

**ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE * FRIENDS OF THE EARTH * PACIFIC ENVIRONMENT * NORTHERN
ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER * SIERRA CLUB**

Conservation groups launch Highway to Shell Campaign to Highlight Shell Oil's Risky and Reckless Arctic Drilling Plan

The online campaign also highlights a 75 percent likelihood of a major oil spill if drilling and production in the Chukchi Sea moves forward

WASHINGTON – Today, a coalition of conservation groups, including Alaska Wilderness League, announced a new campaign called “Highway to Shell.” The campaign will track the advancement of Royal Dutch Shell’s drilling rigs from the Pacific Northwest to the Arctic Ocean as a way to highlight Shell’s checkered past and the risks of drilling in the Arctic.

What’s more, the federal government has found that there is a 75 percent chance of one or more major oil spills between now and full field development in the Chukchi Sea.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy management conducted a rushed and cursory review of Shell’s plan to drill in the Arctic Ocean this summer that inadequately assessed its threats and effects. Shell’s approved exploration plan is even bigger, dirtier, and louder than their 2012 plan, including the use of two drilling rigs in a concentrated area with a bigger armada, all posing a threat to whales, walruses and seals, as well as discharging air and water pollution. Drilling in the Arctic is already a high risk proposition with a high potential for a disastrous oil spill in icy, harsh and remote conditions, which all agree couldn’t be cleaned up.

The campaign platform features two side-by-side maps: a live tracker of Shell’s two drilling rigs, the Noble Discoverer and the Polar Pioneer, and a map of their projected route to the Arctic. As the rigs leave Seattle and move towards the Arctic, the coalition will release a series of social media graphics highlighting one Shell disaster at a time and calling on the president to “shut down the Highway to Shell.”

The tracker can be found [here](#).

Statements from Highway to Shell campaign participants:

“It is irresponsible and reckless to allow Shell or any oil company to drill in America’s Arctic Ocean. Shell has proven time and time again that it cannot be trusted in America’s Arctic Ocean, which is why we will be here to track their every move and share their every mishap. President Obama has committed to fight climate change. But, his actions are louder than words. Drilling in the Arctic is going in the wrong direction to fight climate change and ignores the real threat of an oil spill in the icy and harsh climate of the Arctic. This is why we are asking our members, the public and others to shine a light on Shell’s past and present mistakes and tell the President: #ShellNo. It’s time for President Obama and his administration to take Arctic Ocean drilling off the table for good,” said **Cindy Shogan, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League**.

“This is the largest, loudest, and dirtiest exploration plan ever proposed in the American Arctic Ocean,” said **Friends of the Earth Climate Campaigner, Marissa Knodel**. “Shell’s revised Exploration Plan sets us on the path toward climate catastrophe as the latest science says Arctic oil must be kept in the ground

in order to have a chance at keeping the planet safe. The only place for these dirty fossil fuels is in the ground.”

“The challenges of drilling in the Arctic Ocean are significant and not fully understood—Shell's record coupled with a 75% chance of an oil spill means terrifying risk to those that depend on the Arctic Ocean,” states **Northern Alaska Environmental Center Arctic Program Director, Jessica Girard**. “Highway to Shell follows a vessel whose mission is to extract fossil fuels and increase climate disruption—we're watching a disaster.”

“Shell cannot be trusted in the Arctic. Following its botched attempt at drilling there a couple of years ago, President Obama should not give the go-ahead to try again. We know that if Shell drills, there is a 75% chance of an oil spill and 100% chance of further climate disruption – those are terrible odds. The smart move would be to exit the "Highway to Shell" and just say no,” said **Dan Ritzman, Director of the Sierra Club's Arctic Campaign**.

Contacts:

Gwen Dobbs, Alaska Wilderness League, 202-266-0418, gwen@alaskawild.org

Marissa Knodel, Friends of the Earth, 202-222-0729, mknodel@foe.org

Jessica Girard, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, (907) 452-5093, arctic@northern.org

Jonathon Berman, Sierra Club, 202-495-3033, jonathon.berman@sierraclub.org

###