



PRESS RELEASE

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AIDEA Responds to Decision by Federal District Court Regarding Cancellation of ANWR Leases

March 25, 2025 (Anchorage, Alaska)— The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) applauds [Federal District Court Judge Gleason’s decision](#) in the case AIDEA filed against the United States Department of Interior for wrongfully canceling its leases in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

Background: For decades, Alaska and its congressional delegation have sought to open a small part of ANWR, called the “1002” area, for oil and gas exploration and production. The 1002 area makes up roughly 8% of the total area of ANWR, but is estimated to contain billions of barrels of oil and large volumes of natural gas. Production of oil and gas from ANWR would provide billions of dollars of revenue to the State of Alaska and the federal treasury. It would also provide a stable and secure energy supply for the United States for years to come.

In 2017, Congress enacted, and President Trump signed, the “Tax Cut and Jobs Act.” The bill made several provisions related to ANWR, including:

- Removing all discretion and requiring the Secretary of the Department of the Interior to “establish and administer a competitive oil and gas program for the “leasing, development, production, and transportation of oil and gas” in the 1002 area.
- Directed the Bureau of Land Management to hold two competitive oil and gas lease sales in the coastal plain (approximately 1.56 million acres) of ANWR. Each sale must offer at least 400,000 acres for a total minimum of 800,000 acres, or roughly 51% of the total coastal plain.
- Removing all discretion and requiring the Secretary to conduct not fewer than two **valid** lease sales of at least 400,000 acres each, with the most prospective areas of ANWR included in each lease sale.
- Inclusion of up to 2,000 surface acres of Federal land to be covered by production and support facilities for the oil and gas industry.

A sale was held in December 2020. AIDEA bid and was awarded seven leases in ANWR. Despite clear federal law, the U.S. Department of the Interior (led by Secretary Haaland and Interior Solicitor Robert Anderson) illegally canceled AIDEA’s leases. AIDEA sued to make the federal agency follow the law and the lease terms.

AIDEA has been diligently studying the 2D seismic data previously conducted in ANWR, well data from nearby state lands, and other information to identify the most prospective areas of its leases.

AIDEA has been and will continue to coordinate with entities such as the North Slope Borough, the Voice of the Arctic, and the village of Kaktovik (the only community within the boundaries of ANWR), which represent the Inupiaq and other residents of the North Slope and support responsible development of ANWR.

“Today’s ruling is about so much more than reinstating illegally canceled leases in ANWR, it is about upholding the rule of law in our country,” **said Governor Mike Dunleavy**. “A rouge federal agency under the Biden administration should never have had the power to cancel legally obtained leases. Now the leasing program can move forward and could result in more safe, secure energy production right here in Alaska. President Trump was right on ANWR as well.”

“The progress we have made in the last 50 years is now at risk. We are not second-class communities awaiting the government to swoop in and save us. We are Americans whose perspectives and history must be included in policy discussions taking place in Washington, D.C. The federal government urgently needs to reconsider its approach to our ancestral homelands to reflect this need for consultation with our region – or else it risks the future of our communities and Iñupiaq culture.” – **Josiah Aullaqsruaq Patkotak, mayor of the North Slope Borough and a former member of the Alaska House of Representatives**.

“Today’s decision by Judge Gleason proves that federal agencies with a political agenda to shut down Alaska and keep Alaskans from good-paying jobs must still follow the laws set by Congress. Congress has clearly spoken and said there shall be a program for oil and gas development in ANWR. The Department of Interior does not have the discretion to rewrite federal laws in a way that serves its political supporters and its boss in the White House,” **said Randy Ruaro, Executive Director of AIDEA**.

AIDEA Board Chairman Dana Pruhs stated, “This decision is a positive step forward in the responsible development of ANWR. It also follows the law passed in 2017, calling for lease sales with the purpose of studying and developing the leaseholds. This is an important step in a lengthy process to bring more domestic energy to market.”

About AIDEA

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority is a public corporation of the State of Alaska. AIDEA’s purpose is to promote, develop, and advance the general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Alaska.

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