



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] Comments On Oil and Gas Leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

1 message

Matt Rafferty <raffermatt@gmail.com>
To: blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov

Mon, Jun 18, 2018 at 6:53 PM

Hello,

I'm writing you to emphatically and unequivocally ask you to prevent oil and gas leasing in the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

First, this process Congress used to open the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is fatally flawed. They used a disingenuous, procedural maneuver to circumvent the will of the American people during a time of chaos, crisis and confusion in our political process. This is an outrageous action that will not be judged well in history. It's also completely unethical.

Second, the math by which you arrived at leasing revenue is completely flawed. Lease sales will barely generate a fraction of the revenue that was included in the Tax Reform Bill, making the disingenuous actions to open the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas development that much more egregious. Please explore these erroneous economic models in this scoping period.

Third, the process by which leasing is being rammed through goes against the standards that have made this country great for decades and longer. America has been a great country precisely because we have used public discourse to create a body of law to move the country forward and be an example to the world. This process flies in the face of those norms. The Trump Administration, in their arrogant and faulty quest for "energy dominance," is forcibly rushing what should take years. Please take the time needed to do this well – and make sure that there is a no action option on the table when you conclude that the Coastal Plain is the biological heart of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Fourth, please consider climate change and the impacts of extracting more oil from the ground, which will lead to more carbon in the atmosphere, in this rushed process. Humankind has already reached a tipping point. Alaska and the Arctic are feeling that disproportionately to the rest of the planet. Extracting more oil will only exacerbate it. What happens first in the Arctic will ultimately happen everywhere else on the planet.

Finally, this is a human rights issue and the Gwich'in Nation should have a seat at the table and voice in the process. What the BLM calls the '1002 Area,' the Gwich'in call "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins." Please take that to heart when conducting your scoping. Please go to the Coastal Plain in summer, please walk the rivers, encounter the caribou – and wolves, bears, musk oxen and birds – and recognize this incomparable landscape for what it truly is, one of the last places on Earth where life has preceded at its natural pace for millennia.

As an Alaskan with a vested interest in the future, I urge you to prevent oil and gas leasing and development on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank You,

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Matt Rafferty

1826 E 27th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99508