

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy Is Using Taxpayer Dollars To Fund A 501(c)(4) To Engage In A Campaign To Oppose The Biden Administration's Conservation Policies In Alaska.

SUMMARY: In a highly unusual arrangement, Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy has directed as much as \$2 million in taxpayer dollars to a 501(c)(4) group to engage in a campaign to oppose the Biden Administration's conservation efforts in Alaska.

A 501(c)(4) group is unlike a normal 501(c)(3) nonprofit because it is allowed to engage in political activities, including funding independent expenditure (IE) campaigns supporting particular candidates. Though Voice does not appear to have done this, it would be free to do so in the future.

The small 501(c)(4) group was quietly started in 2015 to advocate for issues relevant to Alaska's Arctic north slope. But after President Biden was elected, the group received \$1 million through budget requests from Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy "to ensure the development of North Slope Natural Resources." Dunleavy has an usually close relationship with the group- he announced a vague "Joint Effort" with the group in 2021 and has attended at least one of the group's board meetings.

Since receiving an influx of Alaska taxpayer funding, Voice's spokesperson has been interviewed on Fox News and CNN disparaging the Biden Administration's policies, highlighted in nearly a dozen press releases from Alaska's US Senators, and quoted extensively in news interviews without criticism or mention that he is a state-funded actor.

Voice's board includes representatives from two dozen villages, corporations, and other groups ostensibly to advocate for the "majority consensus" of Alaska Natives in the Arctic. But the group excludes key Alaska Native constituencies that oppose oil development, like the regional tribal government and the village closest to the controversial Willow project.

Voice of the Arctic's spokesperson is Nagruk Harcharek. On social media, he sympathizes with extreme right-wing commentators and climate skeptics. He retweeted a post from Jordan Peterson accusing President Biden of being a "fool with a juvenile delinquent for a son."

Before an influx of state grants, Voice was "largely funded" by The Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), one of the largest privately held companies in the United States. This company has two seats on Voice's board and has spent millions of dollars lobbying to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil development. After Trump opened ANWR to development, ASRC sold drilling rights to Chevron and BP for \$22.5 million.

Voice Of The Arctic Has Taken At Least \$1,000,000 In Taxpayer Dollars To Run A Campaign Opposing The Biden Administration's Conservation Policies In Alaska.

Voice Of The Arctic, A State-Funded 501(c)(4), Has Led Opposition To The Biden Administration's Conservation Policies In Alaska.

A State-Funded 501(c)(4) Has Emerged As A Main Opponent To The Biden Administration's Conservation Efforts In Alaska.

Voice Of The Arctic Is A 501(c)(4) That Lobbies For Oil And Gas Development In The Arctic. "Voice of the Arctic Inupiat is a non-profit that lobbies for oil and gas development and claims to represent the best interest of Inupiat People. ASRC is a member of Voice of the Arctic Inupiat and shares two of their board members." [Sila inuat Blog, accessed [12/08/23](#)]

- **Voice Of The Arctic Is A 501(c)(4).** [Voice 990, [2022](#)]

Voice of The Arctic Inupiat President Nagruk Harcharek Was Invited To Testify To The House Natural Resources Committee. [House Natural Resources Committee, [09/19/23](#)]

- Nagruk Harcharek has been cited in nearly a dozen press releases from Alaska Senators Lisa Murkowski And Dan Sullivan. [Lisa Murkowski Press releases, accessed [12/08/23](#) and Dan Sullivan Press Releases, accessed [12/08/23](#)]

Voice of The Arctic Inupiat President Nagruk Harcharek Has Been Quoted In Hundreds Of News Stories Criticizing Federal Conservation Efforts In Alaska.

- Nagruk Harcharek went on FOX And Friends to criticize President Biden's conservation policies in Alaska... [Fox News, [09/08/23](#)]
- And on CNN. [CNN, [03/14/23](#)]
- And in the Washington Post. [Washington Post, [07/17/23](#)]
- Nagruk Harcharek has been quoted in hundreds of news stories about Biden Administration policies in the last year. [Nexis search, accessed 12/08/23]

As Of 2023, Voice Of The Arctic Appears To Get The Bulk Of Its Funding Directly From The State Of Alaska At Governor Dunleavy's Request.

Voice Of The Arctic Has Gotten As Much As \$2 Million In Appropriations At Governor Dunleavy's Request To Engage In An Unregistered Lobbying Campaign To "Ensure The Development Of North Slope Natural Resources."

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy Announced A "Joint Effort" With Voice To "Advance Critical Issues... At The Federal Level." "Governor Mike Dunleavy announced the beginning of a joint effort with Voice of the Arctic Inupiat (VOICE) to advance issues critical to the North Slope's traditional and economic wellbeing at the federal level. VOICE is a coalition of 24 North Slope entities including regional organizations, tribal councils, municipal governments, and ANCSA corporations." [Governor Dunleavy Press Release, [03/02/21](#)]

- **Governor-Amended Capital Request In FY 2022 Indicates That The Governor Requested \$1M For The Group In FY 2022.** [[FY-2022 Governor-Amended Capital Form](#)]
 - The \$1,000,000 grant represents more money than the group typically reports as revenue in a year. [Voice 990s, [2017-22](#)]
- **Voice Of The Arctic May Have Also Received A \$1,000,000 Appropriation From The State Of Alaska For FY 2023.** [Named Recipient Grant- Voice Of The Arctic, [07/01/22](#)]
 - It is unclear from the records if this is referring to the previous \$1M payment or if this is an additional payment.

Voice Is Supposed To Use The Money To “Serve As A Conduit For Information Transfer” With The Government, Among Other Things, “To Ensure The Development Of North Slope Natural Resources.” “Serve as a conduit for information transfer with outside organizations, including both governmental and non-governmental entities. VOICE goals are intended to allow it to address and participate in legislation, regulations, and government programs to protect Iñupiat culture; increase communication and information sharing amongst Iñupiat organizations across the North Slope; ensure the development of North Slope natural resources...” [Named Recipient Grant- Voice Of The Arctic, [07/01/22](#)]

The Governor’s Request(s) To Give Millions To Voice Comes After Dunleavy Announced A “Joint Effort” With The Group.

Governor Dunleavy Announced A “Joint Effort” With Voice In 2021, But Was Vague On Details. “Today Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy announced the beginning of a joint effort with Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat (VOICE) to advance issues critical to the North Slope’s traditional and economic wellbeing at the federal level.” [Dunleavy Press Release, [03/02/21](#)]

Governor Dunleavy Has Personally Attended At Least One Voice Board Meeting. [Voice of the Arctic, accessed [12/20/22](#)]

Voice Of The Arctic Purports To Represent A “Majority Consensus” While Disregarding Key Alaska Native Communities.

The One-Sided Group Excludes Key Stakeholders Like The Regional Tribal Government And Villages Closest To Planned Development.

Voice Of The Arctic Says Its Pro-Oil Members Make Up A “Majority Consensus” In The North Slope Region. “But there is ‘majority consensus’ in the North Slope region supporting the project, said Nagruk Harcharek, president of the group Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, whose members include leaders from across much of that region.” [Associated Press, [03/23/23](#)]

- **But The Group Excludes Key Constituencies, Including The Village Closest To Planned Oil Development.** “That’s because despite the emphasis on unity, there are some big gaps in the membership. For example, there’s currently no representation from the village of Nuiqsut, which is one of the places on the North Slope most directly impacted by development. Also missing is the regional tribal government, the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, or ICAS. That’s the group that the federal government has to consult with before taking any action in the region. George Edwardson is the President of ICAS.” [Alaska Public Media, [03/16/18](#)]

Mayor Excluded From Voice Of The Arctic Says Constituents Will Have Their Health And Livelihoods Harmed By The Willow Project, Which Voice Supports. “City of Nuiqsut Mayor Rosemary Ahtuanguaruk, whose community of about 525 people is closest to the proposed development, has been outspoken in her opposition, worried about impacts to caribou and her residents’ subsistence lifestyles. ‘My constituents and community will bear the burden of this project with our health and our livelihoods,’ she said.” [Associated Press, [03/23/23](#)]

Voice Doesn’t Include The Regional Tribal Government, The Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope. “Also missing is the regional tribal government, the Iñupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, or ICAS. That’s the group that the federal government has to consult with before taking any action in the region. George Edwardson is the President of ICAS.” [Alaska Public Media, [03/16/18](#)]

The President Of ICAS Says Voice Is A Counterbalance To Development-Focused Groups Like Voice. “To be clear, Edwardson doesn’t have a problem with the fact that these other leadership groups have teamed up as VOICE. He just thinks that remaining separate from the organization will give his group the independence it needs to counterbalance some of the others in the region, like the local corporations.” [Alaska Public Media, [03/16/18](#)]

Voice And The Alaska Native Corporations It Represents Have A Different Goal: “Make Money.” “They’re doing what they were designed to do: make money,’ Edwardson said. ‘And as a regional tribal government, my job is to protect the ecosystem, and the people and the culture.’” [Alaska Public Media, [03/16/18](#)]

Voice Of The Arctic President Nagruk Harcharek Enjoys Right Wing Content And Climate Skepticism On Social Media.

Nagruk Harcharek Retweeted Shared A Tweet Calling President Biden "A Virtue-Signaling Fool With A Juvenile Delinquent For A Son."

Nagruk Harcharek Retweeted And Liked Comment Insulting President Biden For Being A “Fool With A Juvenile Delinquent For A Son.” Nagruk Harcharek retweeted and liked a tweet

from right wing influencer Jordan Peterson that said, “you're a virtue-signaling fool with a juvenile delinquent for a son.” [Nagruk Harcharek Liked Tweets, [09/07/23](#)]



Source: X, Formerly Twitter

Nagruk Harcharek Liked Content From Leading Climate Denier Alex Epstein. Nagruk Harcharek liked a tweet from an anti-climate activist that said, ““No conceivable warming of the planet could cause heat waves that would be a problem for a grid that's committed to reliable electricity. Just invest enough in reliable sources like natural gas, coal, and nuclear, and any necessary weatherization.” [Nagruk Harcharek liked tweets, [08/07/23](#)]



Source: X, Formerly Twitter

- Alex Epstein Is A “Prominent Client Denier” With A History Of Writing Racist Articles. [Documented, [04/06/22](#)]

Nagruk Harcharek Calling Climate Change A “Problem That Doesn’t Exist,” And That Climate Scientists Are “Grifting.” Nagruk Harcharek liked a tweet that said Rep Scott Perry “crushes” US Climate envoy John Kerry by saying, ““You want to spend \$1.6 quadrillion on a problem that doesn’t exist... climate scientists are ‘grifting like you are.’” [Nagruk Harcharek liked tweets, [06/13/23](#)]



Source: X, Formerly Twitter

Nagruk Harcharek Retweeted A Tweet From Elon Musk Saying That “ESG Is The Devil.” [Nagruk Harcharek retweets, [06/13/23](#)]



Source: X, Formerly Twitter

Negruk Harcharek Retweeted A Tweet Calling John Kerry A “Climate Grifter.” Nagruk Harcharek Retweeted A Tweet Saying US Climate Envoy John Kerry Is A “Multi-Millionaire Climate Grifter And Member Of Skull & Bones.” [Nagruk Harcharek retweets, [05/28/23](#)]

Prior To Getting State Funding, Voice Of The Arctic Was “Largely Funded” By The Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), A Huge Company That Makes Millions Leasing Drilling Rights To Big Oil Corporations.

ASRC Is A Wealthy Alaska Regional Corporation That Made Millions Leasing The Arctic National Wildlife Reserve To Big Oil.

Nagruk Harcharek Is President Of Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat. [VOICE, accessed [09/17/23](#)]

Voice Of The Arctic Is A 501(c)(4) “Largely Funded By The Arctic Slope Regional Corporation.” Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat was formed in 2015 as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, creating a communication network amongst Arctic Slope communities to establish a unified voice for our region and people. Today, our twenty-four member organizations work together to ensure that our collective voice is heard and respected – locally, regionally and nationally. Under our current structure, the VOICE is largely funded by Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) and grants from the North Slope Borough (NSB).” [VOICE, accessed [09/17/23](#)]

ASRC Has A Huge Revenue, Assets, And Pays Its Staff Millions In “Fringe Benefits” That Has Spent Millions Lobbying To Open ANWR Up To Big Oil Development.

ASRC, One Of The Largest Private Companies In The US, Has Spent Millions Lobbying To Open ANWR Up To Big Oil Development. “One of the largest private companies in the United States, on the other hand, has been abundantly clear about its support for drilling the Arctic Refuge and has spent millions of dollars over the past two decades to convince Congress to overturn a prohibition on drilling on the refuge’s coastal plain. The Arctic Slope Regional Corp. (ASRC), an Alaska Native regional corporation with an annual revenue of \$2.5 billion, has

already submitted an application to do a seismic survey of the coastal plain, the area of the refuge that would be leased and drilled.” [Center for American Progress, [08/09/18](#)]

ARSC Had Over \$200 Million In Assets And Over \$77 Million In Revenue In 2018.

- **In 2018, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Reported Net Assets Of 218,029,426.** [Arctic Slope Regional Corporation 2018 Annual Report, accessed [05/14/20](#)]
- **In 2018, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Had \$77,150,480 In Operating Revenue.** [Arctic Slope Regional Corporation 2018 Annual Report, accessed [05/14/20](#)]
- **Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Does Not Have A 2019 Financial Statement Available.** [Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, accessed [05/14/20](#)]

ASRC Spends Millions On “Fringe Benefits” For Its Staff.

- **In 2018, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Spent \$42,521,862 On “Salaries And Fringe Benefits.”** [Arctic Slope Regional Corporation 2018 Annual Report, accessed [05/14/20](#)]

The Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Paid Tara Sweeney, Donald Trump’s Acting Director Of Indian Affairs During The Trump Administration, A Hefty Executive Salary.

- Tara Sweeney’s salary from ASRC was \$645,104. [OGE form 278e, [01/03/20](#)]
- ASRC gave Sweeney a cash payment of \$321,023 as part of its employee incentive program. [OGE form 278e, [01/03/20](#)]

ARSC Took In \$22 Million When It Sold Rights To Huge Swaths Of The Arctic Off To Chevron And BP

The Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Sold Leases To BP And Chevron For \$22 Million After Congress Opened Up ANWR To Oil And Gas Drilling In 2017. “The Alaska Native regional corporation for the North Slope collected \$22.5 million from a pair of oil companies after Congress opened the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge’s coastal plain to drilling in 2017, according to corporate documents. Arctic Slope Regional Corp., whose 13,000 Alaska Native shareholders own the oil rights to 140 square miles along the coastal plain, has long been one of the most aggressive advocates for opening the refuge to oil development. The payment, referenced in ASRC’s latest annual report, underscores just how much the corporation had to gain from the congressional action. It stands to benefit further if the oil companies, BP and Chevron, ultimately find and produce petroleum on its property.” [Alaska Public Media, [01/08/20](#)]

BP Was A Key Lobbyist In Convincing The Trump Administration To Open ANWR To Oil & Gas Extraction. “Oil major BP played a key role in lobbying the Trump administration to allow oil and gas drilling in two previously protected areas of the Alaskan Arctic, Unearthed can reveal. Opening up the areas to exploration poses significant risks to the environment and will undermine efforts to meet the Paris climate targets to prevent catastrophic climate change. Writing to Trump administration officials, the company first lobbied for more areas to be

opened up to drilling off the US coast and then welcomed plans to lease swathes of the Arctic's Beaufort Sea for oil and gas exploration, according to documents seen by Unearthed.”
[Unearthed, [05/19/19](#)]

- **BP America President Susan Dio Said Opening Up ANWR Was A “Big Policy Victory.”** “So when the US interior department kicked-off the leasing process for the area in April 2018, BP Alaska president, Janet Weiss, wrote to officials welcoming the move. A day after that letter was sent, BP’s Susan Dio told a meeting of the Resource Development Council of Alaska (RDC) that the decision to permit drilling was a ‘big policy victory.’ In previously unreported comments, Dio said: ‘Alaska won a big policy victory at the national level this past December when the federal government opened the door to oil and gas development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.’” [Unearthed, [05/19/19](#)]