

Website Comment 157751

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From: CS Symington
Affiliation:
Address: 2602 Riverhills Rd
Austin, TX, Texas, 78733

Comment: Northeast NPR-A Plan Amendment Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office
Alaska State Office
222 West 7th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99513-7599

Dear Northeast NPR-A Plan Amendment Alaska State Office,

1 I am in a bit of shock at your proposal to amend amend the oil and gas leasing plan for the northeastern planning area of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). I strongly urge you to adopt the No Action Alternative and to support a new plan that strengthens, not destroys, existing environmental and wildlife protection in the area. I am especially concerned about the fragile environment of the Teshekpuk Lake region.

2 The Interior Department's data indicates that on average, 47 percent of the brant and 44 percent of the white-fronted geese now molt on lakes that would be partly or wholly unprotected in your preferred alternative. What sort of perverted plan is this that would seek to offer LESS protection than before?

003 Socio-cultural Further, the proposal would almost completely diminish protection for the caribou -- by estimates of 75 percent. Why in the world would you adopt a plan that is so detrimental to wildlife? The Inupiat Eskimo people rely on the 45,000-member herd for subsistence and have done so for 8000 years. Eliminating their food source is tantamount to genocide.

004 Alternatives The entire Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection Area deserves BETTER. Your preferred plan would reduce protection to just over 200K acres, less than five percent of the planning area, a level that can't begin to protect geese, caribou or the dozens of other species that now live there. Available science clearly indicates that geese are highly sensitive to disturbance during the molt and that caribou that give birth to their young in this area are at serious risk from the kind of disturbance your preferred alternative would permit.

5 At the same time, there is no science to show that these areas, closed under the existing leasing plan, can be safely opened. Your proposal would jeopardize a globally significant ecological resource and be a serious violation of your trust.

6 Please choose Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, in this plan.

Sincerely,

CS Symington`
2602 Riverhills Rd
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Attached: None