

*A Letter from Guides and Outdoor Professionals  
Supporting Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Protections*

November 14, 2017

Dear Member of Congress,

As guides and other professionals that work in the Alaska recreation industry, we write to you today to ask you to stand up for the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and to oppose any attempts to open the Coastal Plain for oil and gas development.

The tourism industry has had the privilege of sharing the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge with individuals from across the world, and undoubtedly some of your constituents have been our clients. Each person comes to the Refuge for different reasons and has unique expectations, but many of their reactions embody similar sentiments: awe and appreciation for such an intact and vast place, amazement at the diversity of wildlife, fascination with the local flora and fauna, and humility at the ability to experience a place so largely unharmed by humans. Few such places exist in our world today, and all possible actions should be taken to ensure they are protected for current and future generations alike. We understand the value of wild spaces for both our state and nation, and recognize that such places directly support our livelihoods.

Sustainable tourism provides for us today, and we are confident that sustainable tourism will grow if Congress continues to protect places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Tourism produces \$3.9 billion of economic activity for Alaska, supporting 1/8th of Alaskan jobs. The average spending of the two million visitors that travel to Alaska each year is over \$1,000. At a time when Alaska's economy is facing a recession, these tourism numbers continue to grow. Protecting the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge - and other wilderness areas like it - is not only protecting a wild place for Americans to recreate, but it is also protecting America's recreational economy and our jobs.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our nation's most iconic wild areas, and it deserves our most enduring legal protections. An immense wilderness, bursting with biodiversity and framed by the awe-inspiring Brooks Mountain Range, the Arctic Refuge is pristine, it is spectacular, and it belongs to all Americans. For more than fifty years, our country has remained committed to protecting this unparalleled landscape, and we want to ensure that it remains off-limits to development, for future generations to experience.

Though Alaska's congressional delegation often touts the fact that all Alaskans support opening the coastal plain to oil and gas development, this is a misconception. As Alaskans, we believe that protecting this pristine, wild place for current and future generations alike is in the best interest of our state and nation.

We thank you for your attention towards building a sustainable economy for the state of Alaska and our country, and ask that you take action to protect this extraordinary place.

Signed,

65 Alaska Guides and Outdoor Professionals (see attached)

**Emily Myhre, Denali, AK**  
Guide, Camp Widjiwagan and Arctic Treks

**Jim Campbell, Fairbanks, AK**  
Co-owner / Arctic Treks

**Anne Beaulaurier, Denali National Park, AK**

**Kaitlyn Weitzel, Cantwell, AK**  
Guide/Arctic Treks

**Janeen Hutchins, Girdwood, AK**  
Alaska Wildland Adventures

**Joe Jacob, Clam Gulch, AK**  
Owner, Alaska Personal Journeys

**Amy Breen, Fairbanks, AK**  
University of Alaska Fairbankd

**Nicholas Allen, Girdwood, AK**  
Senior Staff/Guide- Alaska Alpine Adventures

**Pamela A Miller, Fairbanks, AK**  
Log House in Birch Woods (B&B)

**Patricia Gaedeke, Fairbanks, AK**  
Owner, Iniakuk Lake Wilderness Lodge, LLC

**Brenda Murphy, Fairbanks, AK**  
Arctic River Guides, LLC

**Ronald Yarnell, Fairbanks, AK**  
Owner, All About Adventure

**Macgill Adams, Anchorage, AK**  
Wilderness Alaska

**David Shaw, Fairbanks, AK**  
Guide/Photographer

**Jeff Fair, Palmer, AK**  
Fairwinds Wildlife Services

**Jon Hirsh, Haines, AK**  
River guide

**Alan Coulter, Weybridge, VT**  
Guide for Arctic Wild

**Rick French, Livonia, NY**  
President, Pack Paddle Ski Corp

**John Schauer, Fairbanks, AK**  
Wilderness Guide for 25 years

**Gavin Vaughan, Anchorage, AK**  
Adventure Education consultants

**Brita Irving, Fairbanks, AK**  
Research Scientist

**Shannon Coykendall, Denali Park, AK**  
Arctic Treks

**Brooke Edwards, Girdwood, AK**  
Wilderness Guide

**Joe Stock, Anchorage, AK**  
Stock Alpine LLC

**Matthew McIntosh, Anchorage, AK**  
Trail Guide, YMCA Camps Menogyn and Widjiwagan

**Howard Carbone, Talkeetna, AK**  
Alaska Nature Guides

**Garrett Jones, Fairbanks, AK**  
Arctic River Guides, LLC

**Kim Heacox, Gustavus, AK**

**Noelle Carbone, Talkeetna, AK**

**Jenna Jonas, Fairbanks, AK**  
Owner and guide, Boreal Journeys Alaska LLC

**Dee Dee Van Vliet, Anchorage, AK**  
Wilderness Alaska

**Moe Witschard, Bozeman, MT**

**William Eric Schmidt, Anchorage AK**  
Alaska Wilderness Guides

**David Lesh, Gustavus, AK**  
Owner, Gustavus Inn

**Stephen Springer**, *Fairbanks, AK*

**Debbie S. Miller**, *Fairbanks, AK*  
Nature Books

**Robin Lohse**, *Homer, AK*  
Co-owner Wilderness Birding Adventures

**Craig N Buchanan**, *Ester, AK*

**Emilie EntriKin**, *Fairbanks, AK*  
Arctic Guide

**John Gaedeke**, *Fairbanks, AK*  
Iniakuk Lake Wilderness Lodge

**Michael Lemay**, *Homer, AK*  
Owner/operator

**Stuart Cohen**, *Juneau, AK*  
Invisible World

**Cynthia D. Merrow**, *Cantwell, AK*

**Hugh Rose**, *Fairbanks, AK*  
Hugh Rose Photography

**Pam Flowers**, *Talkeetna, AK*  
Sled Dog Adventurer

**Davey Lubin**, *Sitka, AK*  
Esther G Sea Tours and Taxi

**Robert Thompson**, *Kaktovik, AK*  
Kaktovik Arctic Adventures

**James Brady**, *Anchorage, AK*  
Wilderness Alaska

**Cliff Htatt**, *Anchorage, AK*  
Wilderness Alaska

**Katharina Merchant**, *Chickaloon, AK*  
Alaska Ultra Sport

**Alice Bailey**, *Charlottesville, VA*

**Aaron Lang**, *Homer, AK*  
Co-owner, Wilderness Birding Adventures

**Dan Oberlatz**, *Anchorage, AK*  
Alaska Alpine Adventures

**Kevin Slater**, *Newry, Maine*  
Mahoosuc Guide Service

**Polly Mahoney**, *Newry, Maine*  
Mahoosuc Guide Service

**Bill Mohrwinkel**, *Palmer, AK*  
Co-owner/ Arctic Wild LLC

**Elizabeth Roderick**, *Anchorage AK*

**Dave Bachrach**, *Homer, AK*  
President / AK Adventures, Inc.

**Michael Wald**, *Fairbanks, AK*  
Co-Owner, Arctic Wild

**Christa Sadler**, *Flagstaff, Arizona*  
Guide

**Jenna & Simon Hamm**, *Denali National Park, AK*  
Owners, Camp Denali & North Face Lodge

**Fred Raymond**, *Fairbanks, AK*

**Paul Davis**, *Sitka, AK*

**Megan Moody**, *Tenakee Springs, AK*

**Elena kirschner**, *AZ*  
Sundog expeditions

Additional comments from letter signers:

The Arctic Refuge is an integral part of our business and livelihood. It also provides a spiritual connection through its untouched wild wilderness landscape for all of our clients, who then take this renewed spiritual energy back to their own communities and in turn further spreading the possibility of peace and harmony throughout this great country of ours.

*- Jim Campbell - Fairbanks, AK - Co-owner / Arctic Treks*

Please know that both as a resident of Alaska and as a river/wilderness guide that works in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, I stand as absolutely opposed to any development there. Despite what you may hear, many Alaskans are opposed. The scars of early exploration are still visible in the landscape - you can see them not only from the air but also from the banks of the Canning River. What gets done in a permafrost controlled area like that will take nothing short of geologic time to undo. Even with all the technological advances in the oil industry, reclamation is still nothing more than a shoddy bandaid in permafrost country; it is that sensitive of a landscape. The Refuge is a gift to all Americans and I implore you to use your long-term vision and take action to permanently protect the Refuge. In addition, I want to see Alaska diversify it's income - support sustainable tourism and sustainable fisheries, while reducing our dependence on oil revenues. We could use our money a lot more wisely in this state. Thank you for your time and consideration.

*- Shannon Coykendall - Denali Park, AK – Guide / Arctic Treks*

The Arctic Refuge's true value is as a preserved wilderness. Disrupting an intact ecosystem is not an acceptable compromise to the unvetted development of an industry that is failing. As an operator in the Adventure Tourism industry in Alaska, I strive to show visitors to the Refuge what TRUE wilderness is. Development to the Refuge will greatly impact their experience, and my industry as a whole.

*- Nicholas Allen - Girdwood, AK - Senior Staff/Guide- Alaska Alpine Adventures*

Let's save any potential oil reserves that may exist in the ground which will allow for maintaining the character of the Arctic Refuge for its original and intended purpose. Let industry concentrate on the most economic reserves closer to infrastructure. In the meantime, more sustainable energy can be expanded and ideally eclipsing the urge to develop the Refuge at all. Sounds like a win win win to me.

*- Macgill Adams - Anchorage, AK – Owner, Wilderness Alaska*

It has been my privilege to guide in such a wild and beautiful place.

*- Alan Coulter - Weybridge, VT - Guide for Arctic Wild*

Beyond Petroleum.....Wilderness is the goose that lays the golden egg, forever!

*- Davey Lubin - Sitka, AK - Esther G Sea Tours and Taxi*

The National Arctic Wildlife Refuge is a national resources, not just an Alaskan resource. It should be protected from short term energy and economic needs so that future generations can have what we have today; an untouched wilderness.

*- Joe Jacob - Clam Gulch, AK – Owner & Guide*

As a writer, naturalist and explorer, the Arctic Refuge has been a source of inspiration for more than four decades. Oil development is incompatible with the purposes of establishment for the Arctic Refuge. The wilderness would be destroyed and many species would be harmed or disrupted such as the threatened polar bears that den on the coastal plain, and our largest caribou herd that utilizes this critical area as a birthplace and nursery ground. An oil field does not belong in our greatest wildlife refuge.

*- Debbie S Miller – Fairbanks, AK – Nature Books*

Any move to open any part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration and development should be a vote of the American voting public, not an add-on to tax legislation amidst a favorable political climate.

*- Jenna & Simon Hamm – Denali National Park, AK – Owners, Camp Denali & North Face Lodge*

I have worked in ANWR for almost 20 years. It is an incredibly special place, the only place of its kind on the planet. Alaska and the United States have survived quite well without drilling in ANWR since it was established. The damage from oil and gas drilling in this precious place will take geologic time to erase, while the profits will be gone in decades. Please do not let the destruction of this unique ecosystem be the legacy that you leave for future generations.

*- Christa Sadler - Flagstaff, Arizona – Guide*

Please keep this place protected. It is so vital to the entire northern ecosystem.

*- Emily Myhre - Denali, AK - Guide, Camp Widjiwagan and Arctic Treks*