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[EXTERNAL] Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Leasing1 message

Mike Tenenbaum <tenemike1967@gmail.com>

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To: blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov

Nicole Hayes,

I am a retired environmental consultant, and worked primarily in the areas of surface water quality and remediation of water contamination. The proposal to allow oil and gas exploration and mining in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is wrong on so many levels it defies ones intelligence!

"Arctic": if ever there were inhospitable and adverse conditions that could lead to disasters in a heartbeat, the word Arctic brings them forth. This is no place to "trust" the efforts of man to overcome and hold at bay the forces of nature brought to bear against him in this environment. No one can be on top of their game 100% of the time under any and all conditions. The weakest link will break and disaster of unimaginable proportions and costs will result. (We experienced this locally when a pipeline broke and spewed the largest on land oil spill in the US into the Kalamazoo River.)

"Wildlife": the wildlife we put at risk through the proposed actions suggested in this proposal are largely fragile and many are already at some level of risk. Once weakened, the web of life in the Arctic grows increasingly fragile and subject to degrading, irreversible conditions out of our control. So far, we have not been able to duplicate the conditions in this region where we might relocate life forms if necessary. And who would pay for them to be moved? How could that be justified when life in general is held so cheaply?

"Refuge": a refuge is defined as "a condition of being safe or sheltered from pursuit, danger or trouble". The area of concern IS A DECLARED REFUGE! How does that come close to becoming the target of the proposed intrusions that eliminate the purpose of these lands and waters by their very definition. In reality, we would eliminate any aspect of refuge for this ecosystem. Must we ruin this for short term gain?

"Coastal Plain": coastal plains offer some of the richest, most diverse and fragile ecosystems in the world. In an Arctic setting, they are more fragile and susceptible to being destroyed by any major type of outside influence. The benefits garnered from coastal plains are not a matter of conjecture, but are well documented. If you seek, you will find.

Coastal plains offer a rich biodiversity capable of supporting many forms of life, including native peoples who have thrived here for millennia. Most organisms maintain a delicate population balance. Exploration and extraction industries have a dismal record of doing anything other than negatively disrupting such balances.

What level of restoration and monetary commitment is being made upon the companies requesting this proposed change? Will we as citizens once again be asked to bail out these forms when they either run out of money or their clever lawyers find a way to exempt them from their true obligations? Can this area ever truly recover and once again thrive if such environmental disasters as envisioned were to ever take place? We should start with the premise that a disaster WILL TAKE PLACE, and work our way back from there, rather than assuming that everything will always remain unchanged.

These are but a few, rational comments that demonstrate my opposition to implement an oil and gas leasing program within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain. I hope you will consider these along with other comments.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opposition.

With great concern,
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