The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is at the centre of the conflict between Americas demand for oil and nature at its most pristine. Three decades before the battle over oil development began, a group of visionary conservationists launched a controversial campaign to preserve a remote corner of Alaska. Their goal was unprecedented, to protect an entire ecosystem for future generations. Among these conservationists were Olaus and Margaret Murie, who became icons of the wilderness movement.

Last Great Wilderness chronicles their fight and that of their compatriots, tracing the transformation of this little-known expanse of mountains, forest, and tundra into a symbolic landscape embodying the ideals and aspirations that led to passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964.

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