

2019 Oppose Seismic Exploration and Oil Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Purpose:

(Causation): Whereas the weight of scientific evidence indicates that greenhouse gas emissions from human activities including burning of fossil fuels is causing rising global temperatures,

(Causation): Whereas the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is America's most iconic wildlife refuge and one of the largest remaining intact ecosystems in the world at more than 19 million acres and its Coastal Plain is the biological heart, and is internationally recognized for its intact ecosystems, biological diversity, and value to wildlife, local people, and the world,

(Endangerment): Whereas the Bureau of Lands Management has received and is considering a proposal to conduct 3D seismic exploration to identify oil and gas resources on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge and any attempt to conduct seismic exploration is a step towards oil and gas development which will devastate America's largest and wildest refuge,

(Endangerment): Whereas the proposal is to conduct activities across the entire Coastal Plain in winter and would involve a massive amount of industrial activity, including two teams of 150-160 workers, massive mobile camps, giant sleds, tractors, fuelers, incinerators, temporary airstrips, and other industrial equipment. This equipment and activity would cross the Coastal Plain with multiple 90,000-pound vibrator trucks sending vibrations of 64,000-pounds of pressure into the ground roughly every 41 feet, and spaced approximately 660 feet apart,

(Endangerment): Whereas seismic activities can have devastating effects on wildlife, notably in winter disturbing denning polar bears potentially crushing dens and causing pregnant and nursing mothers to abandon their dens, leading to injury and potential mortality of mothers or young,

(Endangerment): Whereas the Arctic Refuge is also home to many other iconic wildlife species such as moose, Dall sheep, caribou, musk oxen, and nearly 200 species of migratory birds that migrate to six continents and all 50 states. All of this biological diversity would also be put at risk,

(Endangerment): Whereas the proposal also represents a threat to the way of life for the Gwich'in people of northeast Alaska and Canada that live along the boundaries of the Arctic Refuge and the migratory route of the Porcupine caribou. The Porcupine caribou herd, one of the largest in the world, is a key food source for the Gwich'in and calve their young in the same area where seismic exploration is being proposed. Disturbances such as tracks and vehicles from development would inevitably lead to the decline of the herd – a devastating threat to the Gwich'in people,

(Endangerment): Whereas protecting wild places such as the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge is a core American value, and seismic exploration or drilling remains deeply unpopular – more than two-thirds of Americans oppose it,

(Endangerment): Whereas at a time when this country and the world is working to lessen and eliminate the use of fossil fuels to mitigate a climate crisis and move to clean, renewable energy sources to preserve a livable and healthy planet, planning to devastate and destroy one of our last premier wildlife refuges is a major mistake,

Resolution:

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America in convention on April 27, 2019 opposes any seismic exploration or oil leasing and development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in a manner that will be protective of our soil, air, woods, waters and wildlife.