

Only Nine Days Left to Stop the Bush Administration and Big Oil from destroying America's Arctic Seas

The American Arctic is currently under assault by the Bush Administration and Big Oil's insatiable appetite for oil. Home to half of the nation's fisheries, endangered whales, polar bears, walrus and endangered seabirds, our Arctic seas are now being targeted for unprecedented oil drilling and exploration. The Bush Administration and companies such as Shell Oil are planning to open the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas to oil exploration and drilling in their shortsighted "drill everywhere" proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil & Gas Leasing Program for 2007- 2012.

Oil exploration, drilling and heavy transportation would disproportionately impact subsistence communities, irreparably devastate the world's largest salmon run, destroy critical whale habitats, and perpetuate the stresses already created by global warming on the Arctic. Furthermore, oil companies have failed to demonstrate the ability to cleanup oil spills in the icy Arctic climate.

We only have nine days left to stop this reckless development and protect the Arctic for future generations. **But the Bush Administration doesn't want to hear what you have to say about his plans for the American Arctic.** Despite the magnitude of this decision, email comments are not being accepted! **But we will not be silenced and neither should you!**

Click below and Pacific Environment will physically deliver your comments to the appropriate decision makers. Alternatively, fill out the specified form on the MMS website and visit the sites for both the proposed program (<http://ocsconnect.mms.gov/pcs-public/do/ProjectDetailView?objectId=0b011f80800d06e8>) and the associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (<http://ocsconnect.mms.gov/pcs-public/do/ProjectDetailView?objectId=0b011f80800dcf28>)

Take action today!

Sample Letter

Dear Ms. Orr and Mr. Bennett,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2007 – 2012 and the associated Environmental Impact Statement. Unfortunately, your current plan is based upon a short-sighted strategy sacrificing America's Arctic. Plans for oil drilling and exploration in the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas threaten America's last unspoiled marine ecosystems and causes disproportionate impacts upon communities exercising the nation's oldest subsistence traditions. As such, it is imperative that these areas are removed from your proposed plan and permanent protections are enacted for America's Arctic.

America's Arctic seas are unique places, and opening these waters, which are already facing ecological stress due to global warming, in order to obtain more fossil fuels, is socially irresponsible. Furthermore, the ecology of the region is largely undocumented, and we have little baseline data upon which to judge the impacts of seismic exploration and development. We do, however, know that the impacts will be quite severe, and I have a number of specific concerns. These include:

- The impacts of oil and gas exploration and development upon marine mammals, including the critically endangered eastern stock of North Pacific right whales, walrus and polar bears.
- The demonstrated inability of industry to clean up oil spills, which are inevitable, in broken ice conditions.
- The failure of the Administration to consider the cause and consequences of climate change when planning for future development in the Arctic.
- The disproportionate impacts of the proposed plan on subsistence cultures.
- The impacts of the project to the world's largest salmon run.
- The impacts to fishing grounds that provide half of the nation's seafood.
- The failure of the Administration to develop a responsible energy policy

In conclusion, it is my belief that the proposed plan and EIS are inadequate to protect America's Arctic for future generations. It is time for the U.S. to adopt a responsible energy policy that does not rely upon destroying the Arctic as a short-term fix to our oil addiction. Remove the Bering (North Aleutian Basin), Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas from the 5 Year Plan and enact permanent protections for America's Arctic seas.

Sincerely,