



ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Arctic Refuge is one of the world's last untouched wild places. We must work harder than ever to make sure this pristine place is not handed over to oil industry by the Trump Administration. Located in the northeast corner of Alaska, the Refuge is unique in many ways: it is the only refuge specifically designed for wilderness purposes, and at 19.6 million acres it is the largest wildlife refuge.

The health of the landscape is vital to the subsistence way of life of Alaska Native communities. Its habitats range from boreal forests, north over the Brooks Range, to sweep across rivers, tundra, lakes and wetlands to coastal lagoons, barrier lands and bays of the Arctic Ocean. Even for those who may never set foot there, the Arctic Refuge is an important symbol of the wild, and a cornerstone of the hope and peace of mind that can only be found in connecting with nature.

The Arctic Refuge is home to some of our most iconic species of wildlife, including caribou, polar bears, grizzly bears, musk oxen, Dall sheep, wolves, wolverines and many more. Each year, the Arctic Refuge coastal plain's vast expanse of lush tundra acts as the birthing grounds for much of this wildlife.

For centuries the Gwich'in and Inupiaq people have relied on the bounty of the Arctic for their livelihood. The Gwich'in refer to the coastal plain as the "Sacred Place Where Life Begins" The protection of the coastal plain is a matter of survival and food security for the Gwich'in people, whose way of life is tied inextricably to the health of the caribou. The few Western foods that are shipped into the villages are prohibitively expensive and cannot be substituted for the abundance of caribou.



Birds we see in our own backyards, in all 50 states and across six continents, begin their lives in the Arctic Refuge before migrating to visit us and then returning there to start the cycle of life anew. The Arctic Refuge's coastal plain is the most important land habitat for mother polar bears, who build dens there each year to give birth to their cubs. The Porcupine Caribou Herd also returns each year to the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain to give birth to their calves, traveling hundreds of miles to do so. For the caribou, and for other Arctic wildlife, there is no alternative to this vital and sensitive habitat that they have depended on for millennia.

THE ARCTIC REFUGE:

- Is the nation's largest National Wildlife Refuge; at 19.6 million acres it is approximately the size of South Carolina!
- Is the nation's northernmost National Wildlife Refuge.
- Includes five distinct landscapes: coast, tundra, mountains, taiga, and boreal forest.
- Includes the four highest peaks and most of the glaciers in the Brooks Range.
- Features 18 major rivers, three of which (Sheenjek, Ivishak, and Wind) are officially recognized as Wild and Scenic.
- Includes North America's two largest and most northerly alpine lakes— Lake Peters and Lake Schrader.
- Supports the greatest variety of plant and animal life in any conservation area in the circumpolar north.
- Is home to over 200 species of birds, 37 species of land mammals, 25 species of fish, and 8 marine mammals along its coast.
- Contains more than 300 archaeological sites.
- Is critical for the survival of the Alaska Native peoples whose existence and continued livelihood is inextricably tied to the health of the coastal plain

The wonder of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has not stopped continued attempts to open this special place to oil drilling. With Trump in office, he's already directed Congress to earmark revenue from drilling in the Refuge in the budget. There is a clear and imminent threat. American families and businesses would not benefit from drilling in the Refuge. Drilling will not protect us, or the economy, from the increasing impacts of climate change or volatile gas prices. Instead of drilling our national treasures, we need real energy solutions—technologies to make our cars and buildings cleaner and more efficient, and that end our dangerous addiction to oil. Using available technology to upgrade our buildings could save more than 10 times the oil that might be found in the Arctic Refuge between now and 2030.

It's time to say NO to drilling the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and move our nation toward a clean energy future.



ALL PHOTOS: FLORIAN SCHULZ

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

One of the most significant ways you can help is to engage your community on this issue.

Write a letter to the editor about why the Arctic Refuge matters to you. Look up your local newspaper at www.usnpl.com and find out how you can submit a letter.

- Present at local community groups or functions to engage your neighbors.
- Sign up to get involved at sc.org/TeamArctic.

Additionally, let your representatives know that the Arctic is no place for drilling:

- Find and contact your Representative: www.house.gov
- Find And contact your Senators: www.senate.gov
- Department of Interior: (202) 208-3100, feedback@ios.doi.gov

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