

*A Letter from Athletes Supporting  
Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Protections*

19 June 2018

Dear Secretary Zinke,

We write to you today to oppose recent efforts to move forward with oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We are 72 professional athletes that stand united in our opposition to drilling in this wild and magnificent place. Public lands like the Arctic Refuge are the lifeblood of millions of individuals that use them for recreation, and as athletes, we rely on protected areas as places to practice and hone our skills. In Alaska alone, 81% of residents participate in outdoor recreation, spending \$4.39 billion each year.

For us as athletes, the fight against developing this iconic Arctic landscape also highlights the important role our public lands play in the effort to curb climate change and ensure healthy winters. The Arctic is on the frontlines of our warming climate, and development there will only exacerbate that warming, while threatening the Refuge's valuable resources and releasing billions of tons of climate-harming gases into the environment. Bottom line, the Arctic Refuge is no place for oil drilling, and to destroy it now would be devastating to both present and future generations.

The Arctic Refuge, and in particular the highly sensitive Coastal Plain, is one of the most treasured wild places in our country. Framed by the magnificent Brooks Range, the Coastal Plain is an unparalleled biological wonderland that should remain protected for the benefit of all. Over the years, its protection has had bipartisan support, and vast and diverse constituencies have spoken out against turning it over to oil and gas interests. To destroy such a place through oil and gas drilling would have serious impacts on our thriving outdoor recreation economy, on our livelihoods as athletes, and on all of the Americans that passionately believe in the intrinsic and incomparable value of our public lands.

In addition, at a time when global warming is one of the most pressing issues we face, it would be particularly careless to drill in a place like the Arctic Refuge. Because of our profession, we spend a significant amount of time outdoors, and we see firsthand the impacts of global warming on our surroundings. These changes to our environment pose severe implications to our professions and threaten the wellbeing of all living things on this planet. Though some of us have not had the chance to visit the Arctic, we know that it is ground zero for climate change: temperatures in the Arctic are rising at twice the rate of the rest of the country; coastal erosion is threatening entire villages; permafrost melt is causing vital infrastructure to collapse; and entire ecosystems are suffering. To push forward with further oil and gas development in the U.S. Arctic – and on one of our most treasured public lands, no less – would be particularly shortsighted.

As athletes that rely on wild spaces across our country, we know that a threat to one of our public lands is a direct threat to our livelihoods. The Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge is not now, nor ever will be, an appropriate place for oil and gas development. It is a lush and magnificent wild place, held in common trust by more than 327 million individuals spread across the entirety of the United States, and should be protected for generations to come.

Sincerely,

72 Professional Athletes (see attached)

**Kit DesLauriers**

Professional Ski Mountaineer  
Jackson, WY

**Conrad Anker**

Professional Climber and Mountaineer, The  
North Face  
Bozeman, MT

**Maddie Bowman**

Professional Freeskier, The North Face  
South Lake Tahoe, CA

**Julian Carr**

Professional Skier  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Jimmy Chin**

Professional Photographer, Filmmaker and  
Athlete, The North Face  
Wilson, Wyoming

**Ryan Copeland****Kate Taylor Crump**

Fly-Fishing Guide  
Rockaway Beach, OR

**Jeff Denholm**

Professional Surfer and Paddleboarder  
Santa Cruz, CA

**Peter Doucette**

AMGA and IFMGA Mountain Guide  
Jackson, NH

**Mike Foote**

Professional Ultra Runner, The North Face  
Missoula, MT

**Clare Gallagher**

Professional Runner  
Boulder, CO

**David Allfrey**

Professional Rock Climber, The North Face  
San Jose, CA

**Nik Berry**

Professional Climber  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Jessica Brackett****Jasmin Caton**

Rock Climber and Guide  
Nelson, BC

**Liz Clark**

Professional Surfer  
French Polynesia (from San Diego, CA)

**Kelly Cordes**

Professional Climber  
Estes Park, CO

**Savannah Cummins**

Professional Climber and Photographer, The  
North Face  
Utah

**Josh Dirksen**

Professional Snowboarder  
Bend, OR

**Amie Engerbretson**

Professional Skier  
Truckee, CA

**YJ Fowler****Caroline Gleich**

Professional Ski Mountaineer  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Aidan Haley**

Filmmaker  
Boulder, CO

**Angela Hawse**

IFMGA / AMGA Mountain Guide  
Ridgway, CO

**Eliel Hindert**

Professional Skier  
Whistler, BC

**Dylan Johnson**

Professional Alpine Climber  
Ventura, CA

**Dakota Jones**

Professional Runner  
Durango, CO

**Rob Krar**

Professional Ultra Runner, The North Face  
Flagstaff, AZ

**Meghan Arbogast Laws**

Professional Ultra Runner, The North Face  
Cool, CA

**Jewell Lund**

Professional Climber  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Lindsay Mann**

Professional Guide  
Jackson, WY

**Dave McCoy**

Professional Fly Fishing Guide  
Seattle, WA

**Nick McNutt**

Professional Skier, The North Face  
Whistler, BC

**Amy Mishkin**

Professional Freestyle Skier and Coach  
Aspen, CO

**Colin Haley**

Professional Alpine Climber  
Seattle, WA

**Elena Hight**

Olympic Snowboarder  
Incline Village, NV

**Ronnie Jenkins**

Professional Climber  
Redlands, CA

**James Joiner**

Photographer and Writer  
Osterville, MA

**Kathy Karlo**

Rock Climber  
Brooklyn, NY

**Ben Kunz****Brendan Leonard**

Writer and Filmmaker  
Denver, CO

**Daniel Malloy**

Professional Surfer and Filmmaker  
Ojai, CA

**James Q Martin**

Filmmaker  
Flagstaff, AZ

**Megan McJames**

Olympic Alpine Skier  
Park City, UT

**Andrew Miller**

Professional Runner, The North Face  
Corvallis, OR

**Krissy Moehl**

Professional Trail Runner  
Bellingham, WA

**Alison Naney**

RRCA Certified Running Coach  
Mazama, WA

**Luke Nelson**

Professional Trail Runner  
Pocatello, ID

**Michelle Parker**

Professional Skier  
Tahoe City, CA

**Kye Petersen**

Professional Skier  
Whistler, BC

**Ming Poon**

Photographer  
Truckee, CA

**Neil Provo**

Professional Snowboarder  
Park City, UT

**Tobin Seagel**

Professional Skier  
Whistler, BC

**Alexa Siegel**

Climber and AMGA Instructor  
New Hampshire

**Doug Stoup**

Professional Polar Explorer  
Truckee, CA

**Seth Swanson**

Professional Ultra Runner  
Missoula, MT

**Stephanie Violett**

Professional Runner, The North Face  
Bend, OR

**Michael Williams****Hilaree Nelson**

Professional Skier, The North Face  
Telluride, CO

**Steven Nyman**

Olympic Alpine Skier  
Park City, UT

**Blake Paul**

Professional Snowboarder, The North Face  
Jackson, WY

**Anna Pfaff**

Professional Alpine Climber, The North Face  
Oakland, CA

**Charles Post**

Ecologist and Storyteller  
Bozeman, MT

**Kate Rutherford**

Professional Climber  
Vashon, WA

**Forrest Shearer**

Professional Snowboarder  
Salt Lake City, UT

**Jonathon Spitzer**

AMGA/IFMGA Mountain Guide  
Washington

**Brian Suntay****Kyle Thiermann**

Professional Surfer  
Santa Cruz, CA

**Tom Wallisch**

Professional Freeskier, The North Face  
Park City, UT

**Forest Woodward**

Adventure Photographer  
Asheville, NC

**Alex Yoder**

Professional Snowboarder  
Jackson, WY

**Graham Zimmerman**

Professional Climber  
Bend, OR

Additional comments from letter signers:

Our earth is the greatest resource we have, and wild spaces are imperative to keep. Both because they are sacred, but also because they are necessary for the health of our world. Please protect these places so future generations are able to thrive and also engage in the beauty of our planet.

*-Stephanie Violett, Professional Runner*

What would Teddy do?

*-Conrad Anker, Professional Climber and Mountaineer*

I value our wild places and work to keep them that way.

*-Alexa Siegel, Climber and AMGA Instructor*

Let's avoid drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

*-Peter Doucette, AMGA and IFMGA Mountain Guide*

Full supporter of the Arctic National Refuge!!!

*-Kathy Karlo, Rock Climber*

From personal experience, Alaska is beautiful, wild, and stunning. Please keep it that way!

*-Jessica Brackett*

Even the idea of drilling in the Arctic is a tragedy. This is a global treasure.

*-Alex Yoder, Professional Snowboarder*

Forward, forward...never backwards.

*-Kye Petersen, Professional Skier*

Wildlife refuges and National Parks were intentionally set aside to be preserved and kept natural. The intent could not be more clear.

*-Michael Williams*

Do not drill for more oil please. There are much better, cleaner ways to power the world. Let's figure it out already!!!!

*-Neil Provo, Professional Snowboarder*

Please keep the Arctic Refuge pristine for my son and many generations to come!

*-Jonathon Spitzer, AMGA/IFMGA Mountain Guide*