



November 2, 2023

Serena Sweet
BLM Project Manager
BLM Alaska State Office
222 West 7th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99513

Dear Ms. Sweet:

The Alaska Chamber writes to request an extension on the comment period for the Coastal Plain Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and to oppose the unlawful cancellation of oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

The Alaska Chamber was founded in 1953, and our mission is to advocate for a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state.

The recently released Coastal Plain Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is 1,400 pages. Given such a sizeable document the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) should extend the comment period beyond November 7th to provide ample time for thorough review. The comment period timing also falls during important subsistence hunting seasons and key stakeholders are likely unavailable or unable to participate in the comment process.

The Alaska Chamber's top federal priority for years has been to support oil and gas exploration and development in Alaska's federal areas and to encourage and support responsible development of these valuable resources. Our reason for prioritizing this issue is simple: developing the 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and continued access in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR) would provide incredible opportunity for all Alaskans, especially economic opportunities.

The Coastal Plain was specifically identified by Congress, pursuant to Section 1002 of Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), for its potential for oil and natural gas resources. Oil and gas from the Non-Wilderness portion of the Coastal Plain is an important resource for meeting our nation's energy demands and achieving energy independence.

ANWR has incredible potential for oil and gas, more than 10 billion barrels by some government estimates. For reference, The Trans Alaska Pipeline has moved just more than 18 billion barrels of oil since start up more than 45 years ago, so the resource potential in ANWR is truly incredible. A project the size and scope of ANWR would create thousands of high-paying jobs for Alaskans. In addition, with the Point Thomson development fully operational just to the west of ANWR, the 1002 area is closer than ever to existing infrastructure and could feed into TAPS with a much smaller footprint than in years past.

Regaining energy independence for the United States remains an ambitious yet achievable goal but moves like lease cancellations and never-ending SEIS processes make it next to impossible. Cancelling oil and gas leases in ANWR erases our progress toward energy security and self-reliance. By locking away



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vast energy resources within our own borders, we unnecessarily handicap our nation's ability to meet its energy needs while simultaneously slowing an already drowsy national economy.

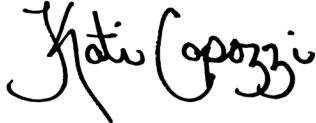
It is possible to pursue economic growth, energy independence, and environmental stewardship in a manner that benefits Alaskans and the entire nation. We have done it in Alaska for more than forty years. Jobs and socioeconomic benefits need to be considered as part of the SEIS analysis, which studies have shown resource development leads to increases in the well-being and life expectancy of Arctic residents.

Alternative B in the Draft SEIS is the preferred alternative, as it complies with the directive of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that “directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to establish and administer a competitive program for the leasing, development, production, and transportation of oil and gas in and from ANWR’s Coastal Plain.” The footprint of production and support facilities will be limited to no more than 2,000 surface acres of the 1.6 million-acre 1002 Area, which is the non-wilderness portion of the refuge’s coastal plain. That is equivalent to just 0.01 percent of ANWR’s 19.3 million acres.

The Chamber urges BLM to extend the comment period beyond November 7th and proceed with Alternative B as outlined in the Coastal Plain Draft SEIS.

Thank you for considering the Alaska Chamber’s comments on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kati Capozzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kati Capozzi
President and CEO