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### **Trump Administration Jumpstarts Arctic Assault with Arctic Ocean Lease Sale**

Washington, D.C. – The Trump administration is taking another step toward oil and gas drilling in the Arctic Ocean today in a region protected under President Obama. [The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management announced](#) it will publish in the Federal Register tomorrow a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed lease sale in Alaska’s Beaufort Sea Planning Area in 2019. The proposed sale is listed in the draft proposed 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program that the Secretary of the Interior announced on Jan. 4, 2018. Millions of Americans have already voiced their opposition to new offshore leasing in the Arctic and other ocean areas.

Using sound science, the Obama administration protected Important areas of the Beaufort and Chukchi seas because of their ecological and subsistence values. This short-sighted move ignores the incredible risks of drilling in Alaskan arctic waters. The Arctic is especially vulnerable to climate change and more drilling will only exacerbate the effects on vulnerable Arctic ecosystems. The harsh Arctic conditions will also make cleaning up a potential spill nearly impossible.

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

“Opposition to offshore drilling was a key issue in the midterm elections especially in coastal states such as California, South Carolina and Florida. The results of the election make clear that the American people understand the risks associated with increased offshore oil and gas development and their voices must be heard.

Oil companies have already tried and failed to bring Arctic offshore oil closer to reality. Shell’s foray into the Arctic Ocean should serve as a seven-billion-dollar cautionary tale, from its disastrous 2012 drilling season that featured a grounded drill rig and numerous environmental and safety violations, to its failed exploration attempt in 2015. There is no reason to invite companies back into a harsh and remote region they have proven incapable of operating in, and where an oil spill would be disastrous for wildlife and local communities.”

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