



Bureau of Ocean Energy  
Management

# Cook Inlet Lease Sale 258

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Public Hearings  
November 2021



# Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

The **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)** is a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior

**BOEM** is the Federal agency responsible for managing the orderly development of energy (renewable and non-renewable) and mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)



# Introduction

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**BOEM is proposing to conduct Cook Inlet Oil and Gas Lease Sale 258, June 2022**

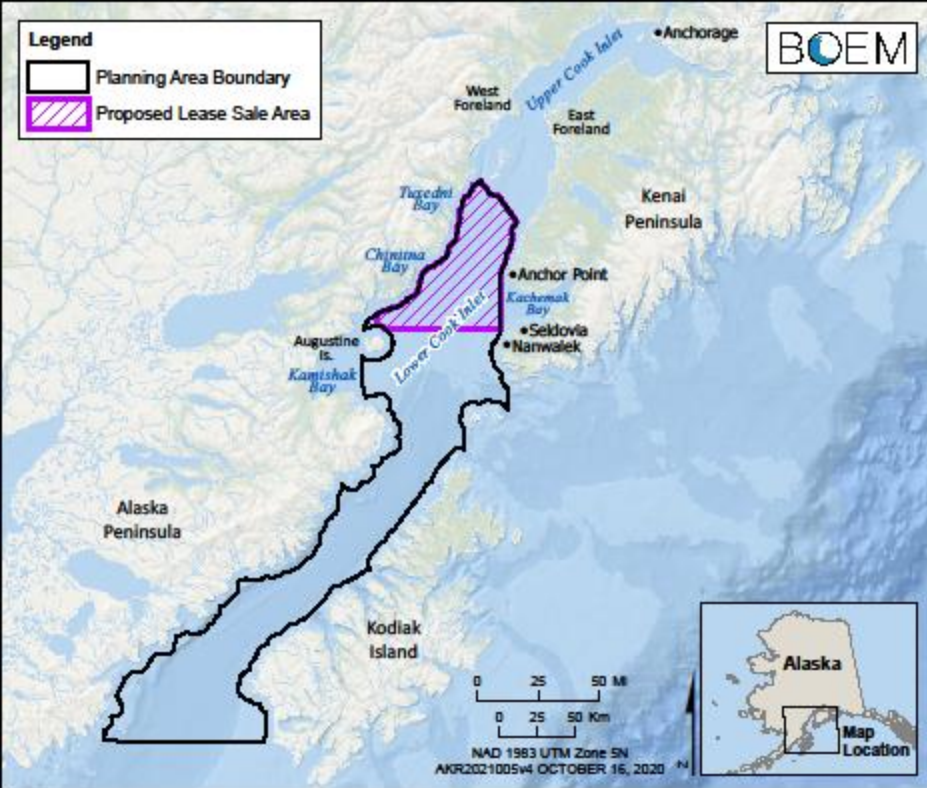
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**BOEM is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address potential impacts**

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**We are here today to record and collect your comments on the Draft EIS to assist in preparing a Final EIS**





# Proposed Lease Sale Area

## Cook Inlet Planning Area

- 1093 OCS blocks
- ~5.3 million acres

## Proposed Lease Sale Area

- 210 OCS blocks
- 14 OCS blocks currently under lease
- ~1.09 million acres

# Targeted Leasing

...identifies areas considered for leasing that have high resource potential and clear indications of industry interest, while appropriately weighing environmental protection and subsistence use needs...



# Targeted Leasing

- Excludes most subsistence-use areas
- Closer to infrastructure and State leases
- Avoids the majority of Beluga whale and northern sea otter critical habitat
- Completely avoids Stellar sea lion critical habitat
- Reduces effects to national parks and preserves, and national wildlife refuges





# Scoping Comments and Issues

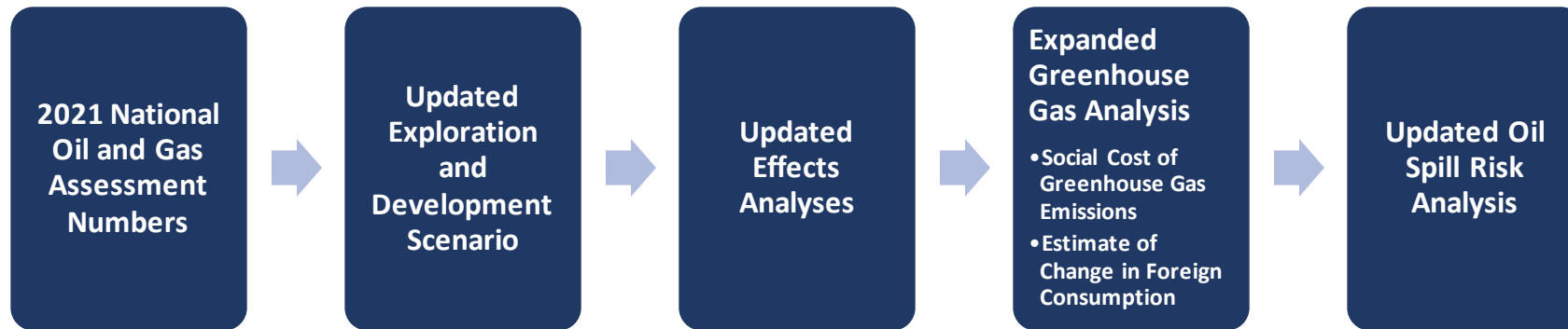
## Scoping Period

- September 11, 2020 – October 13, 2020
- Total Comment Submissions: Over 13,500

## Primary Issues

- Endangered Species Act species (Beluga Whale; Northern Sea Otter)
- Subsistence
- Commercial and Sport Fisheries
- Oil Spills
- Climate Change/Ocean Acidification/Greenhouse Gases

# January 2021 vs. October 2021: What's Different?





# Proposed Action and Alternatives

1 – Proposed Action (Hold Lease Sale 258)

2 – No Action Alternative

3 – Beluga Whale Alternative

- 3A – Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Exclusion Alternative
- 3B – Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Mitigation Alternative
- 3C – Beluga Whale Nearshore Feeding Areas Mitigation Alternative

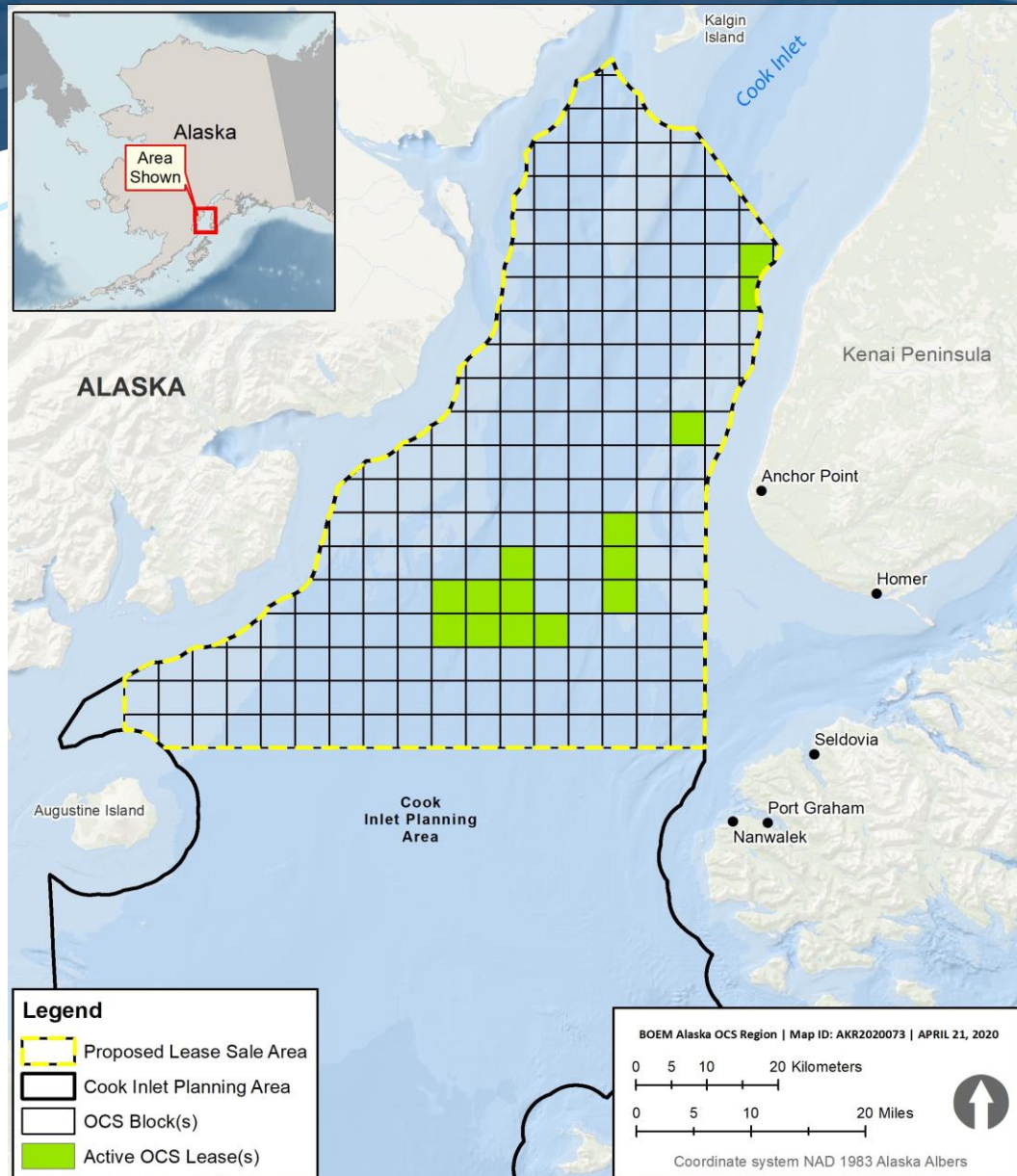
4 – Northern Sea Otter Alternative

- 4A – Northern Sea Otter Critical Habitat Exclusion Alternative
- 4B – Northern Sea Otter Critical Habitat Mitigation Alternative

5 – Cook Inlet Gillnet Fishery Alternative



# Alternative 1 – Proposed Action and Alternative 2 – No Action



## Alt. 1 – Proposed Action

- All available OCS blocks offered for lease in the northern portion of the Cook Inlet Planning Area
  - 210 OCS blocks
  - 14 OCS blocks currently leased

## Alt. 2 – No Action

- No lease sale

## Legend



Proposed Lease Sale Area



Cook Inlet Planning Area



OCS Lease Block(s)



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat



Beluga Whale Nearshore Feeding Areas -  
Mitigation Blocks



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Exclusion or  
Mitigation Blocks

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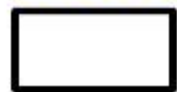


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## Legend



Proposed Lease Sale Area



Cook Inlet Planning Area



OCS Lease Block(s)



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat



Beluga Whale Nearshore Feeding Areas -  
Mitigation Blocks



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Exclusion or  
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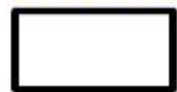


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## Legend



Proposed Lease Sale Area



Cook Inlet Planning Area



OCS Lease Block(s)



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat



Beluga Whale Nearshore Feeding Areas -  
Mitigation Blocks



Beluga Whale Critical Habitat Exclusion or  
Mitigation Blocks

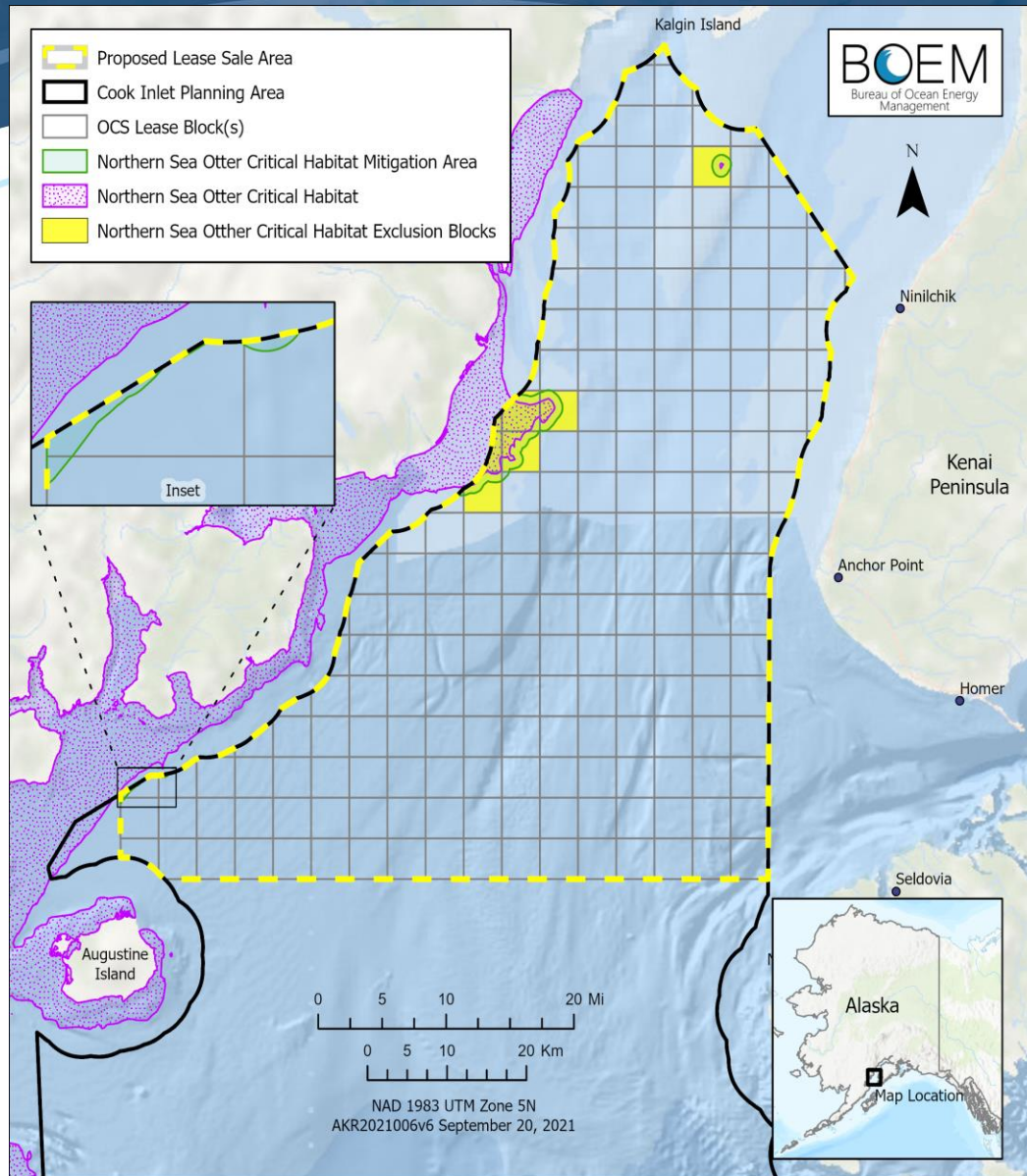
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# Alternative 4 – Northern Sea Otter

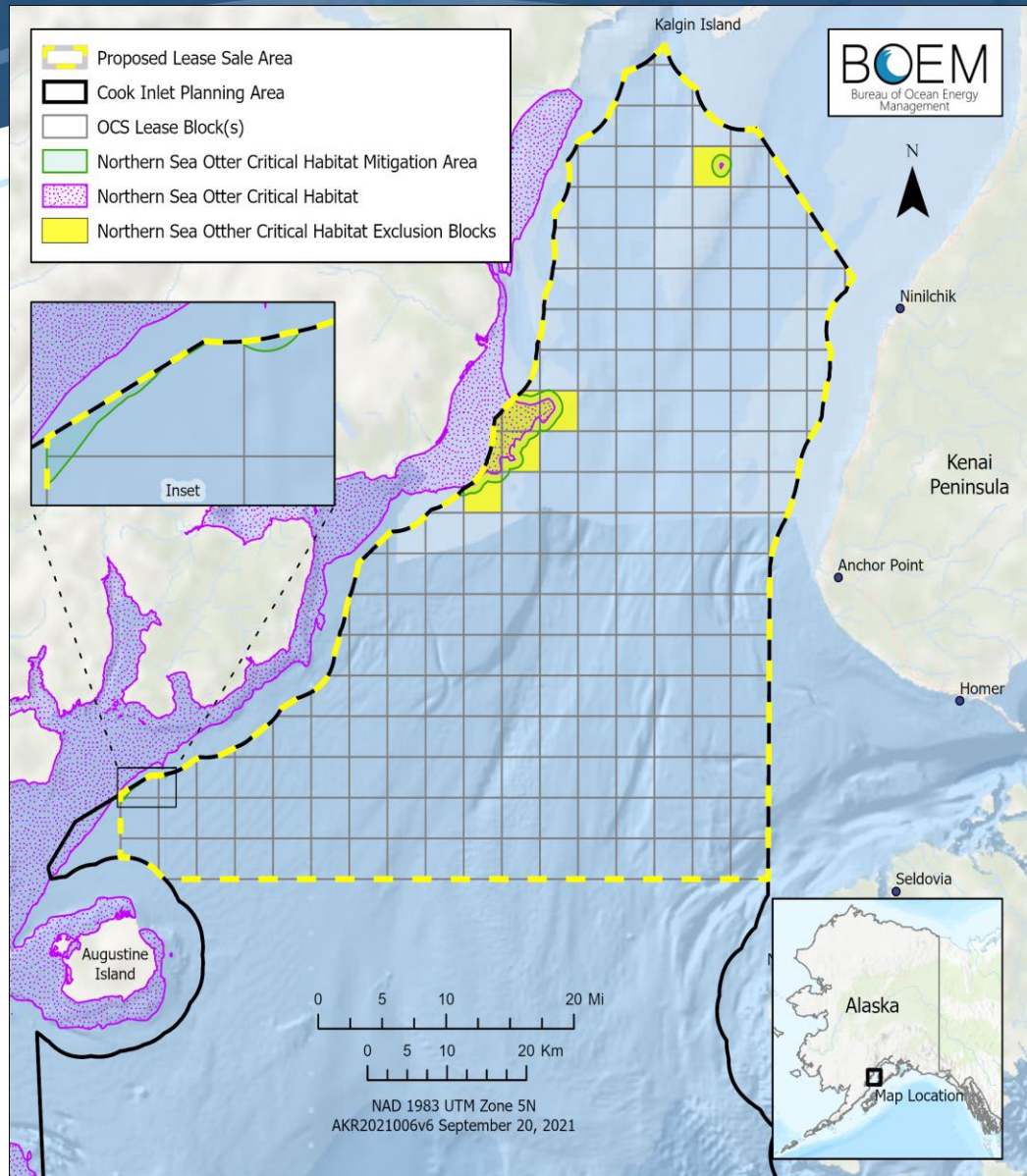


## Northern Sea Otter Alternatives: Developed to address concerns about potential impacts to northern sea otters

### Alt. 4A – Critical Habitat Exclusion

- Excludes 7 blocks that overlap northern sea otter critical habitat from lease sale

# Alternative 4 – Northern Sea Otter







## Northern Sea Otter Alternatives: Developed to address concerns about potential impacts to northern sea otters

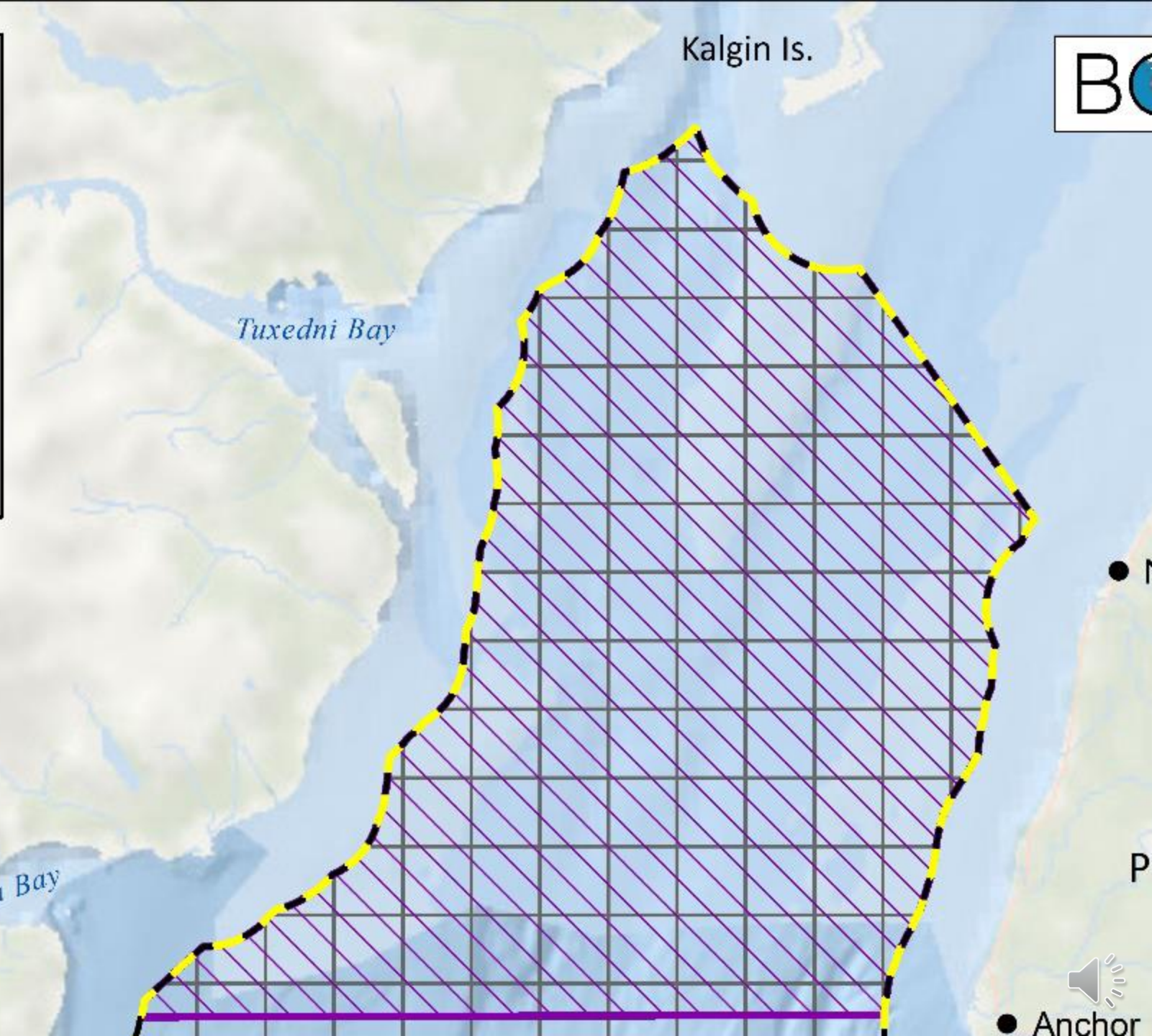
### Alt. 4B – Critical Habitat Mitigation

- Within 1,000 meters of Critical Habitat discharge of drilling fluids and cuttings and conducting seafloor disturbing activities are prohibited

# Gillnet Fishery Mitigation

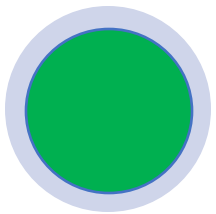
## Legend

-  Proposed Lease Sale Area
-  Cook Inlet Planning Area
-  OCS Lease Block(s)
-  Gillnet Fishery Mitigation Area



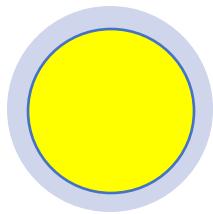


# Impact Analysis: Impact Scale



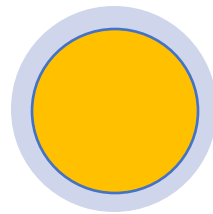
## Negligible

Little or no impact.



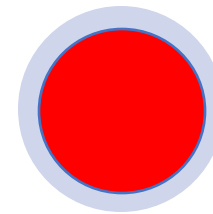
## Minor

Impacts are short-term and/or localized, and less than severe.



## Moderate

Impacts are long-lasting and widespread, and less than severe.



## Major

Impacts are severe.

# Impacts of Proposed Action and Alternatives

■ : no change from Proposed Action

| Alternatives →<br>Environmental Resource ↓ | Proposed Action             | Alt 3 – Beluga Whales | Alt 4 – Sea Otter  | Alt 5 – Gillnet Fishery        |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Air Quality                                | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Water Quality                              | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Coastal & Estuarine Habitats               | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Fish & Invertebrates                       | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Birds                                      | minor to moderate           | ↓ for some species    | ↓ for some species | ↓ for some species             |
| Marine Mammals                             | negligible to minor         | ↓ for beluga          | ↓ for sea otter    | ■                              |
| Terrestrial Mammals                        | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Recreation, Tourism, Sportfishing          | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Communities & Subsistence                  | minor                       | ■                     | ■                  | ↓ for some fishing communities |
| Economy                                    | negligible to minor         | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Commercial Fishing                         | minor to moderate           | ↓ minor               | ■                  | ↓ minor                        |
| Archaeology & Historic Resources           | negligible to minor         | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |
| Environmental Justice                      | no disproportionate effects | ■                     | ■                  | ■                              |



# Schedule

Notice of Availability Draft Environmental Impact Statement

October 29, 2021

Public Comment Period

October 29 – December 13, 2021

Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision

Spring 2022

Lease Sale 258 (if held)

June 2022



# Your Input is Valuable!

**To submit comments on the Lease Sale 258 Draft EIS:**

- Provide testimony at this hearing; or
- Visit [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (Search for Docket # BOEM-2020-0018-0049)

**The entire Draft EIS can be found at:**

- [www.boem.gov/AK258/](http://www.boem.gov/AK258/)



# Helpful Comments

**These types of comments will be helpful in finalizing the EIS:**

Does the Draft EIS consider all the habitats, species, places, and activities that may be affected by oil and gas leasing? If not, what is missing?

Does the Draft EIS characterize the potential impacts well? Why or why not?

Are there any impacts you are concerned about that are not discussed in the document? What are they?

Are there any additional mitigation measures that should be considered to reduce impacts? What are they?

Is there anything else you feel would help us fully assess the potential impacts from oil and gas leasing in Cook Inlet OCS waters?





THANK YOU!



The logo for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). The letters 'B', 'E', and 'M' are white and outlined. The letter 'O' is a solid blue circle with a white wave-like shape inside it. The background of the entire slide is a photograph of a beach covered in large, white ice chunks under a sunset sky.

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