



Canadian environmental groups call on banks to reject funding for oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge

Mr. Brian J. Porter
CEO of Scotiabank
Scotia Plaza
44 King Street West
Toronto, ON
M5H 1H1

Mr. Bharat Masrani
CEO of Toronto-Dominion Bank
10fl. TD Tower
66 Wellington. St W
Toronto, ON
M5K 1A2

Mr. Victor Dodig
CEO of CIBC
Commerce Court
199 Bay Street,
Toronto, ON
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Dear Mr. Porter, Mr. Masrani and Mr. Dodig,

We represent some of Canada's most prominent environmental organizations, with hundreds of thousands of members and supporters across the country. We strongly oppose oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and urge your company to enact a policy to screen out financing for such projects.

The Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge is called "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," by the Gwich'in, The Sacred Place Where Life Begins. Every summer the Porcupine caribou herd gathers on the Coastal Plain to give birth, find relief from insects and reprieve from predators, and graze on a bounty of nutritious plants. For millennia the Arctic Refuge has sustained the Porcupine caribou herd, which in turn sustains Gwich'in communities across the north of the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Alaska.

In 2017 the U.S. Government opened the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas development, and has been pursuing regulatory authorizations ever since. Industrialization of the calving grounds would interfere with the most vital and sensitive period in the Porcupine caribou herd's life cycle. Development of these lands poses a dire threat to the health of the herd, and therefore threatens the physical, cultural and spiritual survival of the Gwich'in Nation.

Even though the Arctic Refuge is situated in Alaska, oil and gas development would send ripple effects into Canada. The Porcupine caribou herd migrates through the Yukon and Northwest Territories, and Canadian users account for 85% of the herd's harvest. Gwich'in communities in northern Canada depend on the Porcupine caribou herd for their culture and subsistence, and the Gwich'in have long been at the forefront of the campaign to protect the calving grounds. Last December, Gwich'in representatives travelled to Toronto to meet with your bank and request action on the Arctic Refuge.

RBC, followed by BMO, are the first Canadian banks to implement policies restricting finance for oil and gas development in the Arctic Refuge. They join a growing list of financial institutions that

include JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Wells Fargo, Morgan Stanley and Citigroup in the United States, and over a dozen banks overseas. We strongly urge you to follow suit, and rule out lending for Arctic Refuge drilling. The health of Gwich'in communities and the vitality of the Porcupine caribou herd is an issue of critical significance to Canada, and your bank's project-financing practices must not put the Arctic Refuge at risk.

Signed,

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

The Council of Canadians

Greenpeace Canada

Nature Canada

Stand.Earth

The Starfish Canada

Wilderness Committee

Wildlife Conservation Society Canada

Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

Yukon Conservation Society

350.org

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, BC Chapter

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Manitoba Chapter

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Newfoundland and Labrador

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Northern Alberta

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, NWT Chapter

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Ottawa Valley Chapter

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Saskatchewan

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Yukon Chapter

SNAP Quebec