



October 30, 2019

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Attention—Coastal Plain EIS  
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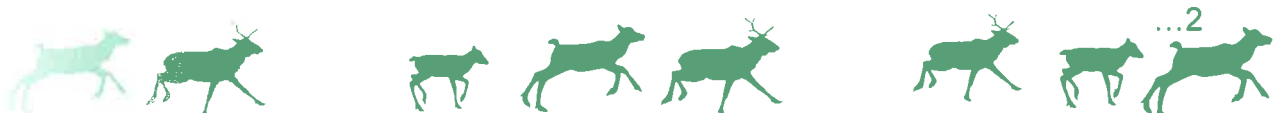
Dear Ms. Hayes:

**Re Porcupine Caribou Management Board Comments on Final Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

While no public comments are currently being invited, the Porcupine Caribou Management Board (PCMB) wishes to submit the following comments on the Final Arctic Refuge EIS.

Given the international nature of the Porcupine Caribou herd (PCH), the historical reliance of Canadian indigenous user groups on the PCH, and the obligations outlined in the 1987 *Agreement Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America on the Conservation of the Porcupine Caribou Herd* (International Agreement), the PCMB asserts that a significant lack of consideration was given to the cross-border impacts of oil and gas development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. While the Final EIS acknowledges that there will be potential impacts to Canadian subsistence users, it does not attempt to quantify the impact and provides no scientific analysis to dispute the extensive quantitative analysis of potential impacts that was completed by Canadian scientists and which was referenced in responses by Canadian stakeholders. The traditional harvesting practices and cultural dependence on the PCH by various Canadian indigenous groups pre-date the international border and are not being given adequate consideration in this process. While potential impacts are acknowledged, no quantitative analysis and no proof of the effectiveness of proposed mitigations are provided.

There is no scientific proof that the proposed mitigations will in fact limit the impacts on caribou and thus on the Canadian subsistence use of the PCH to an adequate degree. The Final EIS also does not provide any assurance that lease holders would be required to demonstrate the effectiveness of proposed mitigations, and that these mitigations would be adjusted if necessary. This is particularly disturbing, considering that the Final EIS asserts that no additional scientific studies or information is required to make a decision.



Not only were the indigenous Parties to the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* not contacted and consulted, Canadian user groups of the PCH and the Canadian public were also not provided an opportunity to comment on the transboundary impact analysis which was added throughout Chapter 3. This is a substantive change that, considering the international nature of the PCH, should have been reissued for public comment.

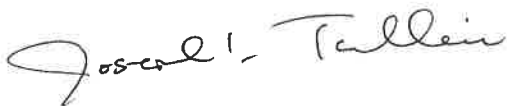
The PCMB asserts that to genuinely reflect the principles of conservation and minimization of adverse effects set out in the International Agreement, the Final EIS should have recommended an alternative that made available for lease only the minimum area required by law. Instead, the Final EIS recommended the alternative that was least conservative and potentially the most negatively impactful to the long-term health of the PCH.

The PCMB asserts that the unilateral approach to the way that the EIS was finalized disregards and virtually ignores the international aspects of managing the herd and disrespects a large portion of the indigenous users who rely on the herd simply because they live in the Canadian portion of the PCH's range.

Since mitigations outlined in the Final EIS are largely unproven and untested, the PCMB emphasizes the need for future data-sharing and international collaborative study and analysis of the effectiveness of these mitigations. Enforcement and diligent monitoring of lease stipulations and required operating procedures will be critical. As data are gathered and analyzed, it will be essential that lease stipulations and required operating procedures be adjusted as necessary to minimize future impacts to the productivity and viability of the PCH.

These comments summarize the PCMB's general response to the Final EIS. We will await the Record of Decision before commenting in more detail about deficiencies in various aspects of the Final EIS.

Sincerely,



Joe Tetlich  
Chair

