

Grandmothers Growing Goodness - Spring Update '24

[Shared with North Slope Burrow Assembly on April 2nd, 2024]

Grandmothers Growing Goodness is a group dedicated to elevating the understanding and protection of Inupiat culture and people in the face of rampant oil and gas development and climate change. We support North Slope communities facing significant environmental justice threats and seek to strengthen equity for our people. We aim to protect the land, air, water, and wildlife our people require for their wellbeing.

Our objectives include elevating—to the public and decision-makers—the concerns of Nuiqsut and other communities about oil and gas development, advocating and strengthening the capacity of others to advocate and participate in government decision-making, developing a sense of solidarity between villages and among people living on the North Slope, and creating a common vision for a post-oil economy.

Last November, we traveled to Washington, D.C. and spoke to decision-makers about the proposed regulations for the NPRA. We thanked the Administration for their efforts to protect subsistence hunting and to strengthen tribal leadership. We recommended mitigation measures for caribou, such as closing the industrial road while they are migrating to their calving grounds. We recommended that the Administration create a new subsistence use Special Area to protect Nuiqsut's core hunting grounds. And we advocated for real co-management, where the power between local people and the federal government is shared, when it comes to making decisions about what happens on our traditional lands. You can read our comments on our website.

We are also encouraging the Administration to get broad public input on the conservation instrument that they are creating at Teshekpuk Lake. This is a required part of the Willow decision. The decision said that since Willow will have such a huge impact on our ability to hunt, the trade-off – called “compensatory mitigation” - must be that the core caribou habitat be better protected. We are encouraged that there will be better protections for the caribou and our subsistence hunting of them, and we think everyone should have a say in what those protections look like – not just the corporations, who are the only ones the Administration has talked to so far.

More recently, we travelled to Juneau to share our concerns with the legislators. We told them about the industrial air pollution we're exposed to and how we believe we should have control over and complete access to the air quality monitoring that is supposed to protect us. We also told them that we think the public should have access to all of the data they have about caribou – where they are, how they are affected by development – not just the select data the companies decide to share with us.

We are an open and transparent organization. We seek to empower our community with scientific and technical information about oil development and its impacts, and to provide our people with guidance on how they can participate in the public decision-making processes that affect them.

We welcome your input and questions, and we look forward to working with you all.