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## **President Obama proclaims his support for the Arctic Refuge**

WASHINGTON – Yesterday, on the 50th anniversary of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, President Obama issued a proclamation that highlights the importance this place holds in the hearts and minds of Americans. With powerful words that talk about the wild beauty of the Arctic Refuge, President Obama reinstates his commitment to protecting it for future generations:

‘Today, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge remains distinct in the American landscape, and we must remain committed to making responsible choices and ensuring the continued conservation of these wild lands.’ (To read the full proclamation, click [here](#))

President Obama’s proclamation comes as pro-drilling advocates look to the next Congress to renew their push to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling. President Obama could curtail these efforts by declaring the Arctic Refuge a national monument through an executive order.

The Arctic Refuge and especially its coastal plain – the Refuge’s “biological heart” – is home to some of America’s most iconic species including polar bears, grizzly bears, wolves, wolverines, muskoxen, and more than 130 species of migratory birds. The Arctic is alive, and it’s all around us. The millions of migratory birds that rely on the Arctic Refuge connect us all to this region – bird species that breed in the Arctic Refuge are found in each state and travel to six continents. For 50 years, the cycle of life in the Arctic Refuge has remained unhindered by human development, so life there has continued to thrive.

Over time, attempts to tack Arctic drilling legislation on almost anything moving in Congress have become relentless. Yet for 50 years, the persistent and overwhelming support for the Arctic Refuge by the American people has ensured its continued protection.

This is not an issue for one party. Recent polling shows that 62 percent of Americans support this idea of designating the Arctic Refuge as a national monument, including 44 percent of Republicans and 63 percent of Independent voters.

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