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[EXTERNAL] Keep the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge a true Refuge

1 message

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To: BLM_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

As one of our largest in tact and undeveloped pieces of public land--owned by all Americans--left in our country, the 1002 Coastal Plain area and entirety of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge should remain development-free. Even in exploring the possibility of developing this area, the EIS should take much longer than a year to create. This area of the continent fluctuates wildly throughout the year, and the only way to truly understand the impact development would have on this ecosystem and all who use it would be a long-term impact study, covering all the seasons of coastal plain tundra including deep winter, the thaw of spring, the caribou calving season, and summer breeding season for the 200+ species of migratory birds who depend on this area to rest, nest, feed, and raise young. There is value in keeping areas of the land free of human consumptive use. Imagine if another race of beings came into our lives and told us we could no longer birth and raise our young in the place and manner we have done so for thousands of years? This is the very tip of what we as humans developing this land will do to the animals and birds that live there.

Additionally converting this Wildlife Refuge to an oil field affects humans--the G'Wichin people have been tied to the caribou herd for hundreds of generations, and this land is sacred to them. At what point do we burn down our churches, cathedrals, and sacred spaces for money and riches of a few?

Lastly, aside from turning the benefits of public land over to a few people/a corporation to make money, oil needs to stay in the ground. We, as a society, are in the beginning phases of transitioning away from fossil fuels to renewable energy. The Wildlife Refuge will be greater benefit to society as a carbon sink than source.