

The Tracks You Leave Behind



LEGACY AND FINANCIAL PLANNING NEWS
FOR FRIENDS OF DEFENDERS

Polar Bears in Trouble



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Left unchecked, climate change could be the final straw for Alaska's polar bears. They could disappear from U.S. shores as early as 2050.

"Warming temperatures are devastating key polar bear habitat," explains Karla Dutton, Alaska Director for Defenders of Wildlife. "The alarming loss of Arctic sea-ice has negative implications for every aspect of the bears' lives, from hunting the prey they need to survive to raising their cubs."

The terrible plight of polar bears and other wildlife being stressed by warming temperatures is at the heart of Defenders' fight for a reduction in the greenhouse gas pollution responsible for climate change. With climate change threatening to push polar bears to the brink of extinction, urgent action is needed on other fronts as well.

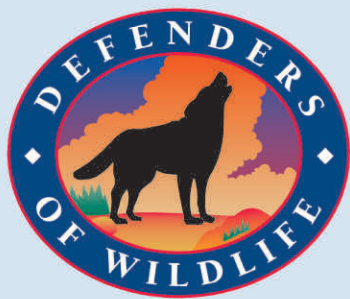
On the ground, Defenders is exploring a number of specific measures to reduce the incidence of conflict between Alaskans in Arctic coastal communities and polar bears, as the loss

of sea-ice forces the bears to spend more time on land in search of food. These measures include community education, bear-resistant food storage and waste disposal procedures, polar bear patrols, the rescue of starving and malnourished bears into rehabilitation facilities, and their eventual relocation. Gene banks and captive-breeding programs may also be needed to preserve the polar bear's diverse gene pool should climate change claim entire populations.

"High on our policy agenda is the suspension of all new Arctic oil and gas development until appropriate measures to protect polar bears and their sea-ice habitat are in place," adds Defenders' President Rodger Schlickeisen.

Defenders is also working to win a permanent moratorium on energy exploration and development in the Southern Beaufort and Chukchi Seas, and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the most important onshore denning habitat for Alaskan polar bears.

Visit www.defenders.org for ways you can help protect polar bears.



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Inside this Issue...

- Easy Ways to Create a Wildlife Legacy
- Retirement Assets Can Make Ideal Charitable Gifts
- Meet Wildlife Defender Leigh Ann Rassler

