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Biden admin., ConocoPhillips declined to appeal Willow decision in Alaska's western Arctic

Washington — The Biden administration and ConocoPhillips have elected not to appeal an August 2021 U.S. District Court decision that [voided](#) the flawed Trump-era approvals and permits for ConocoPhillips's Willow Master Development Plan in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska due to "serious errors."

Alaska Wilderness League is one of six groups that [filed suit in November 2020](#) charging the Trump Interior Department and Bureau of Land Management with illegally and prematurely authorizing Willow despite the harm it would cause to Arctic communities, public health and wildlife, and without a plan to effectively mitigate those harms. The suit also challenged the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for underestimating Willow's harm to protected polar bears. Willow would have added five drill sites, 37 miles of new gravel roads, seven bridges, an airstrip, almost 500 miles of ice roads, and a gravel mine to ConocoPhillips' already extensive footprint in the western Arctic. The Biden administration previously [defended Willow](#) in district court.

Statement by Kristen Miller, Acting Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

"Willow is exactly the type of massive Arctic oil project that cannot move forward if we're serious about addressing climate impacts, especially in a state and a region already on the front lines of the climate crisis. Projects like Willow, which would have produced 100,000 barrels of oil a day for the next 30 years and emitted hundreds of millions of metric tons of CO2 into the atmosphere throughout its lifetime, are incompatible with meeting our nation's long-term climate and environmental justice goals.

"The prior administration approved Willow while ignoring local communities and failing to address risks to people, land, water or wildlife. With Willow's approval now revoked, President Biden can chart a new course in America's Arctic that prioritizes meaningful and robust tribal consultation, recognizes environmental justice concerns, and prioritizes climate-focused management of this important landscape for generations to come."

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Alaska Wilderness League stands with, serves and supports the many people and organizations that believe in a sustainable future for Alaska. We honor and respect the cultures of Alaska Natives whose way of life remains deeply connected to the state's land, waters and wildlife. We believe that Alaska's long-term economic future and subsistence traditions are inexorably tied to the health and sound stewardship of its natural resources, which support hunting, fishing, tourism, and unrivaled outdoor experiences that are central to Alaskans' quality of life.



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