



Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat Urges Biden Administration to Fulfill Commitment to Alaska's North Slope Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 1, 2023

Contact: John Hogan, John@marathonstrategies.com

A statement from Nagruk Harcharek, President of the [Voice of Arctic Iñupiat](#) (“VOICE”). VOICE is a nonprofit organization established in 2015 by the region’s collective Iñupiat leadership to speak with a unified voice on issues impacting the North Slope Iñupiat, their communities, their economy, and their culture. Its members include local government, business, tribal, and civil society across the North Slope of Alaska. VOICE’s board [unanimously passed a resolution](#) in support of advancing the Willow Project to support the economic well-being of the North Slope Iñupiat.

“Today’s announcement from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) inches us closer to a final decision on the future of the Willow Project for Alaska’s North Slope Iñupiat. There is widespread support across Alaska Native communities for this considerately designed development opportunity and the long-term economic stability it offers for the people of Alaska’s remote North Slope.

“All that remains now is for the Biden administration to fulfill its commitment to our people and region by advancing Willow consistent with project’s minimum requirements as laid out by ConocoPhillips. Further unnecessary reviews or limiting the project to fewer and fewer pads would likely terminate the project, leading to dire implications for our national security, our economy, the self-determination of the Iñupiat people, and for the future of Alaska’s North Slope.

“The Willow Project is a new opportunity to ensure a viable future for our communities, creating long-term economic stability for our people and advancing our self-determination. The Willow Project is estimated to generate hundreds of direct jobs and thousands of construction jobs, along with contracting opportunities for Native-owned businesses. BLM estimates that Willow will result in approximately \$6 billion from federal royalties and state and local taxes. For North Slope communities, more than \$1 billion in property taxes paid to the North Slope Borough would help provide basic services like education, police, fire protection, and more. Willow is also projected to add \$2.5 billion to the NPR-A Impact Mitigation Grant Program, supporting social services, youth programs, and more throughout our communities.

“The Iñupiat have sustained themselves in the United States’ most extreme and remote climate for more than 10,000 years by staying true to our time-honored cultural values, including subsistence hunting. These traditions form the bedrock of our Iñupiat culture and are of the utmost importance when considering new economic development opportunities in the North Slope. The Willow Project will make it possible for our community to continue our traditions while strengthening the economic foundation of our region for decades to come.

“We remain grateful to Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, Rep. Mary Peltola, Gov. Mike Dunleavy, labor leaders, and Alaska Native leaders for their bipartisan leadership and strong support for Alaska Native communities and Alaskan residents in general. We urge President Biden to follow their leadership and listen to the voices of the people of the North Slope.”

###

About Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat

Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat was formed in 2015 as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, creating a communication network amongst Arctic Slope communities to establish a unified voice for our region and people. Today, our twenty-four member organizations work together to ensure that our collective voice is heard and respected – locally, regionally and nationally.