

Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

c/o Office of Subsistence Management
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In Reply Refer To:
OSM.A24121

JANUARY 22 2025

Jimmy Fox, Manager
Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge
101 12th Ave, Rm. 264
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Mr. Fox,

I write to you on behalf of the Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) to share the Council's concerns about oil and gas exploration in the Yukon Flats.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in Eastern Interior Alaska Region. It was established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter establishes the Council's authority to initiate, review and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region.

The Council held a public meeting October 8-10, 2024, in Fairbanks and one of the topics discussed was oil and gas exploration in Yukon Flats. Council members expressed concerns about the potential impacts that oil and gas exploration could have to subsistence resources and the environment in the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). The Council appreciated you sharing some background information with us during the meeting and letting us know that the Refuge has postponed the completion of a compatibility determination for oil and gas exploration. The Council requested more detailed information from Doyon about their company's plans for exploration in the region.

The Council would like you to know that it does not consider industrial activity such as oil and gas exploration and development to be compatible with the statutory purposes of the Refuge: conserving fish and wildlife populations and habitat, providing opportunities for continued subsistence uses, and protecting water quality. Fish and wildlife populations are already struggling, and the environment is rapidly changing along with the climate. Oil and gas development would create even further risks and uncertainties. Should you resume the compatibility determination in the future, the Council urges you to find oil and gas exploration

incompatible for these reasons.

The Council thanks you for considering our concerns and appreciates your on-going commitment to the conservation of subsistence resources and uses. If you have any questions or would like to follow up, please contact me through our Subsistence Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid, at (907) 891-9181 or brooke_mcdavid@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert C. Wright, Sr." in a cursive script.

Robert "Charlie" Wright, Sr.
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Mark Burch, Assistant Director of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Administrative Record