



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Coastal Plain EIS comments

1 message

Ruth McHenry <cca@coppervalleyak.net>

Mon, Jun 18, 2018 at 12:12 PM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

My comments are attached. Thank you for the opportunity,

Ruth McHenry

—

Ruth McHenry, Executive Director
Copper Country Alliance
HC60 Box 306T
Copper Center, AK 99573
907-822-3644

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ANWR comments 6-2018.docx

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Ruth McHenry
HC60 Box 306T
Copper Center, AK 99573
907-822-3644
cca@coppervalleyak.net

June 18, 2018

Bureau of Land Management
Via email to blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Re: ANWR Coastal Plain EIS

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the scoping process for oil and gas development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As an Alaska resident for over 70 years, I have watched with concern the repeated attempts to allow oil and gas drilling there. I urge you to consider the following in the EIS process:

Global Warming: Global warming is due to human activities that are putting more carbon dioxide and methane into our atmosphere. That is a fact, not a theory. It is having severe and demonstrable impacts here in Alaska and around the world. All EIS alternatives should state those facts explicitly and discuss how each alternative will impact the pace and severity of climate change.

International Relations: The EIS should consider the message that developing more oil and gas resources in spite of such damage sends to other countries that are keeping the promises of the Paris Accord and those whose survival is threatened by rising sea levels.

In Southeast Alaska, our state is asking Canada to not develop mines that will negatively impact rivers like the Stikine. At the same time, Canada is asking the US not to imperil, through ANWR development, the Porcupine Caribou Herd which moves between the two countries. Would declining to develop ANWR foster better cooperation with Canada on environmental transboundary issues?

Reparations: Will the United States and the State of Alaska be held financially responsible for damage to human health and infrastructure due to the increase in atmospheric carbon resulting from oil and gas development? Six United States cities have filed suit against major oil companies for deliberately obscuring the tie between fossil fuels and climate change. Now that federal and state governments, in spite of knowing that tie, are intent on more oil and gas development in the Arctic, will they also be sued?

Cumulative Impacts: Wildlife biologists recognize that cumulative impacts can lead to the loss of a wildlife population. They recognize that there is a threshold beyond which a population cannot recover. The EIS should consider other impacts—besides the direct effects of oil and gas development—to caribou and breeding birds. Will climate change increase their parasite loads? Will “shrubbification” (also due to climate change) reduce their food?

Opportunity Cost: Will revenue and jobs created by the river floaters, birdwatchers, and photographers decline under ANWR development? How much might it increase in the absence of development?

Alternative: Pursue strategies to reduce energy consumption through improved public transportation, improved vehicle mileage, and home and business design and retrofits. Develop place-appropriate renewable energy sources.

The best alternative is to leave all of ANWR as it is today, so that it may continue to be, with its wild country and wildlife, a potent symbol of how correct choices can finally be made, in contrast to the many destructive choices that have degraded the land, water, and air in the South 48 states. In the long run, future generations will be grateful.

Sincerely,

Ruth McHenry