

8th WORLD
WILDERNESS CONGRESS
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RESOLUTION #: 5

TITLE: Protect Arctic National Wildlife Refuge From Oil Development

WHEREAS: The United States Congress is preparing to vote on a major budget bill that includes an unprecedented authorization to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration and development; and

The Arctic Refuge is the only area protecting a broad spectrum of sub-Arctic and Arctic habitats in the United States and its coastal plain supports internationally significant resources subject to treaties and agreements, including polar bear denning areas, snow goose autumn staging habitat, nesting, feeding and moulting areas for 135 species of migratory birds, and critical calving and post-calving habitats for the Porcupine caribou herd. This transboundary caribou herd supports U.S. and Canadian indigenous peoples for their subsistence livelihood, and development particularly threatens the nutritional, spiritual, and cultural needs of the Gwich'in people; and

The transboundary protected areas of Arctic Refuge and adjacent Canadian National Parks subject to the Agreement on Conservation of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the Canadian Government opposes development of the refuge; and

Numerous polls have show that the majority of the American people support continued protection from energy development of this fragile, wildlife-rich area, the only place in America where a complete Arctic ecosystem remains intact from its headwaters to the ocean, for its biological, aesthetic, spiritual, cultural, symbolic, and wilderness values, and for its integral importance to the subsistence way of life and culture of indigenous people; and

The U.S., the world's largest consumer of fossil fuels and thus the largest contributor to global climate change, has taken no measures to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and failed to acknowledge the seriousness of global climate change by ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.

THEREFORE: The 8th World Wilderness Congress, recognizing that the major impact the U.S. has on global climate change makes it imperative for the U.S. to adopt a sound energy policy, based on conservation and promotion of renewable energy sources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and recognizing the worldwide benefits of preserving and sustaining and intact Arctic ecosystem, which cannot be developed without profound losses to its wild qualities and endangering the future of the Gwich'in people.

RESOLVED: The 8th World Wilderness Congress resolves that:

The United States adopt a national energy policy primarily relying on

conservation, energy efficiency, and expanding clean, renewable sources of energy, while reducing reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear power, while fully enforcing all existing laws aimed at environmental protection, and to ratify and implement the Kyoto protocol on global climate change.

United States Congress and President prohibit oil exploration and development in the coastal plain “1002” area, the biological heart of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and to designate this area as Wilderness under the Wilderness Act;

PROPOSER:

Betsy Goll, Sierra Club – betsy@sierraclubalaska.org

Luci Beach, Gwich'in Steering Committee
Gwichin1@alaska.net

SECONDER:

Gladys Netro – gnetro@hotmail.com
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

Anna Davidson – upick2@aol.com
Village Connection

George Schaller
Vice President, International Conservation
Wildlife Conservation Society

Resolution 5