



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Comments on oil development within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge1 message

Alan Batten <alanbatten@acsalaska.net>

Sun, Jun 17, 2018 at 1:24 PM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Dear BLM Committee:

I believe that the whole idea of inviting the oil industry into the flagship refuge of the Alaskan Wildlife Refuge system is a terrible mistake. This pristine landscape is more valuable for its beauty and wilderness character than for any oil that may be beneath it. The Arctic Refuge is the last big piece of arctic landscape in the United States (and perhaps the world) that isn't littered with seismic lines and discarded oil drums. Wilderness as we in Alaska know it is pretty much gone from the lower 48, and a lot of people regret that. Once it is gone it is just about impossible to get back. Oil development on the coastal plain will certainly have an impact on the Porcupine caribou herd. It's impossible to know exactly what the impact will be, but the herd spending more time in Canada and/or becoming smaller seem like two likely possibilities, both of which will make it more difficult for Alaska's Gwich'in to maintain their traditional economy. NPRA was set aside as an oil and gas reserve. There are wildlife issues in parts of NPRA as well, but there are still reserves there that can be developed relatively safely. Oil prices are low and expected to stay there for the near future. I understand that all the fracking in the lower 48 has given us an oil glut, and that we hardly import any oil at all any more. Why should we degrade the Refuge just to add to the glut?

It is well established that global warming is having a greater effect in the arctic than it does farther south. We can't ignore this any more. We are going to have to leave some oil in the ground if we want to keep the earth livable. And we really should quit subsidizing the fossil fuels industry in ways great and small, and do more to encourage the development of renewable sources of energy. If we are going to do anything about climate change other than complacently wait for our planet to turn into a desert we have to start leaving oil reserves in the ground. I truly believe that we are losing much more than we are gaining by turning the pristine wilderness of the Arctic Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge into an oilfield.

Sincerely,

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