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\* View Ad Here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWBtB8ZYVV8> \*

## **With Gulf Disaster Still Unfolding and Decision on New Drilling in America's Arctic Ocean Days Away, New TV Ad Shows Dangers of Wrong Choice**

*Ad shows impossibility of rewinding an oil spill and the need to pause before the next one*

WASHINGTON, DC – As the Obama Administration moves closer to announcing the fate of the first new offshore drilling following the Gulf disaster, a broad coalition of environmental and oceans groups released a new television ad calling on the President to pause plans for Shell Oil to drill in the Arctic Ocean.

The ad comes even as the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster keeps spreading across the Gulf of Mexico, yet experts say an accident by Shell in America's pristine Arctic Ocean could be even worse. Imagine many of the same challenges as the Gulf, plus bitter cold, ice, extreme wind and wave conditions, 24-hour darkness for months out of the year and response equipment for a blowout of this size being weeks away. Right now, Shell is scheduled to start exploratory drilling in early July.

Advocates charge that Shell is following the same "Trust Us" mentality as BP. Shell claims that drilling in the Arctic's shallow water is less risky than in the Gulf's deep water, despite a report that shows that blowouts are more likely in shallow water. In addition, they claimed conditions such as sea-ice make cleanup easier, though Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thad Allen – head of the Gulf clean-up – said ice and cold makes responding to a spill "significantly more difficult."

The new ad, titled "Drilling Rewind," features images of the devastation caused by the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico – and then rewinds that footage back to a pre-disaster Gulf of Mexico. It bluntly tells President Obama that new drilling in the Arctic this summer by Shell is a mistake. The ad will appear in a strong showing on CNN, MSNBC and other cable outlets over the next several days.

"As the Exxon Valdez disaster and the ongoing BP spill have shown us, oil spills devastate environments and communities, and the devastation can last for generations," said Cindy Shogan, Executive Director for the Alaska Wilderness League. "We need to be sure that we can effectively respond to and clean up an oil spill in the Arctic Ocean before we make this pristine place our next drilling gamble."

“The Obama administration needs to know that Americans want a pause on oil drilling in the pristine waters of America's Arctic Ocean,” said Trip Van Noppen, President of Earthjustice.

“The Gulf of Mexico disaster has shown there are far too many risks involved. An oil spill in this remote region would have long-lasting impacts for decades, killing whales, seals, fish and birds, and the Native communities that rely on them. The Shell Oil Company is preparing to drill in the Arctic Ocean as early as this July. The Obama administration needs to push pause on Shell's plan to drill in the Arctic Ocean and rely on a cautious, science-based approach that protects these waters.”

“The BP oil spill disaster reminds us that offshore drilling in environmentally sensitive areas, such as critical habitat for polar bears and other Arctic species, is simply not worth the risk,” said Justin Allegro, Legislative Representative for Wildlife Conservation with the National Wildlife Federation. “The Obama administration should heed the lessons learned from this catastrophe and rollback plans to allow drilling in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas.”

The ad comes from a broad coalition of environmental and oceans groups, including the World Wildlife Fund, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, The Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society and the Alaska Wilderness League.

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