



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

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**Drilling of any kind or from any direction does not belong in the
Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

Statement from Cindy Shogan, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

“Today, as the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee discussed advancements in oil and gas technology, they heard from experts on the potential for drilling techniques such as directional drilling. Despite claims that these technologies bring a newfound ability to drill without impacting some of our nation’s most unique and abundant environments, Alaska Wilderness League would like to remind committee members that drilling is drilling, no matter how you dress it up. There simply is no such thing as impact-free drilling.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and other members of the Alaska delegation have touted the merits of directional drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge’s Coastal Plain. Yet no matter what direction you drill, oil and gas development requires substantial infrastructure – including well pads, busy airports, permanent gravel roads and pipelines – and has significant environmental impacts and risks. Furthermore, as Senator Murkowski has indicated herself, directional drilling is often used as an initial technology leading to eventual full-scale development of an area. This would result in industrialization of the Arctic Refuge’s entire biological heart, the lush, untouched tundra of the 1.5-million acre Coastal Plain.

Any type of oil production in the Arctic Refuge would also first require intrusive, damaging and risky seismic and exploratory drilling activities across the birthing grounds for so many of our nation’s most beloved wildlife species, from birds we see in all 50 states, to polar bears and caribou. We saw from the exploratory *Deepwater Horizon* well how these activities can impact an ecosystem.

There are some places in this country that define what it means to be American; the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Alaska is one of those places. Fifty years ago, our parents and grandparents looked out across this vast wilderness and decided to set it aside as a protected space for the abundant wildlife that depends on it. We have a moral responsibility to save wild places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for future generations. That’s why our country has remained committed to its protection for over a half century. Some places are just too extraordinary to drill, no matter what the technology, and the Arctic Refuge is one of them.”

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