

Dear Secretary Zinke,

I am writing in strong opposition to holding an oil and gas lease sale in the 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

As one of our last pristine wild places, the Arctic Refuge is just too special to drill. It is home to endangered species like the polar bear, and other iconic wildlife like musk oxen, Arctic foxes and wolverines. Our entire nation is connected to the Arctic Refuge, as birds from all 50 states migrate to this unique habitat. The coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge also bears witness to the migration of the porcupine caribou herd, one of the largest animal migrations in North America. The coastal plain is considered sacred by the indigenous Gwich'in people, who have sustained themselves and their culture on its land for centuries.

Oil and gas drilling would have devastating and irreversible impacts on the people and wildlife for whom the Arctic Refuge is home, as well as on our climate. Recent scientific research concludes that Arctic oil and gas reserves must remain in the ground to avoid dangerous levels of global warming. Alaska is already warming twice as fast as the rest of the nation and experiencing harsh impacts, from community relocation to permafrost melt to wildfires, that will only be exacerbated if more fossil fuels are extracted and burned.

Drilling for oil and gas in the 1002 area of the Arctic Refuge is irresponsible and unnecessary at a time when we should be transitioning to a renewable energy future. I proudly stand with the Gwich'in to defend the Arctic Refuge.

I request the Bureau of Land Management include a "no leasing" alternative in its environmental review. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.