

## Easy Arctic Refuge Talking Points

The oil and gas industry and its allies in Washington, DC, are already gearing up for a big fight to push for development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and its Coastal Plain. By attending town hall meetings and by communicating with your members of Congress in person or via phone and social media, you can help show that what Big Oil and its allies want and what the American public want are not the same. The American public wants this iconic place protected once and for all.

### **Why Wilderness for the Coastal Plain?**

Since the Wilderness Act passed in 1964, Congress has designated nearly 110 million acres of federal wildlands as official wilderness. Wilderness has the highest form of protection of any federal wildland.

### **What CAN you do in Wilderness?**

A Wilderness designation does not mean a place is off limits! You can do just about anything that is lawful activity and does not harm the wilderness or require a vehicle, including hiking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, photography, bird watching and more!

### **Messaging:**

The talking points below will help you construct your own message as to why you would like to see a Wilderness designation for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge:

- The Arctic Refuge is home to the Porcupine Caribou Herd, musk oxen, wolves, polar bears, brown bears, and nearly 200 species of migratory birds.
- The Coastal Plain is the primary calving grounds for the Porcupine Caribou Herd and provides critical denning area for America's polar bear population.
- The Arctic Refuge has sustained the Gwich'in people for thousands of years, and its Coastal Plain provides birthing grounds for the Porcupine Caribou Herd. Protecting the caribou and the Gwich'in way of life is a matter of basic human rights.
- Handing our nation's public lands over for oil and gas development will harm public health and increase carbon pollution that scientists say is responsible for climate change.
- Temperatures in the Arctic are rising at twice the rate of the rest of the country. Villages are falling into the sea, permafrost is melting, and food sources are disappearing. More oil drilling will only compound these impacts.
- Democrats, Republicans and independents have come together to protect our shared natural heritage. A strong majority of Americans (2/3) support protecting the Arctic Refuge from oil rigs.
- One in five animals and plants in the U.S., including the iconic polar bear – is at risk of extinction. We owe it to future generations to keep oil rigs out of the Arctic Refuge because once it is destroyed, it is gone forever.