

## **BOEM ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM: Ongoing Studies**

**Study Area(s):** Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea

**Administered By:** Alaska OCS Region

**Title:** Social Indicators in Coastal Alaska: Arctic Communities (AK-11-09)

**BOEM Information Need(s) to be Addressed:** This study will update key socio-cultural and economic baseline data for analysis of potential local and regional impacts from OCS exploration and development activities that may occur in Federal waters off the North Slope of Alaska. Information from this study will support Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses, for documentation, and may serve as the basis for long-term monitoring for oil and gas exploration and development in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas.

**Total Cost:** \$669,659

**Period of Performance:** FY 2011-2017

**Conducting Organization:** Stephen R. Braund and Associates

**BOEM Contact:** [Chris Campbell](#)

### **Description:**

**Background:** The goal of this study is to update baseline data measuring the pace, direction, and magnitude of regional socio-economic changes, as well as the sense of well-being as expressed by residents in select Arctic coastal communities. These data will assist in NEPA evaluation of the effects of exploration and possible development of OCS energy resources in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas on local populations through the formulation of social indicators nested within sets of key social domains. This study will facilitate evaluation of current conditions and trends in: economic prosperity; the status of health and safety; cultural continuity and well-being; changes in the status of indigenous rights and local control; quality of the physical environment; and education. Likely communities for sampling will include: Pt. Lay, Wainwright, Barrow, Nuiqsut, and Kaktovik.

### **Objectives:**

- Formulate a set of key social indicators nested within domains that will facilitate the monitoring of changes in human well-being in coastal communities of the U.S. Arctic most proximate to proposed oil and gas exploration and development.
- Obtain an OMB control number for a longitudinal survey instrument that can be repeated to identify long term trends, periodic changes, and fluctuations in the rate of change throughout coastal Alaska.
- Provide useful information on regional socioeconomic conditions and regional aspirations from which government officials and stakeholders can monitor and

evaluate potential changes in well-being resulting from offshore oil and gas exploration and development.

**Methods:** Establish formal contact with potential host communities and develop a written protocol to facilitate community participation and meaningful collaboration in the performance of this research. Conduct a literature search on previous northern social indicator studies. Utilize existing identified arctic social indicators or develop alternative relevant social indicators in conjunction with BOEM. Prepare a strategic survey instrument, pre-test it, and obtain the necessary approvals for use from relevant BOEM review offices and the Office of Management and Budget, and administer it. Organize data into a workable database and analyze with appropriate multivariate statistical techniques. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the results of all prior tasks and prepare a draft report of the study findings. Circulate the draft report to the BOEM and host community leaders to facilitate parallel reviews by peer scientists and interested stakeholders; respond to review comments and prepare a final report, incorporating reviewer edits and comments where appropriate; report the study results to participating communities through public meetings or workshops.

**Current Status:** Awaiting final report

**Final Report Due:** March 2017

**Publications Completed:** None

**Affiliated WWW Sites:** <http://www.boem.gov/akstudies/>

**Revised Date:** April 21, 2017

**ESPIS: Environmental Studies Program Information System**

**All *completed* ESP studies can be found here:** <https://www.boem.gov/ESPIS/>