

February 22, 2019

Sen. Chris Birch, Chair Senate Resources Committee  
State Capitol, Room 125  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sen. Chris Birch,

The Alaska Chamber expresses strong support for Senate Joint Resolution 7 which emphasizes the Legislatures support and continuation of allowing limited oil and gas activity within the non-wilderness coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

The Chamber is a non-profit founded in 1953 working to promote a positive business environment in Alaska. The Chamber is the voice of small and large business representing hundreds of employers and local chambers across Alaska. Our member companies employ over 100,000 hard-working Alaskans. We have long supported resource development that is both done in a responsible manner and brings economic opportunities to Alaska and its residents.

Below are some key points, we feel are paramount to the oil and gas lease program which would allow activity within the non-Wilderness coastal plain of ANWR.

- Responsible oil and gas development in the small fraction of ANWR proposed for leasing will help ensure America's energy security for decades and allow Alaska — and our nation as a whole — to realize the benefits that come from expanding energy production in Alaska.
- The DEIS includes a wide range of alternatives which contain measures to avoid or mitigate surface impacts and minimize ecological disturbance throughout the program area.
- Under the three development alternatives, 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.
- Energy production from the non-Wilderness coastal plain has the potential to offset a decline in Lower 48 shale oil production, which is expected to commence in approximately a decade. Without limited oil development on the coastal plain, America will be forced to once again increase its reliance on foreign imports. With limited development in ANWR, America and Alaska can continue to grow the economy and reduce dependence on foreign oil.



- The program area covered by the DEIS contains an estimated 7.68 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil and 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.
- Alaska's economic lifeline, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), is now running at three-quarters empty. New oil production from the coastal plain has the potential to reverse throughput in TAPS, a vital component of American energy infrastructure.
- Oil development on a fraction of the coastal plain would create thousands of jobs nationwide, generate billions of dollars in government revenue for public services, keep energy prices for American consumers affordable, and further improve energy security for decades into the future.
- Since the non-Wilderness coastal plain is less than 60 miles from TAPS, development of energy resources there is one of the most environmentally-sound ways to increase oil production in Alaska.
- Thanks to continuing improvements in technology, practices, and oversight, the oil industry has demonstrated over the past 40 years that North Slope energy development and environmental stewardship can and do coexist. The industry has a proven track record of responsible development in sensitive areas, protecting the environment, wildlife and subsistence needs of local residents.
- Advances in technology have greatly reduced the footprint of development in the Arctic. As much as 60-plus square miles can now be developed from a single 12 to 14 acre gravel drill site. New drilling capabilities are being developed that may increase the subsurface development possible from the same size drill site to as much as 150-plus square miles. The net effect is an ever-decreasing impact on surface resources.
- Development of Native-owned lands on the non-Wilderness coastal plain would provide significant economic benefits to Alaska Natives on the North Slope as well as throughout the state through direct payment of royalties and revenue sharing among the Alaska Native corporations and their shareholders.
- Polls have consistently shown Alaskans overwhelmingly support responsible oil and gas development in the non-Wilderness portion of ANWR. There is no valid reason why we should not be allowed to access the world-class resources within just a minuscule fraction of the coastal plain.
- While renewable energy is a growing part of America's energy portfolio, it is still projected to account for a minority of American energy production in 2040. New oil and gas production will be required to power America's economy and can serve as a bridge until renewable energy becomes a dominant energy source decades into the future.

- The coastal plain was specifically identified by Congress, pursuant to Section 1002 of 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 dominance.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

*Albert Fogle*

Albert Fogle  
Vice President

CC: Sen. John Coghill  
Sen. Cathy Giessel  
Sen. Click Bishop  
Sen. Lora Reinbold  
Sen. Scott Kawasaki  
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