



**YUKON
REGION**

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

REGIONAL CHIEF ADAMEK ENCOURAGES PUBLIC TO CALL FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANWR

WHITEHORSE, YUKON – Assembly of First Nations Interim Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek is encouraging the public to stand in solidarity with the Gwich'in and call for full protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska, the home of the Porcupine Caribou's sacred calving grounds.

The caribou are a vital food source and hold a deep cultural and spiritual importance for all Gwich'in communities, including the Vuntut Gwitchin in Old Crow, Yukon. For decades, the Gwich'in, researchers and other experts have shown that resource development in ANWR and its coastal plain would devastate the caribou and other species.

On April 20, the U.S. government announced it would begin a 60-day public review on the sale of oil and gas leases in the coastal plain of ANWR. This is the initial step required to begin resource development in the region. This upcoming Monday, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) Yukon Chapter is hosting an open house at their offices in Whitehorse for the public to write letters in support of the Porcupine Caribou.

"The U.S. government needs to be reminded that this is about more than just environmental protection, it is about respecting the rights of the Gwich'in and their way of life," Regional Chief Adamek says. "I urge Yukoners who can participate in CPAWS' event to make their voices heard. This is a great opportunity for the community to come together and stand in support of the Gwich'in and the Porcupine Caribou."

The public can submit comments to U.S. Bureau of Land Management until June 19, 2018 by e-mail at blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov.

"I join the Vuntut Gwitchin Government in encouraging the public to voice that development in ANWR cannot be done responsibly, threatens the rights of the Gwich'in and would be an infringement of international law," Regional Chief Adamek says.

The Gwich'in have rights in connection to the Porcupine caribou under domestic and international treaties. A 1987 agreement between Canada and the U.S. states the two nations "should avoid or minimize activities that would significantly disrupt migration or other important behavior patterns of the Porcupine Caribou Herd."

The CPAWS Yukon letter writing open house is taking place Monday, June 18 at 506 Steele St. from 4 to 6 pm.

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