



ARCTIC TRUTH

Celebrating 50 Years of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

~ May 21, 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

Alaskan **Ginny Hill Wood**, 92, pioneering pilot and conservationist, has been involved in Arctic Refuge protection for over 50 years. Her first act as an environmentalist was to testify at a U.S. Senate field hearing in 1959 on the proposal to establish the original Arctic Refuge. She said, *the esthetic, spiritual, recreation, and educational values of such an area are those one cannot put a price tag on any more than one can on a sunset, a piece of poetry, a symphony, or a friendship.* Wood was recently awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for service in the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) during World War II and is in the Alaska Conservation Hall of Fame.

Arctic Bird

Least Sandpipers breed and visit different regions of the Arctic Refuge before journeying to Maine and many other states. They are the smallest shorebird in the world. Impressively, within a day of hatching, Least Sandpipers are able to leave the nest and begin feeding themselves.



Arctic Action

Alaskans played a key role in establishing the Arctic Refuge 50 years ago, and they continue working hard to keep the Arctic Refuge protected. Last week, over 200 people turned out at the Fairbanks, Alaska hearing on the Arctic Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and the vast majority testified in favor of the wilderness review for the Arctic Refuge coastal plain and opposed drilling. *"Wilderness to us is leave it the way it is, without a trace, the way the creator created it,"* said Sarah James, Gwich'in Steering Committee Chairperson from Arctic Village. *"That's how we've lived for thousands of years. This is human rights versus oil. Oil is not our way of life. We are caribou people."* The wilderness review is a historic chance to promote wilderness protection for the coastal plain. Unique among refuges, the Arctic Refuge was established to preserve wilderness values. While only Congress can designate refuge lands as wilderness, the CCP's wilderness review provides a key stepping stone. Please send your comment by June 7 to: arcticrefugeccp@fws.gov.



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