

February 11, 2019

My name is Paul Joslin. I am a retired wildlife biologist. I have had the good fortune to see the beauty of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and to have floated down the Kongakut River to the coastal plain where I saw thousands of Porcupine caribou on their calving grounds where oil exploitation is being promoted, and the reason for the hearing today.

No matter where you fall on your feelings about protecting this jewel in the crown of the refuge for its wildlife, I want to talk about something much more serious when it comes to why we should not exploit oil inside the refuge.

Over the past few decades there have been hundreds of scientific reports on climate change. The answer is the same when it comes to the burning of fossil fuels. No matter if you measure changes in the extent of sea ice, shrinking glaciers, rising CO2 levels in the atmosphere, rising temperatures in the tundra soil, warming of the world's oceans, increasing acidification of the oceans, we have entered a period of rapid mass environmental change occurring literally within a few human generations since we began burning fossil fuels in earnest.

Scientists tend to be very conservative when making predictions. The last thing they want to be accused of is hyperbole and doomsday scenarios. Most of the earlier predictions made by scientists about climate change have tended to underestimate rather than overestimate its seriousness as an oncoming threat. As the data keeps coming in what scientists are discovering is that climate change is happening even faster than their cautious earlier warnings predicted.

In October the United Nations Panel on Climate change went so far as to say that if we don't make much more serious cuts in CO2 entering the atmosphere in the next dozen years we will likely reach a tipping point where it becomes impossible for us humans to prevent climate change from becoming calamitous. Future generations will suffer immeasurably if we do not.

In November the US federal government released the combined findings of 13 different agencies giving its own set of dire warnings, including its impact on Alaska, if addressing the climate change issue is not taken seriously. Global warming is occurring twice as fast in Alaska as it is in the lower 48 states.

For the sake of our children and our children's children I ask that we not only not drill for oil on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge, but that we and the fossil fuel producers start listening to the voices of our scientists and seriously cut back on the production of green house gases by sharply reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. Yes it will cost us some to do this in the short term. However, the cost will not be so much if we use our ingenuity to more create jobs in the green industries. Other states and countries are doing this. In the longer term the benefits we will reap will be profound in keeping our planet more livable and healthy for future generations.

Thank you for listening.

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