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[EXTERNAL] Coastal Plain EIS comments

1 message

Jan Bronson <bronson@gci.net>
To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 12:19 AM

I heard a Gwich'in man speak at the BLM Coastal Plain EIS hearing last week. Addressing the BLM panel and the oil & gas promoters in the audience, he said something like, "You are worried about the economy. But I can tell you that if the economy goes bad, come to our village and we will feed you, if we still have caribou. It will be easier if we still have caribou." This testimony jolted me, and brought tears to the eyes of the person sitting next to me. I realized: it is not just subsistence resources (i.e. the animals) that we need to protect; it is the whole different societal and economic system than what is mainstream in the U.S. now.

It is critically important that the human rights and treaty rights of First Alaskans be considered, and that their voices be fully heard. Subsistence rights and cultures must be protected. These cultures include alternative economic systems, such as one where people share freely with others in need, knowing it may be reciprocated in turn. Alaska still does have strong subsistence traditions. I can't stress this enough, and hope that BLM employees get a glimpse of them through this EIS process.

You **MUST** protect the ability of the Gwich'in Nation to continue a subsistence culture if they choose. It is not just for "their" sake, like it is a gift to them. We all need those examples to still exist and thrive, in wholeness and in present time. Don't jeopardize this for a short period of oil development.

Fortunately, I believe the Gwich'in Nation's subsistence rights are protected in US law and international law. Consider those rights seriously in your EIS.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Jan Bronson
Anchorage, AK

2 attachments **BLM Coastal Plain EIS 642018**
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