



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

"... conserving our natural resources and your right to enjoy them."



SUBJECT: WILDERNESS DESIGNATION FOR COASTAL PLAIN OF THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the conservation of wildlife and its habitat, and

WHEREAS, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in the state of Alaska contains the greatest variety of plant and animal life of any conservation area in the circumpolar north, and

WHEREAS, the coastal plain of the ANWR is its biological "heart" and the center of its wildlife activity, and

WHEREAS, more than 180 bird species gather on the coastal plain of the refuge for breeding, nesting, and migratory stopovers during the summer season, and

WHEREAS, the coastal plain of the ANWR is the calving ground to the vast Porcupine Caribou Herd which migrates annually to this ecologically strategic location, and

WHEREAS, the lives and culture of an indigenous people, the Gwich'en, have been dependent on the caribou herd for over 20,000 years, and

WHEREAS, the coastal plain of the ANWR is the most important onshore denning area for the Beaufort Sea polar bear population, and

WHEREAS, musk oxen have been successfully reintroduced and a herd of approximately 350 of these magnificent animals now live year-round on the coastal plain of the ANWR, and

WHEREAS, the coastal plain of the ANWR represents only 5% of the entire coastal plain and is the last 5% of the coastal plain not yet open to oil and gas exploration and drilling; oil and gas exploration already is permitted on 95% of the Arctic Coastal Plain, and

WHEREAS, the coastal plain of the ANWR was set aside for study (1002 Area) when the refuge was established, and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management, the U. S. Geological Survey and the General Accounting office have issued independent reports which considered both geologic and economic factors, all of which indicate that there is a greater than 50% chance that no economically recoverable quantities of oil exist under the coastal plain of the ANWR, and

(over)

WHEREAS, any intrusive human presence such as that accompanying mineral exploration and development would devastate the delicate ecological balance of the coastal plain, and

WHEREAS, the ANWR belongs to all the people of the United States, and

WHEREAS, only wilderness designation will permanently protect the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation urges Congress to enact the Morris K. Udall Wilderness Bill (H. R. 1239) in the House of Representatives, along with the companion Senate bill, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness Act (S. 867) which will designate the last 5% of the Arctic coastal plain as WILDERNESS, making it part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LWF urges and requests members of Louisiana's Congressional Delegation to co-sponsor and support H. R. 1239 and S. 867.

Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled, March 12, 2000 in Alexandria, Louisiana.