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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2019

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Alaska Wilderness League Statement on Today's House Legislative Hearing Regarding Restoring Protections to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Washington — Today, the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, House Committee on Natural Resources held a legislative hearing titled, "The Need to Protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain," on the following legislation:

- H.R. 1146: To amend Public Law 115-97 (commonly known as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act) to repeal the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge oil and gas program, and for other purposes. "Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act"

Earlier this year, Reps. Huffman (D-CA-02) and Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) officially introduced in the 116th Congress the bipartisan Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act. This bill would restore critical protections – stripped by a provision of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act – prohibiting oil and gas development on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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

"We are deeply grateful to Representative Lowenthal, Representative Grijalva and Representative Huffman and their colleagues on the House Natural Resources Committee for allowing the Gwich'in people and Arctic Refuge supporters to finally be given the recognition they deserve.

The coastal plain is critical denning habitat for threatened polar bears and the calving grounds for the Porcupine caribou herd, which has sustained the Gwich'in people for generations. Public opinion and the voice of the Gwich'in have been ignored by the current administration despite overwhelming, bipartisan support for keeping drills out of the Arctic Refuge. Today's hearing on Representative Huffman's Arctic Refuge protections bill is the first step toward ensuring this Arctic wilderness remains wild."

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