

Statement on the Withdrawal of Certain Areas in the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans on the Outer Continental Shelf From Mineral Leasing *December 20, 2016*

Today, in partnership with our neighbors and allies in Canada, the United States is taking historic steps to build a strong Arctic economy, preserve a healthy Arctic ecosystem, and protect our fragile Arctic waters, including designating the bulk of our Arctic water and certain areas in the Atlantic Ocean as indefinitely off limits to future oil and gas leasing.

These actions, and Canada's parallel actions, protect a sensitive and unique ecosystem that is unlike any other region on Earth. They reflect the scientific assessment that, even with the high safety standards that both our countries have put in place, the risks of an oil spill in this region are significant, and our ability to clean up from a spill in the region's harsh conditions is limited. By contrast, it would take decades to fully develop the production infrastructure necessary for any large-scale oil and gas leasing production in the region, at a time when we need to continue to move decisively away from fossil fuels.

In 2015, just 0.1 percent of U.S. Federal offshore crude production came from the Arctic, and Department of Interior analysis shows that, at current oil prices, significant production in the Arctic will not occur. That's why looking forward, we must continue to focus on economic empowerment for Arctic communities beyond this one sector. My administration has proposed and directed unprecedented Federal investments in the region, but more must be done—by the Federal Government, the private sector, and philanthropy—to enhance infrastructure and our collective security, such as the acquisition of additional ice-breaking capacity, and to lay the groundwork for economic growth in the industries of the future.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary released two Department of the Interior maps of the designated areas and accompanying fact sheets with this statement.

Joint Statement—United States-Canada Joint Arctic Leaders' Statement *December 20, 2016*

In March, President Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau announced a new partnership to embrace opportunities and confront challenges in the changing Arctic, with Indigenous and Northern partnerships, and responsible, science-based leadership. Over the past year, both countries have engaged a range of partners and stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples and Northern communities, state, provincial and territorial governments, nongovernmental organizations and businesses. Those consulted have expressed a strong desire for real and long-term opportunities to build strong families, communities, and robust economies. Today, President Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau are proud to launch actions ensuring a strong, sustainable and viable Arctic economy and ecosystem, with low-

impact shipping, science based management of marine resources, and free from the future risks of offshore oil and gas activity. Together, these actions set the stage for deeper partnerships with other Arctic nations, including through the Arctic Council.

Science-based approach to oil and gas:

In March, the United States and Canada committed that commercial activities will occur only if the highest safety and environmental standards are met, and if they are consistent with national and global climate and environmental goals. Today—due to the important, irreplaceable values of its Arctic waters for Indigenous, Alaska Native and local communities' subsistence and cultures, wildlife and