



Sierra Borealis *alaska report*



SIERRA CLUB ALASKA CHAPTER
MARCH 2019

Comment period ends March 13

Administration rushes to develop Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain--BLM holds hearing in Anchorage

On Feb. 11, the Bureau of Land Management held a public hearing at the Denaina Center in Anchorage on oil leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It was the second to last of many hearings across the state to gather public input on the BLM Environmental Impact Statement.

I was at the hearing for about two and a half hours, from 4:30 to when it ended around 7 p.m. When I got there, I was handed an informational flyer about the presentations and information about the Arctic Refuge. The seating area was huge-- more than half the seats were empty during the whole time I was there, and in front of all the chairs was an elevated stage, upon which were four white men- the BLM official listeners. In the back of the room was a line of posters showing maps and information

about the different alternatives that were proposed in the BLM document. Alternative A, no action, was what I came to support. The other alternatives ranged from opening the entire refuge to oil leasing to opening only parts of it, and restricting activity to times when the caribou wouldn't be calving. I saw some friends gathering in the back of the room whom I easily identified by the distinctive artwork on their clothing and banners as members of Defend the Sacred. I asked if I could buy a sweatshirt, and they pulled one out and gave it to me with a smile, saying that I could donate online to Defend the Sacred (an Alaska community movement to elevate and promote sacred connections to people and the earth. www.defendthesacredalaska.org.)

While I was there, about half of the people who spoke were young Alaska Native people. The other half seemed to be old white people, some of whom were scientists speaking about climate change, others were oil and mining representatives speaking about money.

Several Alaska Native speakers gave an introduction in their own language. One Gwich'in woman pointed out that the word "subsistence" is an English simplification of a much more complex meaning in the Gwich'in language. The EIS and other documents have not been translated

You are invited!
to the next general meeting of
Sierra Club Alaska Chapter

WHEN: March 27, 7 pm

WHERE: at ARC (Arctic Rec Center) on 4855 Arctic Blvd. south of Tudor Road, Anchorage.

SPEAKERS: George Donart, CCL, and Ceal Smith, REAP.

For Sierra Club members and interested public

(See details and speaker bios, p. 8.)



photo: Chnstin Swearingen

Members of "Defend the Sacred" protest BLM's Arctic actions at the Anchorage hearing, Feb 11.

-- continued page 2

Arctic development push: BLM hearing -- from page 1

into Gwich'in or Inupiaq, and none of the BLM officials spoke or seemed to understand Gwich'in.

The one speaker who moved me to tears was a Gwich'in woman who spoke quietly and bravely. She thanked the BLM representatives for being there and listening, thanked them for visiting the villages, and said she knew that they were treated kindly there because Gwich'in people are kind, warm, welcoming people. She said she knew that while they were there, people shared meals of caribou meat with them, and that the caribou they ate is a part of them now. At least one of the BLM representatives was making eye contact with her and nodding, listening very closely, and I felt like they were connecting. As a Catholic, I had the thought that she was speaking about Communion. When everyone in a congregation eats the same bread, they share something special. Catholics believe the communion bread is Jesus, and when we eat it, Jesus becomes a part of us. Caribou are sacred to the Gwich'in people, and what the woman was saying to the BLM man was that the same sacredness is in him now too. This was the most beautiful thing I'd heard, and it felt like a symbol of peace and shared understanding.

During the informational presentation, members and supporters of Defend the Sacred filed up to the front of the room and sat in the front two rows to listen, but when the speaker said that Alternative A was off the table, and that the purpose of this hearing was to determine which of the oil drilling plans would be least destructive, we silently stood up and turned our backs. We held up our bandanas that said "Defend the Sacred" and "Protect the Arctic" and looked at the rest of the crowd still sitting.

As a white millennial scientist, I find climate change is the strongest argument in my head against oil drilling in the Arctic. But the messages I heard from Gwich'in and other Alaska Natives tell me that this is an urgent human rights issue as well. People will be directly harmed by oil development in the Arctic

Refuge, and the political systems that take Alternative A off the table are systems of colonialization.

This fight for the Arctic Refuge has been going on for years. The Alaska Chapter has been fighting against development for this fragile, uniquely remarkable area for more than thirty years. I want to end with a quote from the record of the 2018 public scoping hearing in Anchorage: "MS. KACEY HOPSON: (Speaking in Inupiaq). I said, hello, my name is (Inupiaq word) Kacey Hopson. My family comes from the village of Wainwright, Alaska on the North Slope of Alaska. Thank you for being here today to hear our comments. I am here to say that this is not just a debate about protecting animals. This is not a debate

"This is about - the identity and the future of our country. This is about the kind of country America wants to be ."

between jobs and animals or wildlife. This is much bigger. This is about -- this is about the identity and the future of our country. This is about the kind of country America wants to be. We have a history of making treaties and breaking them again and again and again with the indigenous peoples of this continent. I don't need to read them to you. They are readily available for research. Broken when abiding by them was too inconvenient and when it didn't align with the needs of Congress. Indigenous peoples have been on the receiving end of the forcible theft of land, life, language, our entire existence. And I do not exaggerate."

Background

After Senator Murkowski managed to get "anticipated" revenues from Arctic drilling into the last Congress's federal budget, the door was opened to permit oil development on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, out of bounds to drillers from 1980 until 2017. Such development would be likely to destroy irrevocably the area's extraordinary but fragile wildness and irreparably harm its iconic wildlife, including caribou – mainly the Porcupine caribou herd – wolves, grizzly and polar bears, many smaller mammals, countless birds and their summer nesting habitat.

In hopes of getting actual drilling underway during the present administration, the Bureau of Land Management hurriedly produced a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and proposed plan, that revealed in its inadequate discussion of impacts, the haste and biased intent with which the agency did the Administration's peremptory bidding to get this document out.

(See next page for commenting information.) ❖

-- Christin Swearingen

Chair, Alaska Chapter, <mushroomchristin@gmail.com>



In the Arctic Refuge, looking from the Sadlerochit Mountains northward to the biologically rich, threatened coastal plain.

Please Comment on the Arctic EIS now -- by March 13

First – if you have ever visited the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—describe your personal experience and impressions. "I have been there" is a powerful statement!

Here' a list of unacceptable flaws in the EIS (provided by Trustees for Alaska) : Visit: [https://www.trustees.org/americas-](https://www.trustees.org/americas-arctic-ecosystems/)

[arctic-ecosystems/](https://www.trustees.org/americas-arctic-ecosystems/)

Trustees for Alaska points out significant flaws in BLM's draft EIS and suggests that you can use this information to expand (in your own words) your own comments:

photo: Beth Blattenberger



Siberian aster, *Eurybia siberica*, Arctic wildflower seen on Wulik River gravel bar, western Arctic

** The draft EIS fails to protect the purposes

established for the Arctic Refuge, namely safeguarding wilderness, wildlife and habitat, recreation, water resources, and traditional uses of lands and animals for food and culture.

** The draft EIS fails to **protect the Porcupine caribou herd**. It acknowledges that oil and gas activity will disturb and displace caribou, but it does not fully address the impacts or look at the full range of areas important to the herd's health.

** The draft EIS ignores the traditional knowledge and human rights of the **Gwich'in people**.

** The draft EIS **fails to protect polar bears**, threatened under the Endangered Species Act. More than 77 percent of the Arctic Refuge is formally designated as critical polar bear habitat, and the coastal plain provides key denning habitat for bears with cubs. The draft EIS lacks details on how many bears could be harmed or how it will prevent or reduce injury and death.

** The draft EIS **fails to protect birds** that migrate to all parts of the United States and world. The coastal plain provides essential nesting, foraging, and migratory stopover habitat for millions of birds. The draft EIS offers fleeting and sometimes outright incorrect analysis of the impacts of oil and gas activity on bird populations while providing loopholes that would allow oil and gas development regardless of the harm to birds.

** The draft EIS **fails to protect water**. The coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge lacks large quantities of fresh water, particularly in winter. The draft EIS acknowledges that drilling an oil well could use up to two million gallons of water and that constructing a mile of ice road would require one million gallons of water, but it fails to quantify the total water needs of development, identify where the water will come from, or address impacts of using this scarce resource on fish, vegetation, and hydrology of the region.

** The draft EIS **does not address the currently proposed**

seismic work, which would harm denning polar bears and affect foraging areas for caribou and other animals. While trying to authorize seismic activities through a different process, BLM fails to analyze the impacts of seismic exploration in this draft EIS, which arbitrarily limits its analysis to leasing and later exploration. This narrow view is not consistent with BLM's legal obligation to consider all the likely environmental impacts.

** The draft EIS does not address the **changing climate**, or its devastating impacts on Arctic communities. The Arctic is warming at more than double the rate of the rest of the country, with dozens of Alaska villages in need of relocation. The draft EIS fails to assess how expanding fossil fuel development in the coastal plain would increase the hardships born by Arctic communities due to climate change.

** The draft EIS **fails to quantify emissions of pollutants** or address the impacts of **air quality** on people, animals, and the health of the region.

** BLM's analysis **underestimates the potential frequency of oil spills and the size of those spills**. Spills have occurred and continue to occur across the North Slope, with an average of a spill of 1,000 gallons or more nearly every other month. BLM fails to consider the likely and significant impacts oil spills could have on sensitive Coastal Plain resources and on the Gwich'in people.

Note further that BLM states in the EIS that it will not select the no-action alternative due to the requirements of the "Tax Act"—(a budget sideswipe engineered by Senator Lisa Murkowski-- to hold two lease sales on the Coastal Plain).

⇒ HOW to comment:

To see the documents, including maps, go to <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage¤tPageId=152110>.

Submit comments **directly through the website:**

blm.gov/alaska, or by mail to:

Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS,
222 W. Seventh Ave., Stop #13,
Anchorage, Alaska 99513.

"Any threat to the coastal plain is a threat to the Gwich'in. The Interior should know that we will not be quiet and we will not be ignored. We will fight to protect the Arctic Refuge every step of the way."

-- Bernadette Demientieff, executive director of the Gwich'in Steering Committee--in an op-ed in *The Hill*. ❖

Action Alert

Pebble Mine - Comment period through May on DEIS

Army Corps fails to evaluate major impacts of mine proposal

As the Arctic EIS winds up its comment period (see pp. 1-3)-- a new EIS opens for **YOUR** comments! The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released its first-ever Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Pebble gold and copper proposed open-pit mine in late February. As a government document describing the environmental risks of a proposed project, the DEIS is a key step toward a permitting decision. A final environmental report and decision are expected in 2020. As the Anchorage Daily News pointed out, "Other state and federal agencies must also weigh in before mining can begin, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) still holds the option to essentially veto the project."

Sierra Club in Alaska has opposed this massive mine proposal--right in the heart of the world's largest commercial fishery in Bristol Bay, and at the edges of two famed wild national parks--Katmai and Lake Clark--at least since our first newsletter article in 2005. (See *sierra borealis* March 2018 for the last previous newsletter article.)

Right after release of the 1400 page report, a tribal group slammed the "woefully inadequate" document for failing to address major impacts to fish and to people from the region. Alannah Hurley, of United Tribes of Bristol Bay, said the DEIS "shows the process is rigged for Pebble; the Army Corps ignores real concerns about the devastation Pebble would bring to the region."

The public comment period opened on March 1 and extends for 90 days until June 1. Public meetings are scheduled for nine Alaska communities from March 25 until April 16, with Homer on April 11 and Anchorage on April 16.

From "Save Bristol Bay" www.savebristolbay.org/ we have these points to help with comments on the new Draft Environmental Impact Statement:

While we are still digesting the mountain of technical materials in the DEIS, immediate problems stand out. The document is riddled with pro-Pebble bias. For instance, the Army Corps focuses on the importance of copper to the global economy over the importance of renewable subsistence resources --such as fisheries--to Alaskans.

The DEIS fails to even address the prospect of a catastrophic tailings dam failure, which is the single-largest danger associated with Pebble. Earthen tailings dams fail all the time. The firm that designed the Pebble dam also designed the Mt. Polley Mine dam, which failed in 2014.

The Corps of Engineers fails in its statutory obligation to take a hard look at all reasonably-foreseeable significant impacts of this proposed mine.

The proposed public comment period is completely inadequate. The public needs more than 90 days to review 3,000+ pages of technical information. This is yet another indication the Army Corps is rushing to approve a mine--even though this is supposed to be an impartial, scientific process.

The mine as currently proposed is significantly altered from the one discussed under the 2018 scoping process. The Pebble Limited Partnership, according to its own press releases, has already increased the projected amount it intends to mine, and consequently the amount of tailings and other mine waste the project will generate. It is not possible to adequately evaluate the reasonably-foreseeable impacts of a mine unless the actual scope of the mine is known and studied.

The comment period timing is wrong: the affected Bristol Bay region contains a roadless web of towns and villages connected only by air and water. It takes longer to get together and share information in Bristol Bay than elsewhere in the U. S. This comment period is scheduled primarily during breakup, when the rivers are difficult to impossible to travel.

The peak of social communicative life in Bristol Bay is the summer fishing season. This is when people travel up and down rivers, from villages to fish camps and have a chance to congregate and discuss issues of importance. So the comment period should not end in June, before the region has really come back to life after winter. Leaving comments open through the end of the year would make sense. This would allow Bristol Bay residents to complete their subsistence activities before submitting their comments on the mine.



Fish © Christine Sundly

➡ Your comments urgently needed

It is crucial for everyone reading this to submit comments to the Army Corps. This is the way to convince the government to go back and do the job right. We need to demand accountability at all levels of government.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski has said she wants a robust permitting process that involves Alaskans and addresses their concerns. This DEIS fails to meet that standard; Lisa Murkowski needs to know you care.

Contact Senator Murkowski: (202) 224 -6665 or (907)271-3735, or (907)225-6880.

Or via her website at murkowski.senate.gov.

Mail DEIS comments to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District ,
645 G St., Suite 100-921; Anchorage, AK 99501.

Or submit comments on the Corps of Engineers Pebble site at <https://pebbleprojecteis.com/publiccomments/newcomment>. ❖

Senator Murkowski's latest raid on Alaska's public lands

BLM lands hit; wildlife refuges safe for now

A bill sponsored by Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski that gives away Alaska BLM lands passed both Houses of Congress in late February as part of S 47, the Natural Resources Management Act, a massive omnibus public lands bill package of more than 100 individual bills. President Trump is expected to sign it into law.

S. 785, the Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Act (Act) awards allotments of up to 160 acres in unreserved Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands to eligible Alaska Native veterans who served during the Vietnam War era (1964-75) and who have not received allotments -- and their heirs. BLM reserved lands not available for allotment selections are the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, land withdrawn for military use, the Trans-Alaska pipeline corridor, and land being considered for a proposed natural gas pipeline.

In addition, the Act directs the Secretary to "conduct a study to determine whether any additional Federal lands within units of the National Wildlife Refuge System in the State should be made available for allotment selection and report the findings and conclusions of the study to Congress."

Although the Act grants allotments to certain Alaska veterans, it does not amend the Native Allotment Act to do so. It establishes a new program under which allotments would not be subject to Bureau of Indian Affairs oversight and the mineral estate in federal ownership.

The Act directs the Secretary to determine the number of Vietnam-era veterans eligible to select allotments in BLM areas, as well as in the refuges if Congress opens the latter to selections.

Background

In 1970-71, when it became clear that Congress was going to settle Alaska Natives' land claims, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Native organizations alerted the Native community to the likely revocation of the Native Allotment Act of 1906 as part of the settlement. Natives using and occupying federal land who had not already applied for Native allotments were urged to do so promptly.

Natives serving in the armed services during 1970-71 might have missed the opportunity to apply for allotments during the outreach to the Native community. In 1998, after the Alaska Federation of Natives brought this possibility to the attention of Congress, Congress reopened the Allotment Act to allow veterans who had served during 1969-71 to apply for allotments. Vietnam-era veterans not in the military during this period had the same opportunity as other Alaska Natives to apply for allotments.

In 2002, Sen. Murkowski introduced a bill to award allotments to all Alaska Native veterans who served during

the Vietnam War era other than veterans who had already received allotments.

The bill failed due to opposition from

the Bush Administration and members who had supported the 1998 law. In subsequent Congresses the bill never passed, as there was no basis in law or policy for it; the 1998 law had treated the 1969-71 class of veterans fairly.

Things changed when Sen. Murkowski became chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee in 2017. Her Vietnam Era Native allotments effort returned. Late in 2018 her bill opening both BLM and refuge lands to allotments was in her public lands bill which she tried to add as a rider to a must-pass appropriations bill. When Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) ruled out riders, the omnibus bill had to be reintroduced in 2019.

In the interim, Sen. Murkowski and Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), then ranking minority committee member, agreed that refuges would not be available for allotments outright, as with the BLM lands, but would be subject to the congressional review of the Secretary's study and report noted above. In her additional [dissenting] views on S. 785, Cantwell had opposed opening the refuges to allotments.

A bad precedent

Sen. Murkowski's giveaway of BLM lands could encourage non-Native Alaska veterans of the Vietnam War era, or even veterans of more recent and current wars, to ask for 160 acres of federal land in fee simple title. Even if that doesn't happen, the refuge provision promises to pit certain Vietnam veterans and heirs seeking refuge allotments against conservationists defending the refuges from new private inholdings. ❖

-- Jack Hession

Editor's note: Elsewhere in the nation, passage of S 47 by overwhelming majorities (92-8 in Senate and 363-62 in House) was greeted as a major conservation victory, as its environmental wins seemed to far outweigh the losses -- the worst of which is the Alaska provision. The bill permanently reauthorizes the Land & Water Conservation Fund, establishes 1.3 million acres of new wilderness -- mainly in California, Utah, and New Mexico, expands several national parks and national monuments, names new monuments, legislates the "Every Kid Outdoors" Act which admits fourth graders and their families to national parks for free, and more.



Israel Shotridge, Tlingit: Raven stealing the sun

Alaska Chapter 2019 Election results

I'm happy to announce that all four candidates were approved by the voting Chapter membership to serve on the Alaska Chapter Executive Committee!

So congratulations to Toshihide Hamzaki, Susan Hansen, Hope Meyn, and Yasuhiro Ozuru. (See their bios in the previous newsletter (Sierra Borealis, Dec 2018.)

Toshi, Hope and Yasuhiro live in Anchorage; Susan is in Fairbanks. Susan, Toshi, and Yasu were incumbents running for another term; Hope is a long time volunteer, but new to this Excom. The four just elected join ongoing Excom members Su Chon, secretary; Amy Murphy, and myself, Christin Swearingen, chair—whose terms expire end of 2019.

Everyone got at least 80 votes, Toshi got the most with 86. Our printer used the same mailing list as the 2017 ballot mailer, and thus I fear that at least a few people, new to the Chapter, who should have been on the list never got ballots. It was wonderful to see return addresses from all over Alaska-- people from Naknek to Juneau, Soldotna to North Pole, all mailed in ballots because they care about Sierra Club Alaska Chapter! I am reminded of the huge diversity of supporters, and feel so privileged to help all of you continue championing our environment.

Alaska Chapter Executive Committee members decide policy and priorities for Sierra Club in Alaska. By making decisions on how the Alaska Chapter allocates our resources and what the Chapter will focus on in the next few years, the Ex Com influences the future of environment, conservation, and outdoor life in Alaska. ❖

-- Christin Swearingen, Alaska Chapter Chair

Oppose Governor Dunleavy's nomination of Doug Vincent-Lang and Jason Brune

Recently Governor Mike Dunleavy nominated Doug Vincent-Lang as Alaska Department of Fish & Game Commissioner, and Jason Brune as Department of Conservation (DEC) Commissioner.

Oppose Doug Vincent-Lang

Vincent-Lang, who served as a fish and game official under former Governor Sean Parnell (from 2009-2014) promoted contentious policies. Under Parnell, Vincent-Lang fought against protections for endangered species like the humpback whale and stellar sea lion, arguing that Endangered Species Act protection restricted fishing, oil and gas development. Also, in supporting ADF&G and Board of Game Intensive Management policies, Vincent-Lang, according to Vic Van Ballenberghe, claimed that the only [relevant] standard is to maintain sustained yield for hunters.

Oppose Jason Brune

Governor Dunleavy has nominated Jason Brune to be the Department of Conservation (DEC) Commissioner. Jason Brune is a pro-Pebble Mine booster who was the public face for promoting the Pebble Mine project in Bristol Bay--complete with toxins in salmon streams and more (see article page 4.) Jason Brune should not be in charge of the DEC and issuing key permits for the Pebble Mine.

⇒ WHAT YOU CAN DO

This is an important time for Alaskans who value watching living wildlife to engage with their elected legislators. Call or write your state Senators and Representatives in Juneau to oppose Doug Vincent-Lang's nomination to be Fish & Game Commissioner and Jason Brune's nomination for DEC Commissioner. Remind your elected legislators that the main reason tourists come to Alaska is to see living wildlife. Remind them that most Alaskans value watching wildlife. ❖

-- Susan Hansen

Two speakers at Alaska Chapter Feb. 20th 2019 meeting

The February 20 Alaska Chapter meeting featured talks on wildlife management by two highly qualified biological specialists--Dr. Vic Van Bellenberghe, a moose and wolf research biologist and former Board of Game member, and Dr. Rick Steiner, former marine conservation professor with the University of Alaska, in Kotzebue, Cordova, and Anchorage, from 1980 until 2010; currently, through the independent "Oasis Earth" project, providing Environmental Sustainability advice to NGOs, governments, and industry. <http://www.oasis-earth.com/>.

Highlights of Dr. Van Ballenberghe's talk were that Intensive Management of Alaska's Wildlife under the 1994 state law that mandated increasing the populations of moose, deer and caribou for hunters has not worked as advertised, is not science-based, and has resulted in state hunting practices that are completely at odds with more humane federal regulations, and that many Alaskans find distasteful (especially baiting of bears and long seasons on wolves), and in predator control programs that cost money, cause damage, often don't work, and go against Alaskans' opposition to practices like aerial gunning of wolves.

Highlight of the second talk a, by Rick Steiner, was that our federal Conservation System Units are valuable to this state for the tourism dollars they bring and the protection of wildlife and habitat they afford. Instead of opposing the federal presence, our state government should recognize the value of the CSUs. We should speak out when policy makers in state government oppose necessary federal regulations concerning Alaska wildlife. We should engage women and the tourism industry to assist in changing current hunting regulations, above all to end lethal predator control and unethical hunting. We should make strong efforts to balance the Board of Game with tourism, scientist, consumptive representatives; and lobby hard to eliminate federal funding for predator control. *As Rick Steiner said "If I were a wolf or a bear in Alaska right now, I would be headed for the Canadian border, ASAP."* (Thanks to Denise Saigh, Nancy Bale, and Susan Hansen for providing meeting notes.) ❖

Alaska Chapter hikes welcome beginners

The Alaska Chapter organized multiple outings during the past couple of months. Since a variety of different groups in Anchorage offer hikes and other outdoor activities, a lot of which are challenging trips, we decided to offer a series of hikes for beginners or for other folks who like mellow walks with minimum elevation gain and limited mileage. Part of our goal is to help participants become more familiar with Anchorage's world-class trail systems so they learn how easy it is to hike, bike, or ski to commute to work, shop for groceries or attend cultural events. One hike started on the Campbell Creek trail behind the Peanut Farm restaurant. We headed southwest towards C Street, following a meandering creek that goes through a quiet industrial area that amazingly contains salmon in the summer. Another outing started at Tikishla Park off of 20th Avenue. We hiked on the Chester Creek trail to Goose Lake and the University of Alaska. This lake has a nice beach and is a popular place for kids to play in the summer.

A couple of hikes took place on different trails located in the Far North Bicentennial Park in northeast Anchorage. This huge park-- a true gem -- offers numerous trails for biking, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing and wildlife watching. You can spend hours exploring the main park or head up into the Hillside area to use some of the extensive single-track bicycle trails or fantastic bike/hike/ski trails, choosing groomed trails or heading off the beaten path by making your own trails. We started at the North Bivouac trail head, which is dog-friendly.

On a different outing we hiked on the Turnagain Arm trail, slightly south of Anchorage, which offers splendid

views of the Turnagain Arm and the majestic Kenai Mountains located across the Arm. The Cook Inlet area, which includes Turnagain Arm, has some of the highest



photo: Amy Murphy

Alaska Chapter winter hike in Far North Bicentennial Park

tides in the world. When we're lucky we get to see big bore tides rushing in, heralding the advance of the high tide. One evening we hiked in the peaceful Russian Jack Park in northeast Anchorage, staying on groomed ski trails that had lights in some sections and new signage since the last time I was there. We saw a couple of moose fairly close by and got to see the full moon rise over the Chugach Mountains. What a treat! ❖

-- Amy Murphy

Alaska Chapter seeks part-time Outing Coordinator

Sierra Club Alaska Chapter is seeking an Outings Coordinator! Six-months to a year volunteer commitment. Required CPR and first aid classes are covered by the Alaska Chapter. (Half of certification cost paid up-front, half reimbursed after). Previous experience with volunteer organizing is recommended. Must be a Sierra Club member or willing to become a Sierra Club member (\$15 annual dues). Duties include planning and leading two outings a month, advertising outings in local media outlets, recruiting and training at least four new outings volunteers. Get the full job description and instructions for how to apply by **sending a resume and short letter of interest to Christin Swearingen by May 20, 2019. Email to <Mushroomchristin@gmail.com>.** ❖

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Service trip

For Alaskans interested in service work with federal land agencies--here is a summer outing with a different organization, "Wilderness Volunteers," in Alaska's Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (not a Sierra Club trip):

"July 14 - 20, 2019

A classic Alaskan adventure, this Kenai Refuge service project commences with a boat ride to the southern shore of Skilak Lake in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. We'll establish our basecamp within sight of this beautiful Alaskan lake for a week of selected trail work: re-route/switchback construction, trail grade reduction, drainage improvements, create grade dips, trenches, water bars, and timber bridges. Volunteers will also brush and trim the last mile of the trail. Go to <https://www.wildernessvolunteers.org/project/201927/Kenai+National+Wildlife+Refuge.html> and follow the links to apply."

Wilderness Volunteers, PO Box 22292, Flagstaff, AZ 86002, is a national wilderness service organization with which Sierra Club sometimes works. ❖

Speaker information for Alaska Chapter's March and April meetings—JOIN US!

Here is information on speakers for upcoming Alaska Chapter Anchorage meetings. Meetings begin promptly as 7 pm at the ARC at 4855 Arctic Blvd, south of Tudor Road—phone: (907) 868-3270; munchies will be provided. For March 27, our guest speakers will be George Donart, of Citizens Climate Lobby and Ceal Smith, of Alaska Climate Action Network (AK CAN!) Our April 24 meeting will feature Colleen Fisk, of REAP (Renewable Energy Alaska Project.)

George Donart

As a commercial fisherman in Western Alaska, George Donart has long been concerned about the effect that ocean acidification & climate change have on salmon. He is a retired teacher whose concern for his students led him to work toward a more livable future. Besides volunteering with Citizens' Climate Lobby (www.citizensclimatelobby.org) since 2012, George has volunteered with the National Renewable Energy Lab and with the Alaska Wood Energy Conference.

George will describe the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 that both climate scientists and economists laud as the best first-step to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic climate change impacts. Advisors to CCL include America's leading climate scientist and former NASA Director Dr. James Hansen, Oceanographer and former NOAA Chief Scientist Dr. Sylvia Earle.

Ceal Smith

Founder of the grassroots Alaska Climate Action Network (AK CAN!) to advance climate and energy issues on the front lines, Ceal Smith has worked as a conservation biologist, researcher, writer, environmental compliance expert, legal assistant, energy and climate change policy analyst, movement builder and community organizer since the mid-1990s. She has an MS in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology from the University of Arizona and a BA in Sustainable Development & Environmental Policy from University of California at Santa Cruz. In 2015, Ceal was recognized as a Credo Climate Hero.

Colleen Fisk, speaker at April 24 meeting

Colleen has been with REAP (Renewable Energy Alaska Project—alaskarenewableenergy.org) since 2016 implementing the AK Energy Smart and Wind for Schools curriculum in K-12 classrooms and leading teacher trainings around energy education. Colleen grew up on a small farm in Wasilla where her parents, also science teachers, instilled a lifelong love of science. She graduated from University of Maryland, College Park in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science degree. She moved back to Alaska and earned her Master of Education in Secondary Education from University of Alaska, Fairbanks in 2012. Colleen worked as an educator in the Mat-Su School district for several years, mostly at the secondary level. She then spent two years as a state microbiologist before accepting the job at REAP. ❖

-- Denise Saigh

Sierra Borealis / alaska report

is the newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club

Sierra Club Alaska: 907-276-4088

601 W 5th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99501

This is also the Chapter mail address.

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