

# Follow the Science and Law to Save the World's Most Imperiled Polar Bear Population

The Trump Administration is rushing to authorize oil exploration and development on the coastal plain of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northern Alaska. However, the ecological impacts of industrializing the coastal plain simply can't be reconciled with the science and the law. This is particularly the case with sustaining the imperiled Southern Beaufort Sea polar bear population, which depends on the refuge for survival.

### THE SCIENCE

- **Climate Change Impacts:** Climate change is impacting the world's 19 polar bear populations, and the federally threatened Southern Beaufort Sea population is declining most rapidly. With just 900 polar bears remaining, this population is the most imperiled in the world. The survival of every single bear is crucial.
- **Polar Bear Biology:** The Arctic Refuge's coastal plain is vital to the reproduction and survival of Southern Beaufort Sea polar bears. Females and their newborn cubs winter there in dens dug into snowdrifts. Mother polar bears are sensitive to disturbance and known to abandon their cubs in response to it. Without intact dens or their mothers, newborn cubs can't survive.
- **Oil Exploration/Drilling Impacts:** Oil exploration and development inevitably disturb polar bears and can destroy their maternal dens. Seismic exploration, trucks, helicopters, oil workers and other oil development activities cause noise, vibrations and habitat loss. Industrial activity can kill cubs left vulnerable by den destruction or abandonment by their mothers.

### THE LAW

- **Marine Mammal Protection Act:** Protects polar bears from human activities that may kill, injure or harass them or that disrupt essential behaviors like breeding, nursing and sheltering.
- **Endangered Species Act:** Protects the Southern Beaufort Sea polar bear population and its designated critical habitat, and prohibits human activities that disrupt essential behaviors.

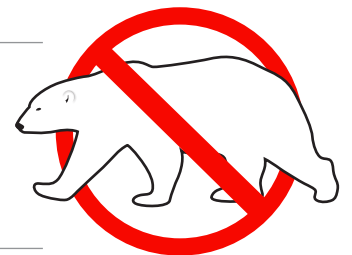
Climate Change  
Impacts



Polar Bear  
Biology



Oil Exploration/  
Drilling Impacts



## The Science and Law Are Clear: Polar Bears and Arctic Refuge Oil Drilling Don't Mix