

26_RE Coast Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS
Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office,

Nearly the entire Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is designated Wilderness or recommended for wilderness designation by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This last great wilderness must remain as it is, wild and free forever. Oil leasing and accompanying development has no place in the coastal plain or anywhere on the Refuge.

Seventy percent of Americans support keeping the Refuge wild and free from fossil fuel extraction

The EIS must clearly analyze the complete spectrum of oil leasing impacts to the wilderness character of both the coastal plain and designated Wilderness to the south and east.

The coastal plain is vital calving and nursery habitat for the Porcupine caribou herd. The impacts of oil leasing on caribou will extend far beyond the coastal plain to include the entire Refuge and a large area of northwest Canada where the herd ranges. The EIS must address all aspects of how the herd and this large area would be impacted.

The EIS must address how oil leasing would impact polar bears and all other wildlife species of the coastal plain, as well as the full spectrum of ecological consequences over the multi-decade life span of oil operations.

For millennia, the native Gwitch'in people have relied on the Porcupine caribou for their subsistence and cultural identity. The EIS must address the total impact of oil leasing on their way of life.

The EIS must include a No Action alternative.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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