalidated by development. The data that such studies are collecting is critical information and should be allowed to continue. Any development or drilling in the coastal plain should allow sufficient time for a thorough environmental impact statement and assessment as well as sufficient time for current studies to continue and conclude.

Additionally, previous studies have indicated that the coastal plain is not appropriate for development because of the associated Risks with respect to wildlife, the difficulty of cleaning up spills, and the fragility of the ecosystem. I see no indication that these previous studies will be included in the current EIS. They need to be included for the EIS to accurately reflect the nature of this proposal.

The EIS must also evaluate the entire area that will be affected, not just the drilling sites. The estimate of 2000 acres is misleading. This doesn't account for the roads and infrastructure required to support drilling operations or the amount of land that may be impacted to secure and access these sites.

Finally, from a personal perspective, I have been to the coastal plain and know its beauty and wildness. It is irreplaceable. The oil and gas development and corresponding infrastructure will forever mar the landscape and the dwindling opportunities we have to experience wilderness. A small example of this is the 1985 Test well, which killed surrounding vegetation and melted the permafrost. The area has still not recovered 30 years later. These are the types of evidence that need to be evaluated, included, and weighted in the EIS.

People visit Alaska not just to go to one spot but to visit an idea of wildness. Tourism in Alaska is the second-largest private sector employer, accounting for one in eight Alaskan jobs, nearly 2 million visitors, and \$2.42 billion in direct visitor spending. So oil and gas development are not the only viable ways to improve Alaska's economy, try Wilderness, focus on tourism.

Thank you for taking the time to review and respond to all comments.
Sincerely,
Rebecca Sue King
Eagle River, Alaska
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