



*Your Land.  
Your Voice.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**5/13/08**

Contact: Emilie Surrusco

Tel: 202-544-5205 or Email: [Emilie@alaskawild.org](mailto:Emilie@alaskawild.org)

**Senate Heartily Rebukes Attempt to Open Arctic Refuge to Oil Drilling**  
*Today's vote shows that majority believes drilling is not the answer to high gas prices*

Washington, DC – The Senate overwhelmingly refused to authorize drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge today, in a 56-42 vote. The Republican minority proposed drilling in the Arctic Refuge as part of a dirty energy package that included opening areas in the outer continental shelf for new offshore oil and natural gas drilling, promoting new oil shale drilling on our public lands, and promoting the increased use of coal.

“The Senate made a clear statement today that drilling in the Arctic Refuge does nothing to lower gas prices,” said Cindy Shogan, executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League. “It has been proven that conservation is our best solution. Now we can work together to come up with real steps toward breaking our addiction to fossil fuels.”

If drilling in the Arctic Refuge were to start tomorrow, no oil would flow for at least a decade. Even then, oil pulled from the Refuge would amount to a drop in the bucket of the oil market. At peak production (in 2030), the effect at the gas pump would be two pennies per gallon, based on 2007 U.S. EIA data. Meanwhile, increased conservation and alternative technologies in the last three years have cut the projected need for imported oil between now and 2050 by more than 100 billion barrels. That's ten times more benefit than what we might be able to get a decade from now from the Refuge.

The Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge, the proposed site for oil drilling, is home to more than 200 wildlife species including polar bears, musk ox and caribou. Scientists consider the coastal plain to be the biological heart of the refuge. The Porcupine caribou herd travel to the coastal plain each summer to give birth to their young. It also is the most important denning site for a significant population of polar bears – which are currently being considered for listing as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Although the Department of Interior (DOI) has missed legal deadline after legal deadline to make a decision on the listing, a federal judge has ordered DOI to make a decision by Thursday.

**About Alaska Wilderness League - Your Land. Your Voice.**

Alaska Wilderness League's mission is to lead the effort to preserve Alaska's wilderness by engaging citizens, sharing resources, collaborating with other organizations, educating the public, and providing a courageous, constant and victorious voice for Alaska in the nation's capital. It is the only organization dedicated solely to the preservation of Alaska's wilderness in the nation's capital. Visit [www.alaskawild.org](http://www.alaskawild.org) to find out more about how you can preserve Alaska's wilderness.

###

[www.AlaskaWild.org](http://www.AlaskaWild.org)

122 C St NW, Ste 240, Washington, DC 20001 \* Tel: 202-544-5205 \* Fax: 202-544-5197