



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

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**[EXTERNAL] Public Comment**

1 message

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**Lindsey Parkinson** <parkinson.lindsey@gmail.com>

Wed, May 30, 2018 at 3:33 PM

To: blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov

To Whom It May Concern,

This scoping period is crucial for giving voice to people but, voice must include both chances to give accounts of ourselves as well as ways to know listening is happening. Having a voice means that our accounts matter in relation to advancing goals and living values.

For decades, Gwich'in and other Alaska Natives have been fighting, and a majority of U.S. voters have been saying "no" to drilling in the Refuge. Who is listening? How will we know?

As an Inupiat member of the Caribou Clan asked BLM representatives last night: "How do you plan to... catalogue this data?" How will our voices count in this scoping process? How will we be able to know that they count?

The Fairbanks meeting gave time and space for some voices, but not nearly enough. There were at least 30 people lined up at the mic when the BLM representatives ended the meeting at 9pm:

Each of those people requested another scoping meeting in Fairbanks, as well as meetings in all villages that would be affected by leasing and drilling.

I support those who also requested meetings outside in each of the U.S. states, since we also are talking about federal public land.

I support those who also requested an extension of the scoping period. For instance, Rhonda Pika explained that being there last night meant missing helping her grandmother set up fish camp. She recommended at least a 120 day extension to cover much of the fishing season.

We also requested translations of all information into and testimonies from Native languages through this process.

We need to know—all of us—that BLM is listening to the vast majority of voices last night who raised concerns and opposition to leasing and drilling in the Refuge. BLM must make clear that our representatives, that the administration, are listening to us.

We need to know—all of us—how BLM is listening to those who would be most directly affected by leasing and drilling in the Refuge—that is, Gwich'in People and other Alaska Natives. BLM must make clear that their people are listening to Gwich'in People and other Alaska Natives.

We need to know—all of us—how BLM is listening to those outside, in the other 49 states. BLM must make clear that our government administrators are listening to the public concerning how public lands are treated.

This scoping process must be extended and must also include more times and spaces for people to speak.

This process must not allow the oil and gas industry to drown out the voices of real people and the land that speaks.

This process must not allow the values of Manifest Destiny to overshadow the voices of real people and the land that speaks.

Show us that our voices count—that our government is our government. Show us that our government is for each and all—for land that is not free of destruction is not the land of the free. Show us that our government is not for corporations, as Misty Nickoli, Denaa of the Gaath Doh (Kaltag) and Tsimshian of Metlakatla, challenged on May 29th, but is for communities and their members.

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