



CoastalPlain_EIS, BLM_AK <blm_ak_coastalplain_eis@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] The Arctic Wildlife Refuge is no place for oil and gas drilling!!

1 message

Pete DeLaat <petedelaat@gmail.com>

Mon, Jun 4, 2018 at 9:36 AM

To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

What on earth are we thinking? Why does the Trump administration so urgently believe that we need to potentially destroy this totally unique wild area?

Right now, the oil and gas industry has a massive surplus of oil and gas leases and permits. Less than half of federal acreage under lease is currently producing. Last year, industry bid on just 7 percent of federal acreage offered for lease at auction — the lowest share ever over the past decade.

The most promising oil plays are still in the Lower 48, primarily on state and private lands, where fracking has unlocked resources that have allowed us to cut our dependence on foreign oil. Any economist would tell you that adding to the glut of supply at this time just doesn't make good business sense.

Proponents of drilling in the ANWR are claiming that the oil and gas development there would send \$1 billion to the U.S. Treasury over 10 years. Yet recent and historical lease-sale data from other places on Alaska's North Slope suggests that number would be closer to \$50 million. Last year's sale of more than 10 million acres in the U.S.'s National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska — perhaps the best indicator we have of industry's interest in the North Slope — brought in bids on less than one percent of the acres offered and generated just over \$1 million.

Then there is the myth that drilling in the ANWR can be done safely, without harm to the surrounding environment.

Nonsense.

The refuge's coastal plain, where the proposed development would take place, is brimming with wildlife — critical calving grounds to caribou, denning habitat for polar bears and home to more than 200 species of migratory birds. And we know from our recent experience on the North Slope that the web of roads, requisite infrastructure and inevitable spills will cause irrevocable damage to one of the most environmentally sensitive and pristine places on the planet. This is what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded in 2015 after a multiyear review that included more than a million public comments, including from scientists, biologists and Alaska Native communities.

And yet, here we are, after nearly six decades of bipartisan efforts in Congress to protect the Arctic Refuge — first to establish it in 1960, and then to periodically beat back attempts to undermine its safeguards, with a president who seems hellbent on initiating such totally unnecessary drilling there. And if that's not bad enough, we also have an Environmental Protection Agency head whose agenda seems to be anything but protecting the environment.

Are we becoming a nation that so easily trades away our children's future for such reckless, shortsighted political gimmicks? I choose to think not. I believe that we are better than this.

Stop already. Please.

Pete DeLaat
5447 41st Ave. SW
Seattle WA 98136