

P.O. Box 80052
Fairbanks, AK 99708
March 3, 2005

Dear Senator:

When I worked on the Kenai National Moose Range, Alaska, more than 40 years ago, I saw that oil exploration and development is destructive to Refuge land and wildlife. I saw that despite rules to control adverse impact, the fact remained that low impact is immense when compared to no impact.

Later, when I saw the destruction to wildlife and land values imposed by oil exploration and development in Prudhoe Bay, on Alaska's north slope, I appreciated even more the wisdom of the people who established the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge nearby.

When I became the first manager of the Arctic Refuge in 1969, I saw the wisdom of its location. The Refuge protects a tiny corner of Alaska's coastal plain. It is an important corner. It draws polar bears to come ashore and dig their maternal dens in snow. It draws thousands of caribou, trudging hundreds of miles north to give birth and nurture their calves in the undisturbed Refuge.

So I urge you protect this little corner of our nation. The Refuge is an oil-poor area. We have the means to conserve much more oil than the Refuge might produce.

Sincerely,

Averill Thayer

Averill Thayer
Arctic Refuge Manager (retired)

