



ARCTIC TRUTH

Celebrating 50 Years of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

~ March 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: **Arctic bird** – that migrates from the Refuge to other states in the US; and other news about why the Arctic Refuge deserves the strongest available protections.



Arctic Hero

This week's Arctic Hero, President **Warren G. Harding**, established the Naval (National) Petroleum Reserve in 1923 in northwest Alaska. This Reserve remains the largest single tract of public land in the United States. Like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the now-named National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska contains regions of unparalleled wilderness and wildlife value, including places identified as Special Areas in the mid-1970s for their importance to wildlife. These areas include Teshekpuk Lake, which President Bush, under intense public pressure, withdrew from oil and gas leasing in 2008.

President Harding began a long tradition of designating unique wild places in Alaska as public lands, setting the stage for the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in 1960.

Arctic Bird

Birds migrate from the Arctic Refuge to every state in the US. **Peregrine Falcons** breed and forge in the Arctic tundra and then travel to Florida and many other states for the winter. Peregrines hunt from above and, after sighting their prey, drop into a steep, swift dive that can top 200 mph. Peregrine Falcons almost disappeared from eastern North America in the mid-20th century due to pesticide poisoning, but extensive recovery efforts have led to their return in many regions of the country.



Arctic Action

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) has been in the news this week demanding her price for supporting the climate bill—drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This despite the fact that Senator Murkowski has repeatedly identified climate change as an important issue for the people of Alaska, as coastal areas erode, and sea ice diminishes before their eyes. Alaska's Arctic region is experiencing the country's most serious impacts from climate change, as temperatures in the Arctic have increased at more than double the rate of the lower 48. However, rather than support legislation that would help ease this burden on her state's citizens, Senator Murkowski is playing a political game. She knows that the supporters of climate legislation will not support drilling in the Arctic Refuge. And she knows that drilling in the Arctic Refuge will only provide a drop in the bucket of our nation's oil needs, while exacerbating climate change. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge needs to be taken off the table as a political pawn once and for all. Please do your part by **supporting H.R. 39, the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act**, which would designate the Coastal Plain of the Refuge as wilderness.



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