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March 13, 2019

Ms. Nichole Hayes, Project Manager
Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program EIS
BLM Alaska State Office
222 W 7th Ave Stop #13
Anchorage, AK 99513

Dear Ms. Hayes:

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) writes to provide comments in support of the proposed oil and gas lease program in the non-Wilderness portion of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR); and urge the agency to promptly proceed with preparation of the final EIS.

AMA is a professional membership trade organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. We are composed of more than 1,400 members that come from eight statewide branches: Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan/Prince of Wales, and Nome. Our members include individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, vendors, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies.

While AMA represents members of Alaska's mining industry, we know full well the value of a robust oil and gas industry in Alaska and the benefits it provides to our nation. For many years, AMA has been on record supporting development of the "1002" area of the ANWR Coastal Plain, as it is considered to be one of the highest potential conventional oil and gas discoveries in our nation. The DEIS includes a wide range of alternatives which contain mitigation measures and practices to minimize disturbance, resulting in limitations to a less than 2,000 acre production and support facility. This is equivalent to just 0.01% of the Refuge's 19.3 million acres. In addition, Alaska's oil and gas industry has a proven track record of responsible development in sensitive areas, including the Arctic, and thanks to continuing improvements and advances in technology, energy development and environmental stewardships have coexisted exceptionally well.

Polls have consistently shown Alaskans overwhelmingly support responsible oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain of ANWR, and Alaska's miners join them in urging the BLM to proceed with the final EIS.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Deantha Crockett
Executive Director