

A slide presentation about

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

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Glendon Brunk, producer of *The Last Great Wilderness* and featured speaker, is a graduate of the University of Alaska in Natural Resources and Wildlife Management. He has lived and worked in Alaska for the past twenty-one years, has participated in caribou behavioral studies in the Arctic oil fields, and has extensively explored the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, he is a former world champion sled dog racer.

Two years in the making, *The Last Great Wilderness* is a multi-projector slide presentation that combines the work of twelve wilderness photographers to provide a close-up look at the fragile and beautiful Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northeast Alaska. Called the "Serengeti of the North," the Refuge is home to grizzly and polar bears, arctic fox, snowy owls, tundra swans, and numerous other species. Each summer more than 165,000 caribou migrate to the Refuge where the cows give birth to their calves on the coastal plain. The Gwich'in and other Native people use the resources of the Refuge for their subsistence survival. *The Last Great Wilderness* captures all of the life, splendor, and beauty only a vast, unspoiled wilderness can have. It also features the controversy over oil development versus wilderness designation of the Refuge's coastal plain. Oil companies want to swallow up this pristine area into the neighboring Prudhoe Bay oil field. Out of 1,100 miles of Alaska's arctic coastline, the coastal plain of the Refuge is the last 125 miles not yet open to development.

Glendon says of his involvement with the Arctic Refuge issue: "It has been a tremendously rewarding experience to have been able to share with people all over the country not only the awesome beauty of the Arctic Refuge, but also to provide information about the destructive forces arrayed against North America's Arctic. It's my strong conviction that now, not later, is the time to address the environmental dilemmas we face. When I make my presentations I try to be graphic and urgent, yet at the same time positive. I point out that if Americans continue to consume and waste the world's resources at our present alarming rate, it's inevitable that we will doom the last special places on earth and, in fact, we may ultimately doom ourselves. But I also emphasize that we don't have to be the losers; we can do something about what's happening to our planet. We must all begin to ask questions, to look deeply at our own perceptions and habits. If in the process of questioning we see something that needs to change, then we need to act."

Since 1971, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, the Alaskan sponsor of the slide show, has been the nation's northernmost environmental group. Through educational projects, research, lobbying, and litigation, the Northern Center promotes wilderness preservation, wise use of our natural resources, and a thorough understanding of the environmental and social consequences of development in the Arctic and interior Alaska. Those of us here at the Northern Center invite you to join us in our efforts to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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