



ARCTIC TRUTH

Celebrating 50 Years of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

~ February 5, 2010 ~

Each week leading up to the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's 50th Anniversary** on December 6, 2010, we will be sending you an Arctic Truth newsletter highlighting an **Arctic Hero** – someone who has gone above and beyond to protect the natural treasures of the Arctic Refuge – an **Arctic bird** that migrates from the Refuge to other states in the US – and other news about why the Arctic Refuge deserves the strongest possible protections.



Arctic Hero

Senator **Warren Magnuson** of Washington State was elected a US Senator in 1944 and served six terms. Senator Magnuson helped author many important pieces of legislation, including the Civil Rights Act and consumer protection bills. He also was an environmental leader, and his love of the ocean led to the Marine Mammal Protection Act as well as bills to conserve American fisheries and establish the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In 1959, Senator Magnuson introduced the first bill to protect the Arctic Wildlife Range, a bill that specified the purpose of the Arctic Wildlife Range was “to preserve, in the public interest, a magnificent wildlife and wilderness area in the State of Alaska.”

Arctic Bird

Birds migrate from the Arctic Refuge to every state in the US. The **Snow Goose** travels from the Arctic Refuge to California and many other Western states. Snow geese travel south from the Arctic in very large and noisy flocks. The swirling white of the flock as it descends is reminiscent of snow, giving them their name. In the early 1900s, snow geese were being over hunted, but the population has rebounded in recent years, aided by the protection of national wildlife refuges across the country which provide them with important habitat for breeding and migratory stop-overs.



Photo: Dave Menke, USFWS

Arctic Action

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the *only* area on the North Slope of Alaska that is legislatively off-limits to oil and gas development. Even immediately offshore of the Refuge, in the Beaufort Sea, oil and gas leasing has occurred. In fact, during the same week that the Department of Interior designated this offshore area critical habitat for the threatened polar bear, they approved exploration plans for this summer offshore of the Refuge. This approval was granted despite a glaring lack of scientific understanding of this region, and a complete lack of technology to clean up oil spills in the Arctic's icy waters. Developing these leases off the Arctic Refuge is risky and premature—first we need to gather more data so we can make a well-informed science-based decision on: if, when, and how development should proceed. In the meantime, we should protect this one haven on Alaska's North Slope in its pristine state: please **cosponsor HR39** the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act.



ALASKA
WILDERNESS
LEAGUE
122 C Street, NW, Ste 240
Washington, DC 20001
Ph: 202-544-5205
www.alaskawild.org

For more information contact: Lauren Hierl, lauren@alaskawild.org