



Cook Inlet: Lease Sale 258 Overview

The Inflation Reduction Act, passed in August, includes several harmful offshore drilling provisions, including one that directs BOEM to hold three lease sales for new offshore oil and gas drilling: one off the coast of Alaska and two in the Gulf of Mexico. The first required sale is Lease Sale 258 in Alaska's Cook Inlet, which the law requires to be held by the end of this year.

President Biden's Department of the Interior scheduled the sale for December 30, 2022. The lease sale is expected to offer about 1.09 million acres for new offshore oil and gas development, stretching from Kalgin Island in the north to Augustine Island in the south.

Oceana strongly opposes this lease sale and will fight to ensure no new leases are developed.

Oil Spills Threaten Cook Inlet's Environment

Offshore drilling is dirty and dangerous. According to the [government's own data](#), new offshore drilling in Cook Inlet comes with around a 20% chance that a large oil spill, defined as one of 42,000 gallons (1,000 barrels) or more, will happen over the course of the lease.

Cook Inlet is a critical ecosystem that supports numerous indigenous communities and valuable commercial and recreational fisheries. An oil spill disaster in Cook Inlet could shut down fisheries, harming local communities that rely on healthy fish populations to support their families. If fish are contaminated by an oil spill disaster, fish populations critical to the local economy such as salmon, herring, and rockfish would be seriously threatened and the ensuing economic shutdown could irreversibly harm the entire economy.

Offshore Drilling Worsens the Climate Crisis

Climate change is already wreaking havoc on Alaska, and the science is clear: To avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must end new offshore drilling. Sea ice is melting, permafrost is thawing, and rising temperatures are hurting Alaska's fisheries. In 2019, [the federal Pacific cod fishery](#) closed in Cook Inlet because of [warming ocean temperatures](#) linked to climate change. Climate change is predicted to cost Alaska between [\\$340 and \\$700 million](#) each year. These impacts are no longer abstract or in the future: They are happening now, and they are hurting Alaskans and the Alaskan economy.

We Must Stop Expanding Offshore Drilling

President Biden [committed](#) to ending new leasing for offshore drilling on the campaign trail, and [President Biden](#) must fight to keep that promise in his final five-year plan. Tackling the climate crisis requires transitioning away from dirty fossil fuels and towards clean, renewable energy like responsibly sited and operated offshore wind.

President Biden: Protect our coasts from devastating oil spill disasters by issuing a final five-year plan that includes #NoNewLeases.

Learn more at: www.Oceana.org/ProtectAlaska