

Comment Submission

Names and Addresses

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Comments

Comment Number: 1

Comment Title: Scholars for Defending the Arctic Refuge

Comment: BLM Public Scoping Comments:

We recently organized a letter campaign called Scholars for Defending the Arctic Refuge. Our letter has been endorsed by more than 500 scholars representing almost all 50 US states and 20 different countries. Their expertise ranges across more than 40 academic disciplines—from climate science, history, and economics to conservation biology, art, and Indigenous studies. We wrote this letter to demonstrate that the Arctic Refuge debate is not just about what happens to this one area of land in the northeastern corner of Alaska. It also connects to some of the most urgent issues of our time—including climate change, Indigenous human rights, and species extinction. The refuge debate has significant biological, cultural, and climate implications that extend well beyond the Coastal Plain.

Scientists have repeatedly warned that oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain would have catastrophic effects on the region's ecosystems and wildlife. One distinctive feature of this letter is that it has been supported not only by scientists but also by scholars from a wide range of other areas. This is because, as the letter explains, the Arctic Refuge issue encompasses science, ethics, and justice. Scholars from across the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world value the transnational and global significance of the refuge and do not want to see its Coastal Plain turned into an oilfield. This letter signals a robust record of international opposition to Arctic drilling.

On June 15, at the public hearing in Washington, DC, we entered this letter into the record. We are submitting again, because we have gained additional signers since then. (See the letter and list of signers attached as a PDF.)

On behalf of the more than 500 scholars who signed this letter, we ask that you drop plans to allow oil and gas exploration and drilling in the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain.

Yours sincerely,

Subhankar Banerjee
Professor of Art and Ecology
University of New Mexico

Finis Dunaway
Professor of History
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Attachment: Scholars for Defending the Arctic Refuge--BLM submission.pdf