

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

November 1, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know, Republicans are devising a scheme to open the Arctic Wildlife National Refuge—the largest protected tract of unspoiled land in America—to oil and gas development.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act states that: “Each refuge shall be managed to fulfill the mission of the System, as well as the specific purposes for which that refuge was established, and may not be used for any purpose unless it is “compatible with the purposes for which these areas are established.”

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was specifically created to protect the pristine habitats of iconic species like the polar bear, musk ox, and caribou.

Under current law, you are required to manage this refuge—which was originally protected by Republican President Eisenhower—in order to “to conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity.”

Do you believe that oil and gas development will “conserve fish and wildlife populations and habitats in their natural diversity?”

Thank you for your prompt response to this inquiry.

Sincerely,



Sen. Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

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