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*** For Immediate Release ***

A joint statement from the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS), North Slope Borough, and Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) on the Biden administration's cancellation of oil and gas leases on the North Slope.

"The elected regional Inupiaq leadership of the North Slope disagree with the Biden administration's decision today to restrict Indigenous access to 13 million acres within the NPR-A and cancel oil and gas lease sales in our region. This decision puts the economic future of the North Slope Inupiat in jeopardy and undermines Alaska Native peoples' right to self-determination. These decisions, largely driven by those who have no connection to our land or cultural heritage, further undermine the rights of Indigenous people across the nation.

"Despite our attempts at open lines of communication with the administration, local leaders learned of this decision through press reports. To date, the Bureau of Land Management failed to consult with North Slope communities or the respective local cooperating agencies on these decisions – ignoring and silencing Indigenous voices.

"The cancellation will undoubtedly cause irreparable harm to our communities and the 11,000 residents of the North Slope who rely on these lands to sustain their way of life. Ripple effects from this decision include decreased connectivity between communities through less seasonal road and trail access for our people, more difficult construction of critical infrastructure – including rebuilding schools, and a lower likelihood of more permanent and redundant telecommunications and broadband infrastructure – all in the wake of an [ongoing local telecommunications emergency](#).

"In the days and weeks ahead, we will be working alongside Alaska's bipartisan congressional delegation and the Governor's office, all stalwart supporters of our people and our region. And we will continue our attempts to be heard by the decision makers in this administration."

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Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS) – ICAS is the regional Alaska Native tribal government for the North Slope region, governed by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the ICAS Constitution. ICAS represents and is selected by the Iñupiat people of the region.

North Slope Borough (Borough) – The Borough is the regional municipal government for the northernmost region of Alaska and the largest municipality in the United States by size. The Borough’s jurisdiction encompasses the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Approximately three-quarters of the Borough’s nearly 11,000 residents are Iñupiat.

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) – ASRC is one of twelve land-owning regional Alaska Native Regional Corporations established pursuant to the enactment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. ASRC is owned by and represents the business interests of more than 14,000 Iñupiaq shareholders. ASRC owns nearly 5 million acres of Alaska Native land on Alaska’s North Slope. ASRC’s Corporate headquarters are located in Utqiagvik (Barrow), Alaska.