

Alaska North Slope On- and Offshore EIS Considerations

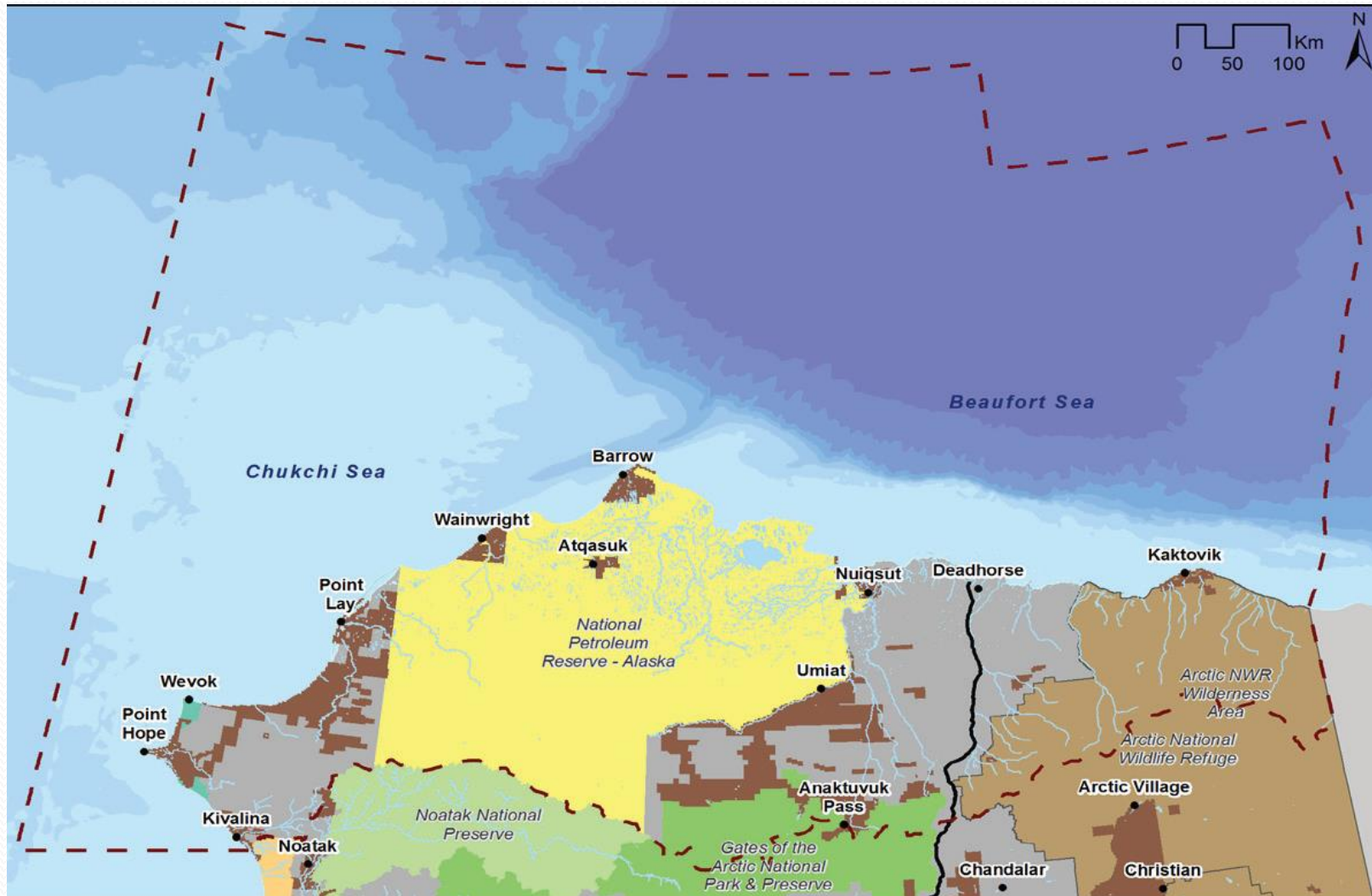
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Regulatory Setting

- EIA driven by NEPA, state/local influence secondary
- NEPA driven by federal action
 - land management, federal facility, federal permit
- EIS preparation has lead and cooperating agencies
 - Land management
 - Federal, state and local permits
 - Government to Government Consultation
- Foster unified NEPA compliance
- Appropriately assign required mitigation/monitoring

North Slope Jurisdictions



Different Types of EIS's

- NEPA prescribes a common EIS format
- Land and OCS Management plans – regional by nature, tiers future action
- Programmatic EIS – covers similar activities, regional by nature, tiers future action
- Project specific action/permit EIS – facility, infrastructure, resource development

Lead and Cooperating Agencies

- Army Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- State of Alaska
- North Slope Borough
- Federally recognized tribes (9 on the North Slope)

Issues driving North Slope EIA

- Federal land management
- Oil and gas development
- Protected species and use areas
- Subsistence activities and resources/Traditional Use
- Social and cultural change
- Health Impact Assessment/Environmental Justice
- Cumulative effects
- Mitigation and monitoring
- EIS cost, schedule, reasonable analysis

EIA Strength/Weaknesses

- Involvement of indigenous stakeholders +
- Consideration of reasonable action alternatives +
- Evolving health impact assessments +
- Cumulative and regional effects =
- Mitigation and monitoring requirements =
- Consistency between agency EIA approaches and positions -
- Scope, volume, cost and schedule of EISs -

NMFS Effects of Offshore Oil and Gas Development in the Arctic EIS

- Programmatic EIS to address effects of oil and gas on marine mammals and their subsistence use
- Incorporated alternative technologies and mitigation measures into alternatives considered
- Developed exploration activity scenarios to assess potential impacts
- Regional approach, accumulated effects
- Extensive indigenous stakeholder consultation

BLM NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan EIS

- Determine appropriate management of BLM lands in NPR-A
- Alternatives propose a range of land allocations
- Identify protections for surface resources and uses
- Provide consistent oil and gas lease stipulations, Best management practices
- Provide programmatic guidance for subsequent project-specific NEPA compliance
- Divergent indigenous stakeholder positions

North Slope Science Initiative Energy Development Scenarios

- Objectives
 - identify future research and monitoring needs
 - Engage diverse stakeholders in thinking broadly about plausible futures
 - Develop long-term information to inform decisions
- High, medium and low development scenarios
- Marine oil spills, subsistence activities, hazards/climate change, community culture and well being
- Identified specific research and monitoring priorities

Nuiqsut Caribou Monitoring Study

- North Slope Borough permit requirement for oil project
- Document oil and gas impacts on Nuiqsut residents' subsistence caribou hunting activities
- Intensive annual interviews of subsistence hunters over 9 years
- Hunter observations, caribou distribution and abundance, caribou harvests over time
- Engages local indigenous stakeholders, observations based on traditional/contemporary knowledge

Donlin Mine EIS Tailings Dam FMEA

- NEPA discourages analysis of worst case catastrophic events – how to address tailings dam failures?
- Failure Modes Effect Analysis typically required by State of Alaska after NEPA is completed
- Multi-stakeholder experts assessed potential modes of tailings dam failures, effects, and likelihood in a systematic process
- A high consequence failure short of catastrophic was selected for analysis in the EIS

Conclusions

- Still room for improvement –
 - Consistency between agencies on NEPA execution
 - Common approach to regional and cumulative effects
 - Developing/funding focused science and information for use in EIA
 - Developing effective (needs vs wants) mitigation and monitoring and sharing the funding burden
 - Meaningful engagement of all Alaska Native stakeholders in the EIA process