



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

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**[EXTERNAL] I oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge**

1 message

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**Rachel Leah Ruston** <rlr398@nyu.edu>  
To: blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov

Mon, Jun 18, 2018 at 1:46 PM

To those it may concern,

As an Alaskan, I have lived my life with an immense appreciation for the landscape of the far north. Vast and sublime in its extreme beauty, ever impressive in the amount of life it supports. I oppose drilling in the Coastal Plain, as well as development of the land in general. I stand in support of the Gwich'in and wish for the preservation of the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou. For the Arctic Refuge, created "for the purpose of preserving unique wildlife, wilderness, and recreational values", deserves to be protected for generations to come. We should be working as hard as possible to preserve the last lands of true wilderness in a world that is so extensively developed and exploited. Oil and gas exploration and development are not permitted under the current Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). BLM must acknowledge this discrepancy and describe plans to address this. I believe that BLM must fully analyze potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat and develop appropriate and adequate mitigation measures to ensure preservation of this unique wildlife complex in the biological heart of the Refuge in accordance with the purpose for which the Refuge was established. I am disgusted by the disregard of the cumulative impacts that opening up this land for drilling will have on the coastal plain and the Gwich'in Nation. The leasing of the coastal plain, known by the Gwich'in people as "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit" (The Sacred Place Where Life Begins), could allow for the permanent devastation of this land.

I believe that this quote by Sarah James of the Gwich'in Nation should be considered when discussing the destruction of the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou. For there is much more to this than even environmental concerns, this is a social justice issue that has the potential to destroy a nation's way of life.

*"We are caribou people. Caribou are not just what we eat; they are who we are. They are in our stories and songs and the whole way we see the world. Caribou are our life. Without caribou we wouldn't exist". ~Sarah James*

Rachel Ruston