Project Description

ConocoPhillips announced a significant new oil discovery named Willow in January 2017. Willow is in the Bear Tooth Unit in the northeast portion of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The original Willow discovery wells, Tinmiaq 2 and 6, were drilled on federal leases in early 2016. The $8 billion that would be invested in capital for the project could create more than 2,000 construction jobs and 300 permanent jobs. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) estimates that Willow could generate more than $10 billion dollars in federal, state, and North Slope Borough revenue.

After successful exploration and appraisal seasons in the Willow area, ConocoPhillips Alaska released the resource estimate of 450 million to 800 million barrels of oil equivalent (MMBOE) in late 2019. A project the size and scale of Willow hasn’t been developed on the North Slope since Alpine in the late 90s. The investment and benefits to be realized from the Willow project are significant. Additional oil production will also help keep a key piece of U.S. infrastructure, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), economically viable. The production rate from Willow is estimated to be about a 20% increase over current TAPS throughput.

The company has proposed a new stand-alone production facility to develop the resource in the Willow area. Willow is estimated to produce in excess of 160,000 BOPD at peak.

The BLM completed scoping in late September 2018 and commenced drafting the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Willow Master Development Plan (MDP). The EIS was prepared under the National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska (NPR-A) Integrated Activity Plan (IAP) completed in 2013. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published on August 23, 2019, and a supplement to the DEIS, which incorporates changes made in response to the public comments, was published in March 2020. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was published on August 14, 2020. BLM issued the Willow MDP Record of Decision on October 27, 2020.

On August 16, 2021, the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska issued a decision in two cases challenging federal permits for the Willow project. The court ruled in favor of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on many issues but ruled against them on three issues: climate change analysis, project alternatives analysis, and certain aspects of the biological opinion on polar bears. The BLM is currently undertaking a Supplemental EIS to address the Court’s decision. A second scoping period was completed in March 2022 and resulted in over 170 days of public comment opportunity throughout the EIS process.
Development Concept

**Location:** Approximately 30 air miles from the Alpine Central Facility and approximately a 36-mile road route from Nuiqsut.

**Scope:** A Central Processing Facility with five drill sites and a separate camp and shops pad. Pipelines linking to existing Alpine infrastructure/corridors. Future additional development would require additional agency reviews and approvals.

**Module Transportation:** Heavier modules would first arrive at the Oliktok Dock, east of the Colville River, then use existing gravel roads and land-based ice roads for transporting modules to the site of the Willow Central Facility (WCF).

**Seawater Source:** Kuparuk Seawater Treatment Plant. A combination of existing and new pipelines would be used to transport seawater to Willow.

Key Facts

- **Jobs created:** More than 250 jobs currently support project planning; the creation of more than 2,000 construction jobs and 300 long-term jobs is expected, and 9 million labor hours are anticipated.
- **Union labor:** Approximately 75% of the anticipated total North Slope installation manhours over 5-year period will use union labor.
- **Cost to develop:** Approximately $8 billion
- **Recoverable oil:** 450-800 million barrels of recoverable oil
- **Peak production:** In excess of 160,000 BOPD
- **Royalty sharing:** Half of the federal royalty will be shared with the State of Alaska to address potential needs of North Slope communities.
- **Revenue:** BLM estimates for Willow include taxes and revenue of $2.1 billion to the State of Alaska, $1.2 billion to the North Slope Borough, $7.6 billion to the Federal Government of which $2.6 billion will be made available to impacted communities through NPR-A Impact Mitigation Grants, for a total of over $10 billion in public revenue over the life of the project.