ACTION ALERT: TELL BLM TO STOP THE WILLOW PROJECT

by Emily Sullivan | Jul 21, 2022



Caribou cross the Colville River outside Nuiqsut, Alaska. Photo by Keri Oberly.

On July 8, 2022 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for ConocoPhillips' Willow project in Alaska's Western Arctic. As we stated alongside coalition partners upon the release, "No single oil and gas project poses a greater threat to the Biden Administration's climate and public lands protection goals than the Willow Project. Allowing ConocoPhillips to proceed in the Western Arctic has the potential to undo the clean energy progress we've already made, and make the goals we hope to reach by 2030 unattainable."

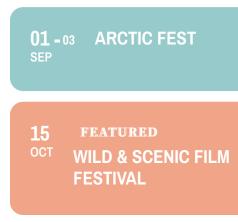
This oil project will be a defining decision for the Biden administration's climate legacy, and we



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must pressure the administration to consider the weight of the decision. The Willow project would do irreversible damage to the Arctic landscape: accelerating climate change, endangering public health, harming wildlife, and threatening subsistence hunting. We encourage you to submit comments urging BLM to reject the project by choosing the no action alternative.

Comments must be submitted by 10pm AKST on August 29.

HOW YOU CAN COMMENT

Online: https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/109410/570

By Mail: BLM Alaska State Office ATTN: Willow MDP SDEIS 222 W. 7th Ave, Stop #13 Anchorage, AK 99513

SOME POINTS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR COMMENTS

Thank you to Trustees for Alaska for drafting substantive sample talking points.

- The Willow Project would be a climate disaster. Arctic Alaska is already warming at nearly three times the rate of the rest of the continent. Approving an oil and gas project that would add an estimated 250 million metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere would directly work against the administration's climate goals. Considered alongside other proposed oil projects, like the Peregrine prospect to the south, Willow would contribute to unacceptable levels of emissions – both from construction, drilling, and eventual burning of fossil fuels. This would be in conflict with the Biden administration's climate agenda.
 - The action alternatives, including the new Alternative E, would each produce approximately the same amount of oil and thus have nearly identical climate consequences to one another, and each would produce more emissions than disclosed for any alternative in the prior EIS. Cite: Vol. 1, page 41 (total GHG emissions from alternatives range from 278 MMT to 287 MMT)
- **The Willow Project threatens food security.** People in the region rely on the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd for food, as well as birds, fish, and marine wildlife, which are all impacted by climate change. The Teshekpuk herd is especially vulnerable, as their relatively small range would be surrounded by infrastructure. Willow would further fragment their

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habitat, making this food source harder for hunters to access.

- The action alternatives, including the new Alternative E, would each produce approximately the same amount of oil and thus have nearly identical climate consequences to one another, and each would produce more emissions than disclosed for any alternative in the prior EIS. Cite: Vol. 1, page 41 (total GHG emissions from alternatives range from 278 MMT to 287 MMT)
- The supplemental environmental review is unacceptably narrow and no drilling project should move forward based on such an insufficient and slapdash look at the impacts to the region.
 - Since the environmental review for this project began, a slow drip of new information has come to light – that oil execs have been happy to brush under the rug -that makes the narrow, supplemental review egregiously unacceptable.
 - All evidence points to the need to choose the no action alternative. Any development in the area, especially at the scale proposed by the ConocoPhillips oil executives, would need a much more robust review that takes into account the full scale of the project and the dire threat of climate change.
- The project outlined in the environmental review represents only a fraction of what ConocoPhillips has planned for the region.
 - Last summer, Conoco executives made clear that the region's development scenario is much larger than is considered under this review. Willow is just step one in the plan to develop an 'infrastructure hub' in the Western Arctic stretching far beyond the currently proposed project.
 - A ConocoPhillips VP told investors that the company had already identified 3 billion barrels of oil in nearby prospects and that Willow's design was intended for expansion. The current analysis does not consider the impacts from the full scale plans for further expansion that ConocoPhillips executives have sold to their shareholders.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

- Share your comments on social media, and encourage your friends to weigh in as well.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper stating your reasons for opposing this project. Letters can be short and to the point: The Biden administration should not approve new oil and gas projects like Willow at this time in our climate crisis. Period.
- Learn more about the impacts Willow would have on the region at silainuat.org.

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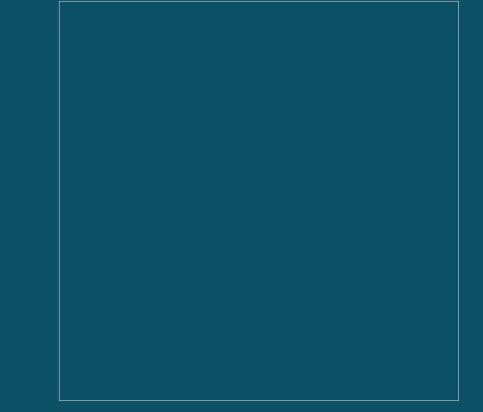
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