

Glenn Boldenow  
11454 Hannibal St  
Commerce City, CO 80022

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Bureau of Land Management  
Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS  
222 West 7th Avenue Stop #13  
Anchorage, AK 99513

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February 5, 2019

Bureau of Land Management  
Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS  
222 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Stop #13  
Anchorage, AK 99513

Subject: Oppose Oil and Gas Activity in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The Arctic National Wildlife Range (ANWR) was established in 1960 to preserve unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values. There are four purposes that guide management of the entire ANWR: to conserve animals and plants in their *natural diversity*, ensure a place for hunting and gathering activities, protect water quality and quantity, and fulfill international wildlife treaty obligations. Oil and gas activity in any part of the ANWR will cause irreparable damage to the plants and wildlife, take away critical hunting and gathering grounds from the indigenous people of the region, and harm the air and water quality of the region. Therefore, I am opposed to oil and gas activity in any part of the ANWR.

The coastal plains of the ANWR are the winter birthing place of the largest population of polar bears in the United States. This habitat is even more important now, as sea ice is diminishing and polar bears are increasingly forced on land. It is also the Summer home to the almost 200,000-strong Porcupine Caribou herd, which the Gwich'in Indians have relied upon for thousands of years as a main food source. The caribou migrate 1,500 miles annually to give birth and raise the young in the coastal plains. Nearly 200 species of birds migrate annually from the Arctic refuge to the lower 48 states. The coastal plain is also critical for over twelve species of marine life. The natural diversity of the coastal plains cannot be sustained if oil and gas activity is allowed to take place.

Section 1002 of the ANWR is approximately the same size as the original permitting on the North Slope. The North Slope has since grown from 2,100 acres to 12,000 acres of drilling spread over 640,000 acres. There have been over 4,500 spills on the North Slope totaling over two million gallons of toxic substances. Similar spills will occur in the ANWR if oil and gas activity is allowed to proceed there. This would destroy the fragile ecosystem of the ANWR; and make areas uninhabitable for the wildlife and indigenous people that rely on the ANWR for survival. Methane gas, created by natural gas leaks, is one of the most severe greenhouse gases. There are always methane gas leaks where oil and gas activity occurs; and this is one of the worst contributors to creating the greenhouse effect that will accelerate climate change.

The toxic chemicals used in drilling for oil will contaminate water and this contamination will flow into the Beaufort Sea. Marine life that rely on clean water will be harmed or eradicated. The whales that rely on clean water in the Beaufort Sea will be harmed by the toxins introduced by oil and gas activity. Oil and gas activity has already proven to interrupt the migratory patterns of marine life; and such activity in the ANWR will accelerate harm to marine life. Migratory birds will have migration patterns interrupted, which will lead to diminishing populations.

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Drilling in the ANWR should never occur. It will destroy one of the last pristine parts of the United States; and the area will not recover.



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