



Devils Tower National Monument

Devils Tower, known to some tribal communities as Bear’s Lodge or Mato Tipila, is a tower of igneous rock rising 1,267 feet over the Belle Fourche River on the traditional lands of the Lakota, Tsistsistas/Cheyenne, and Kiowa tribes in what is today northeastern Wyoming. Devils Tower has the distinction of being the first National Monument designated under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Today, it is a popular tourist destination. As rock climbing grew in popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, thousands of climbers journeyed to Devils Tower with the intent to climb the formation. The rock is a unique geologic feature offering routes ranging from 5.6 (fairly easy) to 5.13 (very hard). Intense interest in climbing Devils Tower continues to this day.

However, long before Devils Tower became popular with rock climbers, various tribal groups visited the area annually to pray and conduct ceremonies connected to the summer solstice. Each tribal group has their own stories of the place, but pipe ceremonies, sun dances, and vision quests are all held near (and in relation to) the tower in order to renew life and spirituality. The tribes consider rock climbing during these ceremonies disturbing and sacrilegious. Devils Tower is also a nesting area for peregrine falcons, a raptor species once classified as Endangered but removed from Endangered status in 1999 due to stable population sizes. Climbing during nesting season can disturb the falcons’ reproductive cycle.

In an effort to balance these disparate interests, the National Park Service has imposed two limitations on rock climbing on Devils Tower. The first limitation is a complete, mandatory ban on climbing every April to protect peregrine falcons during their nesting season. The second limitation, imposed in 1995, is a voluntary ban that discourages but does not completely prohibit climbing during the month of June, which is one of the most important months for tribal ceremonies. Since these climbing limitations have been implemented, several lawsuits have been filed both in support of and against Indigenous religious rights and climbers' access. The overwhelming majority of climbing organizations today support closure during the voluntary limitation period and prominent voices in the climbing community have written articles about how climbing should not occur during that time. Despite this fact, each June a few hundred climbers travel to Devils Tower to climb during the voluntary ban.



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a 19.3 million-acre area of land located in the northeastern corner of Alaska. It is the ancestral and modern-day homeland of the Indigenous Gwich'in and Iñupiat peoples and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Gwich'in and Iñupiat depend on the Arctic Refuge and its resources to sustain their communities, cultures and ways of life. The Porcupine Caribou Herd, in particular, is a primary source of food for the Gwich'in, who identify themselves as caribou people and base many of their cultural practices on their relationship with the herd. The caribou migrate each summer to the coastal plain of the refuge to birth and nurse their calves, so there is much fear that oil drilling there would negatively impact the caribou. The coastal plain—a 1.5 million-acre strip of land between the Brooks Range and the Arctic Ocean—also provides important habitat for moose, wolves, eagles, lynx, wolverine, three species of bears, and many other animals. The refuge includes a large area of designated wilderness, but the coastal plain is outside the wilderness boundary.

Since the 1970s, there has been debate about whether to allow energy companies to drill for oil and gas in the Arctic Refuge. Under the law that created the refuge, drilling for oil on the coastal plain has been illegal for decades, and only Congress could vote to change that rule. Despite the fact that extractive industries provide thousands of jobs in northern Alaska, nearly all Gwich'in oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge— a view shared by many Iñupiat and other Alaska Native tribes.

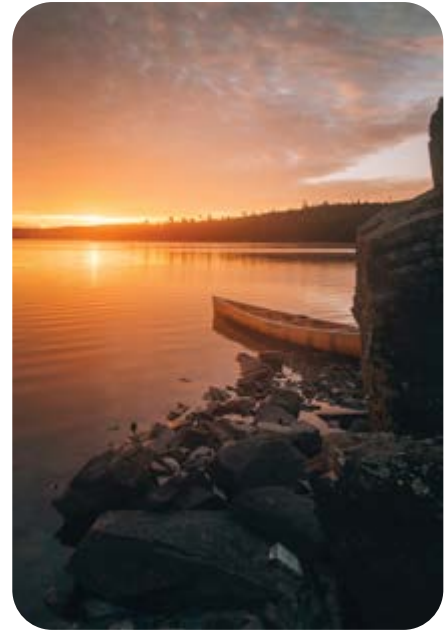
In the 1980s, USFWS recommended that the coastal plain be opened to oil and gas development in the interests of national security and economic development. However, Congress did not grant permission for drilling. Later, in the 1990s and 2000s, Congress several times debated whether to preserve the coastal plain or allow oil and gas extraction. Then, in 2017, Congress passed and President Trump signed legislation that opened the area to drilling.

As a result of 2017 legislation, the United States government auctioned off nine oil and gas leases in 2020. Knowing that drilling on the coastal plain would be risky, expensive and highly controversial, major oil companies decided to not enter a single bid. Seven of the leases were purchased by an economic development corporation owned by the state of Alaska; another was purchased by a real-estate investment firm; and one lease was purchased by an Australian oil and gas company. But in June 2022, that company canceled the lease and requested a refund. This lack of interest on the part of energy companies may be attributable to a public outcry in opposition to drilling in the refuge, especially that of the Gwich'in and Iñupiat peoples. In addition, America's six largest banks announced they will refuse to finance oil and gas extraction in the refuge and a number of insurance companies around the world have policies that prohibit financing and underwriting extraction work in the Arctic Refuge.

Shortly after President Biden took office in 2021, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland suspended all of the leases sold in the 2020 lease sale, insisting that additional review was needed on how drilling would impact the landscape. As a result of that suspension, there has been no further movement toward drilling in the Arctic Refuge as of Spring 2022. Unless Congress acts to protect the coastal plain—the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which contained a provision to open the refuge to drilling—will require another lease sale to be held before the end of 2024.

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) is approximately one million acres of federally designated Wilderness located in the traditional homelands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) people. Today, these lands and waters are part of the Superior National Forest in Northern Minnesota and are the most visited wilderness in the National Wilderness Preservation System. With over 2000 miles of pristine rivers and streams and over 1,000 lakes, the BWCAW is highly-valued for recreation, scientific study, and habitat for several endangered species. The recreation industry that has grown up around the Boundary Waters provides thousands of jobs in the area and is estimated to produce nearly \$100 million in revenue in the region.



In addition to the ecological and recreation value of the region, the lands of Northern Minnesota are rich with taconite, the raw material used to produce iron, and sulfide ore, the raw material used to produce copper. The U.S. Forest Service has allowed mining in areas near the BWCAW since the 1940s. However, the overwhelming majority of this mining has been for taconite and iron production rather than sulfide and copper production. Sulfide ore mining brings new risks including acid mine drainage and other heavy metal pollution to the abundant and interconnected waters of the area. These risks are unlike those from taconite mining. Taconite mining has not had a major impact on the Wilderness to date.

Mining also provides economic benefits to northern Minnesota. In the Iron Range to the west of the Boundary Waters, the mining industry has historically provided thousands of jobs and is still a major employer in the region today. Proponents of mines near the Boundary Waters claim that mining could produce jobs for this region as well, although some economic studies question whether a mining-based economy would outperform the existing recreation-based economy.

In 2012, a Chilean mining company purchased two old mining leases in the Superior National Forest. These parcels are located five miles from the boundary of the BWCAW and are upstream of a large portion of the Boundary Waters watershed. The company would like to mine copper-sulfide ore using a process that is likely to leach toxic minerals and chemicals into the water, posing a significant threat to the pristine waters in the Wilderness area.

The mining proposal sparked the formation of a coalition known as Save the Boundary Waters, consisting of a number of environmentalists, hunters and anglers, and recreation-focused businesses and user groups. Some Indigenous groups and Tribes have also supported the campaign. Save the Boundary Waters is proposing protections for the entire BWCAW watershed. The debate over the mine has pitted some traditional allies against one another. Recreation and conservation interests are against the mine, whereas some organized labor unions are supporting the mine in the hopes that it will provide jobs in the area.

During the Obama administration in 2016-2017, the U.S. Forest Service determined that the mine would cause irreversible damage to the region. The agency canceled the mining leases and proposed a 20-year mining ban around the BWCAW. In 2018 and 2019, the Trump Administration reversed this decision and reinstated the leases to allow the mine. However, the Bureau of Land Management was legally required to carry out official environmental reviews and permitting processes before mining operations could begin.

In early 2022, the Biden Administration again canceled the two active leases, saying the Trump administration's renewal of the leases was unlawful because it did not comply with applicable laws and regulations. The Biden Administration also announced that it plans to pursue the 20-year mining ban first issued during the Obama administration. The mining company has stated that it will challenge the Biden Administration's actions in court.

CASE STUDY WORKSHEET

What land/water is being discussed?

What unique geographic features are involved (rivers, mountains, etc)?

What federal agency manages the land?

User/Interest Group Name	Desired outcome for Land/Water use? Is this use exclusive?	Benefits to this use?	Drawbacks to this use?

* If more user groups/interest groups are identified, complete this same process on extra paper.

Answer the following questions with the user groups and specific area above in mind:

<p>What is the managing agency's mission and designation of the land?</p>	
<p>Based on mission and designation, which groups should be given priority consideration and why?</p>	
<p>Thinking globally and long term, what are appropriate land, water, and air protections for this land?</p>	
<p>Questions to Research</p>	

How can this land be managed to reduce user conflict and ensure that all user needs are met?

On another sheet of paper, describe what a proposal for the best use of this land would be. Include which groups would benefit, what advantages/drawbacks would be for the management decision, and your reasons why you think this is the best management decision for the area.

