



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

101 12th Avenue, Room 236

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701



January 7, 2022

Dear Polar Bear Viewing Guide and Water Taxi Permittees,

Our last update to all of you was in April 2021. Many of you have reached out to Arctic Refuge staff inquiring about the status of polar bear viewing for 2022. Unfortunately, the circumstances have not changed significantly since our last update. We are still under orders from the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service not to issue viewing permits; the community of Kaktovik remains closed to all non-essential travelers; and we remain committed to maintaining health and safety as the highest priorities.

We will inform all of you as soon as possible if the situation changes, and we will allow adequate time for you to submit updated applications in case the opportunity for a 2022 season arises. Feel free to send in your application during the January 1 – April 15 open application period, as it may save you time later in the year.

We would also like to take this opportunity to update you that the polar bear behavior study planned by FWS polar bear biologists and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks did not occur in 2021.

As always, if you have questions or concerns you would like to discuss, please feel free to contact me at Steve_Berendzen@fws.gov or (907) 378-3407.

Respectfully,

Arctic Refuge Manager