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Contact: Gwen Dobbs

Tel: 202-544-5205 or Email: gwen@alaskawild.org

Rep. Huffman to Sec. Jewell: don't approve Shell's plans, Arctic leasing

Washington — A coalition of representatives showed their support for America's Arctic Ocean by sending a letter to Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, urging her to not give Shell final approvals to drill in the Chukchi Sea or move forward with any lease sales in America's Arctic Ocean.

[The letter, spearheaded by Rep. Huffman and signed by 72 representatives](#), underlines the representatives' "serious concerns" regarding Interior's recent approval of Shell's exploration plans for the Chukchi Sea and the inclusion of any oil and gas leasing in U.S. Chukchi or Beaufort waters in the draft proposed 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

The following are excerpts from the letter:

"...we have serious concerns regarding your recent approval of Shell's exploration plans for the Chukchi Sea and the inclusion of any oil and gas leasing in U.S. Chukchi or Beaufort waters in the draft proposed 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program."...

"... Arctic drilling would be inconsistent with the important goal of keeping climate change to 2 degrees C or less by 2050." ...

"...Shell has not demonstrated how it plans to adjust operations to take into account its sloppy attempt to explore for oil in 2012; an attempt which put many lives at great risk, including those of brave Coast Guard crew who handled nearly unimaginably complex conditions to safely remove 18 people from the free-floating Kulluk." ...

"...the Interior Department's own analysis of Sale 193 documents a 75 percent chance of large oil spill occurrence if the Chukchi leases are developed; a truly unacceptable risk."...

"We respectfully request the Department of Interior to not give Shell final approvals to drill in the Chukchi Sea or move forward with any lease sales in America's Arctic Ocean. Instead, we support working together to prioritize ecosystem health, safety, local impacts and limiting carbon emissions over drilling and leasing in the Arctic Ocean."

Contacts:

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

Paul Arden, Rep. Jared Huffman's office, 202-225-5187, Paul.Arden@mail.house.gov

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www.AlaskaWild.org

122 C St NW, Ste 240, Washington, DC 20001 * Tel: 202-544-5205 * Fax: 202-544-5197