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Trump administration finalizes plan to turn western Arctic into an oil field

Washington — Today, U.S. Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management released its final Record of Decision for a new Integrated Activity Plan, the management plan for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska in America's western Arctic, following a rushed and incomplete process.

Alaska Wilderness League is one of six organizations represented by Trustees for Alaska that [filed a lawsuit on Monday, August 24, in U.S. District Court](#) charging BLM with breaking the law by advancing a new management plan that would give the vast majority of the nation's largest unit of public land to oil companies. Expanding fossil fuel exploitation in the western Arctic would increase harmful climate impacts, diminish public health, degrade land, water and air, and encroach on long-protected areas vital to wildlife and people.

Statement by Kristen Miller, Conservation Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

"This plan faced clear public opposition throughout the process, especially from local communities concerned over diminishment of traditional hunting areas, wildlife displacement and worsening air quality from oil and gas development. BLM not only did nothing to address public concerns, the agency has prioritized a new and unvetted alternative that would render essentially meaningless what little protections remain around Teshekpuk Lake, home to the 40,000-head Teshekpuk caribou herd, an important subsistence and food security resource for nearby villages and Alaska Native communities.

"BLM's expedited planning process has violated bedrock environmental laws put in place to provide important protections for the western Arctic. The agency has failed to consider the true impacts of oil development, address the realities of the climate crisis, or provide measures to ensure maximum protection for areas with significant wildlife and other values.

"This administration wants to industrialize every corner of America's Arctic, regardless of the importance to Alaska Native people and to the survival of fish and wildlife upon which they depend. We won't let this stand."

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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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