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### **Trump administration continues Arctic Assault with western Arctic lease sale**

WASHINGTON – Today, the Bureau of Land Management held its annual lease sale in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, in Alaska’s western Arctic. The area offered for lease was the largest in Reserve history with more than 10 million acres on the block, including sensitive wildlife habitat surrounding the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area – one of the largest and most ecologically significant wetland areas in the world. And yet, of the 900 hundred tracts offered only seven were leased, covering approximately 80,000 acres and working out to \$14.99 per acre – or less than 1% of the land offered.

The Reserve is the largest single unit of public lands in the nation, spanning nearly 23 million acres across the western North Slope of Alaska. Located in the northeast corner of the Reserve, Teshekpuk Lake is the largest lake in Arctic Alaska and the third largest in the entire state, and lies at the heart of one of the most productive and unique wetland complexes in the circumpolar Arctic. The Teshekpuk Lake Special Area also provides high-value habitat areas for wildlife and calving grounds for the Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd.

#### **Statement by Kristen Miller, Conservation Director, Alaska Wilderness League:**

“The Trump administration and Republican leaders are making a full-court press to open every single acre of America’s Arctic coast to oil and gas development. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and offshore drilling in the Arctic Ocean are highly controversial, but the all-out push for development in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska deserves every bit as much attention.

Today’s lease sale shows once again the fuzzy Arctic Refuge math by the Trump administration and congressional Republicans. 900 tracts and more than 10 million acres were offered in the Reserve, but a measly seven tracts at \$14.99/acre were leased. At that price, leasing the entirety of the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain’s 1.5 million acres would raise slightly more than \$11 million in revenue for the federal government, a far cry from the billion dollar lie that Trump and Republicans are feeding the American public. Our public lands are worth more than that.

The Reserve is not an oilfield – it is an Indiana-sized tract of largely undeveloped land teeming with migratory birds, brown bears, caribou, threatened polar bears, walrus, endangered beluga whales and more. The American people do not want the entirety of the Arctic coast turned over for wholesale oil and gas drilling.”



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