

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Talking Points

Background

- Protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge helps protect America's birds.
 - Millions of birds, from over 200 species, depend on the Arctic Refuge.
 - Birds are migrating now through all 50 states and six continents after nesting in the Arctic Refuge.
 - We can see these Arctic birds in our backyards and favorite birding spots in every state.
- The U.S. House and Senate are advancing a budget that could turn the heart of the Refuge into an oilfield.
 - On the coastal plain, polar bears den, migratory birds nest, and the Porcupine caribou herd, numbering nearly 200,000 animals, gives birth to its calves.
- The Arctic Refuge is one of our last, untouched wild places, and we have a moral responsibility to protect it for current and future generations.
 - The Arctic Refuge is as much a part of our shared natural heritage as other iconic American treasures such as Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon, or Yosemite.
 - The Arctic Refuge is the only place on America's Arctic coastline that has some protection by law. Energy development does occur on state and federal land elsewhere in the Arctic but we must keep the line drawn outside the Arctic Refuge.
- Oil development would cause irreversible harm to birds and other wildlife of the Refuge.
 - Development would create a spiderweb of infrastructure with drilling rigs, pipelines, and roads, permanently altering this wild landscape, eliminating habitat for birds, caribou, and other wildlife, and threatening oil spills in this pristine place.
 - Setting aside the Refuge from development provides a sanctuary for wildlife while protecting a complete, intact Arctic ecosystem.
- The vast majority of Americans support protecting the Arctic Refuge.
 - In a recent poll, two-thirds of Americans opposed drilling the Refuge, with a majority "strongly opposed".
- There is bipartisan support for protecting the Arctic Refuge
 - The area now known as the Arctic Refuge was originally protected by President Dwight Eisenhower
 - Its protection has been supported by members of both parties in recent decades, including members of the Senate such as Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) and Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME).
- Using the budget process to drill in the Refuge is bad policy and fiscally irresponsible
 - The estimates of raising \$1 billion from drilling, as stated in the Senate budget, would require raising at least 40 times the revenue generated in similar Arctic areas.
 - The U.S. and the world are in the midst of an oil glut with prices near record lows.

The Ask

1. Urge your Members of Congress to oppose opening the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling in the budget process.
 - Encourage your elected officials to oppose language that opens the Refuge to drilling in the House and Senate budget resolutions
 - Ask them to support any effort that would remove this harmful language, including votes to remove the language or sign-on letters from other Members of Congress
 - Encourage them to ask Congressional leadership to oppose using the budget process to open the Refuge to drilling

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Key Arctic Refuge Birds by Flyway

- **All Flyways**
 - Northern Pintails converge on the Arctic Refuge from all four North American flyways. The Arctic is a crucial breeding ground for these graceful ducks. Although widespread, surveys suggest a steep decline in their numbers since the 1960s.
- **Atlantic Flyway** (CT, DE, FL, GA, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, NC, PA, RI, SC, VT, VA, WV, DC)
 - Tundra Swans from the Arctic coast, including the Arctic Refuge, migrate to waters off the east coast including in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, and North Carolina, and even as far south as South Carolina.
- **Pacific Flyway** (CA, OR, WA)
 - Pacific Brant nest in the Arctic Refuge and migrate to winter in waters off the west coast, from Puget Sound to Baja. Brant usually mate for life and the family stays together on the chicks' first migration.
- **Central Flyway** (AZ, CO, ID, KS, MT, NE, NV, NM, ND, OK, SD, TX, UT, WY)
 - American Golden-Plovers undertake one of the longest migrations in the world, traveling from wintering grounds in South America, through the Central Flyway, and to the Arctic tundra to nest in the coastal plain.
- **Mississippi Flyway** (AL, AR, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, MI, MN, MS, MO, OH, TN, WI)
 - Smith's Longspur (Mississippi Flyway) winter in the Great Plains of the Mississippi Flyway, and then head to the tundra in the Arctic Refuge to nest each spring.