

Background and Talking Points

for public comments on the Willow Project

The Ask: Request that the administration select **'Alternative A: No Action Alternative'**

Background: National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve)

The proposed location of ConocoPhillips's Willow project falls within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve), **the nation's largest single unit of U.S. public land**. This landscape, bigger than the state of Maine and teeming with wildlife, spans 23.6 million acres across the western Arctic on the North Slope of Alaska.



For those of you who have supported our campaigns in the Arctic Refuge, thank you! **There are some key differences between the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Reserve**, including:

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

- Located in the **northeast** corner of Alaska
- The Arctic Refuge coastal plain is the calving grounds for the Porcupine caribou herd
- The Arctic Refuge coastal plain is sacred ground to the Gwich'in Nation

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve)

- Located in the **northwest** corner of Alaska
- **The Reserve is the proposed location of the Willow project**
- The Willow Project would threaten the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd

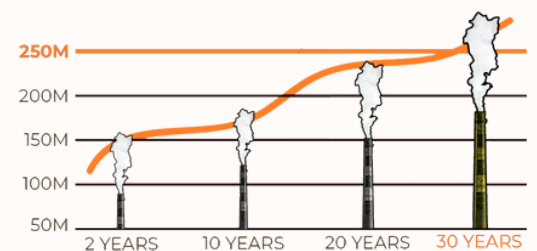
Talking Points

Importance of the Reserve

- The National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve) is an **ecologically rich** landscape that presents a **one-of-a-kind climate opportunity for the nation**.
- The Reserve is essential to President Biden's climate and conservation goals of reducing U.S. emissions, increasing land protections to reverse biodiversity loss, and growing natural carbon sinks by 2030.

Scale of the Willow Project

- ConocoPhillips' Willow Project is **by far the largest oil extraction project proposed on federal lands today**.
- Plans call for up to 250 wells, estimated to produce up to 629 million barrels of oil, locking in oil infrastructure in the rural Arctic for 30+ years
- The Willow project is **estimated to add up to 287 million metric tons of CO₂ to the atmosphere over the next 30 years** — equivalent to the annual emissions from 76 new coal-fired power plants.



Impact on Climate

- The Willow project **would unleash nearly double the planet-warming pollution that President Biden's entire clean energy plan on public lands and waters is meant to prevent in the next decade**. Willow is a climate disaster in-waiting.
- Allowing this project to go forward as planned will lock in **at least three decades of Arctic fossil fuel pollution** at a time when scientists say the world must be rapidly transitioning away from fossil fuels.
- **Climate change is warming temperatures in Arctic Alaska at 4x the rate of the rest of the planet**. With each passing year, the Arctic is especially hard hit by destabilizing on-the-ground effects including sea ice melt, permafrost thaw and coastal erosion.



Impact on Biodiversity

- This project would do **irreversible damage** to a remote, ecologically rich landscape.
 - The plan authorizes construction within and adjacent to both the Reserve's Teshekpuk Lake and Colville River Special Areas. These special areas, created for their ecological importance, include **one of the most productive wetland complexes in the Arctic** and important calving and foraging ground for the Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd.
 - The western Arctic is **filled with robust wild ecosystems** that support caribou, geese, loons, salmon, polar bears, and bowhead whales, along with 13 communities within and adjacent to the Reserve. Any disruption that jeopardizes the ecosystem's health puts all its inhabitants at risk.
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Willow is 'step one' in ConocoPhillips' growth plan

- ConocoPhillips executives have 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 these plans for further expansion.
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Recent News about the Willow Project:

- GRIST: [Is the Biden administration fast-tracking a 'carbon disaster' in Alaska?](#)
 - The Hill: [President Biden can \(still\) defuse the climate bomb in America's Arctic](#)
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