



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

**[EXTERNAL] PUBLIC COMMENT for coastal plain oil and gas leasing program EIS**

1 message

Fern &lt;praerung@gmail.com&gt;

Mon, May 28, 2018 at 1:33 PM

To: blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov

Attn: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS

I am emailing you my comment letter as I was unable to do so through the commenting link on your website (<https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/comments/commentSubmission.do?commentPeriodId=64354>). After inputting my comment in the comment box and hit the 'next' button there is an error message saying "The specified URL cannot be found." Please fix this as it is preventing people like myself from submitting our public comments especially as the commenting period ends in just a few weeks away.

Comment on [Notice of Intent April 20 2018](#)

I work for the Environmental Defense Fund and I am writing in support of the Gwich'in Steering Committee's opposition to planned leasing of the Arctic Coastal Plain for oil and gas development. Article 8 of the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples states that "Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture." and that "States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for: Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources." The Gwich'in peoples rely on the land and the Porcupine caribou herd of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for their physical, spiritual and cultural survival. By authorizing oil and gas drilling in their homeland the Tax Act (Public Law 115-97, Dec. 22, 2017) directly violates the human rights of the Gwich'in peoples.

But my opposition comes not only out of solidarity with the Gwich'in peoples but because the planned development is based on flawed economic argument. Global oil and gas supplies are so abundant that these fuels are being produced on less than half of the approximately 27 million acres of public lands under lease to energy companies in the U.S. (Source: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/oil-and-gas/oil-and-gas-statistics>) Through the 2015 fiscal year, a record 7,950 drilling permits on federal leases were not being used. And last year, the industry bid on less than one-third of the federal acreage offered for lease by the B.L.M., even though the industry identified most of the lands auctioned for energy exploration. The facts are that the United States already has abundant oil and gas available, the industry has chosen not to drill on leases they already own and is not even bidding on what the government is offering. Ramping up the issuance of drilling permits during a time when so many approved permits are not being used makes no economic sense and is unethical when new permits will come at the cost of the lives and livelihood of the Gwich'in people. I urge BLM to immediately stop the coastal plain oil and gas leasing program EIS process and to permanently protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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