

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2015

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

We, the undersigned members of the United States Congress, write to express our sincere thanks for your recommendation of a Wilderness designation for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in your final Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Since it was first set aside over fifty years ago, the Arctic Refuge has stood as one of our nation's most iconic wild areas and deserves our most enduring legal protections. We applaud the Administration's efforts to take this important step toward the strongest possible protection for this vital ecosystem.

The area was first established as the Arctic National Wildlife Range on December 6, 1960 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower for its "unique wildlife, wilderness, and recreational values." It is a sweeping landscape, bursting with wildflowers and framed by the awe-inspiring Brooks Mountain Range. Legislation to protect the Refuge's Coastal Plain as Wilderness has been introduced every Congress for the past 25 years, but gridlock in Congress has made it difficult to protect this pristine landscape. Just this month, the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act was introduced in the House of Representatives for the 114th Congress.

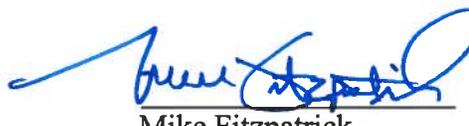
Preserving the Arctic Refuge is necessary to allow the Gwich'in people to live off their ancestral lands, as they have since time immemorial. The Gwich'in rely on the Porcupine Caribou Herd, whose calving and nursery grounds are in the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain which they call "the sacred place where life begins." Birds flock there to nest from every state in the union and six continents and grizzly, black, and polar bears all share the Refuge's diverse habitat. Polar bears are especially dependent on the Coastal Plain to den and raise their young as they face diminishing habitat.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a pristine landscape with values unlike any other public lands in our nation. Its value to Alaska Natives to sustain their cultural and subsistence lifestyle, as well as, its wilderness, ecological integrity, wildlife, and recreational opportunities are unmatched. Therefore, we strongly support your recommendation of a Wilderness designation for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Signed,



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Mike Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



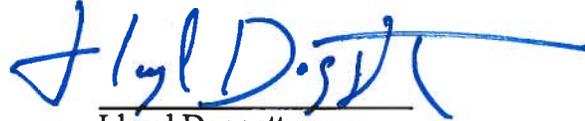
John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



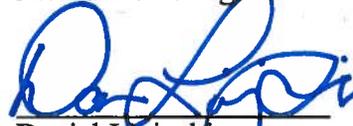
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
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Daniel Lipinski
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Mike Quigley
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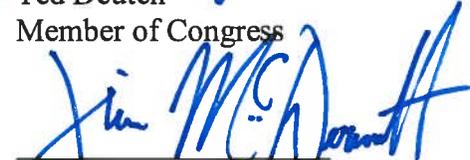
David Price
Member of Congress



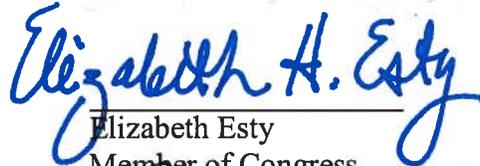
Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



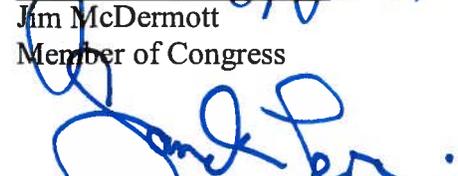
Jim Himes
Member of Congress



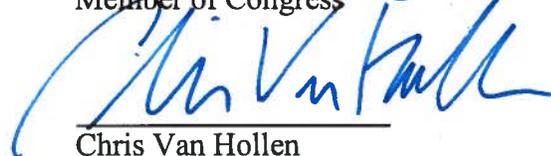
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Esty
Member of Congress



Sandy Levin
Member of Congress



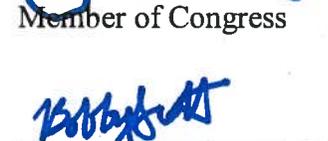
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



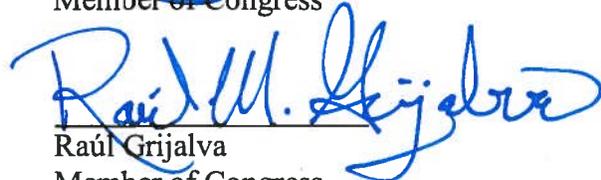
Jim Langevin
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Betty McCollum
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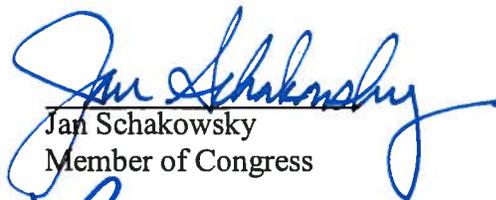
Robert C. Scott
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Raúl Grijalva
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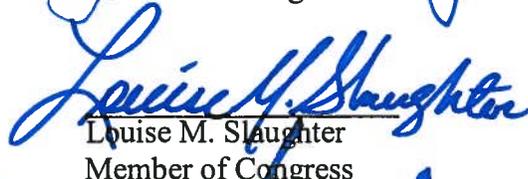
Henry C. Johnson
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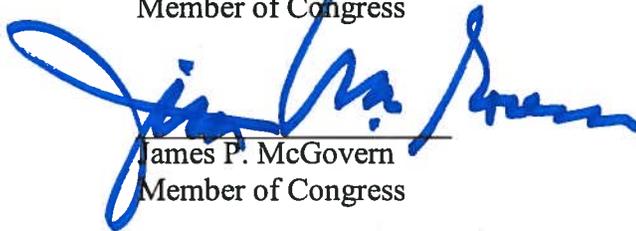
Donald Beyer
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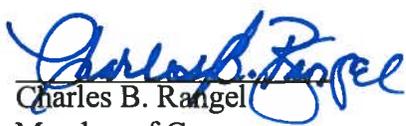
Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Matt Cartwright
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Doris O. Matsui
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Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



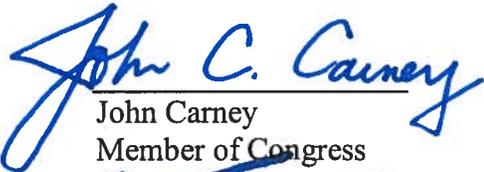
Ferrol Nadler
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Bill Keating
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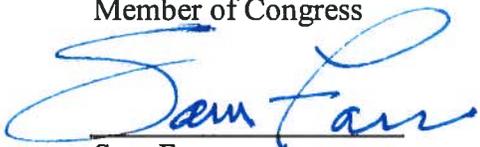
Michael M. Honda
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John Carney
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Tim Walz
Member of Congress



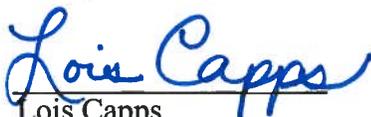
Sam Farr
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John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



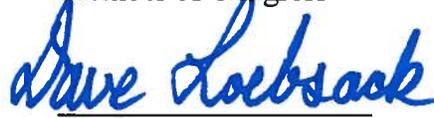
Katherine Clark
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Lois Capps
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Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



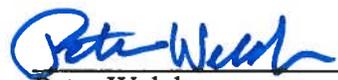
Scott Peters
Member of Congress



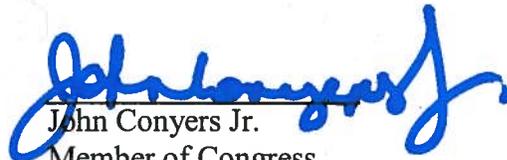
Nydia M. Velázquez
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Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



John Conyers Jr.
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



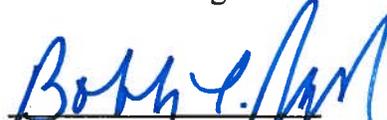
Keith Ellison
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Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



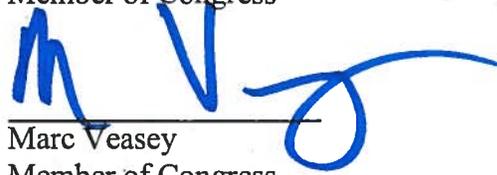
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



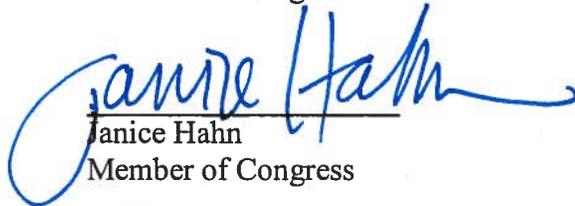
Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Janice Hahn
Member of Congress



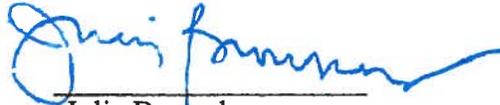
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



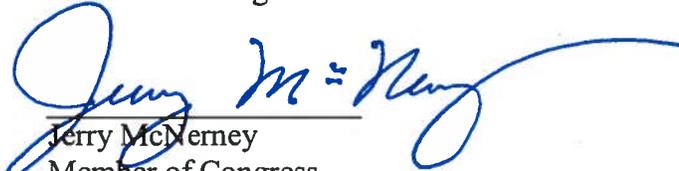
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Peter DeFazio
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Julia Brownley
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Jerry McNerney
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Ted W. Lieu
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Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress



Rick Nolan
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress


Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress


Karen Bass
Member of Congress


Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress


Carolyn B. Maloney
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Mark DeSaulnier
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John Delaney
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