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[EXTERNAL] BLM SCOPING SEISMIC IN THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE: COMMENT

1 message

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Wed, Aug 15, 2018 at 8:20 PM

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments for BLM's scoping of seismic work within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

It seems like the perfect time to review the mission and guiding principles of the refuge network as stated on the Fish and Wildlife Service's website:

The **Mission** of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

And the **guiding principles**:

- We are land stewards, guided by Aldo Leopold's teachings that land is a community of life and that love and respect for the land is an extension of ethics. We seek to reflect that land ethic in our stewardship and to instill it in others.
- Wild lands and the perpetuation of diverse and abundant wildlife are essential to the quality of the American life.
- We are public servants. We owe our employers, the American people, hard work, integrity, fairness, and a voice in the protection of their trust resources.
- Management, ranging from preservation to active manipulation of habitats and populations, is necessary to achieve Refuge System and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service missions.
- Wildlife-dependent uses involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, interpretation, and education, when compatible, are legitimate and appropriate uses of the Refuge System.
- Partnerships with those who want to help us meet our mission are welcome and indeed essential.
- Employees are our most valuable resource. They are respected and deserve an empowering, mentoring, and caring work environment.
- We respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of our neighbors.
- We are a science-based organization. We subscribe to the highest standards of scientific integrity and reflect this commitment in the design, delivery and evaluation of all our work.

How does any type of development – seismic testing or otherwise – within ANWR comply with the refuge system's mission and guiding principles? Clearly, it doesn't.

Can seismic work be done without scarring the land? No, as proven by tracks still visible across the land that were made decades ago. These tracks impact the flow of surface water, lake drainage and speed up the thawing of permafrost as shown by Woods Hole Research Center scientists. That not only impacts wildlife, but, as science shows, results in the release of carbon dioxide and methane, which

contributes to global warming. Alaska leads the nation with its rate of rising temperature. We need to put the brakes on rather than speed up that process.

Finally, development within ANWR threatens the Gwich'in people of Alaska and Canada who depend on the Porcupine caribou herd that calves and migrates within the refuge. The Gwich'in view protection of the herd and their habitat, an area they call *Iizhik Gwat'san Gwandaii Goodlit* (the sacred place where life begins), as a human rights issue and it's impossible to see it any other way.

Do not allow seismic testing within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you,
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