

Alaska Unveils Plan to Assess Gas, Oil in ANWR

BECKY BOHRER, Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Alaska has unveiled a plan to determine the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's oil and gas potential, as the state looks to reinvigorate the debate over whether to drill on the refuge's coastal plain.

Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell said Monday that the U.S. Department of Interior hasn't indicated that it will address oil and gas issues in a new planning document for the refuge so Alaska is stepping up.

Alaska is proposing a multiyear plan that includes seismic surveys, environmental studies and exploration drilling on the refuge's coastal plain. Exploration would take place in winter, and Parnell says it would have a limited impact on the environment.

Parnell says he will ask the state Legislature for up to \$50 million toward the plan, if the federal government is willing to partner with Alaska.

An environmentalist calls the plan a "recycled bad idea."

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