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Trump budget continues aggressive Arctic drilling push while keeping public in the dark

Washington – Today, the Trump administration released its FY 2019 budget, continuing its aggressive and controversial push to open all areas of America’s Arctic – both onshore and offshore – to destructive and dangerous drilling.

Statement by Adam Kolton, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

“This budget offers no details on Arctic Refuge drilling beyond outlining [allocation of money for energy development and lease sales](#). The Trump Interior Department has admitted to [‘holding daily calls’](#) on Refuge leasing and seismic testing yet we are being left in the dark on the content of these discussions. The administration’s own [Arctic Refuge wildlife survey from January](#) makes clear that much more study over longer periods of time is necessary in order to assess oil drilling impacts, yet any mention of funding this critical research is missing in action.

Arctic Refuge drilling had to be fast-tracked through the congressional budget reconciliation process because of its extreme unpopularity, as a provision buried within hundreds of pages of controversial tax legislation, and even that provision was so hastily written that it broke Senate rules and forced a last-minute rewrite of the bill by drilling supporters behind closed doors. From congressional Republicans to the Trump White House, the fate of America’s most iconic wilderness is being decided in secret.

Trump continues to betray the once proud Republican conservation legacy of Teddy Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower and ignore the majority of the [American public that supports keeping the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge off-limits to development](#). Promised revenues from Arctic Refuge leasing and development are highly speculative and uncertain, but the resolve of those opposed to drilling is not.”

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