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07/29/04

NE NPR-A Amendment Planning Team
Bureau of Land Management (930)
222 West 7th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

196948

To Whom it May Concern:

001
Alternatives

I am writing to the Planning Team out of great concern for the proposal by the Bureau of Land Management to reduce the size of the Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection Area from 857,859 acres to 213,000 acres. Because this reduction in size will allow even more oil and gas development than is allowed currently, there will be inadequate protection of important habitat for nesting birds, molting geese and caribou that gather at Teshekpuk Lake each spring and summer.

002
Alternatives

Already 87% of the northeastern Reserve is open to leasing and 1.4 million acres are actively being explored. The additional proposed acreage will allow industrial infrastructure, human activity and overflights which will cause the birds and animals who use the area around Lake Teshekpuk to be overly stressed at a time when they are either molting, calving, or seeking relief from insects. These times are stressful enough for them.

003
Wild Life

Oilfields will attract predators who will prey on nesting birds and their eggs and young. Garbage will attract other wild animals such as bears who will also prey on the animals. But the impacts of the additional development on wildlife will be felt much farther than the Teshekpuk Lake area. This is because subsistence hunters as far away as the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and even in Mexico will have less Pacific brant to hunt as the species declines.

004
Teshekpuk
Lake

The Teshekpuk Lake is ecologically unique and one of the most critical habitats for wildlife in the Arctic. I urge you to keep the original size of the Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection area, i.e., 857,859 acres, intact.

Please include this letter in the Record of Public Comment on this issue.

Thank you,



Ben Long
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Redmond, WA 98052