

September 29, 2023

Mr. Peter Stauber
Chairman
U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Longworth House Office Building
15 Independence Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to you today to follow up on our discussions last week and respond to your request to hear directly from the communities impacted by the administration's recent decision to restrict 13 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and rescind seven oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

Attached please find letters from Iñupiaq tribal leadership in communities in the affected areas, which outline the administration's lack of consultation and misrepresentation of how the NPR-A and ANWR announcements would affect the fabric of our North Slope communities.

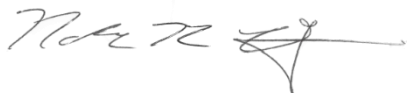
As you know, half of the North Slope Borough's communities are located within the NPR-A, and they are the only communities located within NPR-A. Two others, Point Lay and Anaktuvuk Pass, use the NPR-A for subsistence purposes. Six of our eight communities, spread over an area the size of your state of Minnesota, are directly impacted by the unilateral decision within NPR-A. And the Iñupiaq village of Kaktovik is the sole community located within ANWR and the 1002 Area. Yet officials in Washington neither respected these villages' connection to the land nor consulted with their residents.

This is not an isolated incident, and our relationship with Washington has been lopsided, at best. Worse yet, the administration seems disinterested in correcting its approach to communicating and consulting with our people, as illustrated by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to hastily convene a "public meeting" this week in the midst of our critical fall subsistence activities. This is no way to treat Alaska Native communities.

We were grateful for your invitation to testify before the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources and to brief additional U.S. Representatives about Washington's historically inconsistent policy approach to our people. You will also recall from my testimony and the briefing that the North Slope Borough's tax structure benefits all eight communities, therefore the restrictions with NPR-A and cancellation of leases within ANWR both indirectly and directly affect all eight of our communities. This opportunity is why my organization was created: To speak with a unified voice on issues impacting the North Slope Iñupiat, our communities, our economy, and our culture.

Quyanaqpak for listening to our collective voice on this issue and for your words championing our people: "As long as I am privileged to be chair of this committee your community will be represented." We look forward to engaging you and your subcommittee again in the near future.

Sincerely,



Nagruk Harcharek
President
Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat

IñUPIAT COMMUNITY of the ARCTIC SLOPE
an IRA Regional Tribal Government
P.O Box 934, Barrow, Alaska 99723 Ph: (907)852-4227 or
1(888)788-4227 Fax: (907)852-4246



September 29, 2023

Mr. Peter Stauber
Chairman
U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Longworth House Office Building
15 Independence Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We write to you today on behalf of the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS), the federally recognized regional tribal government of the North Slope of Alaska, regarding the administration's recent decision to restrict 13 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and rescind seven oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). **This decision was made by the administration without consulting or communicating with our communities within the affected areas.**

Located on Alaska's North Slope, ICAS encompasses all four Alaska Native villages located within the NPR-A and Kaktovik, the only community located within ANWR and the Coastal Plain 1002 Area. The North Slope Iñupiat have lived on and stewarded these lands since time immemorial, well before Washington took interest in them 100 years ago. **We are as much a part of the land as its wildlife and natural resources.**

Yet Washington, despite claiming its desire in policy memorandums and its own consultation policies and presidential memoranda neither respected our connection to the land nor consulted with us about the impact of their decision on our community. **We were blindsided by Washington's actions and learned of them through the press, rather than the administration itself.**

This is not an isolated incident. Our relationship with Washington has been tumultuous, one-sided, and inconsistent. **During policy discussions impacting our homelands, Washington has repeatedly chosen not to consult with the Iñupiat about the impact of its policies or consider the possibility of co-management of our homelands.**

This is no way to treat Alaska Native communities. If the administration seeks to support and partner with us, as it suggested in these and previous announcements about tribal participation in U.S. policy discussions, then it **must prioritize and listen to our voices over outside groups that seek to subvert our will and shape the future of our homelands against our wishes.**

We believe that responsible resource development projects in the NPR-A, as well as the ANWR 1002 Area affected by the announcement, are essential to our future. These projects, which provide vital economic benefits to our people, have taken place in our region for over 50 years with the inclusion and engagement of the North Slope Iñupiat. **They can – and must – coexist with conservation efforts and our Iñupiaq traditions.**

Recently, we have heard much discussion of what we cannot do in our homelands with scant consideration for economic alternatives to support the future of the North Slope Iñupiat. **But we refuse to be victimized by decisions made thousands of miles away.**

We invite Washington to join us at the table to discuss a path forward that includes onshore oil and gas leasing on our lands. This will require a more robust, predictable, and communicative partnership between North Slope communities and Washington.

As partners, we can avoid repeating historic wrongs imposed on our communities by fully realizing Iñupiat self-determination and prosperity. But we can only do so with decision-making that includes our voices and is respectful of the needs and inalienable rights of the North Slope Iñupiat.


George Edwardson, President

 9/29/23
Doreen Leavitt, Secretary
Director of Natural Resources



NATIVE VILLAGE OF BARROW IÑUPIAT TRADITIONAL GOVERNMENT

September 27, 2023

Mr. Peter Stauber
Chairman
U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Longworth House Office Building
15 Independence Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to you today on behalf of Barrow, Alaska regarding the administration's recent decision to restrict 13 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and rescind seven oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). **This decision was made by the administration without consulting or communicating with the other communities within the affected areas.**

Located on Alaska's North Slope, Barrow is one of only four Alaska Native villages located within the NPR-A, where we have lived since time immemorial. The North Slope Iñupiat have lived on and stewarded these lands well before Washington took interest in them 100 years ago. **We are as much a part of the land as its wildlife and natural resources.**

Yet Washington, despite claiming its desire in policy memorandums and its own National Strategy for the Arctic Region to speak with tribal leaders and Indigenous communities when formulating federal policy affecting our people, neither respected our connection to the land nor consulted with us about the impact of their decision on our community. **We were blindsided by Washington's actions and learned of them through the press, rather than the administration itself.**

This is not an isolated incident. Our relationship with Washington has been tumultuous, one-sided, and inconsistent. **During policy discussions impacting our homelands, Washington has repeatedly chosen not to consult with the Iñupiat about the impact of its policies or consider the possibility of co-management of our homelands.**

This is no way to treat Alaska Native communities. If the administration seeks to support and partner with us, as it suggested in these and previous announcements about tribal participation in U.S. policy discussions, then **it must prioritize and listen to our voices**

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over outside groups that seek to subvert our will and shape the future of our homelands against our wishes.

We believe that responsible resource development projects in the NPR-A, as well as the ANWR 1002 Area affected by the announcement, are important to our future. These projects, which provide vital economic benefits to our people, have taken place in our region for over 50 years with the inclusion and engagement of the North Slope Iñupiat. **They can – and must – coexist with conservation efforts and our Iñupiaq traditions.**

Recently, we have heard much discussion of what we cannot do in our homelands with scant consideration for economic alternatives to support the future of the North Slope Iñupiat. **But we refuse to be victimized by decisions made thousands of miles away.**

We invite Washington to join us at the table to discuss a path forward that includes onshore oil and gas leasing on our lands. This will require a more robust, predictable, and communicative partnership between communities like Barrow and Washington.

As partners, we can avoid repeating historic wrongs imposed on our communities by fully realizing Iñupiat self-determination and prosperity. But we can only do so with decision-making that includes our voices and is respectful of the needs and inalienable rights of the North Slope Iñupiat.

Respectfully,



Esther Evikana, President
Native Village of Barrow

Native Village of Atqasuk

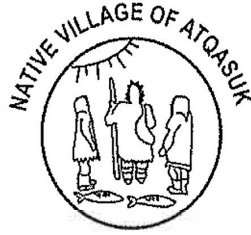
P.O. Box 91108

Atqasuk, Alaska 99791

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Phone: (907) 633-2575

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MEMBER

MEMBER

MEMBER

September 20, 2023

Mr. Peter Stauber

Chairman

U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

Longworth House Office Building

15 Independence Avenue SE

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to you today on behalf of Atqasuk, Alaska regarding the administration's recent decision to restrict 13 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and rescind seven oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This decision was made by the administration without consulting or communicating with the other communities within the affected areas.

Located on Alaska's North Slope, Atqasuk is one of only four Alaska Native villages located within the NPR-A, where we have lived since time immemorial. The North Slope Iñupiat have lived on and stewarded these lands well before Washington took interest in them 100 years ago. We are as much a part of the land as its wildlife and natural resources. Yet Washington, despite claiming its desire in policy memorandums and its own National Strategy for the Arctic Region to speak with tribal leaders and Indigenous communities when formulating federal policy affecting our people, neither respected our connection to the land nor consulted with us about the impact of their decision on our community. We were blindsided by Washington's actions and learned of them through the press, rather than the administration itself.

This is not an isolated incident. Our relationship with Washington has been tumultuous, one-sided, and inconsistent. During policy discussions impacting our homelands, Washington has repeatedly chosen not to consult with the Iñupiat about the impact of its policies or consider the possibility of co-management of our homelands.

This is no way to treat Alaska Native communities. If the administration seeks to support and partner with us, as it suggested in these and previous announcements about tribal participation in U.S. policy discussions, then it must prioritize and listen to our voices over outside groups that seek to subvert our will and shape the future of our homelands against our wishes.

We believe that responsible resource development projects in the NPR-A, as well as the ANWR 1002 Area affected by the announcement, are important to our future. These projects, which provide vital economic benefits to our people, have taken place in our region for over 50 years with the inclusion and engagement of the North Slope Iñupiat. They can – and must – coexist with conservation efforts and our Iñupiaq traditions.

Recently, we have heard much discussion of what we cannot do in our homelands with scant consideration for economic alternatives to support the future of the North Slope Iñupiat. But we refuse to be victimized by decisions made thousands of miles away.

We invite Washington to join us at the table to discuss a path forward that includes onshore oil and gas leasing on our lands. This will require a more robust, predictable, and communicative partnership between communities like Atqasuk, AK and Washington.

As partners, we can avoid repeating historic wrongs imposed on our communities by fully realizing Iñupiat self-determination and prosperity. But we can only do so with decision-making that includes our voices and is respectful of the needs and inalienable rights of the North Slope Iñupiat.



Michelle Bordeaux, Native Village of Atqasuk Tribal President
Atqasuk, AK

Village of Wainwright

PO Box 143

1212 Airport Road

(907)763-2535 Fax: (907)763-2576



Mr. Peter Stauber
Chairman
U.S. House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Longworth House Office Building
15 Independence Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to you today on behalf of Village of Wainwright, Alaska regarding the administration's recent decision to restrict 13 million acres of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) and rescind seven oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). **This decision was made by the administration without consulting or communicating with the other communities within the affected areas.**

Located on Alaska's North Slope, Village of Wainwright is one of only four Alaska Native villages located within the NPR-A, where we have lived since time immemorial. The North Slope Iñupiat have lived on and stewarded these lands well before Washington took interest in them 100 years ago. **We are as much a part of the land as its wildlife and natural resources.**

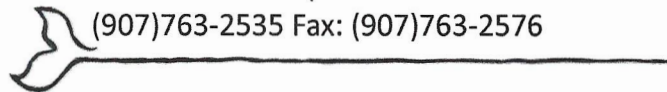
Yet Washington, despite claiming its desire in policy memorandums and its own National Strategy for the Arctic Region to speak with tribal leaders and Indigenous communities when formulating federal policy affecting our people, neither respected our connection to the land nor consulted with us about the impact of their decision on our community. **We were blindsided by Washington's actions and learned of them through the press, rather than the administration itself.**

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This is no way to treat Alaska Native communities. If the administration seeks to support and partner with us, as it suggested in these and previous announcements about tribal participation in U.S. policy discussions, then **it must prioritize and listen to our voices over outside groups that seek to subvert our will and shape the future of our homelands against our wishes.**

We believe that responsible resource development projects in the NPR-A, as well as the ANWR 1002 Area affected by the announcement, are important to our future. These projects, which

Village of Wainwright
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provide vital economic benefits to our people, have taken place in our region for over 50 years with the inclusion and engagement of the North Slope Iñupiat. **They can – and must – coexist with conservation efforts and our Iñupiaq traditions.**

Recently, we have heard much discussion of what we cannot do in our homelands with scant consideration for economic alternatives to support the future of the North Slope Iñupiat. **But we refuse to be victimized by decisions made thousands of miles away.**

We invite Washington to join us at the table to discuss a path forward that includes onshore oil and gas leasing on our lands. This will require a more robust, predictable, and communicative partnership between communities like Village of Wainwright and Washington.

As partners, we can avoid repeating historic wrongs imposed on our communities by fully realizing Iñupiat self-determination and prosperity. But we can only do so with decision-making that includes our voices and is respectful of the needs and inalienable rights of the North Slope Iñupiat.

Billy B. Patkotak Jr.
President
Village of Wainwright

*Please reopen ANWR for exploration
sincerely Billy Blain Patkotak Jr.*

Edward Kagak
Vice-President
Village of Wainwright

Edward Kagak

Muriel V. Panik
Secretary
Village of Wainwright

Muriel V. Panik