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[EXTERNAL] Arctic National Wildlife Refuge - Scoping Comment - Oil & Gas Program

1 message

Summer Spring <summerspring12599@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 1, 2018 at 11:30 PM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

The attached Word document is my public comment on scoping for the EIS regarding the proposed oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Sincerely,
Mary S.



ANWRScopingComment.docx

15K

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – Oil & Gas Development – Scoping Public Comment

Energy development within the proposed area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge raises a suite of environmental issues that forecasts permanent harm to the Arctic Refuge's fragile environment. Scars on the tundra from heavy seismic equipment will remain visible decades later. Nesting birds and secretive bird species will be vulnerable to numerous, inevitable industrial oil spills and increased predation as well as threats from infrastructure and human presence. Migratory birds will face threats to their resting and feeding grounds, negatively impacting their ability to obtain enough food and rest prior to leaving on migration. Migratory birds arriving on the coastal plain will face the same threats when they reach their nesting grounds and may be unable to successfully breed and raise young. The Porcupine Caribou Herd will face potential population-level impacts from roads and pipelines displacing the herd from calving grounds on the narrow coastal plain. The long-term conservation of a holistic Arctic ecosystem in the U.S. will be significantly jeopardized by embarking on this oil and gas program in the Refuge.

These and other impacts must be evaluated for their effects that will extend far beyond the footprint of any physical development. The Refuge must remain a place in America's Arctic for birds and wildlife seeking refuge from the pressures of climate change and development. The Department must carefully collect the science and consider these issues, which clearly indicate why an oil and gas program does not belong in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

For the reasons above, I am strongly opposed to all efforts to develop an oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I have a background in environmental science and understand the irreparable consequences that can result from opening this fragile and globally important area to oil and gas development on any level. The Department of the Interior must closely examine the science and fully evaluate the impacts at every stage of energy development on the Refuge's migratory and resident birds, wildlife, water, subsistence, and other values for which it was created. The current administration has indicated the intent to expedite the review process and hold lease sales by next year. This rushed timeline does not allow for the full analysis required under the law and which is necessary to meet the Department's obligations to responsibly steward one of the crown jewels of the nation's National Wildlife Refuge System.

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