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Notice of Intent will officially launch Trump administration push on Arctic Refuge leasing

WASHINGTON – Today, the Trump administration launched a process to hold its first lease sale in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, rushing forward with plans for destructive oil and gas drilling while disregarding the biological, cultural and climate impacts on a rapidly warming Arctic. The Department of the Interior has announced it is placing a Notice of Intent tomorrow in the Federal Register to initiate scoping for an Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed lease sale, and will collect public comments for the next 60 days.

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

"Our generation must not allow the Trump administration to transform the wildest place left in America into an industrial complex of oil rigs, roads, pipelines and landing strips. We must not allow the Trump administration under the guise of 'energy dominance' to pry open the Arctic Refuge, a place that has sustained the Gwich'in people for thousands of years.

Arctic Refuge drilling remains wildly unpopular. We're only talking about it today because it was jammed in a $1.5 trillion tax bill as a way to lock up Senator Murkowski's vote and avoid a full, fair and open debate. Leasing without a serious effort to assess the impacts on wildlife or the subsistence of the Gwich'in people is driven by a desperate desire to act before the political landscape shifts, as Senator Murkowski has openly admitted.

There is still time to stop this foolhardy gambit to exploit a national treasure. The American people collectively own the Arctic Refuge and have a rightful say in whether it should be protected or plundered, privatized or passed on for future generations."

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