ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)

- Assessing EJ under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) considers any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects to minority and low-income populations.

- The Final PEIS considers potential disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations that hunt marine mammals and fish for subsistence uses.

Bowhead Whale Harvest Celebration in Point Hope, AK

Source: International Whaling Commission

Subsistence uses include "customary and traditional" uses of wild resources for food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, transportation, handicrafts, barter, and customary trade.

These communities rely on harvests of whales, seals, sea lions, and other marine mammals (***subsistence hunting***), as well as fish species such as salmon, halibut, and cod (***subsistence fishing***) for their nutritional, religious, and cultural needs.

Environmental Consequences from NOS Activities

NOS activities that could impact EJ communities

- Active underwater acoustic sources
- Vessel and equipment sound - underwater and airborne
- Vessel and equipment presence
- Human presence related to NOS activities
- Availability of new mapping and charting information

NOS surveying and mapping activities would have an adverse impact on subsistence hunting and fishing activities primarily including behavioral disruptions in individual animals that could increase the hunting difficulty. NOS activities could also have a beneficial impact on EJ communities from the availability of new mapping and charting information. Both beneficial and adverse impacts would increase incrementally from Alternatives A to C. The overall impact of the Proposed Action on the subsistence, economy, and culture of EJ communities would be ***adverse***, ***minor*** to ***moderate***, and ***insignificant***.

oceanservice.noaa.gov/about/environmental-compliance/surveying-mapping.html