

Ninth Circuit Hears Debate Over Oil Drilling in Alaska Reserve

“Attorneys sparred Friday over oil and gas drilling in Alaska – whether the government ignored environmental consequences and if it should reevaluate projects in light of climate science released after the project was first evaluated in 2012.” reports Karina Brown in *Courthouse News Service*.

“The National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska is 23.4 million acres of pristine wilderness named as a source of oil for the U.S. Navy in 1923. The vast area is important habitat for millions of migratory birds, marine mammals like beluga whales and home to the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd – critical for Nuiqsut subsistence hunters. Congress handed management to the Department of the Interior in 1976 with the mandate to provide “maximum protection” to the area’s fish and wildlife habitat.”

“In 2016, ConocoPhillips Alaska found a new cache of oil in the reserve that would mean an additional 130,000 barrels per day – beyond the daily 500,000 barrels that flowed through TransAlaska Pipeline last year.”

Read the article.