



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

TASKING PROFILE

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To (Recipient): Zinke, Ryan

From (Author): Slaughter, Caroline

1605 Westview Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Subject Text: opposes oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Req. Surnames:

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Copies To: SIO-OES

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Correspondence Specialist and Phone: SIO-OES Lisa Cannuscio/202-208-2443

Closed

Comments:

Signed:

April 23, 2018

Honorable Secretary Ryan Zinke

Department of the Interior

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington DC 20240

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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Dear Secretary Zinke,

As a student of biology and a citizen of this Earth, the actions that have already been taken in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) are very alarming, and the green-lighting of further oil exploration in the area is even more so. I treasure the wonders of our national parks and wildlife refuges, and as our climate changes these areas will become only ever more so precious. There are so many ecological concerns not being taken into account, or perhaps discounted, by the companies who wish to scar this beautiful and irreplaceable tundra with oil drilling. This Republican administration has called for a policy of "energy dominance" and has made stateside drilling a priority, but there are other veins of energy domination that could be explored while still leaving the wildlife refuge in our most unique biome free from the stresses of oil drilling and resource extraction. But before I solve the energy crisis let me convince that the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge is so necessary to protect and conserve:

- Tracks made in the refuge from seismic drilling activity done just to establish the amount of natural oil available in the refuge have still not completely healed after more than 30 years. This speaks to the ability and speed of recovery of the environment after a serious disturbance. If serious damage were to occur to the tundra, it would be at least a hundred years before it was recognizable to the thriving ecosystem it is now.
- The technology that developed in the interim 30 years has decreased the distance between seismic review lines, so instead of miles apart, these lines of disturbance would only be hundreds of feet apart. This will be exponentially more devastating to the plants and soil of the tundra than the lasting damage that was done in the 1980's.
- The permafrost is very vulnerable and even just human tracks can cause undue thawing. Machinery will certainly disrupt frost levels, causing microclimates to shift rapidly and to the detriment of organisms inhabiting them. In 2009, 5% of the damage to the frost done in 1980's test remained unchanged.
- It is calving ground for the Porcupine caribou herd numbering at just 200,000, which has migrated to the refuge, each year, for millennia. Disruption of this land will have dire consequences for the caribou, as this is the only breeding ground for these creatures in the United States. If we wish to maintain our crown jewel of

species diversity and natural wonder, these caribou must be allowed to mate and breed uninterrupted.

- The refuge is a vital breeding habitat for hundreds of millions of birds that migrate from every state and six of the Earth's seven continents.
- The tundra proposed for lease for oil exploration is among the planet's most important denning habitats for polar bears.

Losing any of the diversity found in the most unique and singular biome found in the United States would be devastating for scientific and environmental communities. And truly, for all citizens of the planet that we must continue to share. To that point, this path of oil and natural gas exploration and expansion for the United States is not the only path to "energy dominance" and certainly not the cleanest one for our Earth. The rapid increase in technology in renewable energy sources is truly astonishing, and much less costly environmental and ecologically. Solar energy will soon be economical enough to be afforded by the middle class man, and if it were government provided then it could be beneficial to the state as well. The risk vs. reward of drilling in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge is much too high to take the gamble. The price of oil is falling, and the time for our planet to backtrack the damage done by oil's overuse is nearly gone, or gone already. I implore you to re-examine the energy dominance that is driving the sale of this beautiful land for destruction, and consider a sustainable future for this nation and its citizens, even the caribou and polar bears. You have the power to influence these decisions and that is why I have written to you, and why I ask that you use your power to make our nation a nation that is conscious of its actions and acts ecologically fiscal. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Caroline Slaughter
1605 Westview Avenue
Fort Collins, CO, 80521
512-501-0444

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Caroline Slaughter". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal flourish extending from the end of the name.