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“Treasure America Project” to promote win-win strategies for energy independence and preservation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

A growing consortium of fiscally conservative business people, economic development consultants, entrepreneurs, scientists and concerned citizens is coming together to protect the American economy and homeland from continued over-dependence on oil.

In the words of Andrew Smith, Executive Director of the newly formed *Treasure America Project*, "Attempting to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is an obvious symptom of our country's current over-dependence on oil. There are much faster, cheaper ways to deal with America's energy crisis than opening the Refuge to drilling. The Treasure America project seeks to show Americans win-win solutions for reducing our energy costs, creating jobs and keeping special places alive and well for generations to come."

The Treasure America Project Team understands the forces behind the lobbying efforts to open the Refuge for drilling. Neal Donahue, an International Economic Development Consultant participating in the project, explains "Alaskans are worried about how to sustain current revenue streams from the oil industry; oil service companies profit from expanding the operations they've already established across the majority of the Alaskan Arctic. Be advised though, the proponents of this measure are *not* pushing for lower energy prices for America – they profit the most when the price of oil is high!"

For the rest of America, energy independence will come from efficient vehicle technology and investments in new, cleaner sources of energy. Energy companies such as BP and Shell have already begun to move beyond fossil fuels as the answer to growing global energy demand, and see new energy technologies as core to their corporate strategy. American companies are at a risk of falling behind these competitors if they eschew innovation for a last-ditch effort to grab the remaining gallons of ever more costly oil that might lie under ANWR.

Opening the gates of ANWR to oil exploration also sets a dangerous precedent to allow similar drilling on the California and Florida coasts, and in the Rocky Mountains. It's time to draw the line.

During the summer of 2005, the Treasure America Project team will work to promote sustainable economic growth at both the local and national level. First, they will work with Native Alaskans to identify non-oil based economic activities such as tourism that will be less destructive to their cultures than oil industry payoffs. Second, they will team up with innovative business leaders to promote a national energy policy that stimulates innovation rather than stifling it through fossil fuel industry subsidies.

Hunter Lovins, co-author of [Natural Capitalism: The Next Industrial Revolution](#) and a key supporter of the project states, "American entrepreneurs have already developed vehicle technology that is more efficient, safer, cleaner and lots more fun. Why are we talking about 'environmentally sound drilling technology' when we can eliminate the need to drill in the first place? There are plenty of market based programs for efficient technology development that will make the Arctic drilling debate unnecessary, create more jobs and bring genuine security to all Americans."

Find more information on the Treasure America Project at www.treasureamerica.org or by contacting the project's media coordinator, Nick Aster at naster@treasureamerica.org.