

From: [Skibo, Bobbie Jo](#)
To: Garnett.raeann@gmail.com
Cc: sarahjamesav@hotmail.com; [Matthew Newman](#); [Charlene Stern](#); [Tonya Garnett](#); [Rob Rosenfeld](#); [Boario, Sara D](#); [Cohn, Steven M](#); [Sweet, Serena E](#); [Kuhns, Stephanie L](#); [Lor, Socheata](#); [Leonetti, Crystal](#); [Loya, Wendy M](#)
Subject: Coastal Plain SEIS Letter from BLM/FWS: Indigenous Knowledge
Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 5:37:13 PM
Attachments: [BLM0037935 Gwich in Response Re Indigenous knowledge inclusion to SEIS Garnett.pdf](#)

Greetings Chief Garnett (Native Village of Venetie Village Council),
On behalf of Sara Boario, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Regional Director, Region 7, and Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management - Alaska State Director, please find the attached letter that has been sent directly to you via mail. We wanted to share via email, as well, to ensure that you received it in a timely manner. Please feel free to reach out to me and the Coastal Plain SEIS Project Management Team with any follow up questions or comments.

Respectfully,
Bobbie Jo Skibo

Bobbie Jo Skibo, MS (she/her)
Strategic Conservation and Coastal Plain Coordinator
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US Fish and Wildlife Service
907-441-1539



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE



1st Chief RaeAnn Garnett
Native Village of Venetie
P.O. Box 81080
Venetie, Alaska 99781

VIA EMAIL: Garnett.raeann@gmail.com

Dear Chief Garnett:

We are reaching out to follow up with you and your representatives on the inclusion of Gwich'in Indigenous knowledge (IK) into the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

We acknowledge that cancelling federal participation in the workshop held in Fairbanks, February 27th-March 3rd was met with frustration and feelings of disrespect to the elders and knowledge bearers who were in attendance. At that time, we became aware that other Indigenous knowledge bearers did not feel they had an equitable opportunity to participate in the process, and that there were several barriers preventing their attendance. For these reasons, we asked our staff to step back and re-evaluate a path forward.

We understand that the workshop in Fairbanks was accomplished in our absence. While we regret missing it, we are hopeful that you will be willing to share valuable IK gained. Additionally, IK that you shared during the prior EIS process has not been lost and will be incorporated into the SEIS process. Our intent is to build and expand upon the existing IK.

We are committed to ensuring that all of the cooperating agencies receive the same opportunities to participate while receiving the appropriate information and updates throughout the remainder of the SEIS process. We seek your suggestions on how we can better improve our communications with you and meet in a way that ensures that everyone has equitable access to the process and opportunities to participate.

Thank you again for your patience and continued engagement as we work to improve our processes and our relationship.

We look forward to coordinating with you on appropriate and equitable methods for gathering and use of Indigenous and local knowledge, as well as your thoughts on how to navigate a best path forward through the remainder of the NEPA process.

Sincerely,



Steven M. Cohn
State Director
Bureau of Land Management



Sara D. Boario
Regional Director
Fish and Wildlife Service

Identical letters sent to:

1st Chief Galen Gilbert - Arctic Village Council, Galengilbert257@gmail.com

1st Chief Paul Tritt - Venetie Village Council, Timmy_070@hotmail.com

cc:

2nd Chief Gary Simple- Venetie Village Council, venetiegas12@gmail.com

2nd Chief Michael Lee - Arctic Village Council

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