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**A Win for the Arctic as Interior Department Puts New Offshore Drilling Plan on Hold**

Washington, D.C. — Today, [The Wall Street Journal](#) is reporting that the Trump administration’s proposed five-year plan for offshore oil and gas leasing “has been sidelined indefinitely” after a U.S. District Court judge in late March [threw out President Trump’s executive order](#) that sought to overturn bans on offshore drilling in the Atlantic and Arctic oceans put in place at the end of President Obama’s second term in office.

**Statement by Kristen Miller, Conservation Director, Alaska Wilderness League:**

“Today’s news is huge for America’s coastal waters and coastal communities. As has happened with so many of its proposed policies, the Trump administration has been hoisted by its own petard, forced to backtrack on its own aggressive drilling plans after ignoring sound science, broad public input and the law in its rush to hand America’s public lands and waters over to fossil fuel industries. While the current protections for our nation’s oceans were predicated on scientific analysis and a multi-year public comment process, the Trump administration’s hastily created proposal to overturn these protections is rife with unsubstantiated claims and faulty economics.

Today’s announcement comes less than a month after — and is directly attributable to — a recent decision by a federal court in Alaska that determined President Trump overstepped his presidential authority in issuing a 2017 executive order to overturn bans on offshore drilling in the Atlantic and Arctic oceans. The President’s order sought to open more than 120 million acres of ocean to the oil and gas industry, including 98 percent of federal Arctic Ocean waters where offshore drilling would threaten irreplaceable wildlife, sensitive marine ecosystems, coastal villages and our global climate.

Considering all of the challenges facing the Arctic from a rapidly changing climate, we applaud today’s announcement that will protect our Arctic waters and the communities that depend on them from the additional risks of new offshore oil development.”

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