

# Alaska Natural Resource Development Permitting

## Policy maker track: HIA examples in various policy settings

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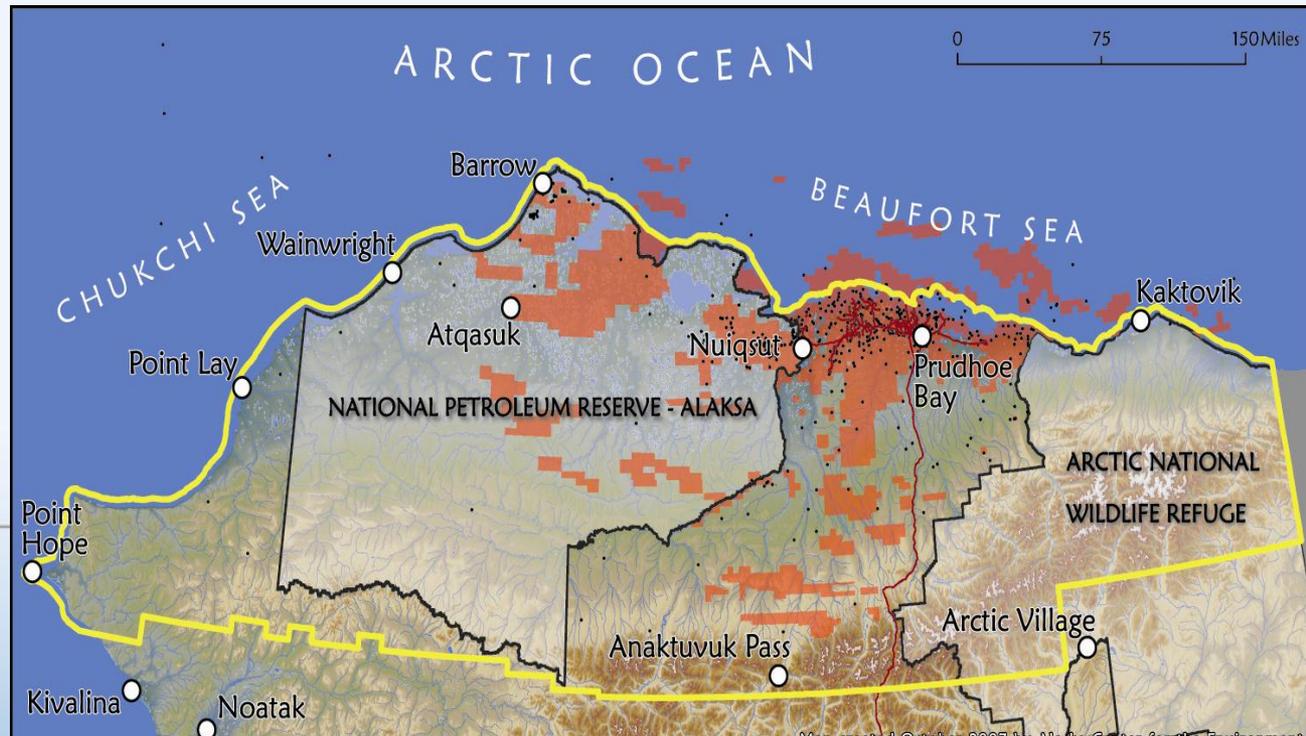
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# Decision: EIS for proposal to expand oil and gas leasing in Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve

- 2004: Pres. Bush proposed expanding oil and gas leasing in the National Petroleum Reserve
- Bureau of Land Management conducted EIS, and decided to lease.
- Environmental litigation resulted in court decision to “vacate” the agency’s record of decision.
- BLM decided to conduct a **Supplemental EIS** to address the ruling.



# Information added by the HIA:

## 3 examples

<b>Health influence</b> <i>(Data in EIS)</i>	<b>Information added by the HIA</b> <i>(Data not already in EIS)</i>
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baseline rates of lung and cardiovascular dz</li><li>• Sensitive populations (children, elders, people with chronic illnesses)</li><li>• Potential pathways of impact</li></ul>
Impact on wildlife (caribou, fish)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baseline diet, nutritional status, related illnesses</li><li>• Potential impact on food security, diabetes</li></ul>
Social/ demographic change (influx)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baseline rates of drug and alcohol problems, violence, injury, sexually transmitted illness</li><li>• Risk factors that could be affected by oil development: new roads, funding for police staffing and emergency services.</li></ul>

# Interaction between BLM and the HIA team

- Alaska Native villages generally support oil development
- Many people strongly opposed this lease sale because of the region's importance to their traditions and food supply.
- North Slope Borough (NSB—the county government) considered joining environmental litigation, but did not.
- Ultimately, though, NSB decided to become a “cooperating agency” in preparing the EIS: contributed HIA, and biological data; reviewed and critiqued entire document.



# Outcomes

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- ❑ No litigation
- ❑ Changes in the leasing plan that were widely accepted on both sides, in part related to the importance to health and well-being.
- ❑ New measures to address community health concerns: protect hunting and fishing, monitor for contaminants in local game, orient workers to the culture.
- ❑ Strong, ongoing collaboration between the community and the agency; NSB and BLM are currently collaborating on another HIA/EIS.
- ❑ Catalyzed multi-agency effort that led to the AK HIA program

# Practical Challenges

- ❑ Lead agency questions/concerns, such as:
  - How does it fit within NEPA process? Will it lead to more litigation?
  - We already identify health risks (air and water quality issues)—will HIA will be redundant?
  - How will mitigation be enforced?

*Solution?* These are fair questions! Establish trust, solid dialogue, and work through the answers by doing the HIA.
- ❑ Enforcing health mitigation is outside of many lead agencies' authority: how can health mitigation measures be implemented?
- ❑ Time requirements, resource constraints, and lack of health expertise.