



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Talking Points

More drugs do not help beat the addiction

President Bush states that “America is addicted to oil.” Yet the new Bush/GOP energy plan calls for drilling the Arctic Refuge and sensitive offshore areas. This amounts to a ridiculous call for the nation to “get more addicted to oil.” As Thomas Friedman stated, *this is a “massive, fraudulent, pathetic excuse for an energy policy.”*

Drilling the Refuge will have no effect on high gas prices for at least 10 years

Even if oil were discovered in commercial quantities in the Refuge, it would take at least ten years for it to reach the market. Recently released U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) data reveals that between 2025 and 2030, when oil discovered in the Arctic Refuge would be near peak production levels, the effect at the gas pump would be just a few pennies per gallon. The fact is that oil prices are set on the global market and drilling the Arctic Refuge will not reduce the price of gas by any noticeable amount.

Big Oil just wants more money

There is no legitimate public interest to drill the Refuge. *Drilling the Refuge is all about getting more money for Big Oil. Exxon Mobil made \$40 billion in profits last year. Yet it has not paid off its Exxon Valdez oil spill debts, and invested a paltry \$10 million in renewable energy.*

Big Oil has a dismal track record

Claims about drilling in an environmentally sensitive manner are just plain wrong. *Spills continually happen on the North Slope, including one in May caused by corrosion at the hallmark Alpine Oil Field, and one this month on the pipeline that was installed by BP at Prudhoe Bay to replace the corrosion-infested pipeline that caused the biggest spill in North Slope history in 2006. And the Exxon Valdez decision of such paltry punitive damages against a company that made \$40 billion in profits last year, for a catastrophic oil spill that happened 19 years ago, provides little disincentive for oil companies to avoid such problems in the future.*

Conservation and alternative energy technologies already show great promise

The EIA analysis reveals that *existing conservation and alternative technology gains far outweigh Arctic Refuge potential.* In fact, due to these factors oil imports have dropped considerably since 2005.

Oil and gas activities would industrialize the Coastal Plain

The 2,000 acre drilling scheme is a hoax. Under all drill bills the entire 1.5 million acre Coastal Plain would be opened to oil and gas exploration. Best estimates by the U.S. government are that oil under the Coastal Plain is in small oil fields spread throughout the Coastal Plain. These could only be developed with a sprawling industrial complex just like at other North Slope oil fields.

The Arctic Refuge is a pristine, wild, place that should be protected

The area proposed for oil exploration – the Coastal Plain – is considered by scientists to be the *biological heart of the Refuge.* It is home to more than 200 wildlife species including polar bears, musk ox and caribou. *Alaska Native people have and still rely on the wildlife sustained by the coastal plain as their cultural and nutritional foundation.*

For more information or for sources of the above facts please contact Steve Kline or Cindy Shogan at Alaska Wilderness League, 202-544-5205