

Title:

Americans Want American Energy

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Summary:

Americans want America energy, says a new national poll.

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A new national poll released by PACWEST Communications of Portland, Oregon shows Americans overwhelmingly favor gaining access to American oil and gas from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, known as ANWR.

In the face of soaring gasoline prices pushed by crude oil prices hitting \$75 per barrel, nearly 60 percent of those questioned said they favor oil production in ANWR.

"These are very strong results," said Paul Phillips, PACWEST's president. "Congress has failed previously in numerous attempts to pass legislation opening ANWR's vast oil and gas reserves. Hopefully, they will now be more responsive to the will of the people and address the people's energy needs."

On numerous occasions, the powerful environmental lobby has defeated attempts to open ANWR, claiming that production there would harm the environment. However, as Phillips points out, it had no such qualms when the Clinton administration proposed oil production on another section of Alaska's North Slope.

In fact, Mr. Clinton's Department of Energy published an extensive report in 1999 entitled "Environmental Benefits of Advanced Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Technology." That report found, "From the tundra of Alaska to the wetlands of Louisiana, a host of advanced technologies enable the oil and gas industry to produce resources far beneath sensitive environments."

It describes techniques such as building ice roads for moving equipment that simply disappear without a trace when summer comes to the Arctic and directional drilling that allows many wells to be put down from a single location. These and other techniques would enable the production of oil and gas using just 2,000 of

ANWR's 19,500,000 acres.

Should the Congress vote to open ANWR to oil production, Phillips said, the effect of driving prices down could be immediate, even though actual production would be some years away.

"Much of the price of oil is based on speculation that there will be shortages in the future," Phillips noted. "Any action which might even slightly lessen such shortages could have a strong impact on prices."

Opening ANWR could well be just such an action. The U.S. Department of Energy has estimated ANWR could hold as much as 16 billion barrels of oil. That is an amount equal to 30 years of imports from Saudi Arabia. Peak production, it is estimated, would yield approximately 1.5 million barrels per day, or about 7.5 percent of this country's daily usage--enough, according to experts, to impact world prices.