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Conservation, Climate and Indigenous groups, public say no to ConocoPhillips' massive Willow drilling project

Groups call on Biden administration to not move forward with permitting ConocoPhillips' Willow project in Alaska's Western Arctic; 200,000+ public comments submitted opposing Willow

Washington — Wednesday, more than 200,000 comments from throughout Alaska and across the country were submitted to the U.S. Interior Department and Bureau of Land Management opposing the Willow oil and gas project and calling on President Biden to protect the Western Arctic. In addition, [140+ organizations submitted a letter directly to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland opposing the project](#), noting that the “reassessment of and response to this damaging proposal will be a significant test of this administration’s commitment to bringing the management of our nation’s public lands into line with the urgent need to combat the climate crisis and your goal to preserve 30 percent of our nation’s public lands by 2030.” Find more information about the letter and quotes [here](#).

The above organizations release the following statement as the project scoping period comes to a close:

“No single imminent oil and gas project on federal public land has the potential to set back the Biden’s administration’s climate and public lands goals more than ConocoPhillips’ Willow project. Willow is estimated to add more than 260 million metric tons of CO2 to the atmosphere over the next 30 years, equivalent to the annual emissions from one-third of U.S. coal-fired power plants or 56 million vehicles. It will be next to impossible to achieve the president’s climate goals if this project and the additional development it will spur moves forward.”

“Willow’s climate impact will be amplified by its location in Alaska’s Western Arctic, the cultural homeland and subsistence area for many Alaska Native communities that rely on the region’s lands, wildlife, and clean water. The project will have significant impacts in particular on the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area, one of the most productive wetland complexes in the Arctic and important calving grounds for the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd, a significant subsistence and food security resource for communities on the North Slope. Willow presents both near-term and long-term threats to subsistence resources in a region already on the front lines of climate change. Jeopardizing Western Arctic ecosystems will put all of its inhabitants at risk.”

The Willow project's carbon emissions would eclipse those avoided through the Biden administration's renewable energy goals on public lands and waters

Carbon dioxide, in million metric tons (MMT)

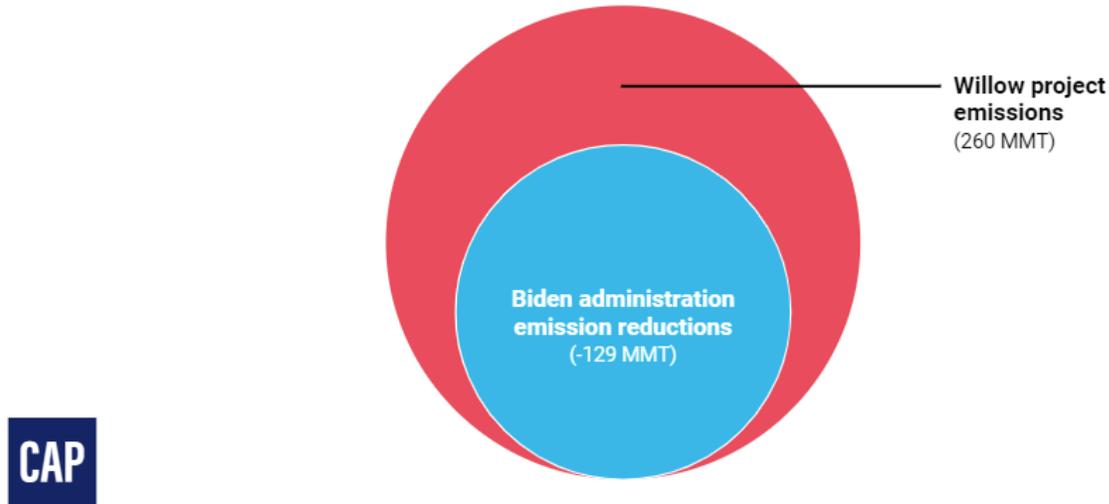


Chart: [Center for American Progress](#)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Land Management, "Willow Master Development Plan: Environmental Impact Statement" (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2020), available at: https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/109410/200258032/20028362/250034564/20200807_Willow%20MDP%20FEIS_Volume1_508.pdf; The Wilderness Society, "Net Zero Wedges Toolkit: Getting to Net Zero Fossil Fuel Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Federal Lands and Waters by 2030" (Washington: 2021), available at: https://www.wilderness.org/sites/default/files/media/file/Toolkit%20Net%20Zero%20by%202030_2021_0.pdf; The White House, "FACT SHEET: Biden Administration Jumpstarts Offshore Wind Energy Projects to Create Jobs," Press release, March 29, 2021, available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/29/fact-sheet-biden-administration-jumpstarts-offshore-wind-energy-projects-to-create-jobs/>.

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Media Contacts:

Corey Himrod, Alaska Wilderness League, 202-266-0426, corey@alaskawild.org
Becca Bowe, Earthjustice, 415-217-2093, rbowe@earthjustice.org
Katrina Peavey, Audubon Alaska, 907-433-5300, katrina.peavey@audubon.org
Kris Deutschman, Conservation Lands Foundation, 970-670-0193, kris@conservationlands.org
Dawnell Smith, Trustees for Alaska, 907-433-2013, dsmith@trustees.org
Tim Woody, The Wilderness Society, 907-223-2443, tim_woody@tw.s.org
Erica Watson, Northern Center, 907-452-5093, erica@northern.org
Brittany Miller, Friends of the Earth, 202-222-0746, bmiller@foe.org
Courtnee Connon, League of Conservation Voters, 727-744-4163, cconnon@lcv.org
Holly Burke, Evergreen Action, 907-440-0122, holly@evergreenaction.com
Ellen Montgomery, Environment America, 720-583-4024, lmontgomery@environmentamerica.org
Rachel Brittin, Defenders of Wildlife, 202-286-4149, rbrittin@defenders.org
Siqiniq Maupin, Sovereign Inupiat for a Living Arctic, siqiniq@silainuat.org

