

From: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

To: "Feldgus, Steven H" <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: below is the initial back and forth with 88 Energy

Date: Tue, 28 Nov 2023 03:05:27 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg; image001(1).jpg

They then decided they wanted to move forward with relinquishing the lease.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
Nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Ashley Gilbert <agilbert@88energy.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 11, 2022 8:57 AM

To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Cc: Allister Caird <acaird@88energy.com>; Annita Ricciardi <aricciardi@88energy.com>; Oliver Mortensen <Omortensen@88energy.com>; Jon W. Katchen <JWKatchen@hollandhart.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] O&G Lease AA095899 - Suspension of operations and production (SOP)

Hi Nada

Thanks for your email.

It would be useful to understand the process and timing around a permanent surrender / cancellation, and to confirm it will be a full refund.

I have cc'd Jon Katchen who is our counsel to include him in these discussions.

Once this is clear, I can liaise with my Board and seek approvals should we wish to proceed down this path.

Regards

Ashley

On 7 Jan 2022, at 11:00 pm, Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Gilbert:

Thank you again for reaching out to me.

You are correct that no rentals are due while the SOP is in place; additionally, the term of your lease is tolled. I do not have any update to provide on the SOP beyond its terms, which indicate that the BLM will issue a new decision concerning this SOP once it completes the additional NEPA analysis.

However, I can offer an update in terms of the progress and current schedule of that additional NEPA analysis. On August 4, 2021, the BLM published a Notice of Intent that it was preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact

#1127619.1

Statement (SEIS) to the 2019 Coastal Plain EIS and initiating a public scoping process. That scoping period recently concluded with a Scoping Report completed at the end of November. Our schedule currently anticipates completing the SEIS and Record of Decision by June of 2023.

To the extent that you are requesting a temporary refund of your payments for this lease during the period the SOP is in effect, we are not aware of any such process or authority. If you are instead considering a permanent refund of your payments, that may be an option through a permanent surrender/relinquishment of your lease or otherwise coming to an agreement with the BLM regarding cancelling or terminating your lease. I would be happy to put your counsel in touch with our Solicitor's Office if that is something you would like to pursue.

Nada Wolff Culver
Deputy Director, Policy and Programs
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Ashley Gilbert <agilbert@88energy.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 12, 2021 6:47 PM
To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Cc: Allister Caird <acaird@88energy.com>; Annita Ricciardi <aricciardi@88energy.com>; Oliver Mortensen <Omortensen@88energy.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] O&G Lease AA095899 - Suspension of operations and production (SOP)
Importance: High

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Hi Nada

Could you please provide an updated on the SOP which is currently in place on the above lease. Lease rentals were to be paid on 1 January 2022, though as stated in the attached letter no rentals are due whilst the SOP is in place.

Obviously, as you could imagine, having this lease in SOP for an extended period is frustrating especially considering we have already paid just over US\$1 million and no value has been created for our shareholders.

If the intent is to keep this lease in SOP for an extended period then I would appreciate understanding what options are available to us to recover the US\$1 million and be able to invest the funds in other value creating activities for our shareholders whilst this additional NEPA analysis is ongoing.

I look forward to your response.

Regards

Ashley Gilbert
Managing Director

#1127619.2



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From: "Landreth, Natalie A" <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>

To: "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>, "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

Cc: "Anderson, Robert T" <Robert.Anderson@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: FW: FWS Proposal for Coastal Plain SEIS - b(5) ACP/DPP

Date: Tue, 11 Apr 2023 20:57:57 +0000

Attachments: BP_-_Arctic_NWR_SEIS_VCA_Final.docx

ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGED / DRAFT DELIBERATIVE / WORK PRODUCT

FYI

From: Deam, Seth R <seth.deam@sol.doi.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 12:35 PM

To: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>; Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>

Cc: Gieryic, Michael S <Mike.Gieryic@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: FWS Proposal for Coastal Plain SEIS - b(5) ACP/DPP

Natalie, Aaron, FYI.

I'm offering the following email below and attachment about a b(5) ACP/DPP

[REDACTED] but I'll note that this approach is scheduled to be briefed to BLM & FWS leadership in the Region on Monday, April 17th (Steve's first day back).

I met with this team on Friday (neither Mike was available) and offered to give them feedback on the attached background paper.

b(5) ACP/DPP

Happy to talk thru this. Whether or not this is a topic for tomorrow's meeting, I had planned to set up a meeting with Aaron and my team later this week on this subject.

Best, Seth

From: Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 3:44 PM

To: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Gieryic, Michael S <Mike.Gieryic@sol.doi.gov>; Deam, Seth R <seth.deam@sol.doi.gov>; Routhier, Michael P

#1127621.1

<michael.routhier@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

When: Friday, April 7, 2023 1:30 PM-2:30 PM.

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

All,

The FWS has developed this briefing paper to guide the next steps of the process for the b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] to be considered as a part of the Coastal Plain O&G Leasing Program SEIS.

b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

We are holding a leadership briefing on April 17th and this information will be useful to provide Steve and Sara options/our path forward.

Sincerely, Bobbie Jo

From: "Huffman, Jessica R" <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
To: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: OMB questions on Press Release for Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska
Date: Fri, 08 Sep 2023 18:22:02 +0000

Thank you, Nada.

Jessica

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 8, 2023 1:57 PM
To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Blasing, Francesca M <fblasing@blm.gov>
Cc: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: OMB questions on Press Release for Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Hi Jessica – Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land & Mineral Management, Laura Daniel-Davis, will take this briefing along with me. Please have OMB reach out to her assistant, Candice Woods, to schedule it. Thanks!

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 11:58 AM
To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Blasing, Francesca M <fblasing@blm.gov>
Cc: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: OMB questions on Press Release for Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Thanks for the quick reply, Nada. I appreciate it. Is there anything else you need from me or team budget on this? Will you follow up with Tracy / ASLM, or would you like us to do that?

I agree that a briefing makes the most sense and once we've heard back from you / ASLM on next steps, I stand by to help coordinate a date/time.

~Jessica

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 11:13 AM
To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Blasing, Francesca M <fblasing@blm.gov>
Cc: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: OMB questions on Press Release for Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

#1127663.1

Thanks, Jessica. Tracy is out today but we'll need to confer with her and ASLM before setting up any briefings or providing any written answers. I tend to think briefing would be best and happy to be the person if ASLM agrees, as well.

And of course we have been in very close communication with SOL and the White House – maybe they missed the President's statement?

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 11:11 AM
To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Blasing, Francesca M <fblasing@blm.gov>
Cc: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: OMB questions on Press Release fot Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska
Importance: High

Nada,

I see you are out today – if you have time, I would appreciate your thoughts on how to engage on this. Would you be the correct person to meet with Michael Hagan on his questions? Would you prefer to answer the questions from the e-mail in writing?

Appreciate any advice and insight you may have for this.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jessica Ray Huffman
(She/Her, [What's This?](#))
Budget Officer
Bureau of Land Management

jrhuffman@blm.gov
Ph: (301) 875-3856

US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW. Washington, DC. 20240

From: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 10:29 AM
To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Cc: Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] FW: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

#1127663.2

Thanks Jessica, I believe Nada needs to weigh in on these questions.

Thanks

Lonny

Lonny R Bagley
Bureau for Land Management
Deputy Assistant Director (acting)
Energy, Minerals, and Realty Management
307-622-6956
lbagley@blm.gov

From: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 7:57 AM
To: Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>
Cc: Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] FW: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Good morning Lonny,

Can you take a look at the questions OMB has raised, and help me identify who needs to be involved in either briefing Mike or drafting written answers?

Thank you!

Jessica

From: Gordon, Bill J <Bill_Gordon@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 5:05 PM
To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Cc: Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] FW: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Hi Jessica - I just saw this press release after Mike Hagan brought it to my attention. Can we arrange a phone call with the appropriate person(s) to discuss this announcement further, especially the ANWR piece. He wants to make sure he completely understands the decision and rationale, and their implications. For example, how was the 2021 lease sale in violation of ("not correctly interpret") the the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017? And is it just the existing leases that are not in compliance; e.g. even if these existing leases are cancelled, does BLM still have a statutory obligation under the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017 to conduct a new lease sale? Do you know if SOL was involved in this decision/rationale; I assume so but just want to confirm. And do you know if policy folks at OMB or the White House were consulted in advance of the decision/announcement. Finally, do you know what this means for the President's budget, which reflects ANWR revenues? Perhaps that is actually a question for OMB, even though Mike asked the question.

Thanks,

#1127663.3


Bill

From: Hagan, Michael B. EOP/OMB <Michael_B._Hagan@omb.eop.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 4:16 PM
To: Gordon, Bill J <Bill_Gordon@ios.doi.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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From: U.S. Department of the Interior <info@updates.interior.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:01 PM
To: Hagan, Michael B. EOP/OMB <Michael_B._Hagan@omb.eop.gov>
Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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 U.S. Department of the Interior: News Release

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023
Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

#1127663.4

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified “multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases.”

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

“With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem,” said **Secretary Haaland**. “President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department's determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are

present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

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This email was sent to mhagan@omb.eop.gov by: U.S. Department of the Interior · 1849 C Street, N.W. · Washington DC 20240 · 202-208-3100



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logo

From: "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>

To: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Cc: "Kniola, Benjamin E" <bkniola@blm.gov>, "Manuszewski, Donald E" <dmanuszewski@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Date: Thu, 05 Oct 2023 15:30:57 +0000

FYI

From: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 9:35 AM

To: Eggers, Barbara L <eggars@blm.gov>; Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>

Subject: Re: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Thank you Barbara. We will probably have the docs in DTS this week. Krauss is confirming with Tracy if she wants a press release or just a response to controlled correspondence.

I think we could safely respond with the following:

Inquiry #2 Response: The safety of the public and our employees is of paramount importance to the BLM. The BLM has worked with US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services (APHIS) in recent months to update our memorandum of understanding governing the management of damage caused by vertebrate wildlife on BLM-administered public lands, including the rare use of M-44s devices that deliver sodium cyanide. The BLM has been engaged in discussions with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) to ensure that state fish and wildlife agencies are informed of any changes.

~ bsg

Brian St George
acting Assistant Director
Resources and Planning Directorate
Bureau of Land Management

From: Eggers, Barbara L <eggars@blm.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 7:47:53 AM

To: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Good Morning Brian,

Let's discuss. Question; when is the estimated release of this information? Options: Perhaps we can provide a short, non-descriptive response rather than the full narrative or if needed we can request POB to assist with putting this question off for a bit. The date of the release will play into this.

Thanks

Barbara L. Eggers, Assistant Director

#1127746.1

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From: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 12:53 PM

To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Heinlein, Thomas <theinlei@blm.gov>; Frost, Troy A <tfrost@blm.gov>; Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>

Cc: Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>; Keleher, Barbara A <bkeleher@blm.gov>; Lewis, Robin C <rlewis@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; Davidson, Zoe M <zdauidson@blm.gov>; Bowmer, James A <JBowmer@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Isaac, Mary <misaac@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; Quamen, Frank R <fqumen@blm.gov>; Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Important note: we are on the verge of finalizing the decisions alluded to below. A Congressional response to this issue now risks getting ahead of the Director's desire to announce this decisions publicly (as discussed at ADs meeting on 10/2/23).

Inquiry #2 Response: b(5) DPP



+ Quamen and Krauss for awareness. Thanks!

~ bsg

Brian St George
acting Assistant Director for Resources and Planning

#1127746.2

Bureau of Land Management

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From: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 9:32 AM

To: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Heinlein, Thomas <theinlei@blm.gov>; Frost, Troy A <tfrost@blm.gov>; Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>

Cc: Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>; Keleher, Barbara A <bkeleher@blm.gov>; Lewis, Robin C <rlewis@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; Davidson, Zoe M <zdavidson@blm.gov>; Bowmer, James A <JBowmer@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Isaac, Mary <misaac@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>

Subject: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Importance: High

ADs & DADs,

I have a quick turn-around Technical Assistance Request from the House Minority staff. She needs this information by Friday, October 6, so I need it back by COB tomorrow, October 5, 2023. I have put my best guess for which director/state has the lead on these questions, but please feel free to coordinate with us / each other if my guesses weren't quite correct.

1. Can you please provide information on the Wildcat Load Expansion Project, whether you will conduct an environmental impact statement that considers the risks to the Colorado River rather than an environmental assessment, and the timeline you are working on for this expansion. (HQ300/HQ200/CO/UT)
2. Does BLM use M-44 devices on public lands and if so, what is the justification for their use considering that NPS, FWS and BOR do not use them? Why does BLM consider this humane? (HQ200)
3. Are there any monuments to the Founding Fathers on BLM lands? (HQ400)
4. Can you send me background on BLMs proposed rule to enhance protections in NPR-A for sensitive areas as well as cancellation of the seven lease in ANWR? (HQ300/HQ200/AK) (NOTE: Previously cleared communications materials on this topic can be shared to answer this question if appropriate. HQ600 copied.)

Please let me or Monique McDonald know if you have any questions about this or want to schedule a conversation. Sorry for the short turn around on this! Let us know if we can help.

*NOTE: I am working half days this week and am unavailable before 10 a.m. or after 3 p.m. Eastern time. You can coordinate with Monique if I am not available.

Sincerely,

Jessica Ray Huffman

(She/Her, [What's This?](#))

Budget Officer

Bureau of Land Management

jrhuffman@blm.gov

#1127746.3

Ph: (301) 875-3856

US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW. Washington, DC. 20240

From: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

To: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: Time Sensitive – For ASLM Review: Draft BLM Testimony H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (HNR EM Hearing 11/29)

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 2023 13:07:41 +0000

Attachments: H.R._6285.pdf; BLM_Statement_-_H.R.6285_Alaska's_Right_to_Produce_Act_(to_ASLM).docx

fya...

Patrick Wilkinson
Division Chief
Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: Feldgus, Steven H <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 2:43 AM

To: Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Rezaeerod, Paniz <paniz_rezaeerod@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: FW: Time Sensitive – For ASLM Review: Draft BLM Testimony H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (HNR EM Hearing 11/29)

Hi folks – am I the witness for this one? I remember discussing some hearings with Drew recently, but thought the potential back-to-back was the 2nd week of December. Probably wouldn't have loved the idea of going back-to-back right after coming back from leave (and I don't get back till late Sunday night, although it does give me plenty of plane time).

From: Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 20, 2023 5:39 PM

To: Macdonald, Cara Lee <cara_macdonald@ios.doi.gov>; McIntosh, Stacie J <s05mcint@blm.gov>

Cc: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Feldgus, Steven H <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>; Sanchez, Alexandra L <alexandra_sanchez@ios.doi.gov>; Quinn, Matthew J <Matthew_J_Quinn@ios.doi.gov>; Rezaeerod, Paniz <paniz_rezaeerod@ios.doi.gov>; Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: Time Sensitive – For ASLM Review: Draft BLM Testimony H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (HNR EM Hearing 11/29)

Hi all,

As you are aware, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources plans to hold a legislative hearing on H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (attached).

H.R. 6285 would:

- Require the BLM to withdraw the proposed NPR-A rule, and prohibit substantially similar rules from being proposed by the BLM;
- Prohibit the President or Secretary of the Interior from placing any moratorium or other pause of oil and gas leasing in the Coastal Plain;

#1127754.1

- Aim to approve all authorizations, permits, etc., as discussed in the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program that was published August 21, 2020;
- Require the Secretary to reissue the canceled leases in the Arctic Refuge within 30 days of enactment;
- Withdraw the Draft Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Supplemental EIS;
- Declare that no court shall have jurisdiction over the review of past decisions regarding the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program; and
- Nullify Executive Order 13990 and Secretarial Order 3401.

Attached and pasted below for ASLM review is a draft testimony, which was cleared by BLM leadership. The bill text is also attached for your reference.

After ASLM review and clearance, we will provide the statement to OCL for further clearance.

CC'ing Matt, Paniz, and Drew with OCL for awareness.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Ben Kniola

Deputy Division Chief (Acting)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Legislative Affairs Division (HQ 620)
Located in Grand Junction, CO
Mobile: 307-275-0355
bkniola@blm.gov

**Statement of
Steve Feldgus, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources**

H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act

November 29, 2023

Chairman Stauber, Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.R. 6285, the Alaska's Right to Produce Act.

(b) (5) / DPP



#1127754.2

(b) (5) / DPP

(b) (5) / DPP

(b) (5) / DPP

(b) (5) / DPP



Conclusion

The BLM remains committed to ensuring that the Federal oil and gas program serves the best interests of the American people by promoting the highest industry, environmental, and public engagement standards and securing a fair return for the American taxpayer. The BLM is further implementing the direction in the governing law to balance oil and gas leasing and development with explicit requirements to protect fish and wildlife, recreation and subsistence in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska. The BLM is working diligently to move the oil and gas program in Alaska forward through the Draft SEIS and NPR-A rule. H.R. 6285 reverts the BLM's oil and gas program in Alaska back to standards that have been determined to be inadequate. Therefore, the BLM strongly opposes the bill.

From: "Landreth, Natalie A" <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>

To: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>, "Moody, Aaron G" <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: RE: for review in January when all back in the office RE: notes re: consultation

Date: Tue, 02 Jan 2024 15:17:41 +0000

Attachments: Consultation_Overview_-_AK_NAL.docx

Inline-Images: image00001.png

Landreth, Natalie A has shared a OneDrive for Business file with you. To view it, click the link below.

 [Consultation Overview - AK NAL.docx](#)

Good morning – I have one suggestion about switching the order of arguments

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Sent: Monday, January 1, 2024 10:55 PM

To: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>; Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: for review in January when all back in the office RE: notes re: consultation

Re-upping for moving this on in early January if possible.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
Nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Culver, Nada L

Sent: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:06 AM

To: Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>; Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: for review RE: notes re: consultation

Hi Aaron and Natalie – Per back and forth below, I put this into a document that we can provide to the Senator's staff as requested. Please let me know your thoughts on how I've written this up and the ideas for framing it so we can get back with BLM Alaska and Leg Affairs folks around transmitting it.

Thanks so much for your help here.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
Nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:09 PM

To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: Re: notes re: consultation

#1127759.1

Yes, that sounds right. And so sorry for the slow response!!

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 9:17:47 PM
To: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>; Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: RE: notes re: consultation

ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGED / DRAFT DELIBERATIVE / WORK PRODUCT

Thank you. Aaron, with Natalie out, b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thanks for talking with me about this while Natalie is out.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
Nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:11 PM
To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Subject: FW: notes to discuss re: consultation

ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGED / DRAFT DELIBERATIVE / WORK PRODUCT

Hello Nada – Seth's thoughts are below and Aaron's view was that b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

From: Deam, Seth R <seth.deam@sol.doi.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 3:59 PM
To: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>; Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: RE: notes to discuss re: consultation

Hi Natalie,

b(5) ACP/DPP [REDACTED]

#1127759.2

b(5) ACP/DPP [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Best, Seth

From: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:22 AM
To: Moody, Aaron G <Aaron.Moody@sol.doi.gov>; Deam, Seth R <seth.deam@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: FW: notes to discuss re: consultation

b(5) ACP/DPP [Redacted]

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:29 AM
To: Landreth, Natalie A <natalie.landreth@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: notes to discuss re: consultation

Privileged and confidential – attorney-client communication

Hi Natalie – b(5) ACP/DPP [Redacted]

- [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]

[illegible][illegible]

Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
Nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: "Gamper, Merry E" <mgamper@blm.gov>

To: "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>, "Lindow, Emily R" <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>, "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>, "Nedd, Michael D" <mnedd@blm.gov>, "Moran, Jill C" <jcmoran@blm.gov>

Cc: "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: New Lawsuit Challenging Arctic Refuge Lease Cancellations - AIDEA v DOI, 1:23-cv-03126 (D. DC)

Date: Thu, 19 Oct 2023 22:30:13 +0000

Attachments: 2023_10_18_ANWR_Leases_Complaint.pdf;
2023.10.17_AIDEA_et_al_&_State's_Reply_re_Motion_to_Amend_SJ_Decision.pdf;
2023.10.17_AIDEA_et_al_&_State's_Motion_to_Vacate_SJ_Decision.pdf

You are likely already aware of the new complaint; the actual filing is attached.

It was also the subject of this news article this morning:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/alaska-sues-biden-administration-over-canceled-arctic-oil-and-gas-leases/ar-AA1itfX8>

The other two filings are related to AIDEAs pending motion to allow lease development preparatory activities and the overall summary judgement decision.

From: Deam, Seth R <seth.deam@sol.doi.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2023 16:22

To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Reed, Erika <e05reed@blm.gov>

Cc: Gamper, Merry E <mgamper@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>; Lor, Socheata <socheata_lor@fws.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; Roach, Emma K <eroach@blm.gov>; Lord, Kenneth M <Ken.Lord@sol.doi.gov>; Gieryic, Michael S <Mike.Gieryic@sol.doi.gov>

Subject: New Lawsuit Challenging Arctic Refuge Lease Cancellations - AIDEA v DOI, 1:23-cv-03126 (D. DC)

Attorney-client privileged / attorney work product / deliberative, predecisional

Steve, Erika, FYI.

On October 18, AIDEA filed the attached complaint in DC District Court challenging the September 6 cancellation of AIDEAs leases, naming DOI, the Secretary, BLM, and the BLM Director as defendants. The complaint alleges violations of the Tax Act, APA, due process clause of the Constitution and DOI's regulations governing lease terminations. The complaint seeks a declaratory judgment invalidating DOI's lease cancellation and other relief. The federal response will be due in 60 days from service of the lawsuit.

Also pending are two motions from Plaintiffs/Intervenor-Plaintiffs in the *AIDEA v Biden* case seeking relief from the court's summary judgment order in August, with a reply to the motion to amend/reconsider and a new motion to vacate the summary judgment order both filed by Plaintiffs/Intervenor-Plaintiffs on Tuesday evening. b(5) ACP/DPP

Best, Seth

Seth R. Deam
Regional Solicitor

#1127766.1

Office of the Solicitor, Alaska Region
U.S. Department of the Interior
907-271-4118 (o)
907-201-9546 (c)

From: "Roach, Emma K" <eroach@blm.gov>

To: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: "Million, Bonnie M" <bmillion@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [Congressional] Script for Monday Senate Indian Affairs Committee briefing (CP SEIS + NPR-A rulemaking)

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 2023 17:54:15 +0000

Attachments: IA_Minority_Staff_briefing_20231106.docx

Inline-Images: image00001.png; image001.png; image002.png; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png; image007.png; image00001(1).png

Roach, Emma K has shared a OneDrive for Business file with you. To view it, click the link below.

 [IA Minority Staff briefing 20231106.docx](#)

Hi Steve. Bonnie mentioned you were looking for the script for this morning's call with the Senate Indian Affairs Committee team. It is linked in the email below and attached. Let me know if you'd prefer it another way!

If this NPR-A call breaks up early, we can gather to prep. I will check to see if Sara and the FWS folks would be available to meet beforehand. (I am listening in on the NPR-A Rule meeting but staying off camera.)

Emma



Emma Roach

(She/Her)

Communications Director

Alaska | Bureau of Land Management

w: 907-271-4418

c: 907-931-0688

e: eroach@blm.gov

www.blm.gov/alaska



Dena'inaq elnen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu.
I live and work on Dena'ina land.

From: Roach, Emma K

Sent: Friday, November 3, 2023 4:37 PM

To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>; Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Slaughter, Tobi J <tobi_slaughter@fws.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Pritchard, Kaitlyn R <kaitlyn_pritchard@fws.gov>


Cc: Steel, Jacob A <jacob_steel@ios.doi.gov>; Medeiros, Andrea AM <Andrea_Medeiros@fws.gov>

Subject: [Congressional] Prep materials: Monday Senate Indian Affairs Committee briefing (CP SEIS + NPR-A rulemaking)

Hi folks. I wanted to reach out to share the latest version of prep materials for Monday's call with the Senate Indian Affairs Committee regarding consultation on (1) Coastal Plain lease cancellations, (2) Coastal Plain SEIS, and (3) NPR-A

#1127805.1

rulemaking. I know that Steve, Nada, and Bonnie are all in travel status on their way back from the North Slope after engaging with folks on the rulemaking.

Materials: The draft run of show (see below), script, background information, and if-asked materials are all available in this document:  [IA Minority Staff briefing 20231106.docx](#). I've also attached it in case anyone has issues with the link.

Run of Show:

- Introductions – Jake to facilitate
- Welcome and Overview – Steve or Nada (Think Steve may make the most sense on this, but open to alternative thoughts after you read it.)
- Coastal Plain Lease Cancellation consultation – Nada
- Coastal Plain SEIS consultation – Sara & Steve (Right now have Steve giving overarching bullets and Sara covering Kaktovik, but we could change)
- NPR-A proposed rule consultation – Steve & Nada
- Questions/Discussion - All

Request for Speakers: Please take a read and feel free to edit your talking points to fit your voice. Also, if you have strong feelings/thoughts about which pieces of this you deliver, let us know and we can adjust.

Thanks for the collaboration on this, and happy Friday!

Emma



Emma Roach

(She/Her)

Communications Director

Alaska | Bureau of Land Management

w: 907-271-4418

c: 907-931-0688

e: eroach@blm.gov

www.blm.gov/alaska



Dena'inaq elnen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu.
I live and work on Dena'ina land.



From: "Gamper, Merry E" <mgamper@blm.gov>
To: "Press, BLM" <BLM_Press@blm.gov>, "Witt, Ryan C" <rwitt@blm.gov>
Cc: "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Tollefson, Christopher J" <ctollefson@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: Lawsuit by AFP concerning open records request
Date: Tue, 31 Oct 2023 17:38:30 +0000

I assume this is the press release:

<https://americansforprosperity.org/afp-foundation-files-suit-for-anwr-lease-sale-cancellation-documents/>



AFP Foundation Files Suit for ANWR Lease Sale Cancellation Documents - Americans for Prosperity

ANCHORAGE, AK — Today, Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFP Foundation) filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) complaint after the Biden administration failed to provide documents on its unprecedented and unlawful cancellation of oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The

americansforprosperity.org

From: Press, BLM <BLM_Press@blm.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2023 11:11
To: Witt, Ryan C <rwitt@blm.gov>; Gamper, Merry E <mgamper@blm.gov>
Cc: Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>; Tollefson, Christopher J <ctollefson@blm.gov>
Subject: Lawsuit by AFP concerning open records request

Hi all, just sharing below as an FYI.

-Brian

[Brian Hires](#)

Press Secretary & Spokesperson

Headquarters | Bureau of Land Management

Washington, DC

Cell: (202) 209-5558

From: Kim Jarrett <kjarrett@thecentersquare.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2023 1:08 PM
To: Press, BLM <BLM_Press@blm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Lawsuit by AFP concerning open records request

#1127812.1

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Good afternoon,

Americans for Prosperity Foundation issued a press release saying they were suing DOI/BLM for failing to respond to FOIA requests.

Does the department have a statement on this lawsuit? My deadline is 5 p.m. EST.

Thank you,

Kim Jarrett
Associate Editor
The Center Square
www.thecentersquare.com

#1127812.2

From: "Wykowski, Henry T" <hwykowski@blm.gov>
To: "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>
Cc: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: Please read- Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023
Date: Fri, 06 Oct 2023 13:19:04 +0000

I did speak with Tracy. We're going to have further conversations next week, so no final decision yet. Based on conversations, sounds like we have around two weeks before it goes final.

Happy to discuss further if useful!

From: Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 11:29 PM
To: Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>
Cc: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>
Subject: Please read- Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Henry,
Were you able to speak to Tracy to see if she wants a press release for the M-44 MOU after yesterday's conversation with Fran Quamen? Please let me know. Thanks.

From: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 9:35 AM
To: Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>
Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Thank you Barbara. We will probably have the docs in DTS this week. Krauss is confirming with Tracy if she wants a press release or just a response to controlled correspondence.

I think we could safely respond with the following:

Inquiry #2 Response: The safety of the public and our employees is of paramount importance to the BLM. The BLM has worked with US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services (APHIS) in recent months to update our memorandum of understanding governing the management of damage caused by vertebrate wildlife on BLM-administered public lands, including the rare use of M-44s devices that deliver sodium cyanide. The BLM has been engaged in discussions with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) to ensure that state fish and wildlife agencies are informed of any changes.

~ bsg

Brian St George
acting Assistant Director
Resources and Planning Directorate
Bureau of Land Management

From: Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 7:47:53 AM
To: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>

#1127835.1

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Good Morning Brian,

Let's discuss. Question; when is the estimated release of this information? Options: Perhaps we can provide a short, non-descriptive response rather than the full narrative or if needed we can request POB to assist with putting this question off for a bit. The date of the release will play into this.

Thanks

*Barbara L. Eggers, Assistant Director
Business Management & Administration (HQ 700)
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240
beggers@blm.gov
Cell: 202 779 3900*

From: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 12:53 PM
To: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Heinlein, Thomas <theinlei@blm.gov>; Frost, Troy A <tfrost@blm.gov>; Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>
Cc: Eggers, Barbara L <beggers@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>; Keleher, Barbara A <bkeleher@blm.gov>; Lewis, Robin C <rlewis@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; Davidson, Zoe M <zdaavidson@blm.gov>; Bowmer, James A <JBowmer@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Isaac, Mary <misaac@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>; Quamen, Frank R <fquamen@blm.gov>; Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023

Important note: we are on the verge of finalizing the decisions alluded to below. A Congressional response to this issue now risks getting ahead of the Director's desire to announce this decisions publicly (as discussed at ADs meeting on 10/2/23).

Inquiry #2 Response: b(5) DPP



#1127835.2

b(5) DPP

+ Quamen and Krauss for awareness. Thanks!
~ bsg

Brian St George
acting Assistant Director for Resources and Planning
Bureau of Land Management

(office mobile) 303-552-4355
(personal mobile) 970-275-2215
bstgeorg@blm.gov

Interested in [HQ200](#) Directorate for Resources and Planning, [who we are](#), and [what we do](#)? Take a closer look at our teams [HQ210](#), [HQ220](#), [HQ230](#), [HQ260](#), and [HQ200 Business](#).

From: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 9:32 AM
To: St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Heinlein, Thomas <theinlei@blm.gov>; Frost, Troy A <tfrost@blm.gov>; Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>
Cc: Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Shugert, Matthew J <mshugert@blm.gov>; Keleher, Barbara A <bkeleher@blm.gov>; Lewis, Robin C <rlewis@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; Davidson, Zoe M <zdavidson@blm.gov>; Bowmer, James A <JBowmer@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Isaac, Mary <misaac@blm.gov>; McDonald, Monique S <m1mcdona@blm.gov>; Pryor, Ernest L <epryor@blm.gov>
Subject: URGENT Congressional Request: Due COB October 5, 2023
Importance: High

ADs & DADs,

I have a quick turn-around Technical Assistance Request from the House Minority staff. She needs this information by Friday, October 6, so I need it back by COB tomorrow, October 5, 2023. I have put my best guess for which director/state has the lead on these questions, but please feel free to coordinate with us / each other if my guesses weren't quite correct.

1. Can you please provide information on the Wildcat Load Expansion Project, whether you will conduct an environmental impact statement that considers the risks to the Colorado River rather than an environmental assessment, and the timeline you are working on for this expansion. (HQ300/HQ200/CO/UT)
2. Does BLM use M-44 devices on public lands and if so, what is the justification for their use considering that NPS, FWS and BOR do not use them? Why does BLM consider this humane? (HQ200)
3. Are there any monuments to the Founding Fathers on BLM lands? (HQ400)
4. Can you send me background on BLMs proposed rule to enhance protections in NPR-A for sensitive areas as well as cancellation of the seven lease in ANWR? (HQ300/HQ200/AK) (NOTE: Previously cleared communications materials on this topic can be shared to answer this question if appropriate. HQ600 copied.)

#1127835.3

Please let me or Monique McDonald know if you have any questions about this or want to schedule a conversation. Sorry for the short turn around on this! Let us know if we can help.

*NOTE: I am working half days this week and am unavailable before 10 a.m. or after 3 p.m. Eastern time. You can coordinate with Monique if I am not available.

Sincerely,

Jessica Ray Huffman
(She/Her, [What's This?](#))
Budget Officer
Bureau of Land Management

[jruffman@blm.gov](mailto:jrhuffman@blm.gov)
Ph: (301) 875-3856

US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW. Washington, DC. 20240

From: "Jones, Nichelle (Shelly)" <njones@blm.gov>


To: "Sweet, Serena E" <:ssweet@blm.gov>, "Million, Bonnie M" <bmillion@blm.gov>, "Pendergast, Kevin J" <kpendergast@blm.gov>, "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: "Roach, Emma K" <eroach@blm.gov>

Subject: Re: ANWR

Date: Tue, 19 Sep 2023 19:59:51 +0000

b(5) DPP



-Shelly

From: Sweet, Serena E <:ssweet@blm.gov>

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 7:02 PM

To: Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; Jones, Nichelle (Shelly) <njones@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: Roach, Emma K <eroach@blm.gov>

Subject: Re: ANWR

Hi Bonnie,

Because The Voice is not a federally recognized Tribe or an ANCSA Corporation we do not consult with them formally. However, Nagruk and others representing the Voice have been invited by ASRC, NSB and other North Slope entities to participate in formal consultations along with them from time to time. Most recently, Nagruk attended an joint consultation hosted by ASRC, NSB and ICAS back in January 2023 where the Willow and the Coastal Plain projects were discussed.

Additionally, The Voice as an organization has provided substantive comments on our various NEPA projects and those comments have been appropriately considered.

Here is an excerpt from their [website](#) that provides additional details: "Voice of the Arctic Inupiat was formed in 2015 as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, creating a communication network amongst Arctic Slope communities to establish a unified voice for our region and people. Today, our twenty-four member organization works together to ensure that our collective voice is heard and respected – locally, regionally and nationally. Under our current structure, the VOICE is largely funded by Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) and grant funding from the North Slope Borough (NSB). The generosity of ASRC and the NSB means that membership is not determined by an organization's ability to pay member dues. By removing the financial burden of membership dues, our region's entities will always have a voice at our table."

#1127851.1



Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat

[...]Read More... from Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat

voiceofthearcticinupiat.org

Let me know if you have any other questions
Serena

From: Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 6:33 PM
To: Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Jones, Nichelle (Shelly) <njones@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>
Cc: Roach, Emma K <eroach@blm.gov>
Subject: Fwd: ANWR

Please forgive the after hours ping - any intel would be appreciated ASAP. Mikes testimony starts tomorrow 0600 AK time!!

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From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 5:29 PM
To: Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>
Subject: Fwd: ANWR

FYA

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From: Nedd, Michael D <mnedd@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 9:28 PM
To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Reed, Erika <e05reed@blm.gov>
Cc: Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>
Subject: ANWR

Team,

I'm preparing for a hearing tomorrow and just completed my reading the 9-page testimony of Nagruk Harcharek, President , Voice of the Arctic Inupiat (VOICE), a non-profit organization established in 2015 by leadership of the Inupiat to speak on behalf of the natives. He will be a witness at the hearing.

While it would take more than than I currently have to list all his complaints, he seems to consistently make the point that the DOI - BLM continue to take actions on ANWR, NPR-A management, rule making, lease cancellation, etc, without include VOICE who speaks the community.

#1127851.2

Any insight you can share in terms of VOICE involvement/engagement in the on going planning, other matters, etc will be helpful.

Take care and have a wonderful day! :)

Michael D. Nedd
202-236-2867 Cell
202-208-3801 Office
mnedd@blm.gov

A thought to consider based on John Wesley's writing "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, for all the people you can, while you can!"

Working together we're stronger - BLM Strong" - and our Core Values are "To serve with honesty, integrity, accountability, respect, courage, and commitment to make a difference."

From: "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>

To: "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>

Subject: Re: guidance please FW: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 2023 12:35:29 +0000

Inline-Images: ~WRD2883.jpg

Let's discuss. **b(5) DPP**

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From: Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 8:18:54 AM

To: Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: Fwd: guidance please FW: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

b(5) DPP

Let's discuss this and invariably other requests to come.

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From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 2:36:13 AM

To: Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>; Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: guidance please FW: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Hi Tracy and Laura – **b(5) DPP**

b(5) DPP

Guidance appreciated!

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 7:06 PM

To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Cc: Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Moffat, Sara A <smoffat@blm.gov>

Subject: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

hi nada,

#1127863.1

flagging the request below (in yellow) from peter/senr maj. to see if you have thoughts on response. (we checked w/ ak on this too)

p

Patrick Wilkinson

Division Chief

Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior

Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:24 PM

To: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Hey Patrick, do you know the answer to this question? Anything we have here that we can share

From: Stahley, Peter (Energy) <Peter_Stahley@energy.senate.gov>

Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 2:19 PM

To: Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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Checking in on the cancellation "mechanism" and any decision documents? I expect I may get asked this again today/tomorrow...

Thanks,
Peter

From: Stahley, Peter (Energy)

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:08 PM

To: Andrew Wallace (andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov) <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

#1127863.2

I should've asked this prior - is there an SO or some other written order/decision document that cancels the ANWR leases? Can we please get a copy?

Thanks,
Peter

From: U.S. Department of the Interior <info@updates.interior.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:01 PM

To: Stahley, Peter (Energy) <Peter_Stahley@energy.senate.gov>

Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

#1127863.3

“With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem,” said **Secretary Haaland**. “President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge’s Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department’s determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

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#1127863.5

From: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

To: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 2023 18:26:25 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg

I did ask Tracy what she and Laura would like to do with this situation. Hope to hear back soon.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

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#1127880.1

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Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 2:19 PM
To: Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>
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Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:01 PM
To: Stahley, Peter (Energy) <Peter_Stahley@energy.senate.gov>
Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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#1127880.2

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This email was sent to peter_stahley@energy.senate.gov by: U.S. Department of the Interior · 1849 C Street, N.W. · Washington DC 20240 · 202-208-3100

#1127880.5

From: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>, "Million, Bonnie M" <bmillion@blm.gov>, "Reed, Erika" <e05reed@blm.gov>, "Roach, Emma K" <eroach@blm.gov>, "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Bagley, Lonny R" <lbagley@blm.gov>, "Kniola, Benjamin E" <bkniola@blm.gov>, "Emmett, Catherine H" <CHEmmett@blm.gov>, "Pool, Jamie R" <jpool@blm.gov>, BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>, "Hires, Brian K" <bhires@blm.gov>, "Heinlein, Thomas" <theinlei@blm.gov>, "Frost, Troy A" <tfrost@blm.gov>, "Foss, Scott E" <sfoss@blm.gov>, "Hanna, Nicole N" <nhanna@blm.gov>, "Salmon, Marni R" <mrsalmon@blm.gov>, "Gale, John W" <jgale@blm.gov>, "Fields, Yvette M" <yfields@blm.gov>, "McGinnis, Shelley R" <smcginnis@blm.gov>

Subject: {+EE Story} - Readout - HNR EM Hearing on HR 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (concerning NPR-A/ANWR) - 11/29/23

Date: Thu, 30 Nov 2023 13:22:02 +0000

'This is pathetic': Lawmakers, Interior official spar over Arctic oil

A House Natural Resources panel held a hearing on legislation to undo President Joe Biden's cancellation of Arctic oil exploration.

BY:

HEATHER RICHARDS

| 11/30/2023 06:24 AM EST

E&E DAILY | Republicans on a House Natural Resources subcommittee excoriated a senior Interior Department official Wednesday over the Biden administration's Arctic oil policies.

The hearing of the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee sparked a heated debate over future drilling on Alaska's public lands.

Republicans also slammed Interior for not consulting with Alaska Native leaders before proposing new limits on oil and gas activity. At one point, Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.), the full committee chair, told the Interior witness: "This is pathetic," adding that he and the administration should be "ashamed."

Subcommittee Chair Pete Stauber (R-Minn.) convened the hearing to debate his "Alaska's Right to Produce Act," [H.R. 6285](#), which would reinstate oil development rights in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) that were canceled by Interior earlier this year.

It would also halt a proposed rule for the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) that critics say would thwart drilling to the detriment of Alaska Native villages.

The bill is supported by Alaska Democratic Rep. Mary Peltola, the first Alaska Native to serve in Congress.

"These communities are the latest victims of this administration's anywhere-but-America, any-worker-but-American agenda," Stauber said Wednesday. "We should be doing everything we can to ensure that responsible production can continue on the North Slope, rather than shutting down production."

Steve Feldgus, the deputy assistant secretary for land and minerals management at Interior, defended the Biden administration's efforts to balance drilling with protecting land and wildlife in the Arctic, a

#1127603.1

region that he noted is experiencing the direct impacts of climate change. He said the bill would undermine tribal input and agency efforts.

“H.R. 6285 reverts the [Bureau of Land Management] oil and gas program and Alaska back to standards that have been shown to be inadequate,” he said. “The department strongly opposes the bill.”

Alaska’s massive untrammeled public lands have become a focal point in President Joe Biden’s balancing act of managing the nation’s public oil and gas resources alongside his commitments to reduce the nation’s dependence on fossil fuels.

The White House stalled oil development in ANWR and released a new supplemental environmental analysis of oil’s potential impacts to the refuge. But it also approved the Willow project, a long-term drilling program by ConocoPhillips in the NPR-A that could encourage more speculation and development on those lands for years to come.

Feldgus acknowledged that Interior has mixed responsibilities in the NPR-A, helming the oil program while also conserving wildlife and habitat. He said 40 communities depend on subsistence hunting, trapping and fishing in the reserve.

Rep. Garret Graves (R-La.) asked Feldgus to articulate what the “P” in NPR-A stands for. “Petroleum,” Feldgus answered.

“That’s right,” Graves said. “Folks act like they’re shocked that we’re actually going to produce energy there. What in the hell do you think Congress intended when they established the area?”

Lawmakers were told Wednesday that proposed rules in the NPR-A make drilling unlikely in half of the reserve.

John Boyle, commissioner for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, testified that proposed high hurdles for development make it “technologically infeasible” to drill in some of the areas with oil potential.

Democrats came to Interior’s defense.

Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) panned Stauber’s legislation as “another fossil fuel sugar high” that proposes “short-term economic benefits with terrible and irreversible long-term damage.”

Ranking member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez criticized the very existence of the oil and gas program in ANWR, created in 2017 by the Republican-led Congress to pay for “tax cuts for the rich” in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

“This was going to be a moneymaker,” she said, noting that the Congressional Budget Office estimate of \$1 billion in revenue has not proved accurate.

Feldgus reported that federal coffers took in just \$6 million from the 2021 ANWR oil sale held by the Trump administration, the first of two auctions mandated by the tax overhaul.

Westerman argued that that figure was deceptive. Most of the expected revenue forecast for ANWR would come from royalties on production. Since the administration stalled the ANWR leases, development plans have not been able to advance.

Tribal consultation under microscope

Several Alaska Native leaders on the panel testified that the Biden administration failed to adequately consult with North Slope tribal leaders.

“The North Slope Iñupiat are the only Indigenous people that have continually inhabited these lands, yet our voices have been continuously dismissed,” said Doreen Leavitt, secretary of the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope.

Charles Lampe, president of the Kaktovik Iñupiat Corp., said his Alaska Native community, which lies within ANWR, supports development.

“For an administration that touts the importance of tribal consultation, it does not appear to follow its own guidelines,” he said of the Biden administration. “This reflects the tone-deaf nature of this department to the people who live on the coastal plain.”

Feldgus withstood a barrage of criticism from Republicans on the committee over the consultation accusations.

“This is pathetic. You should be ashamed. The administration should be ashamed,” Westerman told Feldgus.

Huffman again came to the defense of the Biden administration, saying Stauber’s proposed legislation would speed through oil and gas approvals on these lands without tribal consultation or public input.

“It’s a little rich, I think, to suggest that this Native consultation issue favors one side or the other,” he said. “There is no high ground here for my friends across the aisle or for the fossil fuel enthusiasts who are behind this legislation.”

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From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 6:20 PM

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Reed, Erika <e05reed@blm.gov>; Roach, Emma K <eroach@blm.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Pool, Jamie R <jpool@blm.gov>; BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>; Hires, Brian K <b hires@blm.gov>; Heinlein, Thomas <theinlei@blm.gov>; Frost, Troy A <tfrost@blm.gov>; Foss, Scott E <sfoss@blm.gov>; Hanna, Nicole N <nhanna@blm.gov>; Salmon, Marni R <mrsalmon@blm.gov>; Gale, John W <jgale@blm.gov>; Fields, Yvette M <yfields@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>

Subject: Readout - HNR EM Hearing on HR 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act (concerning NPR-A/ANWR) - 11/29/23

FYI – On Wednesday, November 29, the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a legislative hearing on *H.R. 6285, the Alaska’s Right to Produce Act*, concerning the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge).

Members of Congress in attendance included: Subcommittee Chairman Stauber (R-MN-08), Subcommittee Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14), Full Committee Chairman Westerman (R-AR-04), and Representatives from the Subcommittee, including Reps. Gosar (R-AZ-09), Graves (R-LA-06), Fulcher (R-ID-01), Tiffany (R-WI-07), Rosendale (R-MT-02), Boebert (R-CO-03), Hunt (R-TX-38), Duarte (R-CA-13), Huffman (D-CA-02), and Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37). Representative Peltola (D-AK-At Large), Member of the full Committee, also participated.

The hearing included two witness panels. The first panel had one witness: Dr. Steve Feldgus, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, U.S. Department of the Interior. The second panel consisted of John Boyle, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Natural Resources; Doreen Leavitt, Secretary, Iñupiat Community

of the Arctic Slope; Karlin Itchoak, Alaska State Director, The Wilderness Society [Minority Witness]; and Charles Lampe, President, Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation.

The hearing lasted nearly 3 hours, with the time roughly split between the two panels. The tone was generally cordial, with a few somewhat contentious exchanges related to Tribal consultation and NEPA adequacy.

Chairman Stauber opened the hearing touting his bill as bipartisan and asserting that it "reverses the Biden Administration's recent actions that seek to put an end to oil and gas production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska." He also accused the Department of not consulting with the local Tribes on recent decisions. Full Committee Chairman Westerman followed Chairman Stauber's statement by evoking the memory of former Alaska Rep. Young and expressing his strong disapproval of the administration's energy policy. Ranking Member Ocasio Cortez used her opening statement to note that the tax cuts in the 2017 Tax Act were to supposed to be offset by projected "tens of billions of dollars" in revenues from oil and gas development in the Arctic Refuge, which she asserted have ultimately been less than 1% of what the Congressional Budget Office estimated before enactment.

During his questions, Chairman Stauber asked several questions about the Department's Tribal consultation process and the adequacy of consultation that has occurred. He specifically mentioned an NPR-A Working Group meeting where he reported that a Department official said that an extension on the comment period could not occur because of the Congressional Review Act and that the Department did not have control of the timeline. He then asked Dr. Feldgus what the official meant and who was in control. Rep. Tiffany also asked questions about Tribal consultation, specifically if Dr. Feldgus thought it was adequate. Both Chairman Stauber and Rep. Tiffany requested Dr. Feldgus to stay for the second panel to hear directly from those asserting that consultation was not adequate.

Rep. Westerman continued by questioning Dr. Feldgus regarding the Coastal Plain Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), asking why the Department did not comply with the 150-page limit established by the Fiscal Responsibility Act and how long the Department provided Alaskan natives to read the "1,400-page" document. Rep. Graves contested the Department's compliance with the 2017 tax law requiring leases – asking where the Secretary found discretion to cancel leases issued during the Trump administration under the tax law and proceeded to ask what he thought Congress intended when it set aside the National Petroleum Reserve, emphasizing "petroleum." Rep. Gosar took issue with the Department's Chaco Canyon withdrawal, which he framed as taking away economic prospects of local communities, and veered into unrelated questions regarding the Taylor Grazing Act. Rep. Gosar then asked Steve if he was familiar with the entrepreneurial aspect of the American spirit which he argued would more responsibly develop energy than we are currently.

During her questions, Ranking Member Ocasio Cortez asked Dr. Feldgus about Arctic Refuge leases that have been relinquished, whether the one remaining lessee (AIDEA) had ever managed oil and gas leases, and whether any wildlife refuges had oil and gas development as a purpose of the designation. Rep. Huffman made a general statement regarding increased climate change impacts, both in Alaska and elsewhere in the United States. He then asked Dr. Feldgus about the Chevron and Hillcorp lease relinquishments and the specific complications, barriers, and risks associated with drilling on the North Slope of Alaska. Rep. Kamlager-Dove asked Dr. Feldgus about what the BLM has done to ensure that the proposed NPR-A rule would protect health, safety, and culture of Alaska Native Communities on the North Slope and what the Administration is doing to elevate Tribal Sovereignty objectives in Alaska and on the North Slope.

Rep. Duarte spoke about the high costs of goods in Alaska, specifically in the North Slope area. He repeatedly implied that the Administration's focus on subsistence issues was forcing those on the North Slope to not advance away from a subsistence lifestyle. He added that the left is "robbing the native peoples of Alaska the same economic development opportunities that we've enjoyed that support our lifestyles here. I'm sure your ancestors and mine both used to hunt something."

Rep. Hunt accused the Administration of taking oil and gas off the table in the United States and instead supports importing from Russia, Venezuela, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. While Rep. Rosendale provided only a statement instead of asking questions also accusing the Administration of “catastrophic nationwide repercussions” from its “environmentalist policies”. He then added that climate change must not be of great concern with former President Obama recently buying waterfront property. Lastly, Rep. Stauber allotted himself additional time to ask whether the Department would rescind a Notice to Lessees issued by the Department related to offshore development over Rep. Huffman’s procedural objections.

Second Panel Discussion Overview

Discussions during the second panel largely encompassed the same themes of the first panel, with a more detailed examination of the topics introduced earlier. In particular, Chairman Stauber and other members of the majority asked Witnesses Boyle, Leavitt, and Lampe about the sufficiency of consultation with various Alaska Native Corporations and Tribal communities on the proposed NPR-A rule and the Arctic Refuge SEIS, how decreased energy production would affect the State and Tribal communities, especially with respect to funding of services and infrastructure, and whether there had been impacts to resources since energy production began in the 1970s.

Members of the minority asked Witness Itchoak about the deficiencies in the environmental analysis underlying the canceled leases and the types of impacts that climate change and oil and gas development have on the Arctic. About halfway through the second panel, Rep. Peltola stated that while she was not 100% pleased with all interactions with the Administration, the Willow project decision reflected some deference to Alaskans. Finally, Rep. Peltola requested constructive thoughts from each of the witnesses on how Alaskans can do better to collaborate with Tribes, industry, conservation groups, and others.

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To: "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>, "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>, "Moran, Jill C" <jcmoran@blm.gov>, "Conklin, Caralee S" <csconklin@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>, "Gamper, Merry E" <mgamper@blm.gov>, "McCarthy, Joelle L" <jmccarth@blm.gov>, "Austin Johnson, Alicia M" <aaustinjohnson@blm.gov>, "Nedd, Michael D" <mnedd@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill A" <jralston@blm.gov>, "Gins, Meagan A" <mgins@blm.gov>, "Hanna, Nicole N" <nhanna@blm.gov>, "Tichenor, James C" <jtichenor@blm.gov>, "Brown, James R" <jamesrbrown@blm.gov>

Cc: "Richardson, Carrie M" <crichardson@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Correspondence Report (12/13/2023)

Date: Wed, 13 Dec 2023 17:08:09 +0000

Attachments: BLM_Correspondence_Report_(12-13-2023).docx

Inline-Images: image001.png; image002.png

Good afternoon,

Attached you will find this week's correspondence report. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

This week: 37 total items, 23 of which are 30+ days old; 27 with BLM, 5 with DOI, 5 with ASLM;
26 Congressionals, 16 of which are 30+ days old; 16 with BLM, 5 with DOI, 5 with ASLM;
3 Tribal; 4 Gubernatorial

Last week: 37 total items, 21 of which are 30+ days old; 26 with BLM, 11 with DOI, 0 with ASLM;
25 Congressionals, 13 of which are 30+ days old; 15 with BLM, 10 with DOI, 0 with ASLM;
5 Tribal; 3 Gubernatorial

Thank you,
Brianna

Brianna Nguyen
Correspondence Management Analyst
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#1127605.1

From: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

To: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Cc: "Kniola, Benjamin E" <bkniola@blm.gov>, "Gins, Meagan A" <mgins@blm.gov>, "Wykowski, Henry T" <hwykowski@blm.gov>, "Moffat, Sara A" <smoffat@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 2023 06:34:54 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg

There are letters that went to the lessee but we have not made those public. We should flag for Tracy/ASLM as I don't have them either. Will pass on.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
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From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 7:06 PM

To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Cc: Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Moffat, Sara A <smoffat@blm.gov>

Subject: SENR Maj Q ---- Fw: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

hi nada,
flagging the request below (in yellow) from peter/senr maj. to see if you have thoughts on response. (we checked w/ ak on this too)
p

Patrick Wilkinson

Division Chief

Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior

Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:24 PM

To: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

#1127612.1

Hey Patrick, do you know the answer to this question? Anything we have here that we can share

From: Stahley, Peter (Energy) <Peter_Stahley@energy.senate.gov>

Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 2:19 PM

To: Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Checking in on the cancellation "mechanism" and any decision documents? I expect I may get asked this again today/tomorrow...

Thanks,
Peter

From: Stahley, Peter (Energy)

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:08 PM

To: Andrew Wallace (andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov) <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: RE: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

I should've asked this prior - is there an SO or some other written order/decision document that cancels the ANWR leases? Can we please get a copy?

Thanks,
Peter

From: U.S. Department of the Interior <info@updates.interior.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:01 PM

To: Stahley, Peter (Energy) <Peter_Stahley@energy.senate.gov>

Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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#1127612.2

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

"With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem," said **Secretary Haaland**. "President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations."

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, "[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program." S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department's determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to

properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

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The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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#1127612.5

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Cc: "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "St Michel, Erica E" <estmichel@blm.gov>, "Wykowski, Henry T" <hwykowski@blm.gov>, "Gins, Meagan A" <mgins@blm.gov>, "Emmett, Catherine H" <CHEmmett@blm.gov>, "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Bagley, Lonny R" <lbagley@blm.gov>, BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>

Subject: ICYMI - EE - "Republicans grill BOEM chief on offshore wind, oil and gas"

Date: Thu, 27 Apr 2023 13:32:53 +0000



Republicans grill BOEM chief on offshore wind, oil and gas

The Interior Department official got an earful on a delayed five-year plan for offshore leases at a House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing.



BY: **SCOTT STREATER** | 04/27/2023 06:50 AM EDT

 Liz Klein, David Applegate and Paul Huang.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Director Liz Klein, U.S. Geological Survey Director David Applegate and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement Deputy Director Paul Huang during a House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing Wednesday. Francis Chung/POLITICO

E&E DAILY | The partisan divide over domestic energy production and the roles offshore oil and gas and wind energy should play was on full display Wednesday during a House hearing.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources questioned officials from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Full committee Chair Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) pressed new BOEM Director Liz Klein on the pace of offshore oil and gas leasing, and why the agency is nearly a year late in releasing a new five-year plan for offshore drilling. The Interior Department holds auctions based on a five-year schedule.

#1127622.1

Klein said a final draft of the five-year plan should be released in September and that Interior Secretary Deb Haaland plans to approve it by year's end.

"We are working very hard to go ahead and put out the proposed final program by September 2023," Klein said.

Westerman seemed surprised when Klein conceded that BOEM has yet to start any of the National Environmental Policy Act reviews that are necessary before a lease sale can occur and will not while it works to finalize the five-year plan.

The chair then questioned whether BOEM is sincere about holding offshore oil and gas lease sales — something that's required in the Inflation Reduction Act — noting that it can take two years to complete the environmental reviews for the lease sales.

"So if the five-year plan is finalized in December, and NEPA's projected to take two years, when will the first sale happen if all goes perfectly?" he asked.

While Klein did not answer the question directly, Westerman said the timeline indicates that after a planned offshore lease sale in September, the next one likely would not occur until 2026.

Westerman also said that the Inflation Reduction Act prevents BOEM from issuing new offshore wind energy leases if no offshore oil and gas lease sales were held the previous year.

Klein said they are aware of the requirements in the Inflation Reduction Act and intend to follow the law. She also said, "We feel confident in our ability to move forward with the president's goal of meeting 30 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030."

Westerman said he does not feel as certain.

"Feeling confident and aspirational won't do much to help our energy situation here," he said. "And it appears to me that we are looking at no lease sales for oil and gas in 2024 or 2025, and none for wind in 2025. That looks like where we're at in the process right now."

The exchange underscores how the federal oil and gas program has divided Republicans and Democrats, and is an issue that even President Joe Biden has

struggled to deal with at times, as he promised while campaigning for president in 2020 to retire drilling on federal lands and waters if elected.

Interior has focused on regulatory reforms instead, displeasing climate leaders who have felt betrayed by Biden and angering congressional Republicans who say the administration has stymied domestic energy production, driving up fuel prices.

Subcommittee Chair Pete Stauber (R-Minn.) blasted the delay in finalizing the five-year offshore oil and gas plan, and he attempted to tie it to Biden's announcement this week that he's running for reelection next year.

"Let's be real here: This delay is intended to walk a line between promises to the billion-dollar activist ecosystem" — including, he said, former New York City Mayor and 2020 Democratic presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg — "and the millions of Americans who just want high-wage jobs or affordable fuel for their homes and vehicles, or to have the comfort of knowing we're not reliant on foreign sources of energy."

Offshore wind concerns

Another major point of discussion at the oversight hearing involved offshore wind energy and the Biden administration's unprecedented effort to expand commercial-scale development, particularly along the Atlantic coast.

Two Republicans from New Jersey — Reps. Chris Smith and Jeff Van Drew — expressed concern about the pace of offshore wind energy development. Both have recently tried to link whale and dolphin deaths to preparations in building offshore wind facilities ([E&E Daily](#), March 31).

Smith said he's worried that hundreds of offshore wind turbines could negatively affect military and civilian radars.

"Is that true? Is there the possibility that some 3,400 wind turbines proposed to be deployed off our coast could make navigation less safe?" Smith asked.

Klein said that BOEM has, from the beginning, "worked very closely with our partners at the Department of Defense all throughout the process, starting as

we identified potential sites for offshore wind" in an effort to avoid any such conflicts.

Van Drew also mentioned radar but was also more blunt in his view that most of his constituents in New Jersey don't want the buildup of wind turbines off the Atlantic coastline.

"I don't know how to say it, but I guess just to say it: Director Klein I don't agree with what you and your company [are] doing," he said. "And while BOEM continues to approve offshore wind lease areas at what I would call blinding rates, we've seen a wide array of those involved in the offshore wind process continue to express concerns about its current implementation."

He said the proliferation of commercial-scale wind turbines would negatively affect tourism, the fishing industry and other areas, and he asked Klein if BOEM has properly done its due diligence to fully analyze the impacts of offshore wind.

"From the very beginning of the process that BOEM uses to identify places that seem right for this type of development, they ensure they are identifying areas for lease that would minimize the amount of impacts to the environment and to other ocean users," Klein said.

Van Drew was not swayed.

"This is going to cause way more harm than good," he said. "It's not good for our area, and we don't want it in New Jersey, particularly."

Questioning Klein on ethics

Stauber also addressed what he called "ethics questions" he has concerning Klein, who before joining the Interior Department served as the deputy director of New York University School of Law's State Energy & Environmental Impact Center.

While employed at the center — which has received significant funding from Bloomberg — Klein helped support state attorneys general in filing dozens of lawsuits challenging Trump-era environmental rollbacks, including the former administration's efforts to open up public lands within the coastal plain of the

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development (*E&E Daily*, Jan. 12).

Klein acknowledged that while she was at the center its mission was "to support state attorneys general in their efforts to engage on energy and environmental issues."

Stauber said her history there "does speak volumes about your angst against the offshore oil and gas industry."

He added: "I would just hope that in your new position that you would look at it in a broader way, that there could be reliable and affordable clean energy under the all-of-the-above opportunities for us."

New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the subcommittee's ranking Democrat, defended Klein against any suggestion she has conflicts of interest that prevent her from doing her job as BOEM director correctly.

So did California Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.), who apologized to Klein for what he called his colleague's efforts to drag her into "the rabbit hole of dog-whistle conspiracy theories."

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Subject: BLM Congressional & Legislative Affairs Weekly Report – December 7, 2023

Date: Fri, 08 Dec 2023 00:11:48 +0000

Attachments: NEW_Cong.Report._Updates_(45).docx

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Weekly Report – December 7, 2023
(Updates in Red)

HEARINGS/MARKUPS

- **Dec. 6:** The House Natural Resources Committee favorably reported as amended the following BLM-related bills:
 - H.R. 1449, Committing Leases for Energy Access Now Act or the CLEAN Act;
 - H.R. 6009, Restoring American Energy Dominance Act;
 - H.R. 6011, Right-Of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act or the ROWATA Act; and
 - H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act.
- **Dec. 12:** The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining plans to hold a hearing on mining legislation. Witness: Steve Feldgus, PhD, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management.
 - S. 1742, Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act
 - S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act
- **Dec. 12:** The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources plans to hold a legislative hearing on the following bills of interest to the BLM. No DOI witness; BLM Statement for the Record
 - H.R. 5482, Energy Poverty Prevention and Accountability Act

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- H.R. 6474, Amends the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to expedite geothermal exploration and development in previously studied or developed areas.
- H.R. 6481, Amends the Mineral Leasing Act to require DOI to reimburse the fee for an expression of interest if the expression of interest becomes inactive.
- Dec. 14 (T): The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee tentatively plans to hold a markup on 24 bills, including the following of interest to the BLM:
 - S. 594, Continental Divide Trail Completion Act;
 - S. 636, Dolores River National Conservation Area and Special Management Area Act;
 - S. 1348, Wyoming Public Lands Initiative Act;
 - S. 1634, Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act;
 - S. 1776, PUBLIC Lands Act;
 - S. 1889, Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act;
 - S. 1890, Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act;
 - S. 2581, Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act;
 - S. 2615, Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act;
 - S. 3033, Pecos Watershed Protection Act; and
 - S. 3036, Mountain View Corridor Completion Act.
- TBD: The House Natural Resources Committee plans to mark up H.R. 6492, Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (Omnibus Recreation Legislation)

NEW ITEMS

- Dec. 5: Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff requested information on access to inholdings and data on rivers, creeks, and springs on lands proposed for designation as wilderness in S. 1890, Malheur Community for the Empowerment of the Owyhee.
- Dec. 5: Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Quigley (D-IL-05) staff requested assistance on revised text of the draft bill, “National Interagency Seed and Restoration Center Establishment Act.”
- Dec. 5: Sen. Daines (R-MT) staff requested a status update on the transmission ROW application connected to the Arnold Coulee hydropower project.
- Dec. 6: Sen. Hickenlooper (D-CO) staff requested an update on the proposed Public Lands Rule.
- Dec. 6: HNR minority staff requested information regarding H.R. 6474, which amends the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to expedite geothermal exploration and development in previously studied or developed areas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS / VISITS / BRIEFINGS

- NA

CORRESPONDENCE

EST / DCN	Date	From	Subject	Status
BLM0038665	06/27/2023	Crane	Resolution Copper EIS	OCL
BLM0039833	08/25/2023	Rosen	Ruby Mountains mineral withdrawal	OCL
BLM0039842	08/25/2023	Lombardo (Gov)	Permitting progress of Goldrush project	OCL
BLM0040029	09/01/2023	Cortez Masto	Support for National Monument at Swamp Cedars	OCL
BLM0040385	09/26/2023	Kelly	Support for BLM broadband project permitting in Navajo County, AZ	BIA/OCL
BLM0040491	09/29/2023	Levin	Support of onshore oil and gas leasing rule	OCL

BLM0040737	10/11/2023	Padilla	Expand boundary of Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument	HQ-600
BLM0040818	10/17/2023	Risch	Interpretation and implementation of Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act in ID	HQ-600
BLM0040838	10/18/2023	Booker	Recommendation for National Wild Horse & Burrow Advisory Board	OCL
BLM0040881	10/20/2023	Murkowski	Extending comment deadline for NPR-A rule	OCL
BLM0040954	10/26/2023	Bennet	Support for updated bonding requirements in onshore oil and gas rule	OCL
BLM0040988	10/30/2023	Amodei	Public land withdrawal in Railroad Valley, NV	OCL
BLM0041098	11/02/2023	Murkowski	Comment deadline extension for Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Program SEIS	HQ-300
BLM0041146	11/07/2023	Westerman	Heavener Coking Coal Project	ESSO
BLM0041223	11/13/2023	Rosendale	Rural broadband development in western Montana	HQ-620
BLM0041225	11/13/2023	Cortez Masto	PENDING BLM0039833: Oil and gas withdrawal – Ruby Mountains, NV	HQ-600
BLM0041382	11/20/2023	Westerman	Twin Metals Cancellation and The Wilderness Society Meetings	ESSO
BLM0041334	11/20/2023	Sullivan	Veterans Native Allotments	AKSO
BLM0041335	11/20/2012	Titus	Roberts Mountain Complex wild horse gather accident	HQ-260
BLM0041371	11/21/2023	Bentz	Constituent concern re Human Resources issue	ORSO
BLM0041461	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041462	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041471	11/29/2023	Bennet	Proposed Public Lands Rule improvements	HQ-230
BLM0041524	12/04/2023	Curtis	Co-location of renewable and fossil energy production	HQ-330
BLM0041525	12/04/2023	Lankford	DoD energy resilience at U.S. Military installations	HQ-310

ONGOING ITEMS PENDING WITH BLM

- Jan. 4/June 6/Sept. 20: HNR majority staff requested follow-up information regarding BLM’s draft Greenhouse Gas Environmental Assessment and the related court cases.
- March 14/June 6/Sept. 21: HNR majority staff requested the number of Expressions of Interest received over the last 12 months.

- Sep. 7: Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) staff requested follow up information regarding an oil and gas lease cancellation in Utah and questions regarding BLM permitting staffing needs.
- Sept. 21: SENR majority staff requested an update on the status of the WildEarth Guardians litigation GHG EA and if any decisions have been issued based on the EA.
- Sept. 26: Rep. Curtis (R-UT-03) and Rep. Huffman (D-CA-02) staff requested information on the renewable energy permitting process.
- Sept. 26: Rep. Bentz (R-OR-02) requested information on renewal of grazing permits in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in southern Oregon.
- Sept. 29/Nov. 28: Sen. Cramer (R-ND) staff requested information regarding a BLM-New Mexico EA regarding Lesser Prairie Chicken (**completed Dec. 7**)._{..}
- Oct. 12: Rep. Valadao (R-CA-22) staff requested information regarding water management on public lands in Tulare County, CA.
- Oct. 23: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested information on conservation and the proposed Public Lands Rule.
- Oct. 31: SENR majority staff and staff of Sen. Barrasso (R-WY) requested maps depicting designations proposed in S. 1348, Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (ongoing).
- Nov. 1: HNR majority staff requested information regarding the Report to Congress on oil and gas project office funds.
- Nov. 6: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested information about Alaska Native community involvement/tribal consultation regarding the ANWR lease cancellations, draft SEIS, and proposed NPR-A rule (**completed Dec. 5**).
- Nov. 7: Sen. Rosen (D-NV) staff requested information on the status of the 3 Kids mine conveyance in southern Nevada.
- Nov. 8: Rep. Fulcher (R-ID-01) staff requested a briefing on the Four Rivers RMP decision.
- Nov. 16: Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) staff requested additional information about a Federal mineral rights issue underlying a constituent's private land.
- Nov. 27: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested information about the Sombrillo Travel Management Plan in northern New Mexico (**completed Dec. 6**).
- Nov. 28: Sen. Casey (D-PA) staff requested information regarding the orphaned well plugging requirements in the BIL (**completed Dec. 1**).
- Nov. 28: Sen. Collins (R-ME) staff requested information on the status of the Native Plant Species Pilot Program included in the FY23 Omnibus Appropriations Act.
- Nov. 29: Rep. Schrier (D-WA-08) staff requested information related to the National Prescribed Fire Act.
- Nov. 30: Sen. Cortez-Masto (D-NV) staff requested responses to recommendations from the Findings & Recommendations of the Not Invisible Act Commission, which is a cross jurisdictional commission formed to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous people.

Ongoing CBO/CRS Requests

- Sept. 25: CBO requested information regarding S. 683, Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act (Sen. Padilla, D-CA) (**completed Dec. 6**)._{..}
- Oct. 19: CBO requested information on H.R. 188, Proven Forest Management Act of 2023 (**completed Dec. 6**).
- Oct. 27: CBO requested information on S. 1260, the University of Utah Research Park Act (Sen. Lee, R-UT)._{..}
- Nov. 21: CBO requested information related to temporary housing of non-U.S. nationals on BLM managed public lands (**completed Dec. 1**).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nov. 3/June 6: HNR majority staff requested technical assistance on three specific sections in H.R. 9087, the TAP American Energy Act (Rep. Westerman, R-AR-04).
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

- Feb. 2/April 17/May 24: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to transfer a tract of Federal land to the Wrangel Cooperative Association.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- March 15: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on legislative language regarding transfer of Tenakee Springs.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 7: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested technical assistance on S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 9: Rep. Vasquez (D-NM-02) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill titled “Ranching Without Red Tape.”
 - Status: Pending with **OCL**.
- July 17: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act. BIA is leading the response, with OCL coordinating other agency input.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 31: Rep. McCollum (D-MN-4) requested technical assistance on H.R. 5021, Securing American Critical Minerals Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Aug. 11: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Bureau of Land Management Flexible Partnerships Act of 2023.
 - Status: Pending with ASLM.
- Sept. 5: OCL requested assistance on a Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff request for technical assistance on the previously introduced S. 4369, the North American Grasslands Conservation Act (117th Congress).
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Sept. 18: Rep. Simpson (ID-02) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey public land to Twin Falls County, Idaho, for use as a recreation trail.
 - Status: **Completed Dec. 1; follow up information requested Dec. 7.**
- Sept. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-7) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey reversionary of select land near Ridgecrest California.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Oct. 13: Rep. Cartwright (D-PA-8) staff requested DOI/BLM technical assistance on H.R. 2872, Safeguarding America’s Future and Environment Act, from the 117th Congress.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

- March 29: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: BLM Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with DOI.
- May 16: HNR EMR/FL hearing on the BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0038668)
- June 15: HNR hearing on H.R. 3397, “to require the BLM Director to withdraw a rule of the BLM relating to conservation and landscape health.” Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with **ASLM**. (BLM0040177)
- June 22: HNR Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with **OCL**.
- Sept. 19: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing “Examining the Biden Administration’s Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.” Witness: Deputy Director of Operations Nedd.
 - Status: Pending with **OCL**. (BLM0040784)
- Sept. 28: SENR hearing “Examine opportunities to counter the People’s Republic of China’s control of critical mineral supply chains through increased mining and processing in the United States as well as

international engagement and trade.” Witness: Deputy Secretary Beaudreau.

- Status: Select questions pending with BLM
- Oct. 25: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

REPORTS TO CONGRESS (pending review in DTS)

- Efficiencies with O&C Grant Lands Program for Fiscal Year 2017
 - Status: Pending with HQ-220 (BLM0011656).
- Report to Congress on Online Oil and Gas Leasing - Comprehensive Comparison of Oral vs Online Lease Sales
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0012000).
- Oil and Gas Resource Potential of the Musselshell Breaks and Bridge Coulee Wilderness Study Areas
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0019271).
- Trespassing on Alaska Native Lands
 - Status: Pending with HQ-620 (BLM0021543).
- Annual Helium Report to Congress FY 2020-2022
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NM (BLM0032063).
- Suitability for Geothermal of Categorical Exclusions Under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000067).
- Annual Renewable Energy Report to Congress FY 2022
 - Status: **Delivered Dec. 4.**
- Withdrawal Extension Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with OCL (BLMC000090).
- SNPLMA FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with **BLM-NV** (BLMC000093).

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Very nice.

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Subject: [EXTERNAL] WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: Protecting Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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The White House Logo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 7, 2023

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: Protecting Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Since day one, the Biden-Harris Administration has delivered on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. As part of this unprecedented commitment, the Administration yesterday announced it is taking major action to advance that commitment by canceling the remaining oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and proposing new protections for more than 13 million acres within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. These actions

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will help preserve our Arctic lands and wildlife, while honoring the culture, history, and enduring wisdom of Alaska Natives.

As the climate crisis warms the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the world, President Biden believes we have a responsibility to protect this treasured region and all of America's natural wonders for future generations. That's why the President set a historic goal to conserve and restore 30% of U.S. lands and waters by 2030 and invested more funding in conservation than any other President in a two-year period. The Biden-Harris Administration will continue to take bold action to meet the urgency of the climate crisis and to protect our lands and waters for generations to come.

See what they are saying below:

INDIGENOUS AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS

Bernadette Dementieff, the Executive Director of the Gwich'in Steering Committee: "AIDEA's leases were economically infeasible, unlawful, and threatened the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the Gwich'in way of life. We thank the Biden administration and Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland for taking this step towards protecting [Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit](#) (The Sacred Place Where Life Begins), but we know that our sacred land is only temporarily safe from oil and gas development. We urge the administration and our leaders in Congress to repeal the oil and gas program and permanently protect the Arctic Refuge." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Kristen Miller, Executive Director of Alaska Wilderness League: "Today is a good day for climate, Indigenous communities, and our Arctic ecosystem. At a time when the reality of the climate crisis is daily news, the Biden administration is taking necessary action in the Arctic to move us toward a more sustainable future. Leases should have never been granted in the Arctic Refuge under President Trump's illegal Coastal Plain leasing program, especially to AIDEA – a state-owned development corporation with a track record of failures and no oil and gas experience. Today's action shows the Biden administration's commitment to long-term climate and conservation solutions for this region. The end to illegal leases, along with strong action toward new conservation protections, show the bold action we need to preserve America's Arctic and address climate change." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Abigail Dillen, President of Earthjustice: "We commend Secretary Haaland for canceling unlawfully issued oil-and-gas leases in the Arctic Refuge. This decisive action undoes an egregious attack on this cherished place and will help to vindicate the rights of Indigenous people and protect vital habitat. Looking ahead, we hope to see the strongest possible protections for the Arctic Refuge and the Western Arctic in the years to come." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Jamie Williams, President of The Wilderness Society: "It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of today's announcement for the Indigenous peoples in this region, whose cultures and communities depend on the Porcupine Caribou Herd. The herd's calving ground is once again free of oil leases, our climate is a bit safer and there is renewed hope for permanently protecting one of the last great wild landscapes in America. We are profoundly grateful to the Biden administration for taking this step to protect what the Gwich'in know as *Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit* – The Sacred Place Where Life Begins – and we call on Congress to repeal the Arctic Refuge oil and gas leasing provision in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and take action to permanently protect the coastal plain for future generations." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Ben Jealous, Executive Director of the Sierra Club: "To quote President Biden, this is a big f-ing deal. Oil and gas drilling in the Arctic Refuge is incompatible with the

long-term survival of the Arctic, the Gwich'in Nation's way of life, and life as we know it. By protecting these landscapes and canceling these leases, the White House has made it clear they will take bold action to avert climate catastrophe. The effort to protect and preserve the Arctic Refuge was one of the first major battles of the modern environmental movement. Now, the Arctic and the communities and wildlife that rely on it are on the frontlines of climate change. Today, in listening to the Gwich'in Nation and the American people, President Biden showed that this treasured landscape is also the frontline of climate action." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Jamie Rappaport Clark, President and CEO, Defenders of Wildlife: "Defenders applauds the Biden administration for recognizing the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's unique values and cancelling these questionable leases. The Refuge is a national treasure, home to spectacular wildlife including threatened polar bears and the Porcupine caribou herd, which has provided physical and cultural sustenance to the Gwich'in people for millennia. We stand with the Gwich'in and the vast majority of Americans who support protecting the Arctic Refuge and are grateful the Biden administration addressed the insufficiencies and legal violations of the previous administration's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil and gas leasing program. We now call on Congress to listen to the American people and repeal the program completely, protecting this unique and irreplaceable wildlife refuge in perpetuity." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Collin O'Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation: "Protecting the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a victory for the Gwich'in People and the iconic wildlife that depend on the refuge for survival. This action will help ensure that we're not further exacerbating the accelerating climate impacts and habitat fragmentation in the Arctic. We thank the Biden Administration for taking this important conservation action and urge Congress to permanently protect this crown jewel of the National Wildlife Refuge System." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Marilyn Sigman, President of Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges: "We are thrilled that the Biden Administration has canceled these illegal leases. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is home to a rich biodiversity of wildlife that depend on the large stretches of intact habitat found in the coastal plain and beyond. We thank the President and Secretary Haaland for their support for protecting this jewel of the Refuge System." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Manish Bapna, President and CEO of Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC): "It's long past time to stop sacrificing irreplaceable wildlife habitat and Indigenous lands to deepen our dependence on the fossil fuels driving the climate crisis. This puts our future first. It protects the realms of birthing caribou and migratory birds. It safeguards lands the Gwich'in people rely on for their livelihood. Public lands are a public trust. They must be part of the climate solution – not the problem. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the nation's largest wildlife refuge. It's no place for oil and gas drilling and all the damage and danger it brings." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Tiernan Sittenfeld, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs LCV: "We applaud President Biden and Secretary Haaland for these significant steps to protect Arctic communities and our climate. We're thrilled that the cancellation of the illegally held oil and gas leases in the Arctic Refuge will restore lands sacred to the Gwich'in and vital to the health of the Arctic ecosystem. We also applaud the Biden-Harris administration for prioritizing the Arctic as part of their conservation legacy by strengthening protections for 13 million acres in the Western Arctic and addressing Trump's illegal leasing program in the Arctic Refuge. These proposed protections are vitally important for this unique and sacred landscape, and we are eager to work with the Biden-Harris administration to build on today's announcements and permanently protect the Arctic region." [\[Statement\]](#), 9/6/23]

Chantal de Alcuaz, The Alaska Center Co-Executive Director “Alaskan communities are at the frontlines of the climate crisis. It affects all aspects of our lives, from the health of our communities to the health of our economy. The communities of the Arctic have long fought for a voice in the protection of their lands, and this decision by President Biden and Secretary Haaland is a decisive step in the right direction to listen to the needs and the wisdom of those communities. At The Alaska Center, we believe in the sacredness of these lands and the importance of bringing these communities to the decision-making table. We are grateful that leadership is ready to take the necessary steps to confront the climate crisis and help move our state towards a just transition that works with and for Alaskans.” [\[Statement, 9/6/23\]](#)

Cassandra Carmichael, Executive Director of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment: “Faith communities across the country have stood in solidarity with the Gwich’in to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling and exploration. In canceling the Arctic Refuge leases, President Biden is not only honoring the sacredness of this unique and fragile part of God’s creation, but is acknowledging that protecting the way of life of the Gwich’in is a matter of justice and faithfulness.” [\[Statement, 9/6/23\]](#)

David Krause, Interim Executive Director of Audubon Alaska: “We applaud the Biden administration for taking these meaningful steps to safeguard the ecologically and culturally irreplaceable Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Birds migrating from every state and numerous countries, connecting people and communities around the globe, rely on this landscape to complete their life cycle. Canceling oil-and-gas leases in the Arctic Refuge ensures the health of the world’s bird nursery and the protection of Indigenous lifeways.” [\[Statement, 9/6/23\]](#)

Gwich’in Steering Committee: “The Gwich’in Steering Committee welcomes the cancellation of AIDEA’s leases to develop oil and gas on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge – land sacred to the Gwich’in and the birthing grounds to the Porcupine Caribou Herd. We are grateful to President Biden and Secretary of the Interior Haaland for their decision. Cancellation of these leases is a step to rectify attempted violence against our people, the animals and sacred land. The leases were economically infeasible, threatened the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the Gwich’in way of life, and if developed would have added to the already deteriorating climate in the Arctic and the world over. Alaska Natives and concerned groups from all over Alaska were excluded from AIDEA’s process of making economic and development decisions that affect us all. AIDEA now can focus on its mission to diversify Alaska’s economy through transparent and meaningful public engagement with all Alaskans, inclusive of our desire to protect our traditional ways of life for future generations. AIDEA held the last remaining leases in the Arctic Refuge after all other bidders walked away from their leases in 2022. We thank the Biden administration and the U.S. Department of the Interior for taking this step towards protecting the coastal plain and the Porcupine Caribou Herd, but we know that our sacred land is only temporarily safe from oil and gas development. Our concern now is the SEIS process and the mandated second lease sale in 2024. We will always stand strong in unity, in strength and in prayer to protect the Porcupine Caribou Herd, the Arctic Refuge and the Gwich’in way of life.” [\[Statement, 9/6/23\]](#)

The Arctic Village and Venetie Tribal governments: “The Arctic Village and Venetie Tribal governments want to extend deep gratitude to the Department of Interior for making the just decision to cancel all Arctic Refuge leases. Allowing any development would irrevocably damage the Refuge, the land upon which we deeply depend. This is a significant step towards true, meaningful protection of these lands that are so vital to the survival of our people now and into the future. Our community has already seen the effects that development can have on our way of life. Recent caribou migration seasons

have been increasingly uncertain as the climate changes at a rapid and exponential rate. Any further disruption to the ecological health of these lands puts our very existence at risk, and by canceling these leases, an increasingly uncertain future has become more secure. In addition to preserving these lands, this is a significant recognition of our Tribal Government's urgent, long-standing appeal to respect our way of life that depends unequivocally on the Refuge. By acknowledging our rights as a sovereign government to continue to exist in concert with this land, the Federal Government is one step closer to cultivating a true and productive Government-to-government relationship between the United States and our Tribal Governments. Our people thank you for this historic step towards maintaining Indigenous rights and sovereignty." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Emily Sullivan, communications director for the Northern Alaska

Environmental Center: "We are thrilled to see the Biden administration's decision to cancel AIDEA's leases and re-examine the coastal plain leasing program. Today's announcement is a huge win for Indigenous rights and the Arctic ecosystem—while we still have work ahead of us to protect this vital landscape, we are confident that canceling these illegal leases has set us on the right track." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Brook Brisson, senior staff attorney with Trustees: "Today's decision to cancel AIDEA leases puts right a wrong—those leases were based on a Trump-endorsed leasing program that is rife with legal errors and never should have been issued in the first place. Today's actions are a step toward protecting the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge from reckless and needless industrialization and fossil fuel exploitation that would sacrifice communities, animals, the planet, and future generations." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Helen Cherullo, Braided River Executive Director: "With the cancellation of these leases, this decision serves as a beacon of hope; for the life and land of the Arctic Refuge, for the sovereignty of the Gwich'in and Inupiat communities, and for addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis of Planet Earth," [Statement, 9/6/23]

Steve Blackledge, Senior Conservation Campaigns Director for Environment

America: "The Arctic Refuge is like nowhere else on Earth, hosting roaming caribou herds, a kaleidoscope of migratory birds, denning polar bears and so much more. Arctic wildlife are already struggling. To give them a fighting chance, we need to safeguard their habitats, and that means no leasing and no drilling in the refuge." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Geoffrey L. Haskett, President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association:

"The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is an integral part of our nation's conservation heritage," "As one of the largest tracts of untouched wilderness and most ecologically diverse areas in the United States, it is up to all of us to ensure our Arctic Refuge remains permanently protected to safeguard the irreplaceable landscapes that innumerable species of wildlife call home. We thank the Biden administration for taking this important step towards long-lasting protection of its wildlife and the continued way of life for the Indigenous peoples of northeastern Alaska." [Statement, 9/6/23]

Karlin Itchoak, The Wilderness Society's senior regional director for Alaska:

"Oil drilling on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge endangers not only one of the most beautiful and intact landscapes left in America, but it poses an existential threat to Alaska Native communities that depend on clean air and water, and plentiful subsistence resources such as a healthy Porcupine Caribou Herd. We are grateful to the Biden administration – which has shown a strong commitment to conservation and Indigenous rights – for taking these meaningful steps. We appreciate that the administration is recognizing the importance of what the Gwich'in know as *Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit* – The Sacred Place Where Life Begins – and we call on Congress to repeal the Arctic Refuge oil and gas leasing provision in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and take action to permanently protect the coastal plain for future generations." [Statement,

9/6/23]

Steve MacLean, Managing Director, Arctic Program WWF: “This is a monumental step in the right direction. We must continue to do all we can to permanently protect the Arctic Refuge from harmful oil and gas development. Science is warning us that fossil fuels need to stay in the ground, greenhouse gas emissions are now 50% higher than pre-industrial levels. We appreciate the Biden Administration's ongoing efforts to support long-term protection of America's Arctic: a vital ecosystem essential to the well-being of wildlife, communities and our entire planet. The refuge supports an extraordinary abundance of wildlife, from caribou to muskox to denning polar bears and is home to Indigenous communities whose ancient traditions are deeply rooted to the land and sea. The Porcupine Caribou Herd birth their calves here – a reliable source of sustenance for the Gwich'in and Inupiat people for thousands of years. Disturbances to the caribou's habitat would be devastating to both wildlife and local communities. Unsustainable and risky development that will exacerbate climate change impacts is not the answer. Economic analysis also indicates that refuge leases are not profitable. Dependence on oil and gas revenue has to change. Instead of looking for additional lease opportunities, we should be looking for economically viable, alternative livelihood solutions that will support local communities and transition away from fossil fuels and new drilling.” [[Statement](#), 9/6/23]

Climate Power deputy executive director Claire Moser: “The oil and gas industry is raising prices, ripping off families at the pump, and taking taxpayers for a ride as they exploit our public lands at fire sale prices. And at every turn, Republicans are working overtime for Big Oil, whether it's trying to repeal the clean energy plan or giving oil and gas CEOs cover for price gouging. By contrast, President Biden is protecting our natural resources – canceling these unneeded and uneconomical leases in one of America's most special places, unleashing a massive clean energy boom thanks to historic climate investments, and standing up for workers and communities across the country. There is a stark contrast between the progress we've made under the Biden Administration and the regressive, anti-climate, pro-oil agenda offered by Republicans.” [Statement, 9/6/23]

Jenny Rowland-Shea, director of Public Lands at the Center for American Progress: “President Biden has single-handedly rescued one of America's most iconic and sensitive landscapes from the brink of destruction. These moves will help prevent oil and gas leasing from ruining the Arctic Refuge, an area critical to Indigenous people and to wildlife. The draft conservation regulations in the Western Arctic, where the controversial Willow drilling project was recently approved, are a welcome first step toward better aligning the management of the area with national climate, conservation, and environmental justice goals. America's Arctic presents an unparalleled opportunity to protect public lands on an unprecedented scale, prevent climate change, and sustain the biodiversity that we all rely on. President Joe Biden is fulfilling his promises to put people and planet before oil and gas profit and cementing his conservation legacy.” [[Statement](#), 9/6/23]

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS:

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer: “Thank you to President Biden for taking this important step to protect the coastal plains of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This is one of America's treasures and should not be opened up to oil and gas drilling.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

Chairman, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Delaware Senator Tom Carper: “I applaud @POTUS and @SecDebHaaland for canceling these remaining oil and gas leases in the Arctic Refuge. Protecting this land, water, and wildlife will help preserve the way of life for the nearby Indigenous people and benefit our planet

for generations to come.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

Chairwoman, Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, Washington Senator Maria Cantwell: “The Biden Administration is doing the right thing preserving one of America’s greatest remaining pristine ecosystems for the benefit of future generations, Indigenous communities, and our shared climate. Today’s decision overturns the Trump Administration’s last minute attempt to circumvent environmental laws and jam through drilling in the pristine Arctic Refuge. Now we need to permanently protect these irreplaceable areas and facilitate new economic opportunities based on preserving America’s pristine public lands for outdoor recreation.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

Massachusetts Senator Ed Markey: “. @POTUS & @SecDebHaaland are right to cancel the illegal oil and gas leases in our Arctic Refuge, protecting this land for Arctic Indigenous people and wildlife, and taking an important step for the Western Arctic. Now let’s go further to permanently protect America’s Arctic.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

New Mexico Senator Martin Heinrich: “As someone who has seen the Arctic Refuge and the Western Arctic with my own eyes, I applaud these conservation efforts by President Biden. There is no more important work than passing our nation’s public lands and wildlife on to the next generation.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

California Congressman Jared Huffman: “🔥 Huge news from the Biden administration: @Interior will strengthen protections for 13 million acres in Alaska & cancel all remaining oil & gas leases in the Arctic Refuge! This is crucial for protecting our public lands + tackling the climate crisis.” [[Tweet](#), 9/6/23]

Arizona Congressman Raul Grijalva: “Of all the Trump administration’s shameless gifts to Big Oil, the ANWR leasing program had to be one of their most egregious. They illegally cut corners on environmental reviews, ignored major concerns from the Gwich’in who rely on the region’s caribou for subsistence, and peddled exaggerated job and revenue claims—all just so Big Oil could unenthusiastically throw a few bucks at a couple of leases that clearly didn’t interest them much. The ANWR lease sale never should have happened. I’m glad to see the Biden administration putting our legal and moral responsibilities to protect our environment, listen to tribes, and do right by American taxpayers above polluter profits with this decision. I’m also pleased to see the administration prioritizing the conservation of the arctic landscape by moving forward to protect 13 million acres in the NPR-A. There’s no question that climate change is already taking its toll in the arctic, but decisions like these will help us mitigate some of its worst effects.” [Statement, 9/6/23]

###

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From: "Million, Bonnie M" <bmillion@blm.gov>

To: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>, "Roach, Emma K" <eroach@blm.gov>, "Pendergast, Kevin J" <kpendergast@blm.gov>, "Brumbaugh, Robert" <rbrumbau@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: 11/29 HNR EMR Hearing Prep Materials and Monday's Agenda

Date: Mon, 27 Nov 2023 20:38:20 +0000

Agenda is inline below

--

Bonnie Million
Congressional Liaison
Bureau of Land Management - Alaska
Email: bmillion@blm.gov
Office: 907-271-3335
Cell: 907-802-1015

From: Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>

Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 1:16 PM

To: Feldgus, Steven H <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: Brown, Mark A <m3brown@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; Duffy, Adam B <aduffy@blm.gov>; Emmett, Catherine H <CHEmmett@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Pool, Jamie R <jpool@blm.gov>; Thrift, Brian D <bthrift@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; French, Rebecca A <rebecca_french@ios.doi.gov>; McIntosh, Stacie J <s05mcint@blm.gov>; Wallace, Andrew G <andrew_wallace@ios.doi.gov>; Rezaeerod, Paniz <paniz_rezaeerod@ios.doi.gov>; Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>; Quinn, Matthew J <Matthew_J_Quinn@ios.doi.gov>

Subject: 11/29 HNR EMR Hearing Prep Materials and Monday's Agenda

Hi Steve,

Sending an email to coordinate on a few things related to the 11/29 hearing preps.

Briefing Materials –

We are posting our usual hearing prep materials in the Legislative Affairs Hearing Prep Team, in the Teams Channel “11.29.23 HNR EMR Leg Hearing - H.R. 6285”. The channel is available in SharePoint at [11.29.23 HNR EMR Leg Hearing - H.R. 6285](#). Most witnesses find this is the most user-friendly option.

We have created a [Teams Table of Contents 11.29.23 HNR EMR Leg. Hearing.docx](#) that helps show what items are included and where they are located, with active links to the various folders (we have also pasted the full table of content at the bottom of this email).

To view the channel in Teams, click on the Teams icon in the left sidebar, find the Legislative Affairs Hearing Prep Team, and then select 11.29.23 HNR EMR Leg Hearing - H.R. 6285. When viewing the channel in Teams, content is available in the “Files” tab.

The folders have been updated with content for the Monday briefing. Pending items have been marked as pending and we will add those as they become available.

If you have any trouble accessing the Teams site, please let us know and we will assist.

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We'll go over all of this at the briefing on Monday as well.

Testimony Update –

DOI sent the written testimony to OMB on Friday (that draft is posted on the Teams site).

We prepared a draft oral statement, which is ready for your review ([b. 11.29.23 HNR EMR AK Hearing Draft Oral Statement.docx](#)).

Briefings –

Calendar invites have been sent for the following briefing times (Patrick sent a msg on Wed asking if it's possible to expand these to 90 mins each):

- **Monday, November 27:** 3:30-4:30 p.m. ET
- **Friday, September 15:** 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET
- Also, here is the agenda for Monday's briefing:

Mon. Briefing Agenda

Hearing Prep Session 1 – Monday, November 27

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. ET

1. **Status of Testimony** (Leg. Affairs/OCL)
 - a. Written
 - b. Oral Statement
2. **Teams Site Overview** (Leg. Affairs)
3. **AK Issues** (BLM: Steve/Kevin/Bonnie)
 - a. ANWR/Coastal Plain
 - b. NPR-A
 - i. Integrated Activity Plan (IAP)
 - ii. NPR-A O&G Development
 - iii. Legacy Well Cleanup
 - iv. Rule
 - c. Tribal Engagement
4. **Misc. OG Issues**
5. **Next Steps**
 - a. **Prep Session 2**
 - i. Tuesday 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET
 - ii. Oral statement
 - iii. Mock Hearing

HNR AK Hearing Prep

[11.29.23 HNR EMR Leg Hearing - H.R. 6285](#)

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 - a. Invite Stone-Manning
 - b. H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act
- B.) **[B. Committee Members & Face Pages](#)**
 - a. 118th Congress HNR EMR Face Pages
 - b. HNRC Alaska Member Pages
- C.) **[C. Key Messages](#)**
 - a. H.R. 6285 Key Messages

#1127632.2

- b. Oil & Gas Key Stats FY23 FINAL_2023.11.24
- c. 2023.09 - APD Status Report

D.) D. Written & Oral Statement

- a. DOI Statement - H.R.6285 Alaska's Right to Produce Act (DOI to OMB)
[Under OMB Review as of 11/24]
- b. 11.29.23 HNR EMR AK Hearing Draft Oral Statement

E.) E. Qs & As

- a. 11.29.2023 HNR EMR Hearing Qs & As

F.) F. Background Materials

a. a. NPR-R Rule

- i. NPR-A Factsheet Draft
- ii. NPR-A FAQs DRAFT
- iii. Proposed NPR-A Rule RIN 1004-AE95 508
- iv. NPR-A Map_11X17
- v. 2022_NPRA_IAP_ROD_508
- vi. 2023-10-16_88 Energy ltr to SD re Suspension of NPR-A Leases

b. b. ANWR Lease Cancellation

- i. 2023.09.06 CP AIDEA Lease Cancellation Decision
- ii. 2023 10 18 ANWR Leases Complaint

c. c. Briefing Papers

- i. NPR-A_IAP_BP_8.5.2022
- ii. Ambler Road_BP_11.24.2023
- iii. Central Yukon RMP_BP_7.20.2023
- iv. Coastal Plain SEIS_BP_7.19.2023
- v. Native Veteran Allotment_BP_7.19.2023
- vi. PLO EIS_BP_7.19.2023
- d. IA Minority Staff briefing 20231106
- e. S.O. 3401
- f. E.O. 13990
- g. BLM-AK Consultation Summaries_20231106
- h. ANVLAP outreach summary
- i. NPR-A Working Group Membership

G.) G. Press

a. a. DOI-BLM Press Releases

- i. BLM PR_2.1.2023_Willow Final SEIS
- ii. DOI PR_3.12.2023_Proposing Arctic OG changes
- iii. DOI PR_3.13.2023_Willow Decision
- iv. DOI PR_9.6.2023_Arctic OG
- v. BLM PR_11.13.2023_NPR-A Comment Extension Release

b. b. Member Press Releases

- i. 2.1.23_Ranking Democrat Grijalva Slams Move to Approve Massive Willow Oil and Gas Development Project
- ii. 9.7.23_Sickening_GOP_explodes_at_Biden_over_ANWR_decision

- iii. 9.6.23_Ranking Member Grijalva Commends Cancellation of Oil and Gas Leases in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- iv. 9.6.23_Westerman Slams Biden's Decision to Shutter Alaska Energy Production _ House Committee on Natural Resources
- v. 11.6.23 - Stauber Leads Legislation to Restore Alaskan Energy Production

c. **c. External News articles**

- i. 3.14.2023 How Murkowski helped move Biden on Willow
- ii. 3.14.23 _CNN_Willow Approved
- iii. Interior_weighs_seismic_surveys_for_Arctic_drilling_- _EENEWS

Ben Kniola

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From: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

To: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>, "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] FW: AIDEA filings on the DOI Draft SEIS on the ANWR leases

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 2023 18:51:52 +0000

Attachments: Exhibit_A_-_ANWR_SEIS_Comment_Table_(1557407.2).pdf;
AIDEA_Comments_on_Coastal_Plain_Draft_SEIS_(1560559.1).pdf; Exhibit_E_-_11.01.23_-_AK_Delegation_ANWR_Comment_Extension_Letter32_(1557382.1).pdf;
Exhibit_D_-_Letter_Requesting_Extension_of_Time_for_SEIS_Public_Comment_Period_(1557399.1).pdf; Exhibit_B_-_Lease_Cancellation_Decision_9.5.23_(1557381.1).pdf; Exhibit_C_-_Complaint_-_AIDEA_v_Haaland_(1557386.1).pdf

From: Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>

Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 9:11 AM

To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: Reed, Erika <e05reed@blm.gov>; Roach, Emma K <eroach@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] FW: AIDEA filings on the DOI Draft SEIS on the ANWR leases

FYI

Kevin J. Pendergast PE, CPG

Deputy State Director, Resources

BLM Alaska

907.271.4413 (O)

907.302.0847 (C)

From: Jones, Nichelle (Shelly) <njones@blm.gov>

Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 8:36 AM

To: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; Svejnoha, Wayne <wsvejnoh@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] FW: AIDEA filings on the DOI Draft SEIS on the ANWR leases

From: Jon DeVore <jdevore@bhb.com>

Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 8:30 AM

To: State_Director, BLM_AK <BLM_AK_State_Director@blm.gov>; Jones, Nichelle (Shelly) <njones@blm.gov>; fair arctic refuge, FW7 <arctic_refuge@fws.gov>

Cc: Randy Ruaro <raruaro@aidea.org>; Kent Sullivan <KSullivan@aidea.org>; James Lister <jlister@bhb.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: AIDEA filings on the DOI Draft SEIS on the ANWR leases

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

#1127638.1

Dear Ms. Jones, Mr. Cohen and Ms. Cebrian;

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) on November 7th timely filed comments on the DOI Draft SEIS on the ANWR Leasing program. Attached for your reference are the AIDEA comment letter and supporting documents are attached for your reference. We know you will receive these in the normal process, but AIDEA wants to ensure you have copies that are readily available to you. The comments and other documents were a result of a concentrated team effort by AIDEA. The shortness of time for meaningful public comment is of particular importance to all Alaskans. Based on an analysis and input from NEPA and CEQ experts, this Draft SEIS on ANWR was a uniquely challenging document.

We look forward to working with you in the future. For your reference, my firm is part of the AIDEA team. If you have any questions or issues, please let me know but feel free to directly contact AIDEA.

With best regards,

Jon DeVore

Jon M. DeVore, Esquire

Vice President and Partner

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From: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: "Branham, Sharif D" <sbranham@blm.gov>, "St George, Brian C" <bstgeorg@blm.gov>, "Waddell, Holle" <hwaddell@blm.gov>, "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Bagley, Lonny R" <lbagley@blm.gov>, "Heinlein, Thomas" <theinlei@blm.gov>, "Frost, Troy A" <tfrost@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Eggers, Barbara L" <beggers@blm.gov>, "Shugert, Matthew J" <mshugert@blm.gov>, "McDonald, Monique S" <m1mcdona@blm.gov>, "Beebe, Grant S" <gbeebe@blm.gov>, "DeFries, Tamala J" <tdefries@blm.gov>, "Conry, Meagan M" <mconry@blm.gov>, "Broadwater, Charles E" <cbroadwater@blm.gov>, "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Gray, Morgan" <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>, "Witt, Ryan C" <rwitt@blm.gov>, "Tollefson, Christopher J" <ctollefson@blm.gov>, BLM_WO_610 <BLM_WO_610@blm.gov>, BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>, "Moran, Jill C" <jcmoran@blm.gov>, "Quinn, Matthew J" <Matthew_J_Quinn@ios.doi.gov>, "Feldgus, Steven H" <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>, "Oliver, Kevin E" <koliver@blm.gov>, "Bowmer, James A" <JBowmer@blm.gov>, "Hires, Brian K" <bhires@blm.gov>, BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs <BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs@blm.gov>, "MacDougall, Sean A" <SMacDoug@blm.gov>, "McIntosh, Stacie J" <s05mcint@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill A" <jralston@blm.gov>, "Salmon, Marni R" <mrsalmon@blm.gov>, "Huffman, Jessica R" <jrhuffman@blm.gov>, "Rezaeerood, Paniz" <paniz_rezaeerood@ios.doi.gov>, "Hasson, Tomer Y" <thasson@blm.gov>, "Davidson, Zoe M" <z davidson@blm.gov>, "Pryor, Ernest L" <epryor@blm.gov>, "McGinnis, Shelley R" <smcginnis@blm.gov>, "Morrison, Lisa R" <lmorriso@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Congressional & Legislative Affairs Weekly Report – December 21, 2023

Date: Fri, 22 Dec 2023 00:15:33 +0000

Attachments: NEW_Cong.Report._Updates_(47).docx

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Weekly Report – December 21, 2023
(Updates in Red)

HEARINGS/MARKUPS

- Jan. TBD: The House Natural Resources Committee plans to mark up H.R. 6492, Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (Omnibus Recreation Legislation).
- Feb. 1 (T): The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee tentatively plans to hold an oversight hearing on BLM programs and policies.

NEW ITEMS

- Dec. 15: Rep. Curtis (R-UT-03) and Rep. Levin (D-CA-49) staff requested information on the Automated Fluid Minerals Support System Reports (AFMSS) Database.
- Dec. 18: CBO requested information on H.R. 6011, the Right of Way Application Transparency and Accountability "ROWATA" Act (Rep. Valadao, R-CA-22).
- Dec. 19: CBO requested information on S. 1657, the La Paz County Solar Energy and Job Creation Act (Sen. Sinema, D-AZ).
- Dec. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-07) staff requested an update on agreements with utility companies to service utility poles and lines on public lands in California.
- Dec. 19: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested information on the Cross-Tie Transmission Line Project and its potential impacts on the proposed Bahsahwahbee National Monument.
- Dec. 19: HNR EMR majority staff requested a breakdown of oil and gas lease sale acreage offered that was nominated through an EOI for all lease sales over the past 2 years.

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- Dec. 20: Sen. Daines (R-MT) staff requested additional information regarding the Arnold Coulee Hydropower Project Transmission ROW.
- Dec. 20: Rep. Levin (D-CA-49) staff requested additional information concerning the BLM's announcement of a \$4.9 million investment in wildlife data to inform clean energy growth.
- Dec. 20: CBO requested information on H.R. 3396, Fire Department Repayment Act (Rep. Harder, D-CA-9) (DOI OWF tentatively coordinating response).

UPCOMING MEETINGS / VISITS / BRIEFINGS

CORRESPONDENCE

EST / DCN	Date	From	Subject	Status
BLM0038665	06/27/2023	Crane	Resolution Copper EIS	OCL
BLM0039833	08/25/2023	Rosen	Ruby Mountains mineral withdrawal	OCL
BLM0039842	08/25/2023	Lombardo (Gov)	Permitting progress of Goldrush project	BLM-COS
BLM0040029	09/01/2023	Cortez Masto	Support for National Monument at Swamp Cedars	OCL
BLM0040385	09/26/2023	Kelly	Support for BLM broadband project permitting in Navajo County, AZ	OCL
BLM0040491	09/29/2023	Levin	Support of onshore oil and gas leasing rule	BLM-COS
BLM0040737	10/11/2023	Padilla	Expand boundary of Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument	BLM-DD-POL
BLM0040818	10/17/2023	Risch	Interpretation and implementation of Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act in ID	SOL
BLM0040838	10/18/2023	Booker	Recommendation for National Wild Horse & Burrow Advisory Board	BLM-COS
BLM0040881	10/20/2023	Murkowski	Extending comment deadline for NPR-A rule	BLM-DD-POL
BLM0040954	10/26/2023	Bennet	Support for updated bonding requirements in onshore oil and gas rule	BLM-COS
BLM0040988	10/30/2023	Amodei	Public land withdrawal in Railroad Valley, NV	BLM-COS
BLM0041098	11/02/2023	Murkowski	Comment deadline extension for Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Program SEIS	HQ-100
BLM0041146	11/07/2023	Westerman	Heavener Coking Coal Project	ESSO
BLM0041223	11/13/2023	Rosendale	Rural broadband development in western Montana	MTSO
BLM0041225	11/13/2023	Cortez Masto	PENDING BLM0039833: Oil and gas withdrawal – Ruby Mountains, NV	HQ-600

BLM0041334	11/20/2023	Sullivan	Constituent concern – Veterans Native allotments	AKSO
BLM0041335	11/20/2023	Titus	Roberts Mountain Complex wild horse gather incident	HQ-620
BLM0041371	11/20/2023	Bentz	Constituent Concern - BLM HR Issue - Allen Kai-Uwe	OCL
BLM0041382	11/20/2023	Westerman	Twin Metals Cancellation and The Wilderness Society Meetings	ESSO
BLM0041461	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041462	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041471	11/29/2023	Bennet	Proposed Public Lands Rule improvements	HQ-230
BLM0041524	12/04/2023	Curtis	Co-location of renewable and fossil energy production	HQ-330
BLM0041525	12/04/2023	Lankford	DoD energy resilience at U.S. Military installations	SOL
BLM0041610	12/08/2023	Murkowski	PENDING BLM0040881: Proposed BLM Rule - NPRA	HQ-600

ONGOING ITEMS PENDING WITH BLM

- Jan. 4/June 6/Sept. 20: HNR majority staff requested follow-up information regarding BLM's draft Greenhouse Gas Environmental Assessment and the related court cases.
- March 14/June 6/Sept. 21: HNR majority staff requested the number of Expressions of Interest received over the last 12 months.
- Sep. 7: Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) staff requested follow up information regarding an oil and gas lease cancellation in Utah and questions regarding BLM permitting staffing needs.
- Sept. 21/Dec. 15: SENR majority staff requested an update on the status of the WildEarth Guardians litigation GHG EA and if any decisions have been issued based on the EA.
- Oct. 12: Rep. Valadao (R-CA-22) staff requested information regarding water management on public lands in Tulare County, CA (**completed Dec. 19**).
- Nov. 1: HNR majority staff requested information regarding the Report to Congress on oil and gas project office funds.
- Nov. 7/Dec. 18: Sen. Rosen (D-NV) staff requested information on the status of the 3 Kids mine conveyance in southern Nevada (**completed Dec. 20**).
- Nov. 8: Rep. Fulcher (R-ID-01) staff requested a briefing on the Four Rivers RMP decision (**completed Dec. 15**).
- Nov. 16: Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) staff requested additional information about a Federal mineral rights issue underlying a constituent's private land (**completed Dec. 20**).
- Nov. 28: Sen. Collins (R-ME) staff requested information on the status of the Native Plant Species Pilot Program included in the FY23 Omnibus Appropriations Act.
- Nov. 29: Rep. Schrier (D-WA-08) staff requested information related to the National Prescribed Fire Act.
- Nov. 30: Sen. Cortez-Masto (D-NV) staff requested responses to recommendations from the Findings & Recommendations of the Not Invisible Act Commission, which is a cross jurisdictional commission formed to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous people.
- Dec. 5: Sen. Daines (R-MT) staff requested a status update on the transmission ROW application connected to the Arnold Coulee hydropower project (**completed Dec. 20**).
- Dec. 6: Sen. Hickenlooper (D-CO) staff requested an update on the proposed Public Lands Rule (**completed Dec. 19**).

- Dec. 12: Rep. Thompson (D-CA-04) staff requested an update on agreements with utility companies to service utility poles and lines on public lands in California.
- Dec. 13: HNR majority staff requested updated information on the amount of trash collected by the BLM at the southern border.
- Dec. 13: HNR EMR majority staff requested a breakdown of oil and gas lease sale acreage offered that was nominated through an EOI (completed Dec. 17).
- Dec. 13: HNR EMR majority staff information regarding co-location of energy sources on public lands.
- Dec. 13: Sen. Rosen (D-NV) staff requested information on gaming prohibitions on lands taken into trust for the benefit of a Tribe.
- Dec. 13: Rep. Titus (D-NV-01) staff requested information regarding the West Henderson Fire Station Notice of Realty Action (completed Dec. 18).
- Dec. 14: Sen. Warner (D-VA) staff requested information regarding the Federal Helium System and the upcoming sale process.
- Dec. 14: Rep. Titus (D-NV-01) staff requested information regarding the effect of the West-Wide Energy Corridor on the Avi Kwa Ame National Monument.
- Dec. 14: Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff requested a joint briefing with Sen. Barrasso (R-WY) staff in January on outcome based grazing and grazing flexibility.
- Dec. 14: SENR majority staff requested information regarding coal leasing (completed Dec. 20).

Ongoing CBO/CRS Requests

- Oct. 27: CBO requested information on S. 1260, the University of Utah Research Park Act (Sen. Lee, R-UT) (completed Dec. 19).
- Dec. 13: CBO requested additional information regarding S. 683, Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act (Sen. Padilla, D-CA) (completed Dec. 21).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nov. 3/June 6: HNR majority staff requested technical assistance on three specific sections in H.R. 9087, the TAP American Energy Act (Rep. Westerman, R-AR-04).
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Feb. 2/April 17/May 24: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to transfer a tract of Federal land to the Wrangel Cooperative Association.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- March 15: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on legislative language regarding transfer of Tenakee Springs.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 7: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested technical assistance on S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 9: Rep. Vasquez (D-NM-02) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill titled “Ranching Without Red Tape.”
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 17: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act. BIA is leading the response, with OCL coordinating other agency input.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 31: Rep. McCollum (D-MN-4) requested technical assistance on H.R. 5021, Securing American Critical Minerals Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Aug. 11: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Bureau of Land Management Flexible Partnerships Act of 2023.
 - Status: Pending with ASLM.
- Sept. 5: OCL requested assistance on a Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff request for technical assistance on the previously introduced S. 4369, the North American Grasslands Conservation Act (117th Congress).
 - Status: Pending with OCL.

- Sept. 18: Rep. Simpson (ID-02) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey public land to Twin Falls County, Idaho, for use as a recreation trail.
 - Status: Completed Dec. 19.
- Sept. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-7) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey reversionary of select land near Ridgecrest California.
 - Status: Completed Dec. 19.
- Oct. 13: Rep. Cartwright (D-PA-8) staff requested DOI/BLM technical assistance on H.R. 2872, Safeguarding America's Future and Environment Act, from the 117th Congress.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Nov. 28: HNR majority and minority staff requested DOI technical assistance on H.R. 6492, Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (Omnibus Recreation Legislation).
 - Status: **Completed/DOI delivered to Hill Dec. 21.**
- Dec. 5: Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Quigley (D-IL-05) staff requested technical assistance on revised text of the draft bill, "National Interagency Seed and Restoration Center Establishment Act."
 - Status: **Pending with OCL.**
 -
- Dec. 13: Sen. Tester (D-MT) requested assistance on draft legislative text intended to address the requirements for rural electric cooperatives who have infrastructure on public lands.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

- March 29: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on BLM's FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: BLM Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Delivered to Hill in July 2023.
- May 16: HNR EMR/FL hearing on the BLM's FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0038668)
- June 15: HNR hearing on H.R. 3397, "*to require the BLM Director to withdraw a rule of the BLM relating to conservation and landscape health.*" Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with ASLM. (BLM0040177)
- June 22: HNR Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Sept. 19: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing "*Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*" Witness: Deputy Director of Operations Nedd.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0040784)
- Sept. 28: SENR hearing "*Examine opportunities to counter the People's Republic of China's control of critical mineral supply chains through increased mining and processing in the United States as well as international engagement and trade.*" Witness: Deputy Secretary Beaudreau.
 - Status: Pending with **OCL.**
- Oct. 25: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Nov. 29: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources legislative hearing on H.R. 6285, Alaska's Right to Produce Act. Witness: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Steve Feldgus.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Dec. 5: House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands oversight hearing titled "*Examining Opportunities to Promote and Enhance Tribal Forest Management.*" Witness: BIA Deputy Regional Director Shaw.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Dec. 12: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on mining law reform bills. Witness: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Steve Feldgus.

- Status: Pending with BLM.

REPORTS TO CONGRESS (pending review in DTS)

- Efficiencies with O&C Grant Lands Program for Fiscal Year 2017
 - Status: Pending with HQ-220 (BLM0011656).
- Report to Congress on Online Oil and Gas Leasing - Comprehensive Comparison of Oral vs Online Lease Sales
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0012000).
- Oil and Gas Resource Potential of the Musselshell Breaks and Bridge Coulee Wilderness Study Areas
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0019271).
- Trespassing on Alaska Native Lands
 - Status: Pending with HQ-620 (BLM0021543).
- Annual Helium Report to Congress FY 2020-2022
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NM (BLM0032063).
- Suitability for Geothermal of Categorical Exclusions Under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000067).
- Withdrawal Extension Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with OCL (BLMC000090).
- SNPLMA FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with HQ-100 (BLMC000093).

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Cc: "Ralston, Jill A" <jralston@blm.gov>, "Lyons, Jennie M" <jmlyons@blm.gov>, "Moorman, Kyle W" <kmoorman@blm.gov>, "Espy, Leigh D" <lespy@blm.gov>, "Tollefson, Christopher J" <ctollefson@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: {+EE Story} - Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

Date: Wed, 20 Sep 2023 11:58:08 +0000

drat - just realized i didn't include 600 on our hearing readout yest (and just sent this am's ee story too). sorry!
fyi:

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From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 7:55 AM

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Fields, Yvette M <yfields@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Cowan, Peter I <picowan@blm.gov>; Warren, Matthew (Matt) <mwarren@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Hires, Brian K <bhires@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Broadwater, Charles E <cbroadwater@blm.gov>; Northington, John W <jnorthington@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>

Subject: {+EE Story} - Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

House Republicans grill BLM official in tense hearing

Mike Nedd, the Bureau of Land Management's deputy director, rebutted GOP claims about the administration's oil and gas oversight.



BY: HEATHER RICHARDS | 09/20/2023 06:32 AM EDT

#1127643.1

Bureau of Land Management Deputy Director Mike Nedd is seen during Tuesday's House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing on oil and gas development. Francis Chung/POLITICO

E&E DAILY | House Republicans scolded a Bureau of Land Management official Tuesday over the Biden administration's limits on oil and gas development on public land, including a recent decision to revoke drilling rights in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

"It is not a priority of this administration to keep America strong," Rep. Pete Stauber (R-Minn.), chair of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, said during the Tuesday hearing. "They only seek to appease the radical left at the expense of the rest of America." The Tuesday hearing veered into a sometimes intense interrogation of BLM's deputy director, Mike Nedd.

Rep. Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.) questioned Nedd about the Biden administration's focus on cleaner sources of energy while hampering oil and gas development.

"Why is it that every policy this administration pursues is intended to create energy poverty?" she said.

"I just can't agree with that premise," Nedd responded.

He told lawmakers that BLM under the Biden administration had permitted more than 9,000 oil and gas wells, at the same time enacting reforms to update 70-year-old regulations on the industry.

Stauber said the Biden administration failed to consult Alaskans before yanking the refuge oil leases and has broken the law by not holding more oil sales on public land.

Nedd defended the administration's communications with communities, but Nagruk Harcharek, president of the Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, said BLM did not consult with them.

Ranking member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) asked Nedd to help dispel the idea that Arctic refuge oil and gas leases would have reduced domestic energy prices. She asked how long it would take for them to be productive.

“The Arctic is a complex place to develop. It would have taken many, many years,” he said.

Spat over cobalt

Hageman hammered Nedd with a series of questions about renewable energy’s potential dependence on countries that use child labor, like Congo, an African nation that may hold as much as half of the world’s supply of cobalt, a mineral important to renewable energy technologies.

Nedd said, “Congresswoman, I’m an official of the Bureau of Land Management and I can speak to the Bureau of Land Management. I am not an expert on Congo, nor am I an expert on child labor or labor laws.”

Rep. Jared Huffman, a Democrat from California, asked whether Nedd wanted to clarify his responses after the “pretty aggressive” line of questioning from Hageman.

Nedd said he did and stressed that the bureau is focused on public land management and is not involved with international mineral development or purchase.

Bonding, orphans

Supporters of the oil and gas industry told lawmakers Tuesday that proposed BLM regulations to update oil and gas regulations could slam producers with high costs.

Draft regulations would codify mandates from the Inflation Reduction Act, such as a 16.67 royalty rate. BLM is also proposing to increase the bond for a single lease from a minimum of \$10,000 to \$150,000, as well as restrict oil and gas leasing to areas with high potential for drilling.

Kathleen Sgamma, president of the Western Energy Alliance, said the current bonding system is working as it should. She stressed that most oil companies clean up their own wells, and only a handful of “bad actors” abandon infrastructure.

"It's an arbitrary and capricious rule to increase costs so much, when the problem is such a relatively small problem," she said.

Rep. Sydney Kamlager-Dove, a California Democrat, countered that Sgamma's assessment of orphaned wells on public lands is "cherry-picking of the data."

Barbara Vasquez, affiliated with the Western Organization of Resource Councils, said BLM's definition of "orphan" does not include potentially thousands that are not producing and could be at risk of being abandoned. She said orphaned wells leak methane and toxins into the environment.

"The only way we can stop these wells from pollution is getting them plugged and reclaimed," she said. "Bonding will incentivize operators to take care of that responsibility."

This story also appears in Energywire.

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Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 5:09 PM

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Fields, Yvette M <yfields@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Cowan, Peter I <picowan@blm.gov>; Warren, Matthew (Matt) <mwarren@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Hires, Brian K <bhires@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Broadwater, Charles E <cbroadwater@blm.gov>; Northington, John W <jnorthington@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Eggers, Barbara L <eggars@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>

Subject: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

FYI – On Tuesday, September 19, the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy & Mineral Resources held an oversight hearing titled: "*Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*"

Members of Congress in attendance included: Subcommittee Chairman Stauber (R-MN-08), Subcommittee Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14), Full Committee Chairman Westerman (R-AR-04), and Representatives from the Subcommittee, including Reps. Lamborn (R-CO-05), Fulcher (R-ID-01), Curtis (R-

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UT-03), Tiffany (R-WI-07), Rosendale (R-MT-02), Boebert (R-CO-03), Hunt (R-TX-38), Huffman (D-CA-02), Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37), and Lee (NV-03). Representatives Hageman (R-WY-At large) and Porter (D-CA-47), Members of the full Committee, were also allowed to participate.

The hearing included two witness panels. The first panel had one witness: Michael Nedd, Deputy Director, Operations, appearing for the BLM. The second panel consisted of Kathleen Sgamma, President, Western Energy Alliance; Bill Novotny, President, Wyoming County Commissioners Association; Dr. Barbara Vasquez, Citizen Scientist and Advocate, Western Organization of Resource Councils [Minority Witness]; and Nagruk Harcharek, President, Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat (VOICE).

The hearing lasted just over two and a half hours. Chairman Stauber opened the hearing by saying that the Biden-Harris Administration has set an “anti-development, anywhere but America agenda.” He also accused the Administration and the BLM for being responsible for high gas prices, as compared to prices in January 2021. Specifically, he accused the BLM of failing to hold lease sales and to approve permits to drill. Chairman Stauber also claimed that the Public Lands Rule, Oil and Gas Leasing Rule, and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) Rule are “regulatory actions to stifle domestic energy development on Federal lands.”

In her opening statement, Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez thanked communities for organizing and pushing for changes to oil and gas policy, and added that the BLM’s proposed Oil and Gas Rule is one of several positive steps taken by the Administration to reduce carbon emissions. She later asked what the BLM is doing to ramp down carbon emissions from public lands, given that oil and gas production on public lands is at an all-time high. Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez went further by asking how the Administration will factor in downstream emissions for upcoming lease sales, and how that will differ from how the BLM has historically considered downstream emissions.

Proposed Oil & Gas Rule

Speaking to the proposed rule, Rep. Lamborn pointed out that BLM’s testimony states the agency will avoid leasing in areas with sensitive cultural, wildlife, and recreation resources. He shared his opinion that this description is “so open ended you can drive any agenda through it,” and that any place in the country could have those resources present. Chairman Westerman asked why the BLM is proposing such a “radical change” to bond amounts, when in his opinion, the BLM is doing a good job preventing orphaned wells. He added that the increased bonds would be devastating to small businesses.

Rep. Curtis praised BLM UT staff for their diligent work before he began his questions. He asked how the BLM takes emissions into account when it analyzes public lands, specifically if the BLM compares potential emissions from within the United States to those of foreign countries in its analysis. Rep. Curtis reiterated that BLM needs to look at emissions worldwide when it makes its analysis, as he believes the United States has done a lot already to reduce its emissions.

Alaska

Regarding oil and gas production in Alaska, Chairman Stauber focused his questions largely on the recent decision to cancel leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). He asked Mr. Nedd specifically about coordination and consultation with local communities and Tribes, as well as whether the BLM has cancelled leases without litigation forcing that decision. Rep. Tiffany accused the Administration of not consulting with Alaska Natives prior to the lease cancellation decision.

Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez asked when the recently cancelled Arctic leases would have come online if they were not cancelled. Pointing out that it would take many years for these leases and others in Alaska to produce, she argued that the Majority is incorrect to say the Administration’s actions will impact gas prices today. She added that we cannot drill our way to lower gas prices. Rep. Huffman asked Mr. Nedd to speak to some of the risks to drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and how the proposed NPR-A rule will protect these special areas that are uniquely vulnerable to climate change.

Oil & Gas Lease Sales

Rep. Tiffany commented on how there should be more leasing on all Federal lands out west and equated climate change to a “green fantasy” to drive policy decisions. He also requested a definition for “fair return” that the BLM uses. Rep. Lee discussed oil and gas leasing in Nevada and the most recent sale in the state, and how it resulted in zero bids and wasted BLM staff and other resources to review and analyze the parcels. She added that her legislation, H.R. 3377, the End Speculative Leasing Act, aims to resolve this issue by focusing BLM resources on areas with high oil and gas potential only.

Mining

Rep. Tiffany asked if the BLM is prepared to issue more mining permits for the minerals needed for a clean energy economy, adding a comment about the decision to cancel the mining development in the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota. He expressed his opinion that the Administration claims there are appropriate areas for mining, but then says that every area is not an appropriate place, citing the Twin Metals decision in Minnesota and Resolution Copper in Arizona.

Rep. Hageman aggressively questioned why the BLM would want to incentive frivolous lawsuits against energy and mineral development, export jobs, prohibit United States citizens from accessing their lands via the pending Rock Springs Resource Management Plan, and support companies that buy Cobalt from countries utilizing child labor.

Sage Grouse & Resource Management Plan Amendments

Rep. Lamborn expressed his concern over two pending supplemental Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for two Resource Management Plans (RMP) that would withdraw 1.6 million acres in Colorado from development to protect sage grouse (possibly referring to the proposed Gunnison Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment). He noted that the sage grouse has experienced a 24 percent increase in population since 2019. Rep. Lamborn went on to ask why the BLM feels it’s appropriate to hurt Americans and Colorado, which he stated is the fourth largest oil and gas producer in the nation. He further asked what changes have taken place since the original RMPs were implemented, and what analysis the BLM did on the effects these changes would have on people. Rep. Lamborn concluded by asking for a copy of the analysis on the impacts to communities.

During the second panel, Rep. Boebert also shared her disapproval of the proposed RMP amendments, and her belief that the Administration wants to shut down oil and gas development in western Colorado.

Other Regulatory Updates

Full Committee Chairman Westerman focused questions on the BLM’s implementation of the Fiscal Responsibilities Act, with specific emphasis on the required one-year timeframe for completing Environmental Assessments (EA) and the two-year timeline for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). He requested specific examples of where the BLM was working to accelerate processing of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.

Rep. Hunt asked about the BLM’s updated venting and flaring rule, and stated that, in his opinion, the rule is duplicative of an existing Environmental Protection Agency rule which companies already have to follow. He then asked about communitization agreements, and how long it should take for them to be processed.

Second Panel Discussion Overview

Discussions during the second panel largely encompassed the same themes of the first panel, with a deeper look into the topics introduced earlier. Chairman Stauber invited witness Harcharek to write a letter to the Subcommittee to counter the statement that the BLM did conduct Tribal consultation in making its ANWR lease cancellation decision.

There was significant discussion of orphaned wells and the increased bond requirements of the proposed Oil and Gas Rule. Witness Sgamma stated that the BLM should be applauded for its work on orphaned wells. She added that the low number of known orphaned wells on public lands show that the BLM and industry are addressing the issue, and thus the higher bonding rates are not needed. Rep. Porter also questioned Ms. Sgamma about the fiscal terms in the IRA. Chairman Stauber asked witness Sgamma if the BLM’s bonding increases would

hurt small businesses, and cause more wells to be orphaned. Rep. Fulcher asked witness Sgamma whether the increased royalty rates proposed in the Oil and Gas rule are justified, along with the more robust environmental impact analysis that would be required, and whether the impact it would have on industry would be worth it. Rep. Rosendale also asked about the impact of increased bonding rates on small businesses verses larger corporations.

Rep. Rosendale focused his questions on the BLM's actions regarding critical mineral production, stating that it was detrimental to the nation to rely on foreign countries with worse environmental standards. He asked witness Sgamma about her organization's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests regarding the Department's alleged work with environmental activist groups, including Secretary Haaland's daughter.

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From: "Boario, Sara D" <sara_boario@fws.gov>

To: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 19:14:22 +0000

Inline-Images: ~WRD0500.jpg; image002.jpg

I shared this with my leadership team - sb

From: Weber, Wendi <>wendi_weber@fws.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 11:07 AM

To: Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>

Subject: FW: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

From: U.S. Department of the Interior <info@updates.interior.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:01 PM

To: Weber, Wendi <>wendi_weber@fws.gov>

Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

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Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

#1127656.1

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified “multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases.”

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

“With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem,” said **Secretary Haaland**. “President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department's determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for

protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

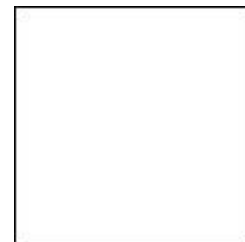
There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

About the U.S. Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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This email was sent to wendi_weber@fws.gov by: U.S. Department of the Interior · 1849 C Street, N.W. · Washington DC 20240 · 202-208-3100



From: "Communications, BLM_AK" <BLM_AK_Communications@blm.gov>

Subject: 8-11-23 Weekly News Digest

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 2023 15:52:03 +0000

Inline-Images: image.png; image(1).png

Weekly News Clips – This digest is provided for leadership’s situational awareness. A story’s appearance in this digest does not imply accuracy of information or endorsement of any kind.

NOTES: To access some stories, you may need a subscription. The Alaska State Office does maintain some [subscriptions](#) (for official use only), but not all.

As a reminder, we are excluding E&E articles (to condense BLM-AK News Clips), as they can be accessed by going to <https://www.eenews.net/get-access/> and using your BLM email address, and password “BLM.”

Land Transfer

[Federal plan would grant Southeast Alaska Native communities land settlements in Tongass National Forest](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/8/23

More than 50 years after the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed Congress, a federal proposal seeks to resolve claims with so-called “landless” Alaska Natives from five Southeast Alaska communities that were left out of the landmark law.

Fire

[BLM closes land north of Fairbanks due to Lost Horse Creek fire](#)

Alaska's News Source 8/5/23

The **Bureau of Land Management** Alaska has closed some land north of Fairbanks due to fire activity.(**Bureau of Land Management**).

Courts

[Alaska state agency with oil leases in Arctic refuge loses legal bid to halt Biden moratorium](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/8/23

A federal judge in Anchorage on Monday ruled against a state agency that holds oil leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, saying the Biden administration’s decision in 2021 to temporarily suspend an oil and gas lease program there was valid.

[Court rejects ANWR lease activity appeal](#) – Petroleum News

[Federal judge puts thumb on scale against Alaska on ANWR development](#) - Must Read Alaska

[Federal judge upholds pause on pre-development oil work in Arctic refuge](#) - Alaska Beacon

[US federal court keeps the brakes on oil, gas leasing activities in Arctic refuge](#) - S&P Global

[Alaska's Delegation, Governor, North Slope Leaders Criticize District Court for Upholding ...](#)

Lisa Murkowski 8/10/23

U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan (both R-Alaska), ... “The point in holding a lease sale is to explore the potential oil and gas ...

Of Interest: In & Around Alaska

[Indigenous knowledge holders share thousands of observations on the changing Arctic in a new study](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/6/23

The research project was aimed to continue tracking Arctic change, support documenting Indigenous knowledge and nurture the next generation of Indigenous scholars, said the primary author of the paper Donna Hauser.

[NTSB: Helicopter involved in deadly North Slope flight was flying low over lake before crash](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/8/23

NTSB investigators are trying to determine who was responsible for tracking the flight as well as why the helicopter was flying low [...] regulations require operators to track a flight, unless there are other agreements in place ...

[State Credit Rating Gets An AA, Oil Warning](#)

Daily Sitka Sentinel 8/4/23

By James Brooks. **Alaska** Beacon. A new review by analysts from New York City-based Kroll Bond Rating Agency has delivered **Alaska's** most positive ...

[Alaska's wild blueberries are good for you. Right?](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/6/23

Our beloved Alaska blueberry seems to have a bad reputation in parts of Europe and Scandinavia. There, people have called it the "mad berry," "intoxicating berry" and "vomit berry."

[How did a walrus get four miles from shore, to the middle of an Alaska oil field?](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/5/23

The walrus rescued by ConocoPhillips from a road in an oilfield on **Alaska's** North Slope. · The ConocoPhillips plane that flew the walrus calf from the ...

NPR-A

[Willow costs holding](#)

Petroleum News 8/10/23

\$7-7.5B remains solid number to first production in 2029, inflation built in

Energy

[Alaska Division of Oil and Gas plans geothermal lease sale for volcano ...](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/5/23

The **Alaska** Division of **Oil** and Gas is preparing to hold a lease sale offering rights to explore for geothermal energy resources of Mount Spurr, ...

[Badami tariff rises as volumes through line drop dramatically](#)

Petroleum News 8/10/23

Nutaaq is requesting an increase from the current rate of \$1.71 per barrel to \$7.19 per barrel.

National

[Bureau of Land Management orders removal of oil wells in California's Carrizo Plain](#)

Yahoo Finance 8/4/23

Carrizo Plain National Monument Bob Wick/**Bureau of Land Management**. Record-breaking rains may have flooded California this year, but they also ...

[Bureau of Land Management announces ambitious approach to reduce wildfire risk](#)

Sierra Sun 8/9/23

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The **Bureau of Land Management** is taking an ambitious and coordinated approach to accelerate fuels reduction projects on ...

Opinion

[OPINION: Fulfilling our obligations to Alaska Native Vietnam War veterans](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/7/23

Our department continues to make the success of this program and the availability of land for all eligible veterans a central priority.

Internal

[BLM Alaska Legislative Affairs Report](#)

Office of Communications SP Site

Summary of delegation-related activities for the week of Aug. 14 – 18.

Smile



[Hint for Trekkies: stormtroopers aren't the best shots]



Visitor: "How old is that Tyrannosaurus skeleton?"

Guide: "70,000,006 years."

Visitor: "Wow. How can you be so precise?"

Guide: "They told me it was 70,000,000 years old when I started working here."

[piffun.com](#)

From: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

To: "Kniola, Benjamin E" <bkniola@blm.gov>

Cc: BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] RELEASE: Ranking Member Grijalva Commends Cancellation of Oil and Gas Leases in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 19:15:29 +0000

Inline-Images: image006.png; image007.png; image008.png; image009.png; image010.png

From: Gressard, Lindsay <Lindsay.Gressard@mail.house.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:13 PM

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RELEASE: Ranking Member Grijalva Commends Cancellation of Oil and Gas Leases in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

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NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
DEMOCRATS
RANKING MEMBER RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 6, 2023

Contact: [Lindsay Gressard](mailto:Lindsay.Gressard@mail.house.gov)
202-740-4715

Washington, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) today issued the following statement on the U.S. Department of the Interior’s decision to cancel the seven remaining 2021 oil and gas leases sold under the Trump administration’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) leasing program. The leases were previously suspended due to multiple legal flaws in the Trump administration’s leasing program, including a failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as a failure to properly interpret the Tax Act.

The Biden administration also announced newly proposed regulations to protect more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

“Of all the Trump administration’s shameless gifts to Big Oil, the ANWR leasing program had to be one of their most egregious,” said Ranking Member Grijalva. **“They illegally cut corners on environmental reviews, ignored major concerns from the Gwich’in who rely on the region’s caribou for subsistence, and peddled exaggerated job and revenue claims—all**

#1127678.1

just so Big Oil could unenthusiastically throw a few bucks at a couple of leases that clearly didn't interest them much.

"The ANWR lease sale never should have happened. I'm glad to see the Biden administration putting our legal and moral responsibilities to protect our environment, listen to tribes, and do right by American taxpayers above polluter profits with this decision. I'm also pleased to see the administration prioritizing the conservation of the arctic landscape by moving forward to protect 13 million acres in the NPR-A. There's no question that climate change is already taking its toll in the arctic, but decisions like these will help us mitigate some of its worst effects."

###



From: "Williams, Martha M" <martha_williams@fws.gov>
To: "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Sundaresan, Siva R" <siva_sundaresan@fws.gov>, "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>
Cc: "Woods, Candice R" <candice_woods@ios.doi.gov>, "Abler, Eugene (Mike)" <Eugene.Abler@boem.gov>, "Long, Amanda D" <adlong@blm.gov>
Subject: RE: Coastal Plain meeting Monday
Date: Tue, 09 May 2023 14:29:27 +0000

Planning on it!

From: Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 7:28 AM
To: Sundaresan, Siva R <siva_sundaresan@fws.gov>; Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>; Williams, Martha M <martha_williams@fws.gov>
Cc: Woods, Candice R <candice_woods@ios.doi.gov>; Abler, Eugene (Mike) <Eugene.Abler@boem.gov>; Long, Amanda D <adlong@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: Coastal Plain meeting Monday

Good morning-

I've reset this for tomorrow, Tuesday, at 1 pm. I hope that works for some - all! - of you, but I wanted to get it back on with the coalition given my last minute cancellation of today. It's still set for in person. Please let me know - thanks!
Laura

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From: Sundaresan, Siva R <siva_sundaresan@fws.gov>
Sent: Saturday, May 6, 2023 8:02:02 AM
To: Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>; Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>; Williams, Martha M <martha_williams@fws.gov>
Subject: Re: Coastal Plain meeting Monday

Sounds good! Thanks, Laura!

Siva Sundaresan
US Fish and Wildlife Service

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From: Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: Friday, May 5, 2023 7:20:30 PM
To: Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>; Williams, Martha M <martha_williams@fws.gov>; Sundaresan, Siva R <siva_sundaresan@fws.gov>
Subject: Coastal Plain meeting Monday

Hi friends,

With apologies for a late Friday message, I need to reschedule our Monday 10 am meeting to discuss the Refuge SEIS. (Siva I think you were already covering for Martha.) We will prioritize getting it back on and thank you for understanding.

Laura

#1127686.1

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From: "Communications, BLM_AK" <BLM_AK_Communications@blm.gov>

Subject: 8-18-23 Weekly News Digest

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 2023 16:01:59 +0000

Inline-Images: image.png; image(1).png

Weekly News Clips – This digest is provided for leadership’s situational awareness. A story’s appearance in this digest does not imply accuracy of information or endorsement of any kind.

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Coastal Plain

[Oil exploration in Arctic Refuge on hold for now](#)

The Cordova Times 8/15/23

... (AIDEA) and state of **Alaska** that would have allowed work to continue toward exploration and drilling for **oil** and gas on the coastal plain.

National

[Tracy Stone-Manning: How the BLM is ensuring the health of our public lands](#)

The Salt Lake Tribune 8/13/23

As the nation's largest public land manager, the **Bureau of Land Management** (BLM), balances these uses. But as the climate crisis worsens and our ...

[Federal grants will replace tunnels beneath roads that let water pass but not fish](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/16/23

The Biden administration on Wednesday announced nearly \$200 million in federal infrastructure grants to upgrade tunnels that carry streams beneath roads but can be deadly to fish that get stuck trying to pass through.

[CRS: Land Management Agencies Face \\$35.5 Billion Deferred Maintenance Backlog](#)

FEDweek 8/13/23

... with the Forest Service accounting for 22 percent, the **Bureau of Land Management** 13 percent and the Fish and Wildlife Service the rest.

[CAL FIRE and BLM sign 'Good Neighbor' agreement](#)

AirMed&Rescue 8/14/23

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has signed a statewide agreement with the US **Bureau of Land Management** (BLM)

Of Interest: In & Around Alaska

[Annual industry awards will be presented at 2023 AOGA conference](#)

Petroleum News 8/17/23

On Aug. 14 the Alaska Oil and Gas Association revealed the winners of this year's industry awards: Cindy Bailey with Santos, Taylor Burgh with Alaska Resource Education, NANA Management Services, and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

#1127692.1

[A year after passage, landmark climate law is creating a 'different world' for Alaska renewables](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/13/23

[Alaska Division of Oil and Gas plans geothermal lease sale for volcano near Anchorage]. The Inflation Reduction Act includes billions in ...

[New report supports importing of LNG to fill Cook Inlet gas supply gap](#)

Petroleum News 8/17/23

This has become an urgent matter, given indications that Cook Inlet gas supplies may fall short of gas and electric utility gas demand around 2027.

[Allies in worst of times](#)

Petroleum News 8/17/23

AIDEA, HEX rescue bankrupt Cook Inlet unit, switch to local hire, boost gas output

Fire

[Wildland firefighter from Oregon who was missing near Fairbanks found alive](#)

Anchorage Daily News 8/17/23

A spokesperson for the Alaska Interagency Management Team said Rendon was found around 5:30 p.m. In an updated statement Thursday evening, the forestry division said he was assessed by medical personnel on the scene and was being taken to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital in "stable condition."

[Lost Horse Creek evacuation status changed to READY in Haystack area](#)

Alaska Wildland Fire Information 8/17/23

As of 2 pm on Wednesday, the Fairbanks North Star Borough changed the evacuation status from Level 2 (SET) to Level 1 (READY) for all areas impacted by the Lost Horse Creek Fire (#296). This includes all areas within the Haystack subdivision, Upper Haystack Drive, Sharmon Court, Middle Fork Road, and the Poker Flat Watershed.

[Alaska fire agencies offer wildfire-smoke reports online](#)

Alaska Public Media 8/16/23

Agency officials say the public has shown a lot of interest in the reports so they may become a regular feature, during especially smoky fire seasons in Alaska.

Courts

[Environmental groups mount legal challenge to Alaska natural gas export approval](#)

KINY 8/14/23

(Alaska Beacon) - Citing climate impacts, groups seek to block the project ... that natural gas, which exists at Prudhoe Bay and other oil fields.

Mining

[Mine project upstream of Haines gets permit for seismic exploration](#)

KTOO 8/11/23

Constantine Metals, which owns the Palmer Project, has received permission from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources to proceed with seismic ...

Opinion

[Alaska's weird fire season ain't over yet](#)

Frontiersman 8/18/23

This is not a reason for alarm: The nostalgic scent of vaporized spruce and willow trees is a normal summer sensation here in middle Alaska. But the 2023 Alaska wildfire season has been anything but normal, according to Rick Thoman.

[Rick Whitbeck: New Alaska group says ending oil and gas is the goal](#)

Must Read Alaska 8/16/23

Rick Whitbeck: New **Alaska** group says ending **oil** and gas is the goal ... Perhaps a more accurate name for them would be "We Are **Alaskan** Haters" or ...

[Smile](#)

[When your parents say they're gonna kick you out if you don't start making money](#)

YouTube

[Makes you wonder how much effort they put into the video vs. job applications 😊]



Must be Sturgis week at the day care



From: "Duffy, Adam B" <aduffy@blm.gov>

To: "Sheehan, Gregory J" <gsheehan@blm.gov>, "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Cc: "Judd, Christina A" <cjudd@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

Date: Wed, 20 Sep 2023 16:06:09 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.png

Thanks Greg. You too.

Adam

From: Sheehan, Gregory J <gsheehan@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 11:23 AM

To: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Cc: Judd, Christina A <cjudd@blm.gov>; Duffy, Adam B <aduffy@blm.gov>; Krauss, Jeff <JKrauss@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

Thank you Patrick and Adam for sharing. I am glad to hear that we had some good Congressional support for Utah in the room.

Also, thanks for all that you do in helping to keep things moving on the hill and for keeping us informed. We appreciate you.

Have a great rest of the week,
Greg

Greg Sheehan
Utah State Director
Bureau of Land Management
440 W 200 S, Suite 500
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
GSheehan@blm.gov
801-539-4010
801-803-4594 cell



From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 6:38 AM

To: Sheehan, Gregory J <gsheehan@blm.gov>

Cc: Judd, Christina A <cjudd@blm.gov>; Duffy, Adam B <aduffy@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

#1127703.1

icymi - see green line below. curtis gave blm ut a shoutout at yesterday's hearing - generally about blm ut's great work, coordination, etc (unrelated to the hearing topic).
well done!

Patrick Wilkinson

Division Chief

Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior

Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 5:09 PM

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Fields, Yvette M <yfields@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Cowan, Peter I <picowan@blm.gov>; Warren, Matthew (Matt) <mwarren@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Hires, Brian K <bhires@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Broadwater, Charles E <cbroadwater@blm.gov>; Northington, John W <jnorthington@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>

Subject: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

FYI – On Tuesday, September 19, the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy & Mineral Resources held an oversight hearing titled: "*Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*"

Members of Congress in attendance included: Subcommittee Chairman Stauber (R-MN-08), Subcommittee Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14), Full Committee Chairman Westerman (R-AR-04), and Representatives from the Subcommittee, including Reps. Lamborn (R-CO-05), Fulcher (R-ID-01), Curtis (R-UT-03), Tiffany (R-WI-07), Rosendale (R-MT-02), Boebert (R-CO-03), Hunt (R-TX-38), Huffman (D-CA-02), Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37), and Lee (NV-03). Representatives Hageman (R-WY-At large) and Porter (D-CA-47), Members of the full Committee, were also allowed to participate.

The hearing included two witness panels. The first panel had one witness: Michael Nedd, Deputy Director, Operations, appearing for the BLM. The second panel consisted of Kathleen Sgamma, President, Western Energy Alliance; Bill Novotny, President, Wyoming County Commissioners Association; Dr. Barbara Vasquez, Citizen Scientist and Advocate, Western Organization of Resource Councils [Minority Witness]; and Nagruk Harcharek, President, Voice of the Arctic Inupiat (VOICE).

The hearing lasted just over two and a half hours. Chairman Stauber opened the hearing by saying that the Biden-Harris Administration has set an "anti-development, anywhere but America agenda." He also accused the Administration and the BLM for being responsible for high gas prices, as compared to prices in January 2021. Specifically, he accused the BLM of failing to hold lease sales and to approve permits to drill. Chairman Stauber

#1127703.2

also claimed that the Public Lands Rule, Oil and Gas Leasing Rule, and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) Rule are “regulatory actions to stifle domestic energy development on Federal lands.”

In her opening statement, Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez thanked communities for organizing and pushing for changes to oil and gas policy, and added that the BLM’s proposed Oil and Gas Rule is one of several positive steps taken by the Administration to reduce carbon emissions. She later asked what the BLM is doing to ramp down carbon emissions from public lands, given that oil and gas production on public lands is at an all-time high. Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez went further by asking how the Administration will factor in downstream emissions for upcoming lease sales, and how that will differ from how the BLM has historically considered downstream emissions.

Proposed Oil & Gas Rule

Speaking to the proposed rule, Rep. Lamborn pointed out that BLM’s testimony states the agency will avoid leasing in areas with sensitive cultural, wildlife, and recreation resources. He shared his opinion that this description is “so open ended you can drive any agenda through it,” and that any place in the country could have those resources present. Chairman Westerman asked why the BLM is proposing such a “radical change” to bond amounts, when in his opinion, the BLM is doing a good job preventing orphaned wells. He added that the increased bonds would be devastating to small businesses.

Rep. Curtis praised BLM UT staff for their diligent work before he began his questions. He asked how the BLM takes emissions into account when it analyzes public lands, specifically if the BLM compares potential emissions from within the United States to those of foreign countries in its analysis. Rep. Curtis reiterated that BLM needs to look at emissions worldwide when it makes its analysis, as he believes the United States has done a lot already to reduce its emissions.

Alaska

Regarding oil and gas production in Alaska, Chairman Stauber focused his questions largely on the recent decision to cancel leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). He asked Mr. Nedd specifically about coordination and consultation with local communities and Tribes, as well as whether the BLM has cancelled leases without litigation forcing that decision. Rep. Tiffany accused the Administration of not consulting with Alaska Natives prior to the lease cancellation decision.

Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez asked when the recently cancelled Arctic leases would have come online if they were not cancelled. Pointing out that it would take many years for these leases and others in Alaska to produce, she argued that the Majority is incorrect to say the Administration’s actions will impact gas prices today. She added that we cannot drill our way to lower gas prices. Rep. Huffman asked Mr. Nedd to speak to some of the risks to drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and how the proposed NPR-A rule will protect these special areas that are uniquely vulnerable to climate change.

Oil & Gas Lease Sales

Rep. Tiffany commented on how there should be more leasing on all Federal lands out west and equated climate change to a “green fantasy” to drive policy decisions. He also requested a definition for “fair return” that the BLM uses. Rep. Lee discussed oil and gas leasing in Nevada and the most recent sale in the state, and how it resulted in zero bids and wasted BLM staff and other resources to review and analyze the parcels. She added that her legislation, H.R. 3377, the End Speculative Leasing Act, aims to resolve this issue by focusing BLM resources on areas with high oil and gas potential only.

Mining

Rep. Tiffany asked if the BLM is prepared to issue more mining permits for the minerals needed for a clean energy economy, adding a comment about the decision to cancel the mining development in the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota. He expressed his opinion that the Administration claims there are appropriate areas for mining, but then says that every area is not an appropriate place, citing the Twin Metals decision in Minnesota and Resolution Copper in Arizona.

Rep. Hageman aggressively questioned why the BLM would want to incentive frivolous lawsuits against energy and mineral development, export jobs, prohibit United States citizens from accessing their lands via the pending Rock Springs Resource Management Plan, and support companies that buy Cobalt from countries utilizing child labor.

Sage Grouse & Resource Management Plan Amendments

Rep. Lamborn expressed his concern over two pending supplemental Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for two Resource Management Plans (RMP) that would withdraw 1.6 million acres in Colorado from development to protect sage grouse (possibly referring to the proposed Gunnison Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment). He noted that the sage grouse has experienced a 24 percent increase in population since 2019. Rep. Lamborn went on to ask why the BLM feels it's appropriate to hurt Americans and Colorado, which he stated is the fourth largest oil and gas producer in the nation. He further asked what changes have taken place since the original RMPs were implemented, and what analysis the BLM did on the effects these changes would have on people. Rep. Lamborn concluded by asking for a copy of the analysis on the impacts to communities.

During the second panel, Rep. Boebert also shared her disapproval of the proposed RMP amendments, and her belief that the Administration wants to shut down oil and gas development in western Colorado.

Other Regulatory Updates

Full Committee Chairman Westerman focused questions on the BLM's implementation of the Fiscal Responsibilities Act, with specific emphasis on the required one-year timeframe for completing Environmental Assessments (EA) and the two-year timeline for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). He requested specific examples of where the BLM was working to accelerate processing of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.

Rep. Hunt asked about the BLM's updated venting and flaring rule, and stated that, in his opinion, the rule is duplicative of an existing Environmental Protection Agency rule which companies already have to follow. He then asked about communitization agreements, and how long it should take for them to be processed.

Second Panel Discussion Overview

Discussions during the second panel largely encompassed the same themes of the first panel, with a deeper look into the topics introduced earlier. Chairman Stauber invited witness Harcharek to write a letter to the Subcommittee to counter the statement that the BLM did conduct Tribal consultation in making its ANWR lease cancellation decision.

There was significant discussion of orphaned wells and the increased bond requirements of the proposed Oil and Gas Rule. Witness Sgamma stated that the BLM should be applauded for its work on orphaned wells. She added that the low number of known orphaned wells on public lands show that the BLM and industry are addressing the issue, and thus the higher bonding rates are not needed. Rep. Porter also questioned Ms. Sgamma about the fiscal terms in the IRA. Chairman Stauber asked witness Sgamma if the BLM's bonding increases would hurt small businesses, and cause more wells to be orphaned. Rep. Fulcher asked witness Sgamma whether the increased royalty rates proposed in the Oil and Gas rule are justified, along with the more robust environmental impact analysis that would be required, and whether the impact it would have on industry would be worth it. Rep. Rosendale also asked about the impact of increased bonding rates on small businesses verses larger corporations.

Rep. Rosendale focused his questions on the BLM's actions regarding critical mineral production, stating that it was detrimental to the nation to rely on foreign countries with worse environmental standards. He asked witness Sgamma about her organization's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests regarding the Department's alleged work with environmental activist groups, including Secretary Haaland's daughter.

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Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior

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Subject: BLM Congressional & Legislative Affairs Weekly Report – November 30, 2023

Date: Fri, 01 Dec 2023 01:02:39 +0000

Attachments: NEW_Cong.Report._Updates_(44).docx

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Weekly Report – November 30, 2023
(Updates in Red)

HEARINGS/MARKUPS

- Dec. 5: The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands plans to hold an oversight hearing titled, “*Examining Opportunities to Promote and Enhance Tribal Forest Management.*” **Witness: Bodie Shaw, Deputy Regional Director - Trust Services, Northwest Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs**
- Dec. 5: The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian & Insular Affairs plans to hold a legislative hearing on four bills, including the following of interest to BLM:
 - H.R. 4748, Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act
- Week of Dec. 4 (T): The House Natural Resources Committee may mark up H.R. 6492, Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (Omnibus Recreation Legislation)
- Dec. 12: The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources plans to hold a legislative hearing on the following bills of interest to the BLM. No witness; BLM Statement for the Record.
 - H.R. 5482, Energy Poverty Prevention and Accountability Act
 - H.R. 6474, Amends the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to expedite geothermal exploration and development in previously studied or developed areas.
 - H.R. 6481, Amends the Mineral Leasing Act to require DOI to reimburse the fee for an expression of interest if the expression of interest becomes inactive.

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- **H.R. 6482, Enhancing Geothermal Production on Federal Lands Act**
- **Dec. 12:** The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining plans to hold a hearing on mining legislation. Witness: Steve Feldgus, PhD, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management.
 - S. 1742, Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act
 - S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act
 - Others TBD
- **Dec. 14 (T):** The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee plans to hold a markup on 24 bills, including the following of interest to the BLM:
 - S. 594, Continental Divide Trail Completion Act;
 - S. 636, Dolores River National Conservation Area and Special Management Area Act;
 - S. 1348, Wyoming Public Lands Initiative Act;
 - S. 1634, Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act;
 - S. 1776, PUBLIC Lands Act;
 - S. 1889, Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act;
 - S. 1890, Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act;
 - S. 2581, Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act;
 - S. 2615, Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act;
 - S. 3033, Pecos Watershed Protection Act; and
 - S. 3036, Mountain View Corridor Completion Act.

NEW ITEMS

- **Nov. 27:** Sen. Padilla (D-CA) staff requested an update on the proposed sale of several BLM parcels to BNSF Railway (completed Nov. 29).
- **Nov. 27:** Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested information about the Sombrillo Travel Management Plan in northern New Mexico.
- **Nov. 28:** Sen. Casey (D-PA) staff requested information regarding the orphaned well plugging requirements in the BIL.
- **Nov. 28:** Sen. Collins (R-ME) staff requested information on the status of the Native Plant Species Pilot Program included in the FY23 Omnibus Appropriations Act.
- **Nov. 29:** Rep. Schrier (D-WA-08) staff requested information related to the National Prescribed Fire Act.
- **Nov. 30:** Sen. Cortez-Masto (D-NV) staff requested responses to recommendations from the Findings & Recommendations of the Not Invisible Act Commission, which is a cross jurisdictional commission formed to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous people.

UPCOMING MEETINGS / VISITS / BRIEFINGS

- NA

CORRESPONDENCE

EST / DCN	Date	From	Subject	Status
BLM0038294	06/09/2023	Daines	BLM mandated lease sales in Montana	ASLM
BLM0038665	06/27/2023	Crane	Resolution Copper EIS	OCL
BLM0039833	08/25/2023	Rosen	Ruby Mountains mineral withdrawal	OCL
BLM0039842	08/25/2023	Lombardo (Gov)	Permitting progress of Goldrush project	OCL
BLM0039978	08/29/2023	Feinstein	Cadiz Real Estate application for ROW reassignment	ASLM

BLM0040029	09/01/2023	Cortez Masto	Support for National Monument at Swamp Cedars	OCL
BLM0040079	09/06/2023	Daines	American Prairie Reserve	MTSO
BLM0040385	09/26/2023	Kelly	Support for BLM broadband project permitting in Navajo County, AZ	BLM-COS
BLM0040410	09/26/2023	Daines	PENDING BLM0038294 – Follow-up letter on BLM mandated lease sales in MT	HQ-600
BLM0040491	09/29/2023	Levin	Support of onshore oil and gas leasing rule	OCL
BLM0040737	10/11/2023	Padilla	Expand boundary of Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument	HQ-400
BLM0040813	10/16/2023	Barrasso	Concerns re: Rock Springs Draft RMP	BLM-COS
BLM0040818	10/17/2023	Risch	Interpretation and implementation of Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act in ID	HQ-300
BLM0040838	10/18/2023	Booker	Recommendation for National Wild Horse & Burrow Advisory Board	OCL
BLM0040881	10/20/2023	Murkowski	Extending comment deadline for NPR-A rule	OCL
BLM0040954	10/26/2023	Bennet	Support for updated bonding requirements in onshore oil and gas rule	OCL
BLM0040988	10/30/2023	Amodei	Public land withdrawal in Railroad Valley, NV	OCL
BLM0041098	11/02/2023	Murkowski	Comment deadline extension for Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Program SEIS	AKSO
BLM0041146	11/07/2023	Westerman	Heavener Coking Coal Project	ESSO
BLM0041223	11/13/2023	Rosendale	Rural broadband development in western Montana	MTSO
BLM0041225	11/13/2023	Cortez Masto	PENDING BLM0039833: Oil and gas withdrawal – Ruby Mountains, NV	HQ-600
BLM0041382	11/20/2023	Westerman	Twin Metals Cancellation and The Wilderness Society Meetings	ESSO
BLM0041334	11/20/2023	Sullivan	Veterans Native Allotments	AKSO
BLM0041335	11/20/2012	Titus	Roberts Mountain Complex wild horse gather accident	HQ-260
BLM0041371	11/21/2023	Bentz	Constituent concern re Human Resources issue	ORSO
BLM0041461	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO

BLM0041462	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
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ONGOING ITEMS PENDING WITH BLM

- Jan. 4/June 6/Sept. 20: HNR majority staff requested follow-up information regarding BLM's draft Greenhouse Gas Environmental Assessment and the related court cases.
- March 14/June 6/Sept. 21: HNR majority staff requested the number of Expressions of Interest received over the last 12 months.
- Sept. 7: Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) staff requested follow up information regarding an oil and gas lease cancellation in Utah and questions regarding BLM permitting staffing needs.
- Sept. 21: SENR majority staff requested an update on the status of the WildEarth Guardians litigation GHG EA and if any decisions have been issued based on the EA.
- Sept. 26: Rep. Curtis (R-UT-03) and Rep. Huffman (D-CA-02) staff requested information on the renewable energy permitting process.
- Sept. 26: Rep. Bentz (R-OR-02) requested information on renewal of grazing permits in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in southern Oregon.
- Sept. 29/Nov. 28: Sen. Cramer (R-ND) staff requested information regarding a BLM-New Mexico EA regarding Lesser Prairie Chicken.
- Oct. 12: Rep. Valadao (R-CA-22) staff requested information regarding water management on public lands in Tulare County, CA.
- Oct. 23: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested information on conservation and the proposed Public Lands Rule.
- Oct. 31: SENR majority staff and staff of Sen. Barrasso (R-WY) requested maps depicting designations proposed in S. 1348, Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (ongoing).
- Nov. 1: HNR majority staff requested information regarding the Report to Congress on oil and gas project office funds.
- Nov. 6: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested information about Alaska Native community involvement/tribal consultation regarding the ANWR lease cancellations, draft SEIS, and proposed NPR-A rule.
- Nov. 7: Sen. Rosen (D-NV) staff requested information on the status of the 3 Kids mine conveyance in southern Nevada.
- Nov. 8: Rep. Fulcher (R-ID-01) staff requested a briefing on the Four Rivers RMP decision.
- Nov. 15: Rep. Obernolte (R-CA-23) staff requested an update on the proposed sale of several BLM parcels to BNSF Railway (**completed Nov. 29**).
- Nov. 15: Rep. Thompson (D-CA-04) staff requested assistance on a proposal to name part of the Headwaters Forest Reserve in California after Senator Feinstein (**completed Nov. 29**).
- Nov. 16: Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) staff requested additional information about a federal mineral rights issue underlying a constituent's private land.

Ongoing CBO/CRS Requests

- Sept. 25: CBO requested information regarding S. 683, Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act (Sen. Padilla, D-CA).
- Oct. 19: CBO requested information on H.R. 188, Proven Forest Management Act of 2023.
- Oct. 27: CBO requested information on S. 1260, the University of Utah Research Park Act (Sen. Lee, R-UT).
- Nov. 21: CBO requested information related to temporary housing of non-U.S. nationals on BLM managed public lands.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nov. 3/June 6: HNR majority staff requested technical assistance on three specific sections in H.R. 9087, the TAP American Energy Act (Rep. Westerman, R-AR-04).
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

- Feb. 2/April 17/May 24: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to transfer a tract of Federal land to the Wrangel Cooperative Association.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- March 15: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on legislative language regarding transfer of Tenakee Springs.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 7: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested technical assistance on S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 9: Rep. Vasquez (D-NM-02) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill titled “Ranching Without Red Tape.”
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- July 17: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act. BIA is leading the response, with OCL coordinating other agency input.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 31: Rep. McCollum (D-MN-4) requested technical assistance on H.R. 5021, Securing American Critical Minerals Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Aug. 11: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Bureau of Land Management Flexible Partnerships Act of 2023.
 - Status: Pending with ASLM.
- Sept. 5: OCL requested assistance on a Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff request for technical assistance on the previously introduced S. 4369, the North American Grasslands Conservation Act (117th Congress).
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Sept. 18: Rep. Simpson (ID-02) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey public land to Twin Falls County, Idaho, for use as a recreation trail.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Sept. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-7) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey reversionary of select land near Ridgecrest California.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Oct. 13: Rep. Cartwright (D-PA-8) staff requested DOI/BLM technical assistance on H.R. 2872, Safeguarding America’s Future and Environment Act, from the 117th Congress.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

- March 29: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: BLM Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with DOI.
- May 16: HNR EMR/FL hearing on the BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0038668)
- June 15: HNR hearing on H.R. 3397, “to require the BLM Director to withdraw a rule of the BLM relating to conservation and landscape health.” Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with BLM. (BLM0040177)
- June 22: HNR Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with **ASLM**.
- Sept. 19: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing “Examining the Biden Administration’s Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.” Witness: Deputy Director of Operations Nedd.
 - Status: Pending with BLM. (BLM0040784)
- Sept. 28: SENR hearing “Examine opportunities to counter the People’s Republic of China’s control of critical mineral supply chains through increased mining and processing in the United States as well as

international engagement and trade.” Witness: Deputy Secretary Beaudreau.

- Status: Select questions pending with BLM
- Oct. 25: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

REPORTS TO CONGRESS (pending review in DTS)

- Efficiencies with O&C Grant Lands Program for Fiscal Year 2017
 - Status: Pending with HQ-220 (BLM0011656).
- Report to Congress on Online Oil and Gas Leasing - Comprehensive Comparison of Oral vs Online Lease Sales
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0012000).
- Oil and Gas Resource Potential of the Musselshell Breaks and Bridge Coulee Wilderness Study Areas
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0019271).
- Trespassing on Alaska Native Lands
 - Status: Pending with HQ-620 (BLM0021543).
- Annual Helium Report to Congress FY 2020-2022
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NM (BLM0032063).
- Suitability for Geothermal of Categorical Exclusions Under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000067).
- Annual Renewable Energy Report to Congress FY 2022
 - Status: Pending review with HQ-620 (BLMC000082).
- Withdrawal Extension Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with OCL (BLMC000090).
- SNPLMA FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000093).

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 [Natural Resources Republicans](#)

Westerman Slams Biden's Decision to Shutter Alaska Energy Production

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 6, 2023

CONTACT: [Rebekah Hoshiko](#) (202) 225-2761

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced it will cancel the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the Trump administration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) while simultaneously locking up millions of acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) issued the following statement in response:

"Clearly the Biden administration has learned nothing from its past failures. President Biden and his cronies continue to make reckless decisions that jeopardize Americans' paychecks and put our national security at risk. Alaska is home to some of the richest oil and natural gas deposits in the country, and responsible development of these resources is widely supported by the indigenous communities, residents of the state and their congressional delegation. Yet the Biden administration is so singularly focused on appeasing radical environmentalists that they are willing to steamroll everyone else in the process. Not only are Alaska's energy reserves a source of opportunity and prosperity for the people of Alaska, they are also resources that are key to America's energy independence and the state has a long track record of accessing them without harming local communities or area wildlife. Sitting in Washington, the Biden administration may think it alone holds the keys to America's natural resources, but they are sorely mistaken. I will fight this decision in Congress and advocate for every American to be able to benefit from our lands and resources."

Background

Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, former President Donald Trump established an oil and gas program in ANWR. It wasn't the first time this issue had come up; former President Jimmy Carter originally set aside a portion of ANWR's 1002 Area for energy development with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980. Then-Senator Joe Biden voted for this legislation.

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The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act restricted energy development in the 1002 Area to 2,000 acres (one ten-thousandth of ANWR's acreage) and could result in the development of 10.4 billion barrels of oil.

The Biden administration's decision hamstring economic opportunity in the state of Alaska. The oil industry is the largest source of unrestricted revenue to Alaska, contributing almost 90 percent of the state's unrestricted general fund and more than \$180 billion in total state revenue since the state's creation. The industry supports more than 110,000 direct and indirect jobs. Since the 1950s, oil and gas operators have invested more than \$55 billion in developing infrastructure in the North Slope and Cook Inlet.

This decision comes just one day after crude oil prices rose to their highest level in 2023, as OPEC+ and Russia jointly agreed to cap output. It also comes after Biden himself released a historic number of barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), depleting the SPR to its lowest level since 1984 despite the fact that U.S. petroleum consumption is more than 28 percent higher than it was then.

###



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From: "Communications, BLM_AK" <BLM_AK_Communications@blm.gov>

Subject: 10-27-23 Weekly News Digest

Date: Fri, 27 Oct 2023 15:35:34 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Weekly News Clips – This digest is provided for leadership’s situational awareness. A story’s appearance in this digest does not imply accuracy of information or endorsement of any kind.

NOTES: To access some stories, you may need a subscription. The Alaska State Office does maintain some [subscriptions](#) (for official use only), but not all.

As a reminder, we are excluding E&E articles (to condense BLM-AK News Clips). For access, follow the subscriptions link above and look for instructions under “E&E News.”

NPR-A

[Alaska Tribes being ignored by BLM](#)

Petroleum News 10/27/23

Congressional delegation demands extension of 'artificially short comment period' for proposed NPR-A rule to allow participation

Ambler

[Doyon cancels land access for Alaska development agency, a barrier for the Ambler Road project](#)

Anchorage Daily News 10/23/23

Doyon, the largest private landholder in Alaska, cited “poor treatment” as a factor in a sharply worded letter outlining its decision to cancel the agreement with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority.

[Doyon Ltd. drops support for Ambler Road, at least temporarily](#)

Alaska Public Media 10/24/23

... **mine** to the Dalton Highway. (**Alaska** Division of **Mining**, Land and Water map). On Sept. 18, Doyon sued AIDEA over \$2 million in outstanding debts ...

[Doyon threatens AIDEA, will withdraw access to Ambler mine area, unless](#)

Must Read Alaska 10/24/23

Schutt demanded AIDEA drop its appeal of Doyon’s free land use permit to use the Mustang Pad free of charge, or else Doyon would pull support from the Ambler Road.

Coastal Plain

[Barrasso: Restricting American Oil Production Threatens Our Economy, National Security](#)

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources 10/26/23

“This year, President Biden cancelled existing **oil** and gas leases on **Alaska's** North Slope and we have the senior Senator from **Alaska** here with us ...

Arctic

[US unveils plan for achieving its Arctic vision of more conservation, less drilling](#)

S&P Global 10/23/23

The administration has also instituted new protections that restrict **oil** and gas development in the National **Petroleum Reserve-Alaska**, and in ...

#1127729.1

Native

[Alaska Federation of Natives asks Congress for 'immediate action' to expand subsistence protection](#)

Anchorage Daily News 10/22/23

As the state's largest Alaska Native organization closed out its 57th annual convention in Anchorage on Saturday, it called on Congress to expand subsistence protections amid a court battle with the state over fishing rights.

Of Interest around Alaska

[Vic Fischer, last surviving Alaska Constitutional Convention delegate, dies at 99](#)

Anchorage Daily News 10/23/23

Fischer arrived in Alaska in 1950 to take his first job as a community planner, with the Bureau of Land Management. Among his duties, he helped create the towns of Cantwell and Tok.

[Western Arctic Caribou Herd keeps shrinking, 2023 census shows](#)

The Arctic Sounder 10/26/23

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game recently shared the results from this summer's photo census of the herd, which is estimated at 152,000 animals. That indicates a 7% decline from the previous year.

[To avoid timber sale, Southeast Alaska community seeks to begin carbon credit program](#)

Anchorage Daily News 10/25/23

An analysis provided by the nonprofit the Nature Conservancy to the Whale Pass city council estimated that the value of a carbon offset project there could be worth anywhere between \$1.3 million and \$6.8 million, depending on the value of the carbon market.

[Alaska offering royalty-free lease terms to stimulate Cook Inlet gas development](#)

Alaska Beacon 10/23/23

The impetus is the concern that the state's most populous region may soon be running low of the natural gas that is its main source of power for heat and electricity, a division official said.

[Alaska Gov. Dunleavy plans legislation intended to prevent natural gas shortage in Southcentral](#) - Alaska Beacon

[EPA awards grant to ADEC to help improve Fairbanks air quality](#)

Petroleum News 10/27/23

The Environmental Protection Agency has awarded a \$10 million Targeted Airshed Grant to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to help fund measures to improve air quality in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, EPA announced on Oct. 23.

Courts

[AIDEA has filed another ANWR lawsuit](#)

Petroleum News 10/27/23

Agency argues Interior's Sept. 6 cancellation of AIDEA's coastal plain oil and gas leases was illegal for a number of reasons

[Group sues state of Alaska to halt mining company from trucking ore on Interior public roads](#)

Anchorage Daily News 10/26/23

A new group has filed a lawsuit in **Alaska** Superior Court seeking to stop a **mining** company from hauling double-trailer trucks filled with gold ore ...

Law Enforcement

[Four prosecuted for over \\$1M worth of dinosaur bones stolen from Utah, shipped to China](#)

KUTV 10/22/23

... **Bureau of Land Management**). Facebook Share Icon · Twitter Share Icon · Email Share Icon. Comment bubble ... SALT LAKE CITY (KUTV) — Four people have ...

Wildlife

[Bird flu detected in Antarctic for the first time, British Antarctic Survey says](#)

CNN 10/25/23

South Georgia is part of the British overseas territory east of South America's tip and just above Antarctica's main landmass. The British Antarctic Survey believes the [skua] carried the disease on their return from migration to South America.

Opinion

[Do Environmentalists Confuse Oil Production With Oil Demand?](#)

Planetizen 10/24/23

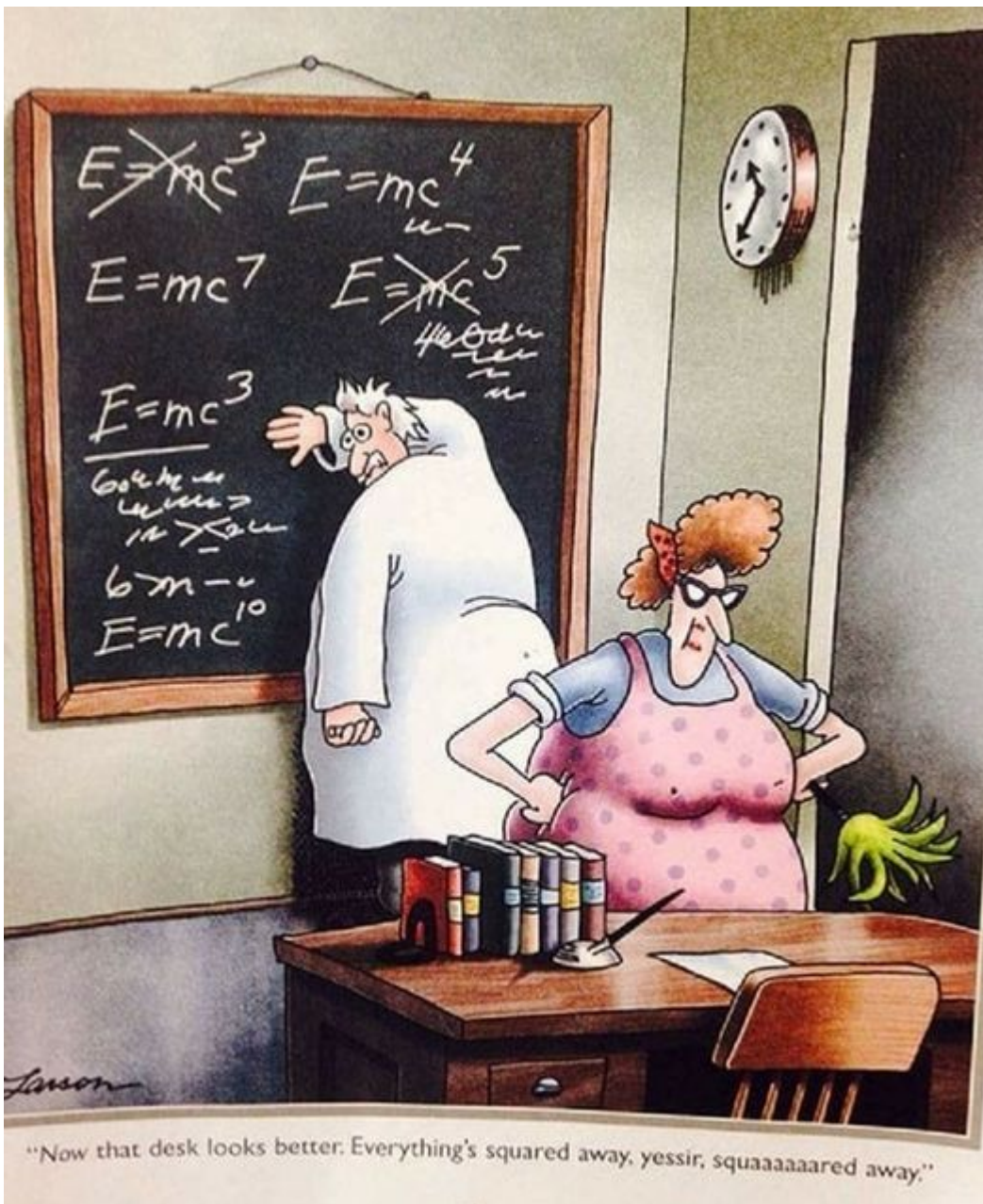
"Describing the Willow project as a 'carbon bomb'" assumes that if the Willow project does not happen, no other producer will pick up the slack," argues Gross.

Smile

Interviewer: How would you describe yourself?

Me: Verbally, but I've also prepared a dance





From: "Pool, Jamie R" <jpool@blm.gov>

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: "Branham, Sharif D" <sbranham@blm.gov>, "St George, Brian C" <bstgeorg@blm.gov>, "Waddell, Holle" <hwaddell@blm.gov>, "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Bagley, Lonny R" <lbagley@blm.gov>, "Heinlein, Thomas" <theinlei@blm.gov>, "Frost, Troy A" <tfrost@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Eggers, Barbara L" <beggers@blm.gov>, "Shugert, Matthew J" <mshugert@blm.gov>, "McDonald, Monique S" <m1mcdona@blm.gov>, "Beebe, Grant S" <gbeebe@blm.gov>, "DeFries, Tamala J" <tdefries@blm.gov>, "Conry, Meagan M" <mconry@blm.gov>, "Broadwater, Charles E" <cbroadwater@blm.gov>, "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Gray, Morgan" <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>, "Witt, Ryan C" <rwitt@blm.gov>, "Tollefson, Christopher J" <ctollefson@blm.gov>, BLM_WO_610 <BLM_WO_610@blm.gov>, BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>, "Moran, Jill C" <jcmoran@blm.gov>, "Quinn, Matthew J" <Matthew_J_Quinn@ios.doi.gov>, "Feldgus, Steven H" <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>, "Oliver, Kevin E" <koliver@blm.gov>, "Bowmer, James A" <JBowmer@blm.gov>, "Hires, Brian K" <bhires@blm.gov>, BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs <BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs@blm.gov>, "MacDougall, Sean A" <SMacDoug@blm.gov>, "McIntosh, Stacie J" <s05mcint@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill A" <jralston@blm.gov>, "Salmon, Marni R" <mrsalmon@blm.gov>, "Huffman, Jessica R" <jrhuffman@blm.gov>, "Rezaeerood, Paniz" <paniz_rezaeerood@ios.doi.gov>, "Hasson, Tomer Y" <thasson@blm.gov>, "Davidson, Zoe M" <z davidson@blm.gov>, "Pryor, Ernest L" <epryor@blm.gov>, "McGinnis, Shelley R" <smcginnis@blm.gov>, "Morrison, Lisa R" <lmorriso@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Congressional & Legislative Affairs Weekly Report – December 28, 2023

Date: Thu, 28 Dec 2023 22:59:11 +0000

Attachments: NEW_Cong.Report._Updates.docx

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Weekly Report – December 28, 2023
(Updates in Red)

HEARINGS/MARKUPS

- Jan. TBD: The House Natural Resources Committee plans to markup H.R. 6492, Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act (Omnibus Recreation Legislation).
- Jan. TBD: The House Natural Resources Committee tentatively plans to conduct a legislative hearing on the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA). Witness: TBD
- Feb. 1 (T): The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee tentatively plans to hold an oversight hearing on BLM programs and policies.

NEW ITEMS

- Dec. 22: Rep Matsui (D-CA-07) staff requested additional information regarding agreements with utility companies to service utility poles and lines on public lands in California.
- Dec. 26: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested information regarding the proposed Bahsahwahbee National Monument and the Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property.

UPCOMING MEETINGS / VISITS / BRIEFINGS

CORRESPONDENCE

EST / DCN	Date	From	Subject	Status
BLM0038665	06/27/2023	Crane	Resolution Copper EIS	OCL

#1127736.1

BLM0039833	08/25/2023	Rosen	Ruby Mountains mineral withdrawal	OCL
BLM0040029	09/01/2023	Cortez Masto	Support for National Monument at Swamp Cedars	OCL
BLM0040385	09/26/2023	Kelly	Support for BLM broadband project permitting in Navajo County, AZ	OCL
BLM0040737	10/11/2023	Padilla	Expand boundary of Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument	BLM-D
BLM0040818	10/17/2023	Risch	Interpretation and implementation of Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act in ID	SOL
BLM0040881	10/20/2023	Murkowski	Extending comment deadline for NPR-A rule	BLM-D
BLM0041098	11/02/2023	Murkowski	Comment deadline extension for Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Program SEIS	BLM-D
BLM0041146	11/07/2023	Westerman	Heavener Coking Coal Project	ESSO
BLM0041223	11/13/2023	Rosendale	Rural broadband development in western Montana	MTSO
BLM0041225	11/13/2023	Cortez Masto	PENDING BLM0039833: Oil and gas withdrawal – Ruby Mountains, NV	HQ-600
BLM0041334	11/20/2023	Sullivan	Constituent concern – Veterans Native allotments	AKSO
BLM0041335	11/20/2023	Titus	Roberts Mountain Complex wild horse gather incident	HQ-100
BLM0041371	11/20/2023	Bentz	Constituent Concern - BLM HR Issue - Allen Kai-Uwe	OCL
BLM0041382	11/20/2023	Westerman	Twin Metals Cancellation and The Wilderness Society Meetings	ESSO
BLM0041461	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041462	11/29/2023	Fulcher	Constituent concern – payment for travel vouchers	IDSO
BLM0041471	11/29/2023	Bennet	Proposed Public Lands Rule improvements	HQ-200
BLM0041524	12/04/2023	Curtis	Co-location of renewable and fossil energy production	HQ-310
BLM0041525	12/04/2023	Lankford	DoD energy resilience at U.S. Military installations	SOL
BLM0041610	12/08/2023	Murkowski	PENDING BLM0040881: Proposed BLM Rule - NPRA	HQ-600
BLM0041791	12/22/2023	Neguse	Concerns re: disposal process for the Federal Helium Reserve	NMSO
BLM0041794	12/22/2023	Murkowski	Amber Access Project SEIS	AKSO

ONGOING ITEMS PENDING WITH BLM

- Jan. 4/June 6/Sept. 20: HNR majority staff requested follow-up information regarding BLM's draft Greenhouse Gas Environmental Assessment and the related court cases.
- March 14/June 6/Sept. 21: HNR majority staff requested the number of Expressions of Interest received over the last 12 months.
- Sept. 7: Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) staff requested follow up information regarding an oil and gas lease cancellation in Utah and questions regarding BLM permitting staffing needs.
- Sept. 21/Dec. 15: SENR majority staff requested an update on the status of the WildEarth Guardians litigation GHG EA and if any decisions have been issued based on the EA.
- Nov. 1: HNR majority staff requested information regarding the Report to Congress on oil and gas project office funds.
- Nov. 28: Sen. Collins (R-ME) staff requested information on the status of the Native Plant Species Pilot Program included in the FY23 Omnibus Appropriations Act.
- Nov. 29: Rep. Schrier (D-WA-08) staff requested information related to the National Prescribed Fire Act.
- Nov. 30: Sen. Cortez-Masto (D-NV) staff requested responses to recommendations from the Findings & Recommendations of the Not Invisible Act Commission, which is a cross jurisdictional commission formed to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous people.
- Dec. 12: Rep. Thompson (D-CA-04) staff requested an update on agreements with utility companies to service utility poles and lines on public lands in California.
- Dec. 13: HNR majority staff requested updated information on the amount of trash collected by the BLM at the southern border.
- Dec. 13: HNR EMR majority staff information regarding co-location of energy sources on public lands.
- Dec. 13: Sen. Rosen (D-NV) staff requested information on gaming prohibitions on lands taken into trust for the benefit of a Tribe.
- Dec. 14: Sen. Warner (D-VA) staff requested information regarding the Federal Helium System and the upcoming sale process.
- Dec. 14: Rep. Titus (D-NV-01) staff requested information regarding the effect of the West-Wide Energy Corridor on the Avi Kwa Ame National Monument.
- Dec. 14: Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff requested a joint briefing with Sen. Barrasso (R-WY) staff in January on outcome based grazing and grazing flexibility.
- Dec. 15: Rep. Curtis (R-UT-03) and Rep. Levin (D-CA-49) staff requested information on the Automated Fluid Minerals Support System Reports (AFMSS) Database.
- Dec. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-07) staff requested an update on agreements with utility companies to service utility poles and lines on public lands in California (**completed Dec. 22**).
- Dec. 19: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested information on the Cross-Tie Transmission Line Project and its potential impacts on the proposed Bahsahwahbee National Monument (**completed Dec. 26**).
- Dec. 19: HNR EMR majority staff requested a breakdown of oil and gas lease sale acreage offered that was nominated through an EOI for all lease sales over the past 2 years.
- Dec. 20: Sen. Daines (R-MT) staff requested additional information regarding the Arnold Coulee Hydropower Project Transmission ROW.
- Dec. 20: Rep. Levin (D-CA-49) staff requested additional information concerning the BLM's announcement of a \$4.9 million investment in wildlife data to inform clean energy growth.

Ongoing CBO/CRS Requests

- Dec. 18: CBO requested information on H.R. 6011, the Right of Way Application Transparency and Accountability "ROWATA" Act (Rep. Valadao, R-CA-22).
- Dec. 19: CBO requested information on S. 1657, the La Paz County Solar Energy and Job Creation Act (Sen. Sinema, D-AZ).
- Dec. 20: CBO requested information on H.R. 3396, Fire Department Repayment Act (Rep. Harder, D-CA-9) (DOI OWF tentatively coordinating response).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nov. 3/June 6: HNR majority staff requested technical assistance on three specific sections in H.R. 9087, the TAP American Energy Act (Rep. Westerman, R-AR-04).
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Feb. 2/April 17/May 24: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to transfer a tract of Federal land to the Wrangel Cooperative Association.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

- March 15: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on legislative language regarding transfer of Tenakee Springs.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 7: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested technical assistance on S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 9: Rep. Vasquez (D-NM-02) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill titled “Ranching Without Red Tape.”
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 17: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act. BIA is leading the response, with OCL coordinating other agency input.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 31: Rep. McCollum (D-MN-4) requested technical assistance on H.R. 5021, Securing American Critical Minerals Act.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Aug. 11: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Bureau of Land Management Flexible Partnerships Act of 2023.
 - Status: Pending with **OCL**.
- Sept. 5: OCL requested assistance on a Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff request for technical assistance on the previously introduced S. 4369, the North American Grasslands Conservation Act (117th Congress).
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Oct. 13: Rep. Cartwright (D-PA-8) staff requested DOI/BLM technical assistance on H.R. 2872, Safeguarding America’s Future and Environment Act, from the 117th Congress.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Dec. 5: Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Quigley (D-IL-05) staff requested technical assistance on revised text of the draft bill, “National Interagency Seed and Restoration Center Establishment Act.”
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Dec. 13: Sen. Tester (D-MT) requested assistance on draft legislative text intended to address the requirements for rural electric cooperatives who have infrastructure on public lands.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

- March 29: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: BLM Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Delivered to Hill in July 2023.
- May 16: HNR EMR/FL hearing on the BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: Director Stone-Manning.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0038668)
- June 15: HNR hearing on H.R. 3397, “*to require the BLM Director to withdraw a rule of the BLM relating to conservation and landscape health.*” Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with ASLM. (BLM0040177)
- June 22: HNR Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Sept. 19: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing “*Examining the Biden Administration’s Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*” Witness: Deputy Director of Operations Nedd.
 - Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0040784)
- Sept. 28: SENR hearing “*Examine opportunities to counter the People’s Republic of China’s control of critical mineral supply chains through increased mining and processing in the United States as well as international engagement and trade.*” Witness: Deputy Secretary Beaudreau.
 - Status: Pending with OCL.
- Oct. 25: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - Status: Pending with BLM. (**BLM0041790**)
- Nov. 29: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources legislative hearing on H.R. 6285, Alaska’s Right to Produce Act. Witness: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Steve

Feldgus.

- Status: Pending with BLM.
- Dec. 5: House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands oversight hearing titled “*Examining Opportunities to Promote and Enhance Tribal Forest Management.*” Witness: BIA Deputy Regional Director Shaw.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Dec. 12: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources legislative hearing on various oil and gas/geothermal bills. BLM Statement for the Record.
 - Status: Pending with BLM. (BLM0041792)
- Dec. 12: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on mining law reform bills. Witness: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Steve Feldgus.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.

REPORTS TO CONGRESS (pending review in DTS)

- Efficiencies with O&C Grant Lands Program for Fiscal Year 2017
 - Status: Pending with HQ-220 (BLM0011656).
- Report to Congress on Online Oil and Gas Leasing - Comprehensive Comparison of Oral vs Online Lease Sales
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0012000).
- Oil and Gas Resource Potential of the Musselshell Breaks and Bridge Coulee Wilderness Study Areas
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0019271).
- Trespassing on Alaska Native Lands
 - Status: Pending with HQ-620 (BLM0021543).
- Annual Helium Report to Congress FY 2020-2022
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NM (BLM0032063).
- Suitability for Geothermal of Categorical Exclusions Under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000067).
- Withdrawal Extension Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with OCL (BLMC000090).
- SNPLMA FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with HQ-100 (BLMC000093).

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Jamie Pool

Legislative Affairs Specialist (Detail)

Bureau of Land Management – Headquarters

U.S. Department of the Interior

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From: "Communications, BLM_AK" <BLM_AK_Communications@blm.gov>

Subject: 9/8/23 Weekly News Digest

Date: Fri, 08 Sep 2023 15:40:36 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg; image002.jpg

Weekly News Clips – This digest is provided for leadership’s situational awareness. A story’s appearance in this digest does not imply accuracy of information or endorsement of any kind.

NOTES: To access some stories, you may need a subscription. The Alaska State Office does maintain some [subscriptions](#) (for official use only), but not all.

As a reminder, we are excluding E&E articles (to condense BLM-AK News Clips), as they can be accessed by going to <https://www.eenews.net/get-access/> and using your BLM email address, and password “BLM.”

Coastal Plain

[Biden administration cancels state-owned oil leases in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge](#)

Anchorage Daily News 9/6/23

The Interior Department announced Wednesday it will cancel the last remaining oil leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and move to restrict drilling on 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

[Biden administration cancels remaining oil and gas leases in Alaska's Arctic Refuge](#) – Associated Press

[US to cancel Alaska oil, gas leases issued under Trump](#) – Reuters

[Biden Administration to Bar Drilling on Millions of Acres in Alaska](#) – The New York Times

[Biden to Cancel Arctic Oil Drilling Rights Sold by Trump](#) – Bloomberg

[Biden administration cancels years-long attempt to drill in Alaska National Wildlife Refuge](#) – CNN

[The Biden Administration is ending drilling leases in ANWR, at least for now](#) – NPR

[Biden cancels last oil and gas leases in Alaska's Arctic Refuge, overturns sales held by Trump](#) – PBS

[Biden administration cancels oil and gas leases in Arctic wildlife refuge](#) – Al Jazeera

[Biden administration cancels leases in Alaska wildlife refuge](#) – Roll Call

[Biden administration cancels controversial oil leases in Alaska wildlife refuge](#) – The Hill

[Indigenous Leaders, Environmental Organizations Applaud Biden Administration Announcement to Cancel Trump Issued Oil and Gas Leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge](#) – Defenders of Wildlife

[Now End All the Drilling, Campaigners Say as Biden Rescinds Arctic Refuge Leases](#) – Common Dreams

[BLM cancels AIDEA's ANWR leases; SEIS found lease sale was illegal](#) – Petroleum News

[Biden Administration Disregards Congress, Attempts to Cancel ANWR Leases](#)

Office of the Governor 9/6/23

“Federal agencies don’t get to rewrite laws, and that is exactly what the Department of the Interior is trying to do here,” said Governor Mike Dunleavy. “We will fight for Alaska’s right to develop its own resources and will be turning to the courts to correct the Biden Administration’s wrong.”

[Alaska officials outraged after feds cancel Trump-era ANWR oil leases: 'Pulling the rug out'](#)

Fox News 9/6/23

Alaska state officials criticized the Biden administration's latest move to curb oil and gas drilling in the Arctic, following the cancellation of seven Trump-era leases in the Section 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

[ANWR lease cancellations outrage Alaska senators](#) – Energy News Network

[Biden breaks law, burns Alaska by booting oil development from ANWR](#) – Must Read Alaska

Willow

[Biden Approved a Big Oil Project. Now, He's Cracking Down on Drilling.](#)

The New York Times 9/7/23

In the months since the president allowed the Willow project in **Alaska**, his administration has curtailed fossil fuel activities on millions of ...

#1127775.1

[ConocoPhillips says court case is likely do-or-die for Willow Arctic oil project](#)

KINY 9/3/23

Anchorage, **Alaska (Alaska Beacon)** - In documents filed Tuesday in Anchorage, international oil company ConocoPhillips said an ongoing federal ...

Land Transfer

[Bureau of Land Management headed to the Y-K Delta to visit Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans](#)

KYUK 9/6/23

[Radio and web story] In 2022, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced that it had completed the final step to begin processing applications from eligible Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans for Native allotments to be selected from approximately 27 million acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Contaminated Lands

[Travels around Alaska highlight myriad challenges facing Indigenous communities, EPA leader says](#)

Anchorage Daily News 9/4/23

Among the top subjects of Regan's trip is legacy contamination of Native-owned land. Over the years since the 1971 passage of [ANCSA], several of the Native corporations ... have been conveyed lands tainted by contaminants, typically leftover from military, mining or industrial operations from several decades in the past.

National

[Burning Man revelers begin exodus after flooding left tens of thousands stranded in Nevada desert](#)

Associated Press 9/5/23

About two hours after the mass departure began, organizers estimated a wait time of about five hours.

Of Interest: In & Around Alaska

[Alaska watches, nervously, as Ukraine war pushes more Russian oil through Bering Strait](#)

Anchorage Daily News 9/4/23

So far this summer, at least five tankers have set out carrying Russian crude across the Northern Sea Route to China, according to Bloomberg

[100 million years ago, dinosaurs left clues about how they lived in Interior Alaska. This summer, a research team went looking for them](#)

KYUK 9/4/23

Over the course of three weeks, scientists recorded more than 90 sites where dinosaurs left their footprints along the middle section of the Yukon River.

[A deep dive into the Yukon River's ancient history could result in a new name for a rock formation](#)

KYUK 9/4/23

This package of rocks is unique enough to this stretch of the Yukon River that the team believes they may be able to name it. And that would be a first for McCarthy, who has traveled Alaska looking at the state's rocks for four decades.

[Hilcorp files to expand Ninilchik & form Pearl participating area](#)

Petroleum News 9/8/23

The expansion would include all or portions of one state lease, ADL 392481, and some private mineral interests, some 1,118.35 acres, bringing the Ninilchik unit to 27,027 acres.

Mining

[Graphite One Welcomes Strategic Investment from Bering Straits Native Corporation](#)

#1127775.2

Junior Mining Network 9/5/23

"BSNC is a dynamic development force in **Alaska**, with an unwavering commitment to community and heritage." Huston continued. "All of us at G1 look ...

Media

[News-Miner eliminates Saturday edition, combines with Sunday](#)

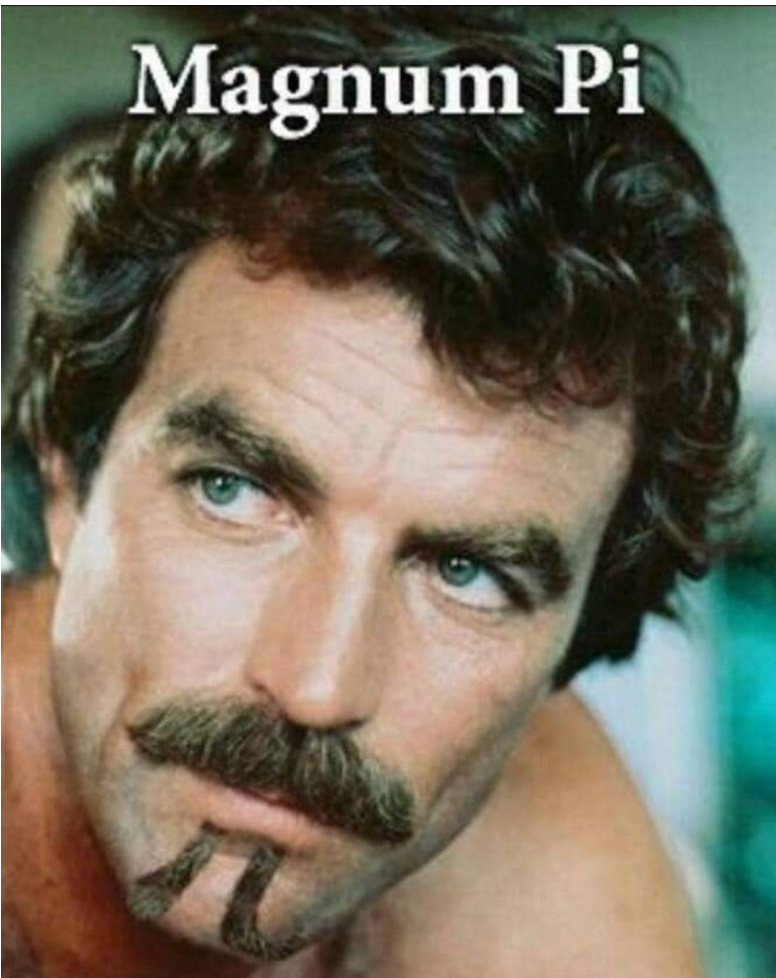
Must Read Alaska 9/3/23

The Fairbanks newspaper had \$4,511,534 in revenues in 2020, down from \$5,394,499 in 2019.

Smile



Magnum Pi



[He must've shaved it with the aforementioned missing X-Acto knife 3.14 times.]

From: "St George, Brian C" <bstgeorg@blm.gov>

To: BLM_HQ_200_Chiefs_DDCs_and_BCs <BLM_HQ_200_Chiefs_DDCs_and_BCs@blm.gov>, "Bahr, Quincy F" <qfbahr@blm.gov>, "Deibert, Patricia A" <pdeibert@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Gilbert, Megan A" <magilbert@blm.gov>

Subject: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

Date: Tue, 19 Sep 2023 22:01:14 +0000

Hi folks. There's a useful update below. Please share with your teams and colleagues as appropriate. Thanks.

From: Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2023 3:09 PM

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: Lindow, Emily R <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>; Gruber, Benjamin E <BEGruber@blm.gov>; Fields, Yvette M <yfields@blm.gov>; Bagley, Lonny R <lbagley@blm.gov>; Cowan, Peter I <picowan@blm.gov>; Warren, Matthew (Matt) <mwarren@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; St George, Brian C <bstgeorg@blm.gov>; Waddell, Holle <hwaddell@blm.gov>; Hires, Brian K <bhires@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Conklin, Caralee S <csconklin@blm.gov>; BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>; McGinnis, Shelley R <smcginnis@blm.gov>; Broadwater, Charles E <cbroadwater@blm.gov>; Northington, John W <jnorthington@blm.gov>; Gins, Meagan A <mgins@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Eggers, Barbara L <beggars@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <sssweet@blm.gov>

Subject: Readout: HNR EM Hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program" - 9/19/23

FYI – On Tuesday, September 19, the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy & Mineral Resources held an oversight hearing titled: "*Examining the Biden Administration's Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*"

Members of Congress in attendance included: Subcommittee Chairman Stauber (R-MN-08), Subcommittee Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14), Full Committee Chairman Westerman (R-AR-04), and Representatives from the Subcommittee, including Reps. Lamborn (R-CO-05), Fulcher (R-ID-01), Curtis (R-UT-03), Tiffany (R-WI-07), Rosendale (R-MT-02), Boebert (R-CO-03), Hunt (R-TX-38), Huffman (D-CA-02), Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37), and Lee (NV-03). Representatives Hageman (R-WY-At large) and Porter (D-CA-47), Members of the full Committee, were also allowed to participate.

The hearing included two witness panels. The first panel had one witness: Michael Nedd, Deputy Director, Operations, appearing for the BLM. The second panel consisted of Kathleen Sgamma, President, Western Energy Alliance; Bill Novotny, President, Wyoming County Commissioners Association; Dr. Barbara Vasquez, Citizen Scientist and Advocate, Western Organization of Resource Councils [Minority Witness]; and Nagruk Harcharek, President, Voice of the Arctic Inupiat (VOICE).

The hearing lasted just over two and a half hours. Chairman Stauber opened the hearing by saying that the Biden-Harris Administration has set an "anti-development, anywhere but America agenda." He also accused the Administration and the BLM for being responsible for high gas prices, as compared to prices in January 2021. Specifically, he accused the BLM of failing to hold lease sales and to approve permits to drill. Chairman Stauber also claimed that the Public Lands Rule, Oil and Gas Leasing Rule, and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) Rule are "regulatory actions to stifle domestic energy development on Federal lands."

In her opening statement, Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez thanked communities for organizing and pushing for changes to oil and gas policy, and added that the BLM's proposed Oil and Gas Rule is one of several positive steps taken by the Administration to reduce carbon emissions. She later asked what the BLM is doing to ramp down carbon emissions from public lands, given that oil and gas production on public lands is at an all-time high. Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez went further by asking how the Administration will factor in downstream emissions for upcoming lease sales, and how that will differ from how the BLM has historically considered downstream emissions.

Proposed Oil & Gas Rule

Speaking to the proposed rule, Rep. Lamborn pointed out that BLM's testimony states the agency will avoid leasing in areas with sensitive cultural, wildlife, and recreation resources. He shared his opinion that this description is "so open ended you can drive any agenda through it," and that any place in the country could have those resources present. Chairman Westerman asked why the BLM is proposing such a "radical change" to bond amounts, when in his opinion, the BLM is doing a good job preventing orphaned wells. He added that the increased bonds would be devastating to small businesses.

Rep. Curtis praised BLM UT staff for their diligent work before he began his questions. He asked how the BLM takes emissions into account when it analyzes public lands, specifically if the BLM compares potential emissions from within the United States to those of foreign countries in its analysis. Rep. Curtis reiterated that BLM needs to look at emissions worldwide when it makes its analysis, as he believes the United States has done a lot already to reduce its emissions.

Alaska

Regarding oil and gas production in Alaska, Chairman Stauber focused his questions largely on the recent decision to cancel leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). He asked Mr. Nedd specifically about coordination and consultation with local communities and Tribes, as well as whether the BLM has cancelled leases without litigation forcing that decision. Rep. Tiffany accused the Administration of not consulting with Alaska Natives prior to the lease cancellation decision.

Ranking Member Ocasio-Cortez asked when the recently cancelled Arctic leases would have come online if they were not cancelled. Pointing out that it would take many years for these leases and others in Alaska to produce, she argued that the Majority is incorrect to say the Administration's actions will impact gas prices today. She added that we cannot drill our way to lower gas prices. Rep. Huffman asked Mr. Nedd to speak to some of the risks to drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and how the proposed NPR-A rule will protect these special areas that are uniquely vulnerable to climate change.

Oil & Gas Lease Sales

Rep. Tiffany commented on how there should be more leasing on all Federal lands out west and equated climate change to a "green fantasy" to drive policy decisions. He also requested a definition for "fair return" that the BLM uses. Rep. Lee discussed oil and gas leasing in Nevada and the most recent sale in the state, and how it resulted in zero bids and wasted BLM staff and other resources to review and analyze the parcels. She added that her legislation, H.R. 3377, the End Speculative Leasing Act, aims to resolve this issue by focusing BLM resources on areas with high oil and gas potential only.

Mining

Rep. Tiffany asked if the BLM is prepared to issue more mining permits for the minerals needed for a clean energy economy, adding a comment about the decision to cancel the mining development in the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota. He expressed his opinion that the Administration claims there are appropriate areas for mining, but then says that every area is not an appropriate place, citing the Twin Metals decision in Minnesota and Resolution Copper in Arizona.

Rep. Hageman aggressively questioned why the BLM would want to incentive frivolous lawsuits against energy and mineral development, export jobs, prohibit United States citizens from accessing their lands via the pending

Rock Springs Resource Management Plan, and support companies that buy Cobalt from countries utilizing child labor.

Sage Grouse & Resource Management Plan Amendments

Rep. Lamborn expressed his concern over two pending supplemental Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for two Resource Management Plans (RMP) that would withdraw 1.6 million acres in Colorado from development to protect sage grouse (possibly referring to the proposed Gunnison Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment). He noted that the sage grouse has experienced a 24 percent increase in population since 2019. Rep. Lamborn went on to ask why the BLM feels it's appropriate to hurt Americans and Colorado, which he stated is the fourth largest oil and gas producer in the nation. He further asked what changes have taken place since the original RMPs were implemented, and what analysis the BLM did on the effects these changes would have on people. Rep. Lamborn concluded by asking for a copy of the analysis on the impacts to communities.

During the second panel, Rep. Boebert also shared her disapproval of the proposed RMP amendments, and her belief that the Administration wants to shut down oil and gas development in western Colorado.

Other Regulatory Updates

Full Committee Chairman Westerman focused questions on the BLM's implementation of the Fiscal Responsibilities Act, with specific emphasis on the required one-year timeframe for completing Environmental Assessments (EA) and the two-year timeline for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). He requested specific examples of where the BLM was working to accelerate processing of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses.

Rep. Hunt asked about the BLM's updated venting and flaring rule, and stated that, in his opinion, the rule is duplicative of an existing Environmental Protection Agency rule which companies already have to follow. He then asked about communitization agreements, and how long it should take for them to be processed.

Second Panel Discussion Overview

Discussions during the second panel largely encompassed the same themes of the first panel, with a deeper look into the topics introduced earlier. Chairman Stauber invited witness Harcharek to write a letter to the Subcommittee to counter the statement that the BLM did conduct Tribal consultation in making its ANWR lease cancellation decision.

There was significant discussion of orphaned wells and the increased bond requirements of the proposed Oil and Gas Rule. Witness Sgamma stated that the BLM should be applauded for its work on orphaned wells. She added that the low number of known orphaned wells on public lands show that the BLM and industry are addressing the issue, and thus the higher bonding rates are not needed. Rep. Porter also questioned Ms. Sgamma about the fiscal terms in the IRA. Chairman Stauber asked witness Sgamma if the BLM's bonding increases would hurt small businesses, and cause more wells to be orphaned. Rep. Fulcher asked witness Sgamma whether the increased royalty rates proposed in the Oil and Gas rule are justified, along with the more robust environmental impact analysis that would be required, and whether the impact it would have on industry would be worth it. Rep. Rosendale also asked about the impact of increased bonding rates on small businesses verses larger corporations.

Rep. Rosendale focused his questions on the BLM's actions regarding critical mineral production, stating that it was detrimental to the nation to rely on foreign countries with worse environmental standards. He asked witness Sgamma about her organization's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests regarding the Department's alleged work with environmental activist groups, including Secretary Haaland's daughter.

Patrick Wilkinson

Division Chief

#1127784.3

Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior

Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: "Pendergast, Kevin J" <kpendergast@blm.gov>
To: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>
Cc: "Reed, Erika" <e05reed@blm.gov>
Subject: FW: Weather related cancellation/Bobbie Jo and Mic
Date: Mon, 13 Nov 2023 23:50:24 +0000

As unfortunately expected, FWS just bowed out.

Kevin J. Pendergast PE, CPG
Deputy State Director, Resources
BLM Alaska
907.271.4413 (O)
907.302.0847 (C)

From: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 2:37 PM
To: Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>
Subject: Fw: Weather related cancellation/Bobbie Jo and Mic

FYI

Serena Sweet
Supervisory Planning & Environmental Coordinator
BLM-Alaska, Resources Division
Desk: 907-271-4543
Cell: 907-223-3267

From: Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 2:31 PM
To: Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>; Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>
Cc: Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>; Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>
Subject: Weather related cancellation/Bobbie Jo and Mic

Hello All,

I am sorry to say that Mic Isham and I will not be able to make the flight tonight and corresponding charter tomorrow so we will not be in attendance. Our offices are shut down due to the intense snow load we received over the last 24 hours and as a result are not permitted to drive for work purposes (Mic and I both live an hour+ outside of Anchorage). I understand that arrangements were made for our technical advisor Tim (from BIA) to attend virtually on Teams. I am hoping that, if all technology works, that I will be able to attend this way too 😊 At this time, if all goes well with their flights, Stephanie, Serena, and Joe will be making it in person. Merben is planning on coming on Thursday. Please except my sincere apology but safety comes first. Thank you for understanding, Bobbie Jo and Mic

From: Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 10:52 PM
To: Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>
Cc: Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>; Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>; Kuhns,

#1127795.1

Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Arctic Village school contact needed

Do you have an agenda?

Thank you,
Crystal

On Tue, Oct 31, 2023 at 12:47 PM Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com> wrote:

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 31, 2023, at 11:45 AM, Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov> wrote:

Good morning, Tiffany,

Can you please confirm that there is wifi at the meeting hall? We will need to connect via MS Teams and it would be good to know that there's wifi available.

Thanks!
Merben

Merben R. Cebrian
Refuge Manager, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
101 12th Avenue, Rm 236 Fairbanks, AK 99701
+1 907 388 6751
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arctic>

From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 28, 2023 2:37 PM

To: Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>

Cc: Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>; Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Arctic Village school contact needed

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Excellent. Thank you

#1127795.2

Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

> On Oct 28, 2023, at 12:33 PM, Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com> wrote:

>
> Joe and merben can stay in the tribal court
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On Oct 28, 2023, at 11:07 AM, Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com> wrote:
>>
>> Hi Crystal, Chief Gilbert, Tiffany and Tonya
>>
>> BLM and USFW will need lodging at the school Nov 13-17th for 5 people. Can you please comment us with the school?

>>
>> BLM: Stephanie Kuhns, Serena Sweet, Joe Keeney
>> FWS: Bobbie Jo Skibo, Merben Cebrian
>>
>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

>>
>>
>>>> On Oct 26, 2023, at 3:00 PM, Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov> wrote:

>>>>
>>>> BLM: Stephanie Kuhns, Serena Sweet, Joe Keeney
>>>> FWS: Bobbie Jo Skibo, Merben Cebrian
>>>>
>>>> Rob, are you able to assist us with coordinating lodging at the school while we're there?
>>>>
>>>> Thank you,
>>>>
>>>> Stephanie

>>>>
>>>> -----Original Message-----
>>>> From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>
>>>> Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2023 11:33 AM
>>>> To: Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>
>>>> Cc: Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>
>>>> Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Time Sensitive_106 meeting scheduling

>>>>
>>>> Thank you very much Stephanie.
>>>>
>>>> Who will be attending on behalf on BLM and USFW.
>>>>
>>>> Much appreciated.
>>>>
>>>> Rob

>>>

>>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

>>>

>>>

>>>> On Oct 26, 2023, at 11:29 AM, Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov> wrote:

>>>>

>>>> Hello Rob,

>>>>

>>>> We can meet in Arctic Village these days. The current plan is to arrive on Monday 11/13 and depart Friday 11/17.

>>>>

>>>> Thank you,

>>>>

>>>> Stephanie

>>>>

>>>> -----Original Message-----

>>>> From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>

>>>> Sent: Monday, October 23, 2023 7:50 PM

>>>> To: Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>

>>>> Cc: Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>

>>>> Subject: [EXTERNAL] Time Sensitive_106 meeting scheduling

>>>>

>>>>

>>>>

>>>> This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

>>>>

>>>>

>>>>

>>>> Hi Serena, Stephanie, Merben and Bobbie Jo:

>>>>

>>>> I hope this finds everyone well.

>>>>

>>>> I'm writing to follow up on our mutual commitment to set dates for the next 106 meeting in Arctic Village.

>>>>

>>>> In Arctic Village we all committed to agreeing on dates for a 106 consultation.

>>>>

>>>> The Tribes would like to meet in Arctic Village November 14-17th. Bringing the BLM Archaeologist, Joe keeney will be great.

>>>>

>>>> Please do let us know ASAP if these dates will work?

>>>>

>>>> Thank you very much.

>>>>

>>>> Rob


>>>>

>>>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

>>>>

From: BLM Press <blm_press@blm.gov>
To: "mnedd@blm.gov" <mnedd@blm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska
Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 20:16:53 +0000

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 U.S. Department of the Interior: News Release

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

"With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem," said Secretary Haaland. "President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further

#1127817.1

that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge’s Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department’s determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would

establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

About the U.S. Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



This email was sent to mmedd@blm.gov

Bureau of Land Management, 1849 C St., Washington, D.C. 20240, United States
[Unsubscribe](#)

From: "Packer, Richard L" <rpacker@blm.gov>

To: "Press, BLM" <BLM_Press@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Daily News Clips - March 15, 2023

Date: Wed, 15 Mar 2023 16:05:29 +0000

Note: BLMers who register with their @blm.gov email address [here](#) can access E&E News articles for free.



March 15, 2023

BLM News

KTVZ-TV Published Mar 14, 2023 **474,033 reach**

Oregon beachgoers urged to respect nesting areas for threatened snowy plover

... , primarily the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). Habitat ...

MEAWW Published Mar 15, 2023 **2,091,531 reach**

Is Ammon Bundy's org investigating Chase Allan shooting? Internet finds troubling hints

... fees and in 2014 engaged in an armed showdown with the federal **Bureau of Land Management**. Bundy announced in June 2022 that he was running ...

Daily Herald Published Mar 14, 2023 **696,924 reach**

'This is the answer to climate change': How regenerative agriculture is restoring public land

... 'This is the answer to climate change': How regenerative agriculture is restoring **public land** ...

Montana Free Press Published Mar 14, 2023 **149,895 reach**

Interior Dept. to invest \$25 million in bison restoration

... tribes, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the **Bureau of Land Management** and the National Park Service to advance bison restoration. "The ...

Wyoming Public Radio Published Mar 14, 2023 **32,376 reach**

Utah and Wyoming stand out in an analysis of federal land protections

Utah and Wyoming stand out in an analysis of **federal land** protections ...

WyoFile Published Mar 15, 2023 **51,398 reach**

Amid drought, 'weird' winter boosts snowpack, water forecast

... well," the statement continued, "because many ranch, county, and [**Bureau of Land Management**] roads are drifting shut and, even when cleared, ...

The Insider Published Mar 14, 2023 **1,602 reach**

Opinion: You Don't Know What You Got, 'Til It's Gone [Calf Creek Recreation Site]

#1127818.1

... acronyms: DOI, **BLM**, GSENM, CCRS, EA, FONSI, DR, NRHP, SHPO, ISA, WSA, FOIA that cause one to think "WTF" & "BS"! (You guess.) The **BLM**/GSENM ...

KUTV-TV Published Mar 14, 2023 **1,127,190 reach**

2 hikers still overdue after Kane County floods; crews find 10 more stranded during search

... , and the **Bureau of Land Management** has information at its offices about conditions for the hikes. Alldredge said the **BLM** also proves ...

The Durango Herald Published Mar 14, 2023 **220,938 reach**

Roost the Ridges still on, Kinsey's Spring Classic postponed

... parked around various points of the trail to watch riders. The **BLM** requires that parking remain unobtrusive to other drivers and remain in ...

KLIX-AM Published Mar 14, 2023 **123,500 reach**

BLM Roads South of Twin Falls to Remain Closed

... managers say many are still covered in snow. The **Bureau of Land Management** (**BLM**) announced Tuesday the seasonal road closures will remain in ...

Molecular Ecology - Wiley Online Library Published Mar 14, 2023 **228,106 reach**

A systematic map of knowledge exchange across the science-policy interface for forest science: How can we improve consistency and effectiveness?

... 10 NA United States National Park Service 10 NA United States **Bureau of Land Management** 10 NA United States US Fish and Wildlife ...

The Outdoor Wire Published Mar 15, 2023 **14,603 reach**

More on Mountain States Stream Access

... next to waters may wish to consult public land maps printed by the **Bureau of Land Management**. Bottom line is the easy way to fish the Rocky ...

YubaNet Published Mar 14, 2023 **52,527 reach**

[Press release] Nevada County Receives Over \$1.5 Million in Grant Funding for Forest Resilience Projects

... fuels on approximately 304 acres of land owned by the U.S. **Bureau of Land Management** (**BLM**) on the San Juan Ridge. The project will improve ...

3/14-15/2023 Willow Project Coverage

CNN Published Mar 15, 2023 **134,312,034 reach**

Environmental groups file two lawsuits hoping to stop the Willow Project, citing climate impacts

... 's Department of Interior and its top officials, the **Bureau of Land Management**, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies.

BNN Bloomberg Published Mar 14, 2023 **1,385,979 reach**

ConocoPhillips Oil Project Challenged by Environmentalists

#1127818.2

... process overseen by the **Bureau of Land Management**," said ConocoPhillips spokesman Dennis Nuss. "We believe the **BLM** and cooperating agencies ...

Fox Business Network Published Mar 15, 2023 15,038,971 reach

Willow Project to deliver jobs, billions in government revenue

... before it was transferred to the Department of the Interior's **Bureau of Land Management** and opened for potential oil and gas leasing in 1976 ...

Reuters Published Mar 14, 2023 42,329,808 reach

[Requires registration] Green groups sue Biden admin over approval of Alaska Willow oil project

The **Interior Department** on Monday approved three drill pads for Willow after saying last month it was concerned about the greenhouse gas emissions. ConocoPhillips had wanted up to five drill sites and infrastructure including dozens of miles of roads and pipelines and seven bridges.

Globe Echo Published Mar 14, 2023 47,997 reach

Biden just broke a big climate promise

... project in northern Alaska in a matter of days. According to the **Bureau of Land Management's** estimate , the project could produce up to 614 ...

The Epoch Times Published Mar 14, 2023 9,622,997 reach

Sen. Manchin Defends Biden Approval For Alaska Oil Drilling Project Amid Criticism From Democrats

... -year lifespan. In August of 2020, the U.S. **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** under President Donald Trump approved the Willow Project. A year ...

Axios Published Mar 14, 2023 8,852,905 reach

Alaska oil: Environmental groups sue Biden administration over Willow project

... ," the lawsuit states. The groups allege that the **Bureau of Land Management** violated the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to ...

The Weather Network Published Mar 14, 2023 9,120,458 reach

Legal challenges could delay Alaska's Willow oil project

... "We'll be looking closely at how (Interior's) **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** is considering alternatives and what its final approvals are." ...

Washington Examiner Published Mar 14, 2023 5,632,413 reach

Daily on Energy: The battle over Willow drilling has only just begun

... will eventually have to be extended pursuant to stricter rules the **Bureau of Land Management** put in place in November, as well as other ...

Washington Examiner Published Mar 15, 2023 5,632,413 reach

Biden's Alaska oil project approval is a gift to the environment

... , which received approval from the Department of the Interior's **Bureau of Land Management**, will produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil per day ...

WION Published Mar 14, 2023 3,703,411 reach

#StopWillowCampaign: Biden Administration approves oil drilling project in Alaska. Here's all you need to know

... as a part of the project. However, the US **Bureau of Land Management** approved three drill sites, which ConocoPhillips Alaska said was a ...

Anchorage Daily News Published Mar 14, 2023 786,653 reach

Environmental groups sue to stop ConocoPhillips' newly approved Willow oil project in Alaska

... by the **Bureau of Land Management**," Rebecca Boys, a spokeswoman for ConocoPhillips Alaska, said in a statement. "We believe the **BLM** and ...

Western Standard Published Mar 14, 2023 753,345 reach

BIDEN'S ABOUT FACE: US prez approves controversial Alaska oil project

... bpd — on his first day in office. In its decision the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** said the decision "strikes a balance" by upholding ...

Alaska's News Source Published Mar 15, 2023 385,332 reach

New round of lawsuits against the Willow Project begins

... filed a lawsuit on behalf of six advocacy groups against the Bureau and Land Management (**BLM**), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.

Courthouse News Service Published Mar 14, 2023 369,450 reach

Environmentalists sue to block approval of Willow oil project in Alaska

... groups said in a complaint filed Tuesday in federal court. The **Bureau of Land Management**, which approved the project, failed to take a " ...

KTOO-FM Published Mar 14, 2023 155,023 reach

Questions about Biden's approval of Arctic drilling of Willow? We've got answers

... about 219 wells. That's the same number as the **Bureau of Land Management** recommended in January. Conoco had wanted five drilling sites and ...

High Country News Published Mar 14, 2023 189,014 reach

The Biden administration just approved a huge oil project in Alaska

Nuiqsut officials had asked that the decision be delayed until the **Bureau of Land Management** first engaged with them in a meaningful way to ...

Native News Online Published Mar 14, 2023 144,676 reach

Biden Administration Approves Controversial Alaska Oil-Drilling Project

... a "carbon bomb" by opponents. The decision by the **Bureau of Land Management** came just one day after the Biden administration said it would ...

Latinamericanpost Published Mar 15, 2023 142,059 reach

Willow Project: US Government Approved a Mega-Project for the Extraction of Oil and Gas in Alaska

. There is an environmental impact statement (DIA) made by the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**, which, in October 2020, issued an act of ...

The Independent Published Mar 14, 2023 37,792,365 reach

[Requires registration] Biden's climate legacy in jeopardy with Willow oil project approval, furious environmentalists warn

... project after it was approved with five drill pads. The **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** undertook a review after an Alaskan federal court ...

New Scientist Published Mar 14, 2023 3,947,390 reach

[Requires registration] US approves controversial Willow oil drilling project in Alaska

February, at the end of a lengthy environmental review, the US **Bureau of Land Management** identified three drill sites, rather than the five ...

Energy & Minerals

BNN Bloomberg Published Mar 15, 2023 1,385,979 reach

The 17-Year Saga to Build the SunZia Power Line Is a Cautionary Tale

... approval can be exceptionally difficult — and focused on the **Bureau of Land Management**, which was viewed as more amenable to development on ...

DNYUZ Published Mar 15, 2023 1,121,658 reach

Nevada lithium mine breaks ground despite Indigenous opposition

In court filings, a lawyer for Lithium Americas said the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** had required the company to take action to preserve ...

nsenergybusiness Published Mar 15, 2023 218,864 reach

Aquatech wins lithium refining process contract at Thacker Pass project

... at the Thacker Pass project following the receipt of notice to proceed with the project from the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**.

The Daily Caller Published Mar 14, 2023 1,998,191 reach

GOP Legislation Would Bar 'Foreign Bad Actors' From Mining In US

... with known human rights violations from leasing and operating mines on **federal land**, part of a broader effort to boost domestic energy and ...

Missoulia Published Mar 14, 2023 235,850 reach

BLM schedules oil and gas lease sale under new rules

. There is a 228-acre Montana parcel west of Forsyth. The **Bureau of Land Management** will hold its first oil and gas lease sale under rules ...

Alaska Public Media Published Mar 14, 2023 323,203 reach

ANWR boundary dispute will continue as Alaska challenges ownership of oil-rich land

... what maps label as the Canning River proper. In 2016, the **Bureau of Land Management** rejected the state's request to take ownership of the ...

KTVF Published Mar 14, 2023 28,794 reach

U.S. District Court instructs review of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge border

Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) was incorrectly surveyed by the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**. Specifically, the state alleges the boundary for ...

The Economist Published Mar 14, 2023 6,293,996 reach

[Requires subscription] In America climate hawks and Big Oil alike cheer geothermal energy

... behind a pyromaniacal festival in Nevada, is suing the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** over its approval of geothermal exploration in a ...

Twin Falls Times-News Published Mar 15, 2023 98,594 reach

[Requires subscription] GUEST COMMENTARY: Clean energy is important for future of Magic Valley

Lava Ridge Wind Project "deferring to the expertise of the **Bureau of Land Management** to select the alternative best suited for the proposed ...

Investing News Network Published Mar 15, 2023 292,930 reach

[Press release] Atlas Lithium's Lithium Ore Concentrates to Battery Supply-Chain Grade

Nevada ruled in Lithium Americas' favor following an appeal of the **Bureau of Land Management's** approval of the company's plans for Thacker ...

Wild Horse & Burro

VOCAL Published Mar 14, 2023 1,484,530 reach

The Majestic Beauty of Wild Horses

... managed by the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**. The **BLM** estimates that there are approximately 95,000 wild horses and burros living on **BLM**- ...

POLITICO/E&E News

POLITICO Published Mar 14, 2023 14,293,010 reach

Greens sue Biden over Willow oil project approval

... approval violated four environmental laws despite the fact that the **Bureau of Land Management** greenlit a smaller version of the project than ...

POLITICO Published Mar 14, 2023 14,293,010 reach

Biden's green allies promise lawsuit over Alaska oil project

... action against the approval process by the Interior Department's **Bureau of Land Management**. Trustees for Alaska, which successfully sued to ...

POLITICO Published Mar 15, 2023 14,293,010 reach

How Murkowski helped move Biden on Willow

#1127818.6

... for deputy **Interior** secretary, Liz Klein, was swapped out for **Tommy Beaudreau**, who held a variety of posts in the Obama **Interior Department**.

E&E News Published Mar 14, 2023 258,848 reach

EPA targets 'forever chemicals' in historic water rule

PFHxS. **EPA** did not comment on whether new advisories might be issued for those chemicals. Officials said that if the rule is finalized, **EPA** ...

E&E News Published Mar 14, 2023 258,848 reach

Haaland reverses Trump-era Izembek road decision

. The **Interior Department** said it was doing so in large part because the 2019 land exchange orchestrated by former **Interior** Secretary David ...

E&E News Published Mar 15, 2023 258,848 reach

EPA rule slashes industrial smog-forming emissions

... **EPA** is significantly bolstering regulation of smog-forming emissions from power plants and more than a half-dozen other industries in the ...

E&E News Published Mar 15, 2023 258,848 reach

Utilities' push to extend monopolies may shape grid's future

... labor and materials costs, the \$85.2 million bid by NextEra **Energy** Transmission was about half the project cost estimated by the region's ...

E&E News Published Mar 15, 2023 258,848 reach

House Republicans unveil energy, permitting package

... last year in response to high **energy** prices. Provisions from the **Energy** and Commerce Committee would promote natural **gas** exports, ease some ...

E&E News Published Mar 14, 2023 258,848 reach

Biden admin unleashes \$2.5B for EV charger network

... to reduce the country's reliance on fossil fuels and slash greenhouse **gas** emissions. "By helping bring EV charging to communities across ...

Federal Register

Federal Register Published Mar 15, 2023 1,094,536 reach

Notice of Public Meeting of the Alaska Resource Advisory Council

... maintained by the **BLM** Alaska State Office. Minutes are also Start Printed Page 16029 posted to the **BLM** Alaska RAC web page at www.blm.gov/ ...

Federal Register Published Mar 15, 2023 1,094,536 reach

Notice of Availability of the Proposed Notice of Sale for Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Lease Sale 261

AGENCY: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, **Interior**. ACTION: Notice of availability. SUMMARY: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (...

From: BLM Press <blm_press@blm.gov>
To: "blm_field_comm@blm.gov" <blm_field_comm@blm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska
Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 20:16:52 +0000

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 U.S. Department of the Interior: News Release

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

"With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem," said Secretary Haaland. "President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further

#1127820.1

that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge’s Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department’s determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would

establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

About the U.S. Department of the Interior


The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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To: "begruuber@blm.gov" <begruber@blm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Conservative Resource
Date: Wed, 29 Nov 2023 20:12:48 +0000

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[Natural Resources Republicans](#)

Welcome back to all the action here on the Natural Resources Committee, where we are still figuring out all the ways to use up Thanksgiving leftovers. This week, the committee is working to expand access to our public lands, passing bills through the House and holding Biden accountable for his failed policies. Learn more about our committee activity this week and next week [here](#).

Do you know someone who'd love to get our newsletter? Forward them this email to [sign up!](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) or subscribe to our [YouTube](#) to stay up-to-date on natural resources news.

Get Out and EXPLORE!



Chairman Westerman (R-Ark.) alongside other committee members at a press conference on Wednesday introducing the EXPLORE Act.

Today, House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) and Ranking Member Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act. This bipartisan bill will expand access and create new opportunities for Americans nationwide to get outside and enjoy the unparalleled beauty of our public lands. Learn more [here](#).

Defending Our Parks

This week, the full House is considering H.R. 5283, the Protecting Our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act, introduced by U.S. Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-N.Y.). This bill will prohibit President Biden from using America's public lands to solve the border crisis of his own making. New York City is running out of room to house migrants, and instead of taking action at the root cause, the administration is targeting a beloved national park in NYC and using it to build ramshackle camps to shelter migrants on the taxpayer's dime.

#1127842.1

This sets a dangerous precedent allowing administrations to commandeer federal lands and forgo environmental reviews, and the committee will continue conducting necessary oversight on this issue. Learn more [here](#).

Biden's War on American Energy Hits Close to Home

Today, the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing on President Biden's recent decision to cancel energy leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. This decision will devastate Alaskans, with over 77,000 jobs in the state relying on oil and gas production. This hearing examined both Biden's decision and heard from local witnesses testifying on the impacts this will have on the state and H.R. 6285, which will reverse the decision.

President Biden has continued his war on American energy, no matter how many dollars and American jobs it costs. Committee Republicans have consistently provided substantive legislative pushback on this policy, and today's hearing and H.R. 6258 continue this work. Learn more [here](#).

The Christmas Season Begins



Yesterday's Capitol Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

After a couple of weeks of preparation since arriving on the Hill, "Wa'feem'tekwi," or "Bright Tree", this year's Capitol Christmas tree, was lit yesterday during a ceremony on the west lawn of the Capitol. From now through January 1, you can get away from holiday stress and shopping traffic by visiting this year's tree, where it will be shining bright from sundown through 11 p.m. Learn more [here](#).



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#1127842.2

From: "Packer, Richard L" <rpacker@blm.gov>

To: "Press, BLM" <BLM_Press@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Daily News Clips - May 12, 2023

Date: Fri, 12 May 2023 16:23:10 +0000

Note: BLMers who register with their @blm.gov email address [here](#) can access E&E News articles for free.



May 12, 2023

BLM News

Daily Mail Published May 12, 2023 **83,586,006 reach**

Title 42 EXPIRES: US braces as migrants try to evade Border Patrol before clocks tick down to midnight, COVID restrictions are dropped after three years and thousands wait to try and cross from Mexico

Yuma, Arizona As they arrived, two patrol vehicles of the *Bureau of Land Management* ranger service arrived to intercept them. They beat the ...

U.S. House of Representatives Published May 12, 2023 **4,302,503 reach**

[Press release] Idaho Delegation Presses BLM Director on Change to Multiple-Use Approach for Public Lands

... (all R-Idaho) wrote the Director of the *Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Tracy Stone-Manning* regarding her department's efforts to change the ...

The Nevada Independent Published May 12, 2023 **337,407 reach**

BLM's new public lands rule good wildlife, hunters, outdoor enthusiasts

... land — 48 million acres to be exact — is managed by the *Bureau of Land Management (BLM)* with a mission to "sustain the health, diversity, ...

National Agricultural Law Center Published May 12, 2023 **15,530 reach**

BLM Looks to Expand Conservation - National Agricultural Law Center

On April 3, 2023, the *Bureau of Land Management ("BLM")* published a proposed rule in the Federal Register that introduces a...

KPVI-TV Published May 11, 2023 **75,907 reach**

Idaho legislative committee hears from opponents of BLM's proposal to protect public lands

... the public. The *Bureau of Land Management* and the Biden administration published the new public land rule last month. The *BLM* is accepting ...

Farms.com Published May 12, 2023 **77,302 reach**

Research At U Of I Ranch Finds Promise In Long-Lasting Herbicide

#1127853.1

... active ingredient indaziflam, for use on its terrain. The federal **Bureau of Land Management** may also look to the study for its own Rejuvra ...

KRQE-TV Published May 11, 2023 908,693 reach

Why has Tent Rocks been closed for three years?

. The **BLM** updated the statement on its website on April 28, during the weeks of KRQE's requests for information. Finally, the **BLM** agreed to ...

KRQE-TV Published May 11, 2023 908,693 reach

Behind the Story: What's with the Tent Rocks Monument's three-year closure?

... took in her investigation. They also discuss when the **Bureau of Land Management** may reopen the beloved and culturally significant monument.

KIDK-TV Published May 11, 2023 247,031 reach

BLM acquires western Idaho land to preserve critical wildlife habitat

BOISE, Idaho (KIFI) - The **Bureau of Land Management** has purchased 390 acres of land in western Idaho, located 11 miles west of Midvale, from ...

Coeur d'Alene Press Published May 12, 2023 152,598 reach

Overnight camping set to close at Huckleberry Campground

The **Bureau of Land Management** is poised to begin a modernization and improvement project for electrical upgrades that will require overnight ...

Imperial Valley Press Published May 12, 2023 47,422 reach

LAND OF EXTREMES: Summertime in the Imperial Valley

... -tail horned lizard's habitat and is overseen by the **Bureau of Land Management** to ensure the safety of the species. Their conservation has ...

KSNW-TV Published May 11, 2023 1,714,738 reach

How to Hunt for Fossils in Kansas

... are very specific rules laid out by the **Bureau of Land Management**: "Only researchers operating under a **BLM** permit are allowed to collect ...

The Denver Gazette Published May 11, 2023 311,045 reach

CPW to host "Gear Up For Summer" festival this weekend

... to Pueblo," CPW said in a news release. Representatives from the **Bureau of Land Management**, the U.S. Forest Service, the Greater Arkansas ...

Chaffee County Times Published May 12, 2023 3,303 reach

AHRA, GARNA to celebrate Public Lands Day with Clean Up-Green Up

... -539-5106. Clean Up-Green Up is in partnership with AHRA, GARNA, **BLM**, the city of Salida, the town of Buena Vista, Salida Parks Open Space ...

Hi-Desert Star Published May 11, 2023 10,588 reach

Joshua Tree National Park rangers scale back search for hiker

... , according to Schwalbe. Park officials worked with the **Bureau of Land Management** and a helicopter crew with the California Highway Patrol.

Osage News Published May 11, 2023 6,951 reach

[Osage Nation] ON Congress commends Wildland Fire Management [Oklahoma]

... department and because of the way they network with other folks, including **BLM** and the other rural firefighters, so this was just an attempt ...

The Durango Herald Published May 11, 2023 249,631 reach

Animas City Mountain burning expected to resume Friday

... , according to the **Bureau of Land Management**. The prescribed burn on Monday and Tuesday scorched about 270 acres, but the **BLM** wants to burn ...

Energy & Minerals

Fox News Channel Published May 11, 2023 57,678,463 reach

Biden admin inadvertently praises fossil fuel drilling benefits

... from fossil fuels, mainly **oil**, natural **gas** and **coal** development . **BIDEN** ADMIN QUIETLY DELAYS MAJOR **OIL, GAS** LEASING DECISION According to ...

JD Supra Published May 11, 2023 626,097 reach

Biden-Harris Administration Publishes Priorities for Permitting Reform to Build Clean Energy "Faster, Safer, and Cleaner"

... lands by 2025." The fact sheet notes that the **Bureau of Land Management** has permitted more than 130 renewable generation projects with a ...

SFGate Published May 12, 2023 19,810,779 reach

Biden's strategy for cutting carbon emissions from electricity generation could extend the lives of fossil fuel power plants

... the **Biden** administration's climate commitments and avoiding another gutting in court. To do that, they focus on reducing **greenhouse gas** ...

MSN.com Published May 11, 2023 156,890,226 reach

[New York Times] E.P.A. Proposes First Limits on Climate Pollution From Existing Power Plants

The **Biden** administration on Thursday announced the first regulations to limit **greenhouse** pollution from existing power plants, capping an ...

The Hill - Floor Action Published May 11, 2023 16,270,980 reach

Six things to know about Biden's proposed crackdown on power plant emissions

On Thursday the **Biden** administration proposed a new rule aimed at slashing power plants' contribution to climate change. The rule, ...

Reuters Published May 11, 2023 40,314,707 reach

Coal-fired power fleet in US to halve by 2050, EIA projects

... by natural **gas** and **renewable** energy displace the aging fleet , the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) said on Thursday. The **Biden** ...

The Washington Post Published May 12, 2023 52,660,387 reach

[Requires subscription] Tax credit for clean energy raises concern from some U.S. industries

... 2023. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig) As the **Biden** administration pushes the **solar** and **wind** power industries to move their manufacturing back to the ...

Law360 Published May 11, 2023 570,981 reach

[Requires registration] States, Trade Group Want Oil, Gas Leasing Challenge Axed

States, telling a D.C. federal judge that the U.S. **Bureau of Land Management** followed the law in authorizing the June 2022 lease sales....

The Denver Post Published May 11, 2023 3,094,903 reach

Feds to pay Colorado \$5 million in latest settlement from 2015 Gold King Mine spill

... spill. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service and **Bureau of Land Management** manage other areas with mines that have also been the source of ...

The Colorado Sun Published May 11, 2023 746,923 reach

Colorado gets \$5 million more from U.S. to help clean up Gold King Mine blowout

... 's Office, says the U.S. Forest Service and **Bureau of Land Management** are liable for damages because they manage property within the mining ...

Petroleum News Published May 12, 2023 5,524 reach

BLM further delays ANWR lease sale DEIS

... in the third quarter of this year Alan Bailey for Petroleum News **Bureau of Land Management** has further delayed the completion of a draft ...

Global Business Reports Published May 11, 2023 22,323 reach

Jason Latkowcer [President, CEO and Director, Pan American Energy Corp. discussing Horizon lithium project in Nevada]

... drill program that has been approved and permitted by the **Bureau of Land Management**. This drill plan gives excellent coverage across the ...

North American Clean Energy Published May 12, 2023 1,221 reach

[Press release] RioSol's 550-Mile Transmission Project will Help New Mexico and Arizona meet Renewable Energy Goals

... construction to follow soon thereafter. This route comes as part of the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**'s soon-to-be-completed, extensive ...

Wild Horse & Burro

ColumbusUnderground.com Published May 12, 2023 149,289 reach

Real Life and Fantasy, Documentary and Horror on Screens Big and Small [includes Wild Beauty review]

#1127853.4

... -owned land in 10 states? These lands are managed by the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**, charged by a 1971 Concessional Act signed into law ...

cowboystatedaily.com Published May 12, 2023 880,985 reach

Wild Horse Advocates Sue BLM, Claim Red Desert Mustang Roundups Cruel, Costly To Taxpayers

Mustang roundups in Wyoming's Red Desert are cruel, unnecessary and costly to taxpayers, horse advocates who are suing the **Bureau of Land Management** claim.

POLITICO/E&E News

POLITICO Published May 11, 2023 18,462,880 reach

The nerd's guide to Biden's new climate rule

... limits on greenhouse **gas** emissions from the nation's coal- and natural **gas**-fired power plants, the nation's second-largest source of **climate** ...

POLITICO Published May 11, 2023 18,462,880 reach

Biden's prom day for the planet

... 's first-ever **energy** summit exploring how the U.S. is positioning itself in a complicated **energy** future and featuring guests such as **Energy** ...

POLITICO Published May 12, 2023 18,462,880 reach

Challenge for Biden power rule: Keeping the lights on

... that can replace the **gas** that could retire," Snitchler said. **Energy** & Environment The nerd's guide to Biden's new **climate** rule By Alex ...

E&E News Published May 12, 2023 165,651 reach

4 energy issues to watch with EPA's power plant rule

... **EPA's** definition for a low-greenhouse **gas** version of the fuel. The coalition's membership includes the American **Gas** Association, **oil and gas** ...

E&E News Published May 12, 2023 165,651 reach

Legal war brews over EPA power plant rule

... for **EPA** It's not all bad news for **EPA**. Legal observers say the Supreme Court's guidance in West Virginia and the presence of new **climate** ...

E&E News Published May 11, 2023 165,651 reach

Power rule's carve-out could undermine protections

. Most of **EPA's** projections for the draft rules' effects zero-in on its proposed standards for existing coal and future **gas**. Existing **gas** ...

Federal Register

Federal Register Published May 12, 2023 1,113,123 reach

Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement Addressing Land Withdrawal Extension at Fort Wainwright, Alaska

... training areas, which are federal lands managed by the *Bureau of Land Management* (*BLM*) that Congress has withdrawn and reserved for military ...

From: "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

To: BLM_WO_100 <BLM_WO_100@blm.gov>

Cc: "St George, Brian C" <bstgeorg@blm.gov>, "Waddell, Holle" <hwaddell@blm.gov>, "Lindow, Emily R" <Emily.Lindow@boem.gov>, "Gruber, Benjamin E" <BEGruber@blm.gov>, "Bagley, Lonny R" <lbagley@blm.gov>, "Heinlein, Thomas" <theinlei@blm.gov>, "Frost, Troy A" <tfrost@blm.gov>, "Krauss, Jeff" <JKrauss@blm.gov>, "Eggers, Barbara L" <egggers@blm.gov>, "Shugert, Matthew J" <mshugert@blm.gov>, "McDonald, Monique S" <m1mcdona@blm.gov>, "Beebe, Grant S" <gbeebe@blm.gov>, "DeFries, Tamala J" <tdefries@blm.gov>, "Conry, Meagan M" <mconry@blm.gov>, "Broadwater, Charles E" <cbroadwater@blm.gov>, "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Gray, Morgan" <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>, "Witt, Ryan C" <rwitt@blm.gov>, "Tollefson, Christopher J" <ctollefson@blm.gov>, BLM_WO_610 <BLM_WO_610@blm.gov>, BLM_HQ_620_ALL <BLM_HQ_620@blm.gov>, "Moran, Jill C" <jcmoran@blm.gov>, "Quinn, Matthew J" <Matthew_J_Quinn@ios.doi.gov>, "Feldgus, Steven H" <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>, "Oliver, Kevin E" <koliver@blm.gov>, "Bowmer, James A" <JBowmer@blm.gov>, "Hires, Brian K" <bhires@blm.gov>, BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs <BLM_PublicAffairsChiefs@blm.gov>, "MacDougall, Sean A" <SMacDoug@blm.gov>, "McIntosh, Stacie J" <s05mcint@blm.gov>, "Carnahan, Rachel" <rcarnahan@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill A" <jralston@blm.gov>, "Salmon, Marni R" <mrsalmon@blm.gov>, "Huffman, Jessica R" <jrhuffman@blm.gov>, "Rezaeero, Paniz" <paniz_rezaeero@ios.doi.gov>, "Hasson, Tomer Y" <thasson@blm.gov>, "Davidson, Zoe M" <z davidson@blm.gov>, "Pryor, Ernest L" <epryor@blm.gov>, "Manuszewski, Donald E" <dmanuszewski@blm.gov>, "Manuszewski, Donald E" <dmanuszewski@blm.gov>, "McGinnis, Shelley R" <smcginnis@blm.gov>, "Thrift, Brian D" <bthrift@blm.gov>

Subject: BLM Congressional & Legislative Affairs Weekly Report – October 12, 2023

Date: Thu, 12 Oct 2023 23:13:04 +0000

Attachments: NEW_Cong.Report._Updates_(37).docx

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Weekly Report – October 12, 2023
(Updates in Red)

HEARINGS/MARKUPS

- Oct. 19: The House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee plans to hold a legislative hearing on the following bills. No DOI witness; Statement for the Record.
 - o H.R. 5283, Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act;
 - o H.R. XXXX, Trash Reduction and Suppressing Harm from Environmental Degradation (TRASHED) at the Border Act; and
 - o H.R. XXXX, Ensuring Border Access and Protection on Federal Land Act.
- Oct. 25: The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining plans to hold a legislative hearing on misc. public lands bills, tentatively including the following of interest to BLM. BLM Witness TBD.
 - o S. 175, Codify AK PLOs
 - o S. 1348, Wyoming Public Lands Initiative
 - o S. 1719, FIRESHEDS Act
 - o S. 1764, Western Wildfire Support Act
 - o S. 1889, Unrecognized SE AK Native Communities Recognition and Compensation Act

#1127860.1

- o S. 2151, Utah Wildfire Research Institute Act
- o S. 2581, Secure Rural Schools Reauthorization Act,
- o S. 2615, Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act
- o S. 2855, CLOSE THE GAP Act
- o S. 2867, Promoting Effective Forest Management Act
- o S. 2991, America's Revegetation and Carbon Sequestration Act
- o S. 3033, Pecos Watershed Mineral Withdrawal
- o S. 3036, Mountain View Corridor Completion Act
- o S. ____, Accelerate Appraisals for Public Lands
- Oct. 25: The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources plans to hold a legislative hearing on the following BLM-related bills. No DOI witness; Statement for the Record.
 - o H.R. 1449, Committing Leases for Energy Access Now (CLEAN) Act;
 - o H.R. XXXX, Regarding applications to grant rights-of-way (discussion draft);
 - o H.R. XXXX, To require the Director of the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw the proposed rule relating to fluid mineral leases and leasing process (discussion draft).
- Oct. 25: The Senate Indian Affairs Committee may hold an oversight hearing on Tribal co-management/Tribal co-stewardship.

NEW ITEMS

- Oct. 6: Rep. LaMalfa (R-CA-01) staff requested the BLM meet with officials from Modoc County, CA, to discuss the BLM's wild horse and burro program.
- Oct. 11: Senate Committee on Indian Affairs minority staff requested a briefing from the BLM and FWS on Alaska Native community involvement/tribal consultation regarding the ANWR lease cancellations, draft SEIS, and proposed NPR-A rule.
- Oct. 11: Sen. Stabenow (D-MI) staff requested information about a mineral rights issue on a Michigan constituent's private land.
- Oct. 12: Rep. Valadao (R-CA-22) staff requested information regarding water management on public lands in Tulare County, CA.

UPCOMING MEETINGS / VISITS / BRIEFINGS

- Oct. 13: Rep. Biggs (R-AZ-05) plans to visit the proposed Goldfield Recreation Area near Apache Junction in Pinal County. BLM AZ Phoenix District Manager Leon Thomas and Lower Sonoran Field Manager Lindsey Tyler will participate.
- Oct. TBD: BLM-WY State Director Archuleta will host virtual courtesy visits with members of the WY delegation.
 - o Sen. Lummis (R-WY) and staff (Oct. 17).
 - o Others TBD
- Oct. 19: Director Stone-Manning will meet with Rep. DeGette (D-CO-01) to discuss administrative efforts to conserve public lands, including wilderness study areas and areas of critical environmental concerns.

CORRESPONDENCE

EST / DCN	Date	From	Subject	Status
BLM0037027	03/28/2023	Tuberville	Federal coal moratorium	ASLM
BLM0037593	05/03/2023	Tuberville	Follow-up to 03/23/23 letter on federal coal moratorium	HQ-600
BLM0038294	06/09/2023	Daines	BLM mandated lease sales in Montana	OCL

BLM0038665	06/27/2023	Crane	Resolution Copper EIS	OCL
BLM0039162	07/19/2023	Stauber	Domestic coal production and leasing	OCL
BLM0039163	07/19/2023	Stauber	Hardrock mining	OCL
BLM0039166	07/21/2023	Williams	Domestic mineral production to support semiconductor industry	WGS-D-CA
BLM0039570	08/09/2023	Westerman	BNGC National Monument mineral withdrawal concerns	BLM-D
BLM0039833	08/25/2023	Rosen	Ruby Mountains mineral withdrawal	BLM-COS
BLM0039842	08/25/2023	Lombardo (Gov)	Permitting progress of Goldrush project	HQ-620
BLM0039978	08/29/2023	Feinstein	Cadiz Real Estate application for ROW reassignment	BLM-D
BLM0040006	08/31/2023	Huffman	M-44 devices on public lands	HQ-230
BLM0040029	09/01/2023	Cortez Mastro	Support for National Monument at Swamp Cedars	HQ-620
BLM0040030	08/31/2023	Kim	Mountain Star Development Mission Viejo	CASO
BLM0040079	09/06/2023	Daines	American Prairie Reserve	BLM-D
BLM0040095	09/07/2023	Stansbury	Public Lands Rule	BLM-D
BLM0040099	09/07/2023	Bennet	Wildcat Loadout expansion project	BLM-COS
BLM0040385	09/26/2023	Kelly	Support for BLM broadband project permitting in Navajo County, AZ	AZSO
BLM0040410	09/26/2023	Daines	PENDING BLM0038294 – Follow-up letter on BLM mandated lease sales in MT	HQ-600
BLM0040483	09/28/2023	Lee	Canyon Fuel Company's Category 3 Royalty Rate Reduction application	HQ-300
BLM0040491	09/29/2023	Levin	Support of onshore oil and gas leasing rule	HQ-300
BLM0040550	10/02/2023	Westerman	PENDING BLM0039570: Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument follow-up letter	HQ-600

ONGOING ITEMS PENDING WITH BLM

- Jan. 4/June 6/Sept. 20: HNR majority staff requested follow-up information regarding BLM's draft Greenhouse Gas Environmental Assessment and the related court cases.
- March 14/June 6/Sept. 21: HNR majority staff requested the number of Expressions of Interest received over the last 12 months.

- June 15/June 29/Sept. 22: SENR majority staff requested information on the timing of the posting of Expressions of Interest numbers on the BLM's website and when the BLM expects to issue solar or wind ROWs after the upcoming oil and gas lease sales.
- Aug. 7: HNR majority staff requested information regarding mining claims and uranium leases within the proposed NCA designated by H.R. 1534, the Dolores River National Conservation Area and Special Area Act (Rep. Boebert, R-CO-03) (**completed Oct. 6**).
- Sept. 7: Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) staff requested follow up information regarding an oil and gas lease cancellation in Utah and questions regarding BLM permitting staffing needs.
- Sept. 11: HNR majority staff requested information regarding BLM's wind energy program.
- Sept. 20: Rep. DeGette (D-CO-01) staff requested assistance to prepare legislative maps for the Colorado Wilderness Act (maps delivered Sept. 28/additional information requested).
- Sept. 21: SENR majority staff requested an update on the status of the WildEarth Guardians litigation GHG EA and if any decisions have been issued based on the EA.
- Sept. 20: Sen. Risch (R-ID) staff and SENR minority staff requested information regarding BLM's interpretation of the Aquifer Recharge Flexibility Act (P.L. 116-260).
- Sept. 26: Staff of Rep. Curtis (R-UT-03) and of Rep. Huffman (D-CA-02) requested information on the renewable energy permitting process.
- Sept. 26/Oct. 4: HNR majority staff requested information about processing solar and wind right-of-way applications (**completed Oct. 10**).
- Sept. 26: Rep. Bentz (R-OR-02) requested information on renewal of grazing permits in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in southern Oregon.
- Sept. 28: HNR majority staff requested the latest Report to Congress on the use of the APD fees as described in Section 3021(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015 (under review by DOI) (**completed Oct. 10**).
- Sept. 28: HNR Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee majority staff requested information on the amount of trash collected by the BLM at the southern border in FY22 and FY23.
- Sept. 28: Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff requested information on the McDermitt lithium project related to constituent concerns regarding ground disturbances (**completed Oct. 11**).
- Sept. 29: Sen. Cramer (R-ND) staff requested information regarding a BLM-New Mexico EA regarding Lesser Prairie Chicken.
- Oct. 5: Sen. Lee (R-UT) staff requested technical assistance on the Senate companion bill to H.R. 2468, to convey BLM lands within the boundaries of Camp Williams to the State of Utah (**completed Oct. 10**).

Ongoing CBO/CRS Requests

- Sept. 11: CRS requested information regarding revenues from BLM solar and wind leases.
- Sept. 22: CRS requested updates on the Department's implementation of S.O. 3377 regarding Tribal co-management of fluid mineral operations (provided BLM's response to BIA Oct. 11)
- Sept. 25: CBO requested information regarding H.R. 4374, the Energy Opportunities for All Act (Rep. Crane, R-AZ-02).
- Sept. 25: CBO requested information regarding S. 683, Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act (Sen. Padilla, D-CA).
- Oct. 5: CBO requested information on H.R. 3195, Superior National Forest Restoration Act, which would reinstate the Twin Metals leases.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Nov. 3/June 6: HNR majority staff requested technical assistance on three specific sections in H.R. 9087, the TAP American Energy Act (Rep. Westerman, R-AR-04).
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.

- Feb. 2/April 17/May 24: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to transfer a tract of Federal land to the Wrangel Cooperative Association.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- March 15: Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) staff requested technical assistance on legislative language regarding transfer of Tenakee Springs.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 7: Sen. Cortez Masto (D-NV) staff requested technical assistance on S. 1281, Mining Regulatory Clarity Act.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- June 9: Rep. Vasquez (D-NM-02) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill titled “Ranching Without Red Tape.”
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- July 17: Sen. Lujan (D-NM) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act. BIA is leading the response, with OCL coordinating other agency input.
 - o Status: Pending with OCL.
- July 31: Rep. McCollum (D-MN-4) requested technical assistance on H.R. 5021, Securing American Critical Minerals Act.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- Aug. 11: Sen. Bennet (D-CO) staff requested technical assistance on the draft bill, the Bureau of Land Management Flexible Partnerships Act of 2023.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- Sept. 5: OCL requested assistance on a Sen. Wyden (D-OR) staff request for technical assistance on the previously introduced S. 4369, the North American Grasslands Conservation Act (117th Congress).
 - o Status: Pending with **ASLM**.
- Sept. 18: Rep. Simpson (ID-02) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey public land to Twin Falls County, Idaho, for use as a recreation trail.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- Sept. 19: Rep. Matsui (D-CA-7) staff requested technical assistance on draft legislation to convey reversionary of select land near Ridgecrest California.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

- March 29: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: BLM Director Stone-Manning.
 - o Status: Pending with DOI.
- May 16: HNR EMR/FL hearing on the BLM’s FY 2024 Budget Request. Witness: Director Stone-Manning.
 - o Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0038668)
- June 15: HNR hearing on H.R. 3397, “*to require the BLM Director to withdraw a rule of the BLM relating to conservation and landscape health.*” Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM. (BLM0040177)
- June 22: HNR Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Principal Deputy Director Wolff Culver.
 - o Status: Pending with BLM.
- July 12: SENR Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining legislative hearing on various BLM-related bills. Witness: Tom Heinlein, Assistant Director of National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships.
 - o Status: Pending with OCL. (BLM0039581)

- Sept. 19: HNR Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing “*Examining the Biden Administration’s Mismanagement of the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Program.*” Witness: Deputy Director of Operations Nedd.
 - Status: Pending with BLM.
- Sept. 28: SENR hearing “*Examine opportunities to counter the People’s Republic of China’s control of critical mineral supply chains through increased mining and processing in the United States as well as international engagement and trade.*” Witness: Deputy Secretary Beaudreau.
 - Status: Pending with BLM

REPORTS TO CONGRESS (pending review in DTS)

- Efficiencies with O&C Grant Lands Program for Fiscal Year 2017
 - Status: Pending with HQ-220 (BLM0011656).
- Report to Congress on Online Oil and Gas Leasing - Comprehensive Comparison of Oral vs Online Lease Sales
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0012000).
- Oil and Gas Resource Potential of the Musselshell Breaks and Bridge Coulee Wilderness Study Areas
 - Status: Pending with HQ-100 (BLM0019271).
- Trespassing on Alaska Native Lands
 - Status: Pending with BLM-AK (BLM0021543).
- Annual Helium Report to Congress FY 2020-2022
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NM (BLM0032063).
- Annual BLM O&G Project Office Combined Report for Fiscal Years 2015-2021
 - Status: Pending review with OES (BLM000045)
- Suitability for Geothermal of Categorical Exclusions Under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005
 - Status: Pending review with BLM-NOC (BLMC000067).
- Annual Renewable Energy Report to Congress FY 2022
 - Status: Pending review with ASLM (BLMC000082).
- Withdrawal Extension Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with **OCL** (BLMC000090).
- SNPLMA FY 2022 Annual Report to Congress
 - Status: Pending review with SOL (BLMC000093).

 Patrick Wilkinson
 Division Chief
 Legislative Affairs (HQ 620)
 Bureau of Land Management
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 Cell Phone: (202) 631-6346

From: "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>

To: "Wykowski, Henry T" <hwykowski@blm.gov>, "Million, Bonnie M" <bmillion@blm.gov>

Cc: "Huffman, Jessica R" <jrhuffman@blm.gov>, "Watson, Rolanda V" <rvwatson@blm.gov>, "Kniola, Benjamin E" <bkniola@blm.gov>, "Wilkinson, Patrick" <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: Questions from House Approps on AK Actions

Date: Fri, 06 Oct 2023 16:06:58 +0000

Thanks, Henry.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>

Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 11:53 AM

To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Watson, Rolanda V <rvwatson@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: Questions from House Approps on AK Actions

I suspect they'll have reviewed the publicly available content, but we can start here and see if they ask for more. Thanks!

From: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 9:59 AM

To: Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>; Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Watson, Rolanda V <rvwatson@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: RE: Questions from House Approps on AK Actions

Thanks, Bonnie. Henry, can we send this or do you all feel we need to write it up for them? It would be nice to start with this.

Nada Wolff Culver
Principal Deputy Director
Bureau of Land Management
nculver@blm.gov
202-255-6979

From: Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 2:27 PM

To: Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>; Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>

Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>; Watson, Rolanda V <rvwatson@blm.gov>; Kniola, Benjamin E <bkniola@blm.gov>; Wilkinson, Patrick <P2Wilkin@blm.gov>

Subject: Re: Questions from House Approps on AK Actions

Hey Henry -

I shared with Rolanda this morning but there is additional info available online:

#1127869.1

Project website - <https://www.blm.gov/about/laws-and-regulations/NPR-A-Rule>
Fact Sheet - https://www.blm.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2023-09/BLM-NPR-A-Proposed-Rule-Fact-Sheet_20230925.pdf
FAQs - https://www.blm.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2023-09/BLM-NPR-A-Proposed-Rule-FAQs_20230925.pdf

Hope this helps!!

--

Bonnie Million
Congressional Liaison
Bureau of Land Management - Alaska
Email: bmillion@blm.gov
Office: 907-271-3335
Cell: 907-802-1015

From: Wykowski, Henry T <hwykowski@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 10:10 AM
To: Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Million, Bonnie M <bmillion@blm.gov>
Cc: Huffman, Jessica R <jrhuffman@blm.gov>
Subject: Questions from House Approps on AK Actions

Hello Nada and Bonnie,

House approps staff have asked for some input on a few high-visibility matters as they prepare their future work on the FY 24 bill, including conference and potential debates. In particular, they asked for some information on the NPR-A Rule and the Coastal Plain decisions I thought you'd be best positioned to answer (question below). I've also included some additional background on the scope of the request.

Would it be possible to provide back a few "highlights" by next Tuesday?

Can you send me background on BLMs proposed rule to enhance protections in NPR-A for sensitive areas as well as cancellation of the seven leases in ANWR? I read the Fed. Register notice, so I have a few talking points on the need to update, etc. so not looking for too much more information. Just some highlights about the need to protect these areas.

Thank you,

Henry Wykowski | Advisor
Office of the Director
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
C: 703-994-3469 | hwykowski@blm.gov

#1127869.2

From: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

To: "Reed, Erika" <e05reed@blm.gov>

Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] FW: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Date: Thu, 16 Mar 2023 00:43:38 +0000

Attachments: NVK_KIC_Ltr_to_BLM_and_FWS_2.21.2023_FINAL_Signed.pdf;
EDITED_CPSEIS_Response_to_NVK_3.8.23.docx

From: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>

Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 4:24 PM

To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] FW: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Serena Sweet
Supervisory Planning & Environmental Coordinator

BLM-Alaska, Resources Division
Desk: 907-271-4543
Cell: 907-223-3267

From: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 4:35 PM

To: Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: Pendergast, Kevin J <kpendergast@blm.gov>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>

Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] FW: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Hi Steve,

We have drafted the attached language which is a more in-depth response to the February 21, 2023 letter from NVK (also attached). The language has been reviewed by Mike G, Bonnie and Kevin so far and we are working on getting the appropriate letterhead.

Our plan is to send this as a joint letter from Bobbie Jo, Stephanie and myself as a follow-up to the email that you sent to NVK on Monday. I wanted to confirm that you are still comfortable with this approach. Let me know if you would like to discuss. Also, do you plan to talk about this with Sara B.?

Serena Sweet
Supervisory Planning & Environmental Coordinator

BLM-Alaska, Resources Division
Desk: 907-271-4543
Cell: 907-223-3267

#1127890.1

From: Teresa Imm <Teresa-Imm@outlook.com>

Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 11:52 AM

To: Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Ladies,

FYI. Please see the attached letter and email note below from Native Village of Kaktovik about their concerns, outrage, and frustration, which you heard last Monday, on how the ITEK working group is going and the proposed Workshop and its agenda.

Teresa

From: Matthew Rexford <nvkaktovik@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 11:35 AM

To: Teresa Imm <Teresa-Imm@outlook.com>

Subject: Fwd: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Hi Teresa,

I just sent the email out.

Regards,

Matthew Rexford
Tribal Administrator
NATIVE VILLAGE OF KAKTOVIK
P.O. Box 52
Kaktovik, AK 99747
Phone: (907) 640-2042 or 2043
Fax: (907) 640-2044

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Matthew Rexford <nvkaktovik@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 11:32 AM

Subject: Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Supplemental EIS and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge

To: Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>, Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>

Cc: <chad_padgett@sullivan.senate.gov>, <steve_wackowski@murkowski.senate.gov>, <alex.ortiz@mail.house.gov>, Doreen Leavitt <Doreen.Leavitt@icas-nsn.gov>

#1127890.2

Dear Mr. Cohn and Ms. Boario,

Following our Cooperative Agency meeting in Kaktovik on February 13, 2023, our council has deliberated and have decided to send to you a letter of our concerns, outrage, and general frustration over your agency's action on what is being referred to as ITEK. We are extremely upset over the function of the ITEK Working Group and the agenda being presented in the ITEK Workshop scheduled to be held in Fairbanks, Alaska on February 22 through March 4. You have offered to come to Kaktovik following the ITEK Workshop to report back to us which we initially agreed to but we now feel that holding the ITEK Workshop is untenable to our community, its tribal members, and our culture. This workshop is a form of cultural appropriation of one culture against our culture and homelands which is being facilitated by both BLM, FWS and NARF.

Our trust relationship with the federal government is tenuous at best and is quickly being eroded by this action. This is moving so fast that we are having a difficult time keeping up which is counterproductive to any sort of relationship building – since our meeting – instead of slowing down the process you have had another ITEK Working Group meeting, the meeting minutes were released on Friday, February 21, with a follow-up from NARF requesting that the meeting minutes be amended to stating “that the meeting needs to remain an “official NEPA meeting which is part of the record”” which implies the results of the Workshop become part of the public record. We strenuously oppose this request yet, as I prepare to send this to you, I have received a copy of the amended minutes adding that statement into the G2G record. We are unclear how the Workshop can be added to the NEPA record since it does not appear to be open to the public nor was it officially noticed in the Federal Register as a public workshop. These are our lands; we cannot let this Workshop become part of the public record – you are jeopardizing our identity – this is cultural assassination in a time that the agencies have been working to strengthen their relationships with us and it seems through the ITEK approach you are actively tearing them apart.

We are completely astonished that your agencies seem to think that the ITEK Workshop is something other than patronizing the Kaktovikmiut. The ITEK Workshop Agenda, the Working Group meeting minutes, and the fact that the attendees of the Working Group are mostly comprised of NARF and other special interest groups say it all and we cannot be complicit in allowing this process to continue which is to establish other tribe's footprint onto our homelands. There is nothing in the Workshop Agenda that even speaks to the purpose of correcting the 'legal deficiencies' of the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing EIS. We entered into a government-to-government relationship with you to address those issues and now, instead, we are fighting to retain our cultural identity. The fact that there is an ITEK Workshop scheduled with no thought of how the Kaktovikmiut can attend is more than outrageous – it is completely tone-deaf. The request that what information is received through the ITEK Workshop will become part of the public record is shameful because you are actively working to erase our culture in the process. Once the results of the Workshop are entered into the public record – remember anyone can say anything in this workshop and we believe most comments will be scripted by NARF - you have then, without any verification established other tribe's making representations about our region just by entering the Workshop into the public record 'as evidence'. We can't begin to express our outrage at all of this – either you as supposed 'unbiased agencies' are naïve about the narrative that is being constructed by this process or you are in collusion with the special interest groups and are passively allowing this to happen. So far, at every attempt we have made to address these issues your agencies have tried to placate our concerns – this has got to stop.

This email and the attached letter only begin to express the psychological and cultural damage this ITEK Workshop is doing to our tribal members. We feel the only way to begin to repair any trust and relationship with the federal government is to cancel the workshop and regroup.

Thank you for your attention to this most critical matter.

Matthew Rexford
Tribal Administrator
NATIVE VILLAGE OF KAKTOVIK
P.O. Box 52
Kaktovik, AK 99747
Phone: (907) 640-2042 or 2043

#1127890.3

Fax: (907) 640-2044

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 7, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Secretary Haaland:

We write to provide initial technical comments on the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) draft supplement environmental impact statement (SEIS) for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Program (the Program).¹ These comments specifically focus on BLM's inaccurate portrayal of the resources and authorized uses of the Program area and provide suggestions to improve the implementation of the Program, given BLM requests that comments focus on the following areas:

1. The identification of new information that would have a bearing on the analysis;
2. Inaccuracies or discrepancies in information or any errors in BLM's portrayal of the resources and uses of the program area;
3. Suggestions for improving implementation of an oil and gas leasing program, consistent with the purposes of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR); and
4. The identification of new impacts, alternatives, or potential mitigation measures.²

As a starting point, we reiterate our profound disappointment that the Department of the Interior (DOI) has refused to extend the public comment period for 180 additional days as we requested. Alaskans have not had enough time to read the 1,430-page SEIS, participate in public meetings, and provide thoughtful comments on the many shortcomings and deficiencies in the SEIS. These comments are accordingly rushed, incomplete, and submitted today based solely on the artificially short timeline the Department has refused to adjust.

We firmly believe that the final environmental impact statement (EIS) and record of decision (ROD) for the Program *does not* contain the alleged "deficiencies" BLM refers to and accurately reflect Congress' intent in passing that legislation. Given our substantial interest in ensuring that BLM administers a competitive oil and gas leasing program in the Coastal Plain of ANWR (1002 Area) pursuant to section 20001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the Tax Act), we ultimately urge BLM to abandon this effort and use its administrative powers to re-adopt Alternative "B" – BLM's "preferred alternative" – from the final EIS and ROD in 2020 and reinstate the cancelled leases.

¹ Notice of Availability of the Draft Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, 88 Fed. Reg. 62,104 (Sept. 8, 2023).

² *Id.*

I. BACKGROUND

As you know, ANILCA explicitly allows oil and gas exploration in the 1002 Area, as well as production under the condition that Congress approve of such production.³ Indeed, the purpose of such authorization and condition was to “authorize exploratory activity within the coastal plain in a manner that avoids significant adverse effects on the fish and wildlife and other resources... wildlife and habitats...and the culture and lifestyle (including subsistence) of affected Native and other people.”⁴

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service first proposed that all of the 1002 Area be opened for oil and gas development and found that the oil and gas potential of the 1002 Area was needed for the country’s economic and national security in 1986.⁵ In 1987, DOI subsequently recommended in a final report to Congress that the entire 1002 Area should be made available for oil and gas leasing.⁶

Congress provided clear approval and a mandate for commercial production in the 1002 Area in 2017 when it passed the Tax Act and established the Program as a means of improving energy security while generating revenue for the United States.⁷ Specifically, Congress required the Secretary of the Interior, through BLM, to develop and maintain an oil and gas leasing program within the 1002 Area and conduct at least two area-wide leasing sales, not less than 400,000 acres each, within seven years, with the first lease sale taking place before December 22, 2021, and the second lease sale before December 22, 2024.⁸ It also required the Secretary of the Interior to grant rights-of-way and easements necessary for the successful development of the oil and gas resources in the 1002 Area and authorizes up to 2,000 surface acres, or 0.01% of ANWR’s 19.3 million acres, to be covered by production and support facilities.⁹

BLM then moved forward with a final EIS and published the ROD for the Program in August 2020.¹⁰ In its ROD, BLM explicitly points out that the ROD is constructed to provide for the protection of those considerations required in ANILCA.¹¹ BLM further points out that, in

³ 16 U.S.C. § 3142.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *See, e.g.,* Philip Shabecoff, *U.S. Proposing Drilling for Oil in Arctic Refuge*, N.Y. TIMES, Nov. 25, 1986, at A1.

⁶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Land Management, *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, Coastal Plain Resource Assessment: Report and Recommendation to the Congress of the United States and Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement* (Apr. 21, 1987).

⁷ Pub. L. No. 115-97, tit. II, § 20001, 131 Stat. 2054 (Dec. 20, 2017).

⁸ *Id.* at § 20001(c) (requiring that the first lease sale occur within 4 years of the date of enactment of the TCJA and the second lease sale within 7 years of enactment).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *See* Bureau of Land Management, et al., *Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision* (Aug. 2020).

¹¹ *Id.* at 16 (stating “this Decision is constructed to provide for the protection of important surface resources and uses thereof, such as caribou (especially the Porcupine herd), polar bears, migratory birds, surface waters, and subsistence uses, among other resources and uses, and to take into account the other, non-oil and gas purposes of the

addition, the ROD includes a number of mitigation measures, including required operating procedures and lease stipulations, to provide further protections.¹² BLM responded to Congress' direction when it held the first lease sale on January 6, 2021, pursuant to the ROD, subsequently entering into contracts with three entities for the issuance of 10-year leases that covered nine tracts of land totaling more than 430,000 acres.¹³

In order to fully understand the comments provided herein, it is critical to point out the laws and orders cited in the draft SEIS. Immediately after taking office, President Biden issued Executive Order (E.O.) 13990.¹⁴ Section 4 of E.O. 13990 specifically directed you to review the Program consistent with applicable law.¹⁵ On the same day, Scott de la Vega, then-Acting Secretary of the Interior, issued Secretarial Order (S.O.) 3395, which suspended authority for all career BLM officials to issue any onshore or offshore fossil fuel authorization, including but not limited to a lease, amendment to a lease, affirmative extension of a lease, contract, or other agreement, or permit to drill.¹⁶ S.O. 3395 did not limit existing operations under valid leases, nor did it apply to authorizations necessary to avoid: conditions that might pose a threat to human health, welfare, or safety; or adverse impacts to public land or mineral resources.¹⁷

Six weeks after your confirmation, you issued S.O. 3401 in furtherance of S.O. 3395, claiming that you personally reviewed the ROD and found “multiple” legal deficiencies, despite only making two generalized statements on the matter.¹⁸ We have yet to receive a clear and thorough explanation from you, however, as to why the environmental review process for the ROD was “legally deficient” or why what the range of alternatives analyzed was “insufficient.”

Neither your actions nor the premise behind them have any basis in law. Rather, these actions were in response to promises that President Biden made while on the campaign trail in the Lower 48 – certainly not Alaska. Indeed, E.O. 13990 cites “alleged” deficiencies in the ROD, and directed you to review the Program consistent with applicable law.

The scope of alternatives analyzed in the 2020 final EIS ranged from a “no action alternative” to a maximum development scenario, as required by NEPA. There was and remains no other range of alternatives that could be used. Further, the 2020 ROD was vetted by multiple

ANWR, which include conservation of fish and wildlife populations and habitats, fulfillment of international treaty obligations, allowance for continued subsistence use, and protection of water quality and quantity necessary to meet fish and wildlife conservation needs.”).

¹² *Id.* at 19.

¹³ See Bureau of Land Management, *2021 Coastal Plain Lease Sale Bid Recap* (Jan. 6, 2021).

¹⁴ E.O. 13,990, *Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science To Tackle the Climate Crisis*, 86 Fed. Reg. 7,037 (Jan 25, 2021).

¹⁵ *Id.* at § 4.

¹⁶ Secretary of the Interior, Order No. 3395, *Temporary Suspension of Delegated Authority* (Jan. 20, 2021).

¹⁷ *Id.* at § 3(g).

¹⁸ Secretary of the Interior, Order No. 3401, *Comprehensive Analysis and Temporary Halt on all Activities in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Relating to the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program* (June 1, 2021).

career attorneys within the DOI's Solicitor's office. These attorneys met at least three times each week with professional staff at the BLM and FWS offices in Alaska.

This painstaking process was done to ensure that the 2020 final EIS comported with each and every law and regulation governing DOI, including section 20001 of the Tax Act. An additional analysis of the entire Program was unnecessary, as was the abrupt cancellation of the leases issued with respect to the Program.

As Members of Congress with oversight responsibilities over the very legislative language that you believe DOI "failed" to properly interpret, we can assure you that, despite the simple fact that you voted against the Tax Act, the 2020 final EIS and ROD reflect Congress' intent. It is clear that such "legal deficiencies" merely reflect your opinion and the draft SEIS is a product of political motive, rather than fact and the letter of the law.

II. THE SCOPE OF THE SECRETARY'S AUTHORITY

It is important to detail the scope of authority of the Secretary's authorities before detailing the technical deficiencies with the draft SEIS. As discussed, section 20001 of the Tax Act explicitly requires that the Secretary conduct *at least* two lease sales in the 1002 Area, staggered over a 7-year period.¹⁹ The draft SEIS, however, fails to point out that Congress included two *separate* deadlines for each of those sales. Rather, the draft SEIS simply says that both must occur by December 22, 2024.²⁰

BLM has effectively not met its statutory obligation to conduct the first lease sale by December 22, 2021 in cancelling the leases that were issued pursuant to that sale. BLM is consequently now behind on that schedule, and must hold two lease sales, the first of which should be held immediately given Congress' mandate. We therefore request that BLM provide us detailed information as to how it plans to meet the schedule required in section 20001(c) of the Tax Act.

More importantly, the Tax Act only provides the Secretary with the authority to "manage" the Program and "administer" it in a manner similar to that of the oil and gas leasing Program in the NPR-A.²¹ To that end, the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (NPRPA), the statute governing the oil and gas leasing program in the NPR-A, only provides the Secretary with the authority to "direct or assent to the suspension of operations and production."²² The only time the NPRPA contemplates the termination of leases is under specific, limited circumstances that are beyond the control of the lessee.²³ It is clear that neither the Tax Act nor the NPRPA delegate you the authority or discretion to terminate a lease, and your actions constitute an abuse of administrative power and violate the law.

¹⁹ *Supra* note 8.

²⁰ Draft Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement at § 1.3.

²¹ Tax Act at § 20001(b)(3).

²² 42 U.S.C. § 6506a(k)(2).

²³ *Id.* at § 6506a(i).

III. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is important to note again that these comments are rushed, incomplete, and provided solely at this time due to DOI's refusal to extend the public comment period for the draft SEIS, as well as the fact that DOI has decided to open multiple comment periods at the same time on issues of critical importance to Alaska, inundating Alaskans with thousands upon thousands of pages of technical information to review in an extremely short period of time. Despite those significant limitations, a cursory review of the draft SEIS reveals a range of technical deficiencies that DOI must address.

It is clear that BLM did not consider Congress' direction in establishing the Program in the Tax Act in its draft SEIS. Section 20001 clearly states that BLM is required to "establish and administer a competitive oil and gas leasing program" in the 1002 Area.²⁴ BLM's actions, however, have had the opposite effect and do nothing more than create a "chilling effect" and instability within the Program, particularly as it relates to the second lease sale that BLM is required to hold by the end of next year. It is hard to believe that DOI's goal is anything other than undermining the Program and convincing no one to bid.

The Executive Summary, for example, reiterates the "alleged deficiencies" that you have cited as the rationale for this prolonged and unnecessary effort.²⁵ Such subjective, pre-decisional statements are political in nature and inconsistent with the purpose and need of the Program. One can only conclude that the use of generalized statements like this are a maneuver designed to implement a political agenda rather than the law.

Further, BLM followed the requirements of NEPA in 2020, when it considered maximum acreage disturbance in order to disclose the maximum amount of environmental impacts the Program would cause in the 1002 Area. This was based on their alternatives analysis, which ranged from the "no action" alternative to a maximum development scenario. Yet your statement regarding "alleged deficiencies" is broad and does not provide specific information as to how that analysis is deficient.

BLM's best option for administering a competitive oil and gas leasing program is to therefore abandon this effort in lieu of re-adopting "Alternative B" from the ROD and reinstating the cancelled leases, which will allow the Program to flourish.

A. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE "PURPOSE AND NEED" SECTION

Congress clearly intended that BLM permit oil and gas development, through the establishment and administration of a competitive oil and gas leasing program, in the 1002 Area that is protective of environmental and cultural resources. Indeed, the Tax Act amends ANILCA to explicitly "provide for an oil and gas program in the Coastal Plain."²⁶ Such protections are reflected by limitations on the amount of surface acres included in the Program and the fact that

²⁴ Tax Act at § 20001(b)(2)(A).

²⁵ Draft SEIS at ES-1.

²⁶ Tax Act at § 20001(b)(2)(b)(iii).

Congress explicitly required the Program be administered in the same fashion as the oil and gas leasing program that Congress established in the NPR-A.

The “Purpose and Need” section of the draft SEIS is a fundamental aspect of the NEPA process. BLM, however, states that the “Purpose and Need” of the draft SEIS is:

Purpose: The joint lead agencies are undertaking this Leasing SEIS to inform the BLM’s administration of the oil and gas leasing program in the Coastal Plain consistent with PL 115-97.

Need: Section 20001 of PL 115-97 requires the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the BLM, to establish and administer a competitive oil and gas program for the leasing, development, production, and transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain area within the Arctic Refuge. Further, Section 20001(c)(1) of PL 115-97 requires that at least two lease sales be held by December 22, 2024, and that each sale offer for lease at least 400,000 acres of the highest hydrocarbon potential (HCP) lands within the Coastal Plain, allowing for up to 2,000 surface acres of federal land to be covered by production and support facilities. Any oil and gas program alternative must consider all five statutory purposes of the Arctic Refuge, none of which are superseded by any other.²⁷

The “Purpose and Need” section of the draft SEIS is vague and does not articulate the purpose *or* need for a new, comprehensive analysis of the Program. Rather, there is no reasoned explanation for the draft SEIS, and the exercise to “inform BLM’s administration” of the Program appears to be designed to allow BLM, under a new administration, to go back and select a different alternative based on political motives. This becomes abundantly clear when you consider that the “purpose” of the draft SEIS is the same “purpose” that BLM previously provided for in the 2020 final EIS and ROD. If there are truly “legal deficiencies” serving as the rationale for the draft SEIS, then BLM must clearly articulate those details in this section.

BLM and the FWS also fail to provide any information on how they will manage the lands within the 1002 Area. The agencies also fail to provide the reader with the scientific information necessary to support the need for such analysis, leading one to conclude that this undertaking is a result of a political disagreement that Congress settled in 2017.

There is no “need” for a new, comprehensive analysis and the reference included in the draft SEIS is misleading and inaccurate. For example, BLM fails to identify what constitutes a “competitive oil and gas leasing program,” as required by the Tax Act. Rather, it contradicts the draft SEIS in its entirety by substituting “oil and gas *program* alternative” for “oil and gas *leasing* alternative.”²⁸ The “need” section does not even cite the five laws governing the Program, a fundamental flaw by any account.

²⁷ Draft SEIS at ES-2.

²⁸ *Id.* (stating “Any oil and gas program alternative must consider all five statutory purposes of the Arctic Refuge, none of which are superseded by any other.”).

Indeed, the “need” for the draft SEIS specifically contradicts the “Decisions to be Made” section. The 2020 final EIS determined which tracts would be leased first, yet the draft SEIS offers the same exact tracts for leasing. It is illogical to think that the draft SEIS will dictate which tracts will be offered when that decision has already been made. BLM also mentions the terms and conditions being applied to leases issued pursuant to the Program, but remains silent on the competitive nature of those terms and conditions. BLM should therefore clearly define what constitutes a competitive program and how it intends to support that program. The current document simply does not support a competitive oil and gas leasing program in the 1002 Area.

To date, no court has found any legal deficiencies with the final EIS, and given the time that has lapsed between 2020 and now, if such deficiencies existed, the Courts would have considered those deficiencies on the merits. There is clearly no need for the draft SEIS and BLM should therefore re-adopt “Alternative B” from the 2020 ROD and reinstate the cancelled leases.

B. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE “SCOPING” SECTION

The draft SEIS is also a product of a lack of transparency. BLM states that the FWS “was not yet confirmed as a joint lead agency during the SEIS public scoping period.”²⁹ DOI, however, makes it clear in the draft SEIS that the FWS will manage the surface estate while the BLM will manage the oil and gas leasing program. BLM misled the public on who the responsible officials were in order to identify issues associated with scoping, given the FWS was not yet identified as a co-lead.³⁰ Congress intended that BLM would manage the Program and did not identify any lead role for the FWS.

C. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE “ALTERNATIVES” SECTION

The draft SEIS is also redundant with respect to the proposed alternatives. Following its alternatives analysis, BLM must make a decision that is consistent with the Tax Act and take into consideration the purpose of ANWR. BLM, however, utilizes almost the same exact set of alternatives that were included in the 2020 final EIS and ROD. For example, Alternatives “B” and “C” both include nothing more than *minor* edits to the alternatives included in the prior documents. The proposed Alternative “B,” however, now includes additional required operating procedures and no surface occupancy stipulations that will make it nearly impossible to administer the Program.

Even more apparent, however, is that Alternative “D” utilizes the same exact analysis as Alternative “D2” in the 2020 final EIS and ROD. BLM states that Alternative “D” corrects legal deficiencies by adequately analyzing a reasonable range of alternatives. BLM cannot be correcting those alleged deficiencies, however, if it is using the same or nearly the same alternatives in which those alleged deficiencies are found.

²⁹ Draft SEIS at ES-3.

³⁰ *Id.*

When viewed together, the alternatives that BLM has proposed fail to reflect the actual “Purpose and Need” of the Program and expand the scope of restrictions on production well beyond the 2,000 acre-limit that Congress included in the Tax Act.

One can therefore conclude that either the 2020 final EIS contained no legal deficiencies and no further analysis is required, or that BLM’s inclusion of Alternative “D” in the draft SEIS is a predetermined outcome based, again, on subjective political revision. BLM should instead remain consistent with itself and re-adopt Alternative “B” from the 2020 final EIS.

D. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE “HYPOTHETICAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO” SECTION

BLM’s use of the “hypothetical development scenario” fails to minimize environmental impacts, which DOI would be expected to minimize through the lease development process. Nor does it analyze a reasonably foreseeable development scenario or an economically feasible leasing and drilling program, which would be consistent with the plain text of the Tax Act.

Rather, the “hypothetical development scenario” serves only to make the development of the Program impossible. It has been proven by the State of Alaska that companies can operate economically and competitively in the Arctic within a reasonable and competitive permitting structure. BLM’s statement to the contrary is therefore false and subjective as there is no actual data to support such an assertion.

E. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE “IMPACT ANALYSIS” SECTION

BLM makes a number of vague, negative, and adverse assertions regarding impacts to subsistence in the draft SEIS. For example, BLM fails to include supporting data and analysis regarding the specific impacts they cite, such as the impact that an access road *may* have on a caribou herd. Caribou herds and other species, however, can safely co-exist and increase in numbers while responsible oil production occurs on the North Slope of Alaska. BLM has included evidence to support this assertion in prior regulatory efforts.

The draft SEIS also fails to point out that hunters in the NPR-A and Prudhoe Bay regularly utilize roads and other infrastructure in developed areas to successfully conduct subsistence activities such as berry picking, fishing, and hunting. That infrastructure has provided easier and cheaper access, while increasing transportation safety to traditional grounds.

BLM also applied new standards in the draft SEIS that are inconsistent with a leasing program. For example, leases, and activity conducted pursuant to those leases, do not impact any of the resources that BLM cites in the draft SEIS. The activities that BLM cites would, however, need to be analyzed in a project-level environmental assessment or EIS for seismic activities or eventual development. A lease is nothing more than a paperwork exercise conducted at the State and Arctic District BLM offices, and BLM should not exaggerate its impacts.

F. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE “CONSULTATION” SECTION

As reflected in our letter requesting a comment period extension, we are deeply frustrated by the Department’s selective application of its consultation policies, and its contention that consultation has occurred with affected Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs). During subsequent conversations with our staff, however, BLM admitted the obvious truth: no consultation took place during the development of the draft SEIS, because the Department did not believe there was anything to consult about. In addition, the Regional Alaska Native Corporation for the area, the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), has been denied the opportunity to consult or even meet on the draft SEIS on at least seven occasions. Further, an initial public meeting went forward in Utqiagvik despite just four days’ of public notice because a reporter from a French publication was present. KIC was only recently given a chance for a meeting, but no responsible officials were present.

The State of Alaska, with the exception of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), has not been consulted regarding the draft SEIS. Nor have the vacated leaseholders or the Alaska Congressional Delegation, despite our leadership in crafting the governing law for and overseeing the administration of the Program.

DOI, BLM, and FWS have not met their obligations for consultation or their own standards of conduct—lending further evidence to the notion that the draft SEIS is a *fait accompli*, and the fulfillment of a political campaign pledge rather than an attempt to comply with federal law.

IV. CONCLUSION

The draft SEIS remains a non-solution to a non-problem—a waste of Department resources and taxpayer dollars. The Department fails to articulate a clear need for the draft SEIS and further fails to outline deficiencies in the Program that supposedly justify its existence. The Department’s proposals are inconsistent with both congressional intent and the plain text of the Tax Act, seeking to turn the Program on its head from competitive to deliberately unattractive leasing. The Department pays no attention to the impacts those changes would have on Alaskans, especially the Alaska Natives who live on the North Slope who stand to be most negatively impacted by them. The Department has not ever bothered to engage in meaningful consultation with those Alaskans.

All of this cements the notion that decisions on the SEIS have already been made at DOI Headquarters in Washington, D.C., with Alaska BLM and FWS left to go through the motions to try to explain and justify them. Suffice to say, this is not how Americans expect the Department to implement the laws that Congress passes, nor is it how we expect the Department to engage with Alaskans.

We therefore insist that BLM rescind the draft SEIS and reinstate the final EIS and ROD that your career staff prepared in 2020, selecting BLM's same "Preferred Alternative B" for the responsible development of a small portion of the non-wilderness 1002 Area.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Mary Sattler Peltola
Representative for All Alaska

CC: *Laura Daniel Davis, Acting Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior*
 Tracey Stone-Manning, Director, Bureau of Land Management
 Nada Culver, Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management
 Steve Cohn, Director, BLM-Alaska



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

June 1, 2021

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

DECISION

Alaska Industrial Development	:	Oil and Gas Leases
and Export Authority	:	AA095889
813 West Northern Lights Blvd.	:	AA095890
Anchorage, Alaska 99503	:	AA095893
	:	AA095897
	:	AA095898
	:	AA095900
	:	AA095901

Suspension of Operations and Production

On January 20, 2021, Executive Order 13990 directed that the Secretary of the Interior “place a temporary moratorium on activities of the Federal Government relating to the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program” and “review the program and ... conduct a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the oil and gas program.”

After conducting the required review of the program, the Department identified defects in the underlying record supporting the leases, including, but not limited to: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives in the environmental impact statement (EIS); and failure in the August 17, 2020, Record of Decision (ROD) to properly interpret Section 20001 of Public Law 115-97 (Tax Act). In addition to these specific defects, the Department has identified several areas for which additional analysis may either address a potential legal defect or, at a minimum, serve NEPA’s purpose to meaningfully inform the decisionmaker as to the environmental consequences of federal action. These include, but are not limited to, the EIS’s treatment of foreign greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and compliance with section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Further, any new NEPA analysis involving an additional alternative may also involve connected reviews, such as under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

#1127895.1

Specifically, the Coastal Plain Leasing Program EIS failed to analyze a reasonable range of alternatives in that it did not analyze an alternative, besides the no action alternative, that involved fewer than 2,000 acres of surface development. The Tax Act provides for authorization of *up to* 2,000 acres to be covered by “production and support facilities.”¹ However, inclusion of the phrase “up to” indicates that less than 2,000 acres may be authorized in appropriate circumstances, such as for alternatives that make large areas unavailable for leasing or surface development and thus may require fewer production and support facilities. The explanation in the ROD for not considering such an alternative – that the Tax Act provides a *mandate* to the BLM requiring it to approve production and support facilities up to that limit – is both implausible and contrary to Congressional intent, which is itself a legal error.

While not identified as a legal defect at this point, the Department recognizes that the recent Ninth Circuit opinion involving the Liberty Project in Alaska, *Center for Biological Diversity v. Bernhardt*, issued on December 7, 2020, has implications for the analysis of foreign greenhouse gas emissions in many of its programs and projects, including those already in litigation, like the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The Department is carefully evaluating its approach to this issue and may later identify this issue as an additional specific legal error depending on the resolution of pending court cases involving similar issues.

Based on the identified defects noted above with the NEPA documents underlying the competitive lease sale that resulted in the issuance of the lease(s) referenced above, and in exercise of the Department’s inherent authority to correct legal errors, the Department has concluded that it is necessary to suspend the above-referenced lease(s) and complete further environmental analysis under NEPA, consistent with the direction provided in Executive Order 13990 and Secretarial Order 3401. The BLM will undertake this additional NEPA analysis to determine whether the leases should be reaffirmed, voided or subject to additional mitigation measures. The BLM will publish a notice of intent to begin this process to undertake additional analysis, complete necessary consultation, and correct defects in the EIS and ROD. When complete, the BLM will issue a new decision concerning this suspension of operations and production (SOP) of the above-referenced leases.

This SOP is effective the first day of June 2021. While this SOP is in place, no lease operations may transpire on the leases, the terms of the leases are tolled, and lease rentals are suspended. If you have any questions, please contact Nada Wolff Culver at nculver@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Laura Daniel-
Davis

Digitally signed by Laura
Daniel-Davis
Date: 2021.06.01
16:17:14 -04'00'

Laura Daniel-Davis
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management

¹ Section 20001(c)(3) of the Tax Act provides: “SURFACE DEVELOPMENT—In administering this section, the Secretary shall authorize up to 2,000 surface acres of Federal land on the Coastal Plain to be covered by production and support facilities (including airstrips and any area covered by gravel berms or piers for support of pipelines) during the term of the leases under the oil and gas program under this section.”

MSR Executive Summaries

June 16, 2023

Background: To communicate estimates and assumptions more accurately through leadership and OMB, brief narrative executive summaries were requested to accompany the commodity estimates. The executive summaries should answer the following questions:

- a.) What are the key assumptions included in your estimates?
- b.) How are these assumptions different than what was assumed in the last President's Budget?
- c.) What key policy decision and/or legislation direction are reflected in your assumptions?
- d.) How much of the estimated increase/decrease over the 10yr budget window is a result of the new economic assumptions vs other programmatic/policy assumptions?
- e.) How do your assumptions reflect current Administration priorities?

Please see attached spreadsheet (Background Info - Change from PB24 to MSR.xlsx) for a more detailed breakdown of the updates.

Executive Summary, Onshore Oil and Gas

Policy assumptions remain constant since the initial FY 2024 President's Budget was submitted for BLM oil and gas royalty estimates, while economic assumptions were lowered somewhat due to OMB forecasting. Both the initial and mid-session FY 2024 President's Budgets reflect key policy decisions directed by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which increased royalties, rents, and bonuses on leases issued after August 6, 2022. The MSR updates the BLM oil and gas royalty estimates to reflect lower estimated pricing forecasts, as referenced in the OMB economic assumptions, and lower production estimates as provided by the Energy Information Administration Outlook (EIA) since the initial FY 2024 President's Budget. Of the \$5.5 billion estimated decrease in the 10yr Gas Royalties, approximately \$4.5 billion is attributed to lower estimated pricing forecasts; the remaining \$1.0 billion is attributed to lower production estimates as provided by the EIA Outlook at MSR24.

Regarding oil and gas rents and bonuses, the policy and economic assumptions remained relatively constant. For the next 10 years, rents are set at \$3 per acre for years 1-2, \$5 per acre for years 3-8, and \$15 per acre for years 9-10 as stipulated by the IRA. For projected bonus bids per acre, the BLM used a simple regression based on previous years' bid per acres to forecast future bids.

Executive Summary, Geothermal

Policy and economic assumptions have remained constant since the initial FY 2024 President's Budget was submitted for geothermal revenue estimates. The estimates for the three revenue streams – rents, bonuses, and royalties – were provided based on average annual revenue over 10 years. No policy or legislative changes are expected.

Executive Summary, Coal

The updated coal revenue royalty estimates reflect Administration policy affecting coal, including the additional time to complete the required analysis in consideration for lifting the coal moratorium, and modest increases in production projections from the U.S. Energy Information Administration and Wood Mackenzie. The coal leasing moratorium is expected to be lifted after FY 2025, upon the completion of

an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which began with a Notice of Intent (NOI) published on May 1, 2023. The FY 2024 President's Budget assumed that the coal leasing moratorium would continue through the end of FY 2025.

The new Coal estimates also reflect the current changes in coal prices compared to those previously submitted with the FY 2024 President's Budget. Given that coal prices have remained relatively stable with previous prices submitted with the FY 2024 President's Budget, there is no significant change in Coal bonus estimates reflected in the new estimates.

Executive Summary, NPR-A

The new National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) oil and gas royalty estimates for existing leases are updated to reflect current incremental increases in Brent crude oil values and approval of the Willow Master Development Plan (Willow Plan) Record of Decision (ROD), which provided increased estimates for the volume of production. In addition, approximately 2 years of production and corresponding royalties are eliminated from the MSR FY24 due to seasonal construction constraints on the North Slope of Alaska.

Production under the Willow Plan is currently anticipated to start in 2027 instead of 2025, as previously reflected in the FY 2024 President's Budget. Further, full production estimates under the Willow Plan are now at 180,000 barrels of oil per day (bopd) compared to the previous full production estimate used in the FY 2024 President's Budget of 100,000 bopd.

The estimates also do not anticipate the issuance of additional leases in the NPR-A in the future.

Executive Summary, NPR-2

Policy and economic assumptions have remained constant since the initial FY 2024 President's Budget was submitted for the Naval Petroleum Reserve 2 (NPR2) revenue estimates. The estimates for the two revenue streams – rents and royalties – were provided based on existing lease and royalty agreements. No policy or legislative changes are expected.

The estimates also anticipate that no new additional leases in the NPR-2 will be issued in the future.

Executive Summary, ANWR

Policy and economic assumptions remain constant since the initial FY 2024 President's Budget was submitted for oil and gas activities in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The Tax Act (Public Law 115-97) called for two lease sales to occur by 2024. Nine leases were sold at the first sale on Jan. 6, 2021, but two were returned for full refunds, and DOI suspended the remaining seven leases. No additional rental revenues from the suspended leases are included in the current estimate.

Underlying assumptions about the success of a mandated second sale in FY 2024 are constant, anticipating \$1,930,610 annually in rents and \$6,444,000 in bonuses in 2023. No production is anticipated in the next 10 years.

From: "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>

To: BLM_AK_ALL_EMPLOYEES <BLM_AK_ALL_EMPLOYEES@blm.gov>

Subject: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 21:08:56 +0000

Dear BLM Alaska Team -

Major news from the Department today. Big thank you to everyone who has been working so hard on the Coastal Plain Supplemental EIS project and getting it to this stage!!


Please direct any and all media inquiries to the following folks:

- Melinda Bolton for the Coastal Plain Supplemental EIS - mbolton@blm.gov
- Bonnie Million for the NPR-A Rulemaking - bmillion@blm.gov
- Emma Roach for the Coastal Plain leases - eroach@blm.gov

Thank you!

Steven M. Cohn
Alaska State Director
Bureau of Land Management
scohn@blm.gov
Cell: 907-202-0055
Office: 907-271-5080

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 U.S. Department of the Interior: News Release

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023
Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

#1127914.1

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

"With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem," said **Secretary Haaland**. "President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations."

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, "[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program." S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department's determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

###

About the U.S. Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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#1127914.4

From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>

To: "Skibo, Bobbie Jo" <Bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>, Jill Rush <rush@narf.org>

Cc: Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>, Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>, "Boario, Sara D" <sara_boario@fws.gov>, "Cebrian, Merben R" <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>, Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>, "Cohn, Steven M" <scohn@blm.gov>, Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>, "Kuhns, Stephanie L" <skuhns@blm.gov>, "Matt Newman Cell" <mnewman@narf.org>, "Sweet, Serena E" <ssweet@blm.gov>, "Tonya Garnett" <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>, Megan Condon <mcondon@narf.org>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Weather related cancellation/Bobbie Jo and Mic

Date: Mon, 13 Nov 2023 23:55:29 +0000

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Hi Bobbie Jo:

When does Stephanie, Joe and Serena arrive in Arctic Village?

Who does Tim work for? BIA? Or BLM?

We look forward to a productive meeting.

Thank you for informing us of your change of plans due to weather.

Sincerely,

Rob

Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council, Native Village of Hooper Bay, and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (907)388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

On Nov 13, 2023, at 2:31 PM, Skibo, Bobbie Jo <Bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov> wrote:

Hello All,

I am sorry to say that Mic Isham and I will not be able to make the flight tonight and corresponding charter tomorrow so we will not be in attendance. Our offices are shut down due to the intense snow load we received over the last 24 hours and as a result are not permitted to drive for work purposes (Mic and I both live an hour+ outside of Anchorage). I understand that arrangements were made for our technical advisor Tim (from BIA) to attend virtually on Teams. I am hoping that, if all technology works, that I will be able to attend this way too 😊 At this time, if all goes

#1127915.1

well with their flights, Stephanie, Serena, and Joe will be making it in person. Merben is planning on coming on Thursday. Please except my sincere apology but safety comes first. Thank you for understanding, Bobbie Jo and Mic

From: Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>

Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 10:52 PM

To: Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>

Cc: Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>; Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Arctic Village school contact needed

Do you have an agenda?

Thank you,
Crystal

On Tue, Oct 31, 2023 at 12:47 PM Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com> wrote:

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 31, 2023, at 11:45 AM, Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov> wrote:

Good morning, Tiffany,

Can you please confirm that there is wifi at the meeting hall? We will need to connect via MS Teams and it would be good to know that there's wifi available.

Thanks!
Merben

Merben R. Cebrian
Refuge Manager, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
101 12th Avenue, Rm 236 Fairbanks, AK 99701
+1 907 388 6751
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arctic>

From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 28, 2023 2:37 PM

To: Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com>

Cc: Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Galen Gilbert <galengilbert257@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Crystal Frank <crystal.frank@arcticvillage.gov>; Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Arctic Village school contact needed

#1127915.2

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Excellent. Thank you

Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

> On Oct 28, 2023, at 12:33 PM, Tiffany Yatlin <wellnesstribalcourt22@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Joe and merben can stay in the tribal court

>

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Oct 28, 2023, at 11:07 AM, Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com> wrote:

>>

>> Hi Crystal, Chief Gilbert, Tiffany and Tonya

>>

>> BLM and USFW will need lodging at the school Nov 13-17th for 5 people. Can you please comment us with the school?

>>

>> BLM: Stephanie Kuhns, Serena Sweet, Joe Keeney

>> FWS: Bobbie Jo Skibo, Merben Cebrian

>>

>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

>>

>>

>>>> On Oct 26, 2023, at 3:00 PM, Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov> wrote:

>>>>

>>>> BLM: Stephanie Kuhns, Serena Sweet, Joe Keeney

>>>> FWS: Bobbie Jo Skibo, Merben Cebrian

>>>>

>>>> Rob, are you able to assist us with coordinating lodging at the school while we're there?

>>>>

>>>> Thank you,

>>>>

>>>> Stephanie

>>>>

>>>> -----Original Message-----

>>>> From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>

>>>> Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2023 11:33 AM

>>>> To: Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>

>>>> Cc: Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>; Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>

>>> Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Time Sensitive_106 meeting scheduling
>>>
>>> Thank you very much Stephanie.
>>>
>>> Who will be attending on behalf on BLM and USFW.
>>>
>>> Much appreciated.
>>>
>>> Rob
>>>
>>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com
>>>
>>>
>>>> On Oct 26, 2023, at 11:29 AM, Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov> wrote:
>>>>
>>>> Hello Rob,
>>>>
>>>> We can meet in Arctic Village these days. The current plan is to arrive on Monday 11/13 and depart Friday 11/17.
>>>>
>>>> Thank you,
>>>>
>>>> Stephanie
>>>>
>>>> -----Original Message-----
>>>> From: Rob Rosenfeld <robrosey@gmail.com>
>>>> Sent: Monday, October 23, 2023 7:50 PM
>>>> To: Cebrian, Merben R <merben_cebrian@fws.gov>; Kuhns, Stephanie L <skuhns@blm.gov>; Sweet, Serena E <ssweet@blm.gov>; Skibo, Bobbie Jo <bobbiejo_skibo@fws.gov>
>>>> Cc: Matt Newman Cell <mnewman@narf.org>; Charlene Stern <charlenestern@gmail.com>; Tonya Garnett <tonyagarnett@hotmail.com>; Cohn, Steven M <scohn@blm.gov>; Boario, Sara D <sara_boario@fws.gov>
>>>> Subject: [EXTERNAL] Time Sensitive_106 meeting scheduling
>>>>
>>>>
>>>>
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>>>>
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> Hi Serena, Stephanie, Merben and Bobbie Jo:
>>>>
>>>> I hope this finds everyone well.
>>>>
>>>> I'm writing to follow up on our mutual commitment to set dates for the next 106 meeting in Arctic Village.
>>>>
>>>> In Arctic Village we all committed to agreeing on dates for a 106 consultation.
>>>>
>>>> The Tribes would like to meet in Arctic Village November 14-17th. Bringing the BLM Archaeologist, Joe keeney will be great.
>>>>
>>>> Please do let us know ASAP if these dates will work?

>>>>

>>>> Thank you very much.

>>>>

>>>> Rob

>>>>

>>>> Rob Rosenfeld, MA, Consultant for Native American Rights Fund, Evansville Tribal Council, Tanana Tribal Council, Alatna Village Council and Advisor for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. (907) 388-2683, robrosey@gmail.com

>>>>

From: "Alonso, Shantha R" <shantha_alonso@ios.doi.gov>

To: Justin Meuse <Justin_Meuse@twos.org>, "Daniel-Davis, Laura E" <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>, "Stone-Manning, Tracy M" <tstonemanning@blm.gov>, "Williams, Martha M" <martha_williams@fws.gov>, "Feldgus, Steven H" <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>, "Culver, Nada L" <nculver@blm.gov>, "Gray, Morgan" <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>, "Rezaeerood, Paniz" <paniz_rezaeerood@ios.doi.gov>, "matthew.g.lee-ashley@ceq.eop.gov" <matthew.g.lee-ashley@ceq.eop.gov>, "Hardin, Sally A. EOP/CEQ" <Sally.A.Hardin@ceq.eop.gov>

Cc: Jamie Williams <Jamie_Williams@twos.org>, Lydia Weiss <lydia_weiss@twos.org>

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] TWS statement on DOI announcements in Alaska

Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 20:12:04 +0000

Inline-Images: image001.jpg; image002.png; Outlook-5m0g2qkr.png

Hi Justin,
Thank you for sharing!
Best,



Shantha Ready Alonso *(she/her)*
Director, Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (OIEA)
Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
202-538-2965 (mobile)

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From: Justin Meuse <Justin_Meuse@twos.org>

Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:36 PM

To: Daniel-Davis, Laura E <laura_daniel-davis@ios.doi.gov>; Stone-Manning, Tracy M <tstonemanning@blm.gov>; Williams, Martha M <martha_williams@fws.gov>; Feldgus, Steven H <steve_feldgus@ios.doi.gov>; Culver, Nada L <nculver@blm.gov>; Alonso, Shantha R <shantha_alonso@ios.doi.gov>; Gray, Morgan <Leslie_Morgan_Gray@ios.doi.gov>; Rezaeerood, Paniz <paniz_rezaeerood@ios.doi.gov>; matthew.g.lee-ashley@ceq.eop.gov <matthew.g.lee-ashley@ceq.eop.gov>; Hardin, Sally A. EOP/CEQ <Sally.A.Hardin@ceq.eop.gov>

Cc: Jamie Williams <Jamie_Williams@twos.org>; Lydia Weiss <lydia_weiss@twos.org>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] TWS statement on DOI announcements in Alaska

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Good afternoon, everyone –

Thank you for the strong conservation and climate announcements in the Arctic today. Please see our statement below.

Best,

Justin Meuse (he/him)
Government Relations Director, Climate & Energy
The Wilderness Society | **The Wilderness Society Action Fund**

#1127917.1



Biden administration takes sweeping steps for Arctic conservation

Contacts:

Tim Woody, (907) 223-2443, tim_woody@tw.s.org

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA (September 6, 2023) – In an extraordinary trio of announcements today, the Biden administration renewed its emphasis on addressing conservation and climate change to protect America’s Arctic by:

- Canceling the sole remaining oil leases held by the state of Alaska in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, issued illegally by the Trump Administration.
- Issuing a [draft supplemental environmental impact statement](#) that recognizes conservation needs and Indigenous rights in the Arctic Refuge region.
- Shoring up [protections for designated Special Areas](#) in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, also known as the Western Arctic.

In response, The Wilderness Society issued the following statements.

From Wilderness Society President Jamie Williams:

“It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of today’s announcements for Arctic conservation,” Williams said. “President Trump’s Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was an underhanded ploy that opened one of the last great wild landscapes in America to destructive development, and resulted in a failed lease sale that was sloppily and hurriedly held in the waning days of the Trump administration as a gift to the fossil-fuel industry.

“But today – with positive announcements on both the Arctic Refuge and the Western Arctic – the Biden administration took huge steps to protect vast, beautiful landscapes for future generations,” Williams added. “More acres are set aside for conservation in the Western Arctic and, once again, the Arctic Refuge is free of oil leases. Our climate is a bit safer and there is renewed hope for permanently protecting one of the last great wild landscapes in America.”

From Karlin Itchoak, The Wilderness Society's senior regional director for Alaska:

"Oil drilling on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge endangers not only one of the most beautiful and intact landscapes left in America, but it poses an existential threat to Alaska Native communities that depend on clean air and water, and plentiful subsistence resources such as a healthy Porcupine Caribou Herd. We are grateful to the Biden administration – which has shown a strong commitment to conservation and Indigenous rights – for taking these meaningful steps.

"We appreciate that the administration is recognizing the importance of what the Gwich'in know as *lizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit* – The Sacred Place Where Life Begins – and we call on Congress to repeal the Arctic Refuge oil and gas leasing provision in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and take action to permanently protect the coastal plain for future generations."

Despite no major oil companies bidding in the 2021 lease sale, and [every major bank in America](#) announcing policies against financing drilling projects in the Arctic Refuge, another lease sale for the 1.5 million-acre coastal plain is required by the 2017 legislation, which can be overturned only by an act of Congress.

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The Wilderness Society is the leading conservation organization uniting people to care for America's wild places. Founded in 1935, and now with more than one million members and supporters, The Wilderness Society has led the effort to permanently protect 111 million acres of wilderness and to ensure sound management of our shared national lands. www.wilderness.org.


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From: BLM Press <blm_press@blm.gov>
To: "blm_wo_100@blm.gov" <blm_wo_100@blm.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska
Date: Wed, 06 Sep 2023 20:16:53 +0000

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 U.S. Department of the Interior: News Release

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Takes Major Steps to Protect Arctic Lands and Wildlife in Alaska

Department of the Interior cancels oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; proposes new protections in National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

WASHINGTON — The Biden-Harris administration today announced significant steps to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge) and more than 13 million acres in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). These bold actions to protect the Arctic region build on President Biden's [historic conservation and climate agenda](#), which already includes protecting more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters across the nation, and securing the Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history.

In the Arctic Refuge, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland has authorized the cancellation of the remaining seven oil and gas leases issued by the previous administration in the Coastal Plain. The leases were suspended in June 2021 following the issuance of [Secretary's Order \(S.O.\) 3401](#), which identified "multiple legal deficiencies in the underlying record supporting the leases."

In addition, the Department today [proposed new regulations](#) for the NPR-A that would ensure maximum protection for the more than 13 million acres of Special Areas in the reserve, while supporting subsistence activities for Alaska Native communities. The proposed rule, [previewed in March 2023](#), adds to President Biden's actions to protect millions of acres of lands and waters in the Arctic, including withdrawing approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea, ensuring the entire United States Arctic Ocean is off limits to new oil and gas leasing.

"With climate change warming the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the planet, we must do everything within our control to meet the highest standards of care to protect this fragile ecosystem," said Secretary Haaland. "President Biden is delivering on the most ambitious climate and conservation agenda in history. The steps we are taking today further

#1127919.1

that commitment, based on the best available science and in recognition of the Indigenous Knowledge of the original stewards of this area, to safeguard our public lands for future generations.”

Lease Cancellations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Following passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Tax Act), the previous Administration held an oil and gas lease sale in the Arctic Refuge’s Coastal Plain on January 6, 2021, and issued 10-year leases on nine tracts covering more than 430,000 acres. On January 21, 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 13990, directing the Department to review oil and gas leasing in the Refuge, “[i]n light of the alleged legal deficiencies underlying the program.” S.O. 3401 directed a new, comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Coastal Plain Leasing Program. Since that time, two of the issued leases have been canceled and refunded at the request of the lessees. The remaining seven leases held by the sole lessee covered 365,000 acres in the Coastal Plain.

The Secretary of the Interior has the authority to cancel or suspend oil and gas leases issued in violation of a statute or regulation. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) released today by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed information supporting the Department’s determination that the 2021 lease sale was seriously flawed and based on a number of fundamental legal deficiencies, including: insufficient analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act, including failure to adequately analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and properly quantify downstream greenhouse gas emissions; and failure to properly interpret the Tax Act. Accordingly, Secretary Haaland has determined that the leases issued by the previous administration in the Arctic Refuge shall be cancelled.

Protections in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska

Extending from the northwest slope of the Brooks Range to the Arctic Coast, the NPR-A encompasses roughly 23 million acres of public land managed by the BLM. Tribal Nations have occupied lands now within the NPR-A since time immemorial, and over 40 Indigenous communities continue to rely on subsistence activities in the reserve, harvesting caribou, shore and waterbirds, and many other fish and wildlife species, with many communities subsisting primarily from food harvested from the NPR-A.

Under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act (NPRPA) of 1976, Congress directed the BLM to balance oil and gas development with the management and protection of sensitive landscapes – known as Special Areas – and surface resources across the reserve. The proposed rule is designed to assure maximum protection of Special Areas, as authorized under the NPRPA. The proposed rule would require that protections for Special Areas remain in place for as long as the values and characteristics in those areas are present, ensuring the durability of the protections into the future. The proposed rule also would require the BLM to review and gather public input – at least every five years – on whether existing special areas should be expanded, whether new special areas should be designated, and whether additional resources within special areas should be identified for protection. Upon finalization of the proposed rule, the Administration will follow this proposed process to inform the creation or expansion of additional special areas in the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would protect 13 million acres encompassed by the existing Special Areas by limiting future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon, and Peard Bay Special Areas – places collectively known for their globally significant intact habitat for wildlife, including grizzly and polar bears, caribou and hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. The rule would

establish an outright prohibition on any new leasing in 10.6 million acres, more than 40 percent of the NPR-A.

The proposed rule would raise the bar for development throughout the NPR-A by establishing clear guidelines that are consistent with provisions of the current management plan for the reserve, the [NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan](#) (IAP). This current management plan for the reserve was put in place in 2022, and effectively reversed the previous administration's IAP that sought to expand oil and gas leasing and development in the NPR-A and reduce protections for the Special Areas.

The proposed rulemaking would help protect subsistence uses throughout the NPR-A, responding to Alaska Native communities who have relied on the land, water and wildlife to support their way of life for thousands of years. It also advances the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to strengthening the role of Tribal governments in the management of public lands by encouraging the BLM to explore co-stewardship opportunities with Tribes for the Special Areas.

Seeking Public Comment

There will be a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft SEIS for the Coastal Plain. In developing the draft, the BLM and FWS engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders and used the best available data and science, including Indigenous Knowledge. For additional information, go to [BLM's eplanning page](#).

The proposed [NPR-A rule](#) and [map of the five NPR-A Special Areas](#) as delineated in the 2022 IAP, are available for preview. A forthcoming publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register will open a 60-day public comment period. During that time, the BLM will host in-person meetings in communities on the North Slope, as well as virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed rule. Details of those opportunities will be made available soon.

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About the U.S. Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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