



Kern-Kaweah Chapter Sierra Club

November 5, 2020

State Director, Bureau of Land Management
Alaska State Office
222 West 7th Avenue, Mailstop 13
Anchorage, AK 99513-7504.

Dear State Director,

The recent "call for nominations" for leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, issued Nov. 17, has every appearance of being a rush job for no better reason than the chief champion of this unnecessary exploitation needs to get done before he leaves office. Additionally, the process of accepting comments only by surface mail with an extremely short comment period has every appearance of a cheap shot to limit comment. For me, I have stamps.

That is no justification for the rush. This is a solution looking for a problem and seeks more to assuage the feelings of the insular populist right than to address any actual need. Further the Native, Gwich'in people are the ones with the biggest dog in the fight and their views need more consideration than dismissal of their concerns.

The primary reason for this land to have been set aside is to address the declining inventory of habitat for sensitive and resources that would be threatened by drilling. This includes polar bears, countless bird species, and the porcupine caribou herd, which the Gwich'in people rely on for their subsistence and culture. This rushed process has ignored concerns about threats to the Gwich'in people, threatened wildlife, and our climate.

The BLM should remove tracts #1 - #32, identified in the call for nominations, from consideration for leasing. The potential destruction of both the environment and culture are too great to move forward. There is no longer the need for Trump loyalists to suck up to Trump and his shallow values any longer. Stand up for what's right. Protect this unique land. End this leasing program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Montgomery", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephen Montgomery
Chapter Chair

CC: ExCom

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