



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **State of Alaska Makes Nominations in OCS Lease Sale Program**

October 7, 2016 ANCHORAGE – Governor Bill Walker today sent a letter to Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell nominating the Beaufort and Chukchi seas and Cook Inlet for inclusion in the 2017-2022 proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) lease sale program. The State asked that a minimum of one lease sale in each location be included in the five-year program.

“Scheduling lease sales is incredibly important to ensure the long-term financial health of Alaska, including making sure we can balance our budget,” Governor Walker said. “We are very cognizant of ensuring that safeguards are in place to protect subsistence activities.”

“We will continue to work with Arctic stakeholders, the federal government, and our Congressional delegation to ensure Alaskans can see economic progress in the Arctic,” said Alaska Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Andy Mack. “Many safeguards are in place to protect subsistence activities and to allow development in the OCS.”

The State of Alaska receives significant financial and economic benefits from leasing in the outer continental shelf of Alaska, in terms of new employment opportunities and revenue from bonuses, rents and royalties, and it is working with the North Slope Borough to ensure their mutual interests in responsible development are protected.

“North Slope Borough residents are directly impacted by activities in the Arctic OCS and we will always strive to protect subsistence,” said North Slope Borough Mayor Harry Brower. “We can support leasing in the OCS so long as the federal government provides the necessary protections and benefits to our communities. To that end, the North Slope Borough assembly endorsed eight policies for offshore oil and gas development. We intend to work with the State of Alaska on these issues going forward.”

Last week, Governor Walker and Lieutenant Gov. Byron Mallott met with North Slope Borough Mayor Harry Brower and Arctic Slope Regional Corporation President and Chief Executive Officer Rex Rock to discuss appropriate safeguards and benefits from development in the Arctic. Also, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the North Slope Borough continue to work through a formal Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on resource development in the Arctic.

If the Secretary accepts the State’s nominations, the State will use the federal leasing process to facilitate private sector investment and participation in the lease sales.

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**Attached: Letter to Secretary Jewell**