



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

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**[EXTERNAL] Response to Coastal Plain EIS**

1 message

**rebecca clark** <kirby1234@sbcglobal.net>

Sat, Jun 2, 2018 at 4:32 PM

Reply-To: rebecca clark &lt;kirby1234@sbcglobal.net&gt;

To: "blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov" &lt;blm\_ak\_coastalplain\_EIS@blm.gov&gt;

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Dear BLM.

I highly suggest that you thoroughly evaluate the EIS Statement for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Once you thoroughly evaluate the EIS for the Coastal Plain, I highly urge you to cancel all leases for the Coastal Plain and designate it as wilderness instead.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our most treasured wild lands here in the United States of America. The Coastal Plain is the Refuge's biological heart, and it supports a rich array of wildlife, including polar bears, caribou, musk oxen, and moose.

The Coastal Plain is also a vital denning ground for polar bears, and it's the calving ground for the Porcupine Caribou herd.

And it's not just the wildlife that call it home. Indigenous peoples do, too. The Gwich'in, living in harmony with the land and wildlife they call home, have thrived off of the Porcupine Caribou herd for thousands of years. Protecting the Coastal Plain, and in turn ANWR, is a matter of human rights.

Drilling in the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a ecological and cultural disaster. It not only scars the landscape permanently, it also will destroy vital habitat for wildlife, cause an irreversible impact on the landscape, wildlife, and indigenous cultures, and violates the human rights of indigenous peoples.

For the Porcupine Caribou, drilling in the Coastal Plain is a threat to their calving grounds. In fact, caribou are one of, if not the first, animals to leave their breeding grounds if they are disturbed in any way from activities such as drilling for oil.

Caribou are both sensitive to light and sound; they are easily scared by the two. Research shows that caribou spend less time in areas within 3 miles of any human disturbance, including infrastructure, even if those lands are traditional migration, foraging or calving areas.

If drilling goes forward in the Coastal Plain, where the Porcupine Caribou migrate to, calve, and return from every year, the Porcupine Caribou will abandon their calving grounds and have to look elsewhere to give birth and graze - most likely to the foothills and mountains, where they are more likely to be predated upon predators like bears and wolves, especially the vulnerable pregnant cows and calves.

To the indigenous Gwich'in people, the loss of both the land they have lived on for thousands of years and the caribou would be detrimental to the health - both mentally and physically - of the Gwich'in. The supermarket foods in Alaska have sky-high prices. For example, cheese can cost \$9, a basic lunchtime menu can cost \$15, and one bottle of good-quality Red Wine can be \$18. Even a low-cost food item such as a 1-liter carton of whole-fat milk, starting at \$1.05, can be too much for the Gwich'in. In short, the Gwich'in do not have enough money to buy foods at the grocery store, and if their main food source, the meat of the Porcupine Caribou, is taken from them, they will starve to death.

No amount of apologies and compensation from corporations can patch up the profound impact the loss of both ancestral land and subsistence can have on the Gwich'in if the Coastal Plain is developed for oil drilling. History has shown, time and time again, on how their way of life and their story will end: they will start to die off, one by one, and once the last member of the indigenous culture dies, then the indigenous people will go extinct, and their genocide will be complete.

Oil and gas drilling in the Coastal Plain of ANWR is not a given. It remains unpopular with the majority of Americans, and those same Americans oppose drilling in ANWR and want to see the Coastal Plain protected as wilderness instead.

It makes no sense to continue extracting oil and gas in such loved and treasured places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It makes no sense to drill in one of our last wild place son the planet, especially in a time when climate change and its effects are both running rampant worldwide. Both solar and wind power have grown profoundly over the years, and a majority of people are practicing energy-saving skills and energy efficiency.

And there are more earth-friendly cars that lower GHG emissions and reduce the urge to drill in many areas, such as hybrids, electric vehicles (EVs), Plug-In Hybrids (PHEVs), and Fuel Cell Vehicles (FCEVs). For example, Japanese car-maker Toyota has predicted the decline and eventual end of combustion-engine only vehicles and sees half of its vehicle sales being Hybrids, EVs, PHEVs, and FCEVs. And it has set a strategy to sell eco-friendly cars by 2030, as it will see half of its sales come from more of these Earth-friendly cars.

Given the reasons and all those talking points that I have stated above, it is very unfathomable on why anyone would allow drilling in the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, especially when drilling there would only aggravate the climate crisis and make it worse, and serve as the death sentence for both the Porcupine Caribou and the Gwich'in People.

Once again, I urge you to reevaluate the EIS statement for the Coastal Plain, and once you fully evaluate it, please cancel all leases and do not sell off the Coastal Plain to Oil Companies.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca