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**[EXTERNAL] Comments on Leasing the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for Oil Production**

1 message

**Michael Rees** <michaelrees2@yahoo.com>

Thu, May 24, 2018 at 10:09 PM

Reply-To: Michael Rees &lt;michaelrees2@yahoo.com&gt;

To: "blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov" &lt;blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov&gt;

I would like to submit my comments on this issue for your consideration. I am **strongly** opposed to opening the refuge to oil drilling. The Arctic Refuge and its coastal plain are a special place--true wilderness, which is a vanishing resource in the world. I've been to the refuge, and I've experienced it's special qualities. Yes, we do need oil to run our country. But we don't have to open up every place to oil production--I doubt we'd allow an oil rig on the grounds of the White House. Although only a small area of the Arctic Refuge would be impacted by this development, the impacts won't be limited just to the area being drilled. Roads, pipelines, and other needed infrastructure, and increased numbers of people will alter the landscape permanently. The coastal plain has many important resources besides oil, including the Porcupine caribou herd's calving ground, predators like brown bears and wolves, and countless migratory birds that summer here. The Gwich'in people, who have lived in the area for millennia, depend on this area for their subsistence and nutrition, and it is part of their culture-- it is a sacred place for them. Drilling will be a significant adverse cultural impact to their way of life.

If we open up the refuge to oil drilling, we will be turning our back on the wildlife, people and wilderness values embedded in this unique area. We have other choices. We don't have to drill here now. Our country will continue to prosper if we don't open up the refuge to oil production. Lets continue to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, recognizing that the short-term gains of oil production will be far, far less than the long-term losses to our country's environment and people. This action is **not** in the public interest. Please do not lease the refuge for oil.

Sincerely,

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