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[EXTERNAL] Public Scoping Comment

1 message

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To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

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I work for the Alaska Geobotany Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, which studies changes in tundra vegetation on permafrost landscapes across the circumpolar arctic due to both infrastructure development and climate change. As an Alaskan, I've traveled to the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, including the Coastal Plain, as a tourist - for hiking, canoeing and wildlife viewing. Leasing to develop portions of the Coastal Plain would affect me in both those roles.

I have many concerns about the large size of the lease sales and the impacts of exploration activities that will follow leasing. Oil and gas exploration and development risks significant damage to this rich ecological and cultural treasure. To mitigate short- and long-term ecological and social impacts, any leasing EIS should include:

- What would the **geographic extent** and **duration** of short- and long-term impacts be from 3D Seismic exploration and of the construction of roads and pads to support exploratory drilling, including
 - impacts on permafrost thawing
 - impacts on hydrology
 - impacts on caribou calving and migration
 - impacts on composition of tundra vegetation
 - impacts of revegetation of areas disturbed by exploration
 - impacts on polar bear denning
 - impacts on bird migration and nesting
 - impacts on eco-tourism and adventure travel
- Perform an independent analysis of the amount of revenue a lease sale and development of oil and gas resources on the Coastal Plain will bring to the federal government, and compare with the cost of development and the revenue forecast included in the authorizing 2017 tax bill.

Thank you,

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