

Oil and Gas (Alaska)

Our Goal: To address energy issues in a manner which protects public health and the environment; streamlines the permitting of exploration, extraction, and transportation of oil and gas resources in Alaska; and allows for consultation with tribal governments and other entities.

Background

Oil and gas exploration and development in Alaska is increasing significantly in an attempt to meet national energy needs, and it is expanding beyond the traditional geographic areas most commonly developed. This expansion has raised concerns about potential degradation of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic environments. Additionally, tribal subsistence activities may be at risk, and trust responsibilities of the federal government to the tribes require government-to-government consultation.

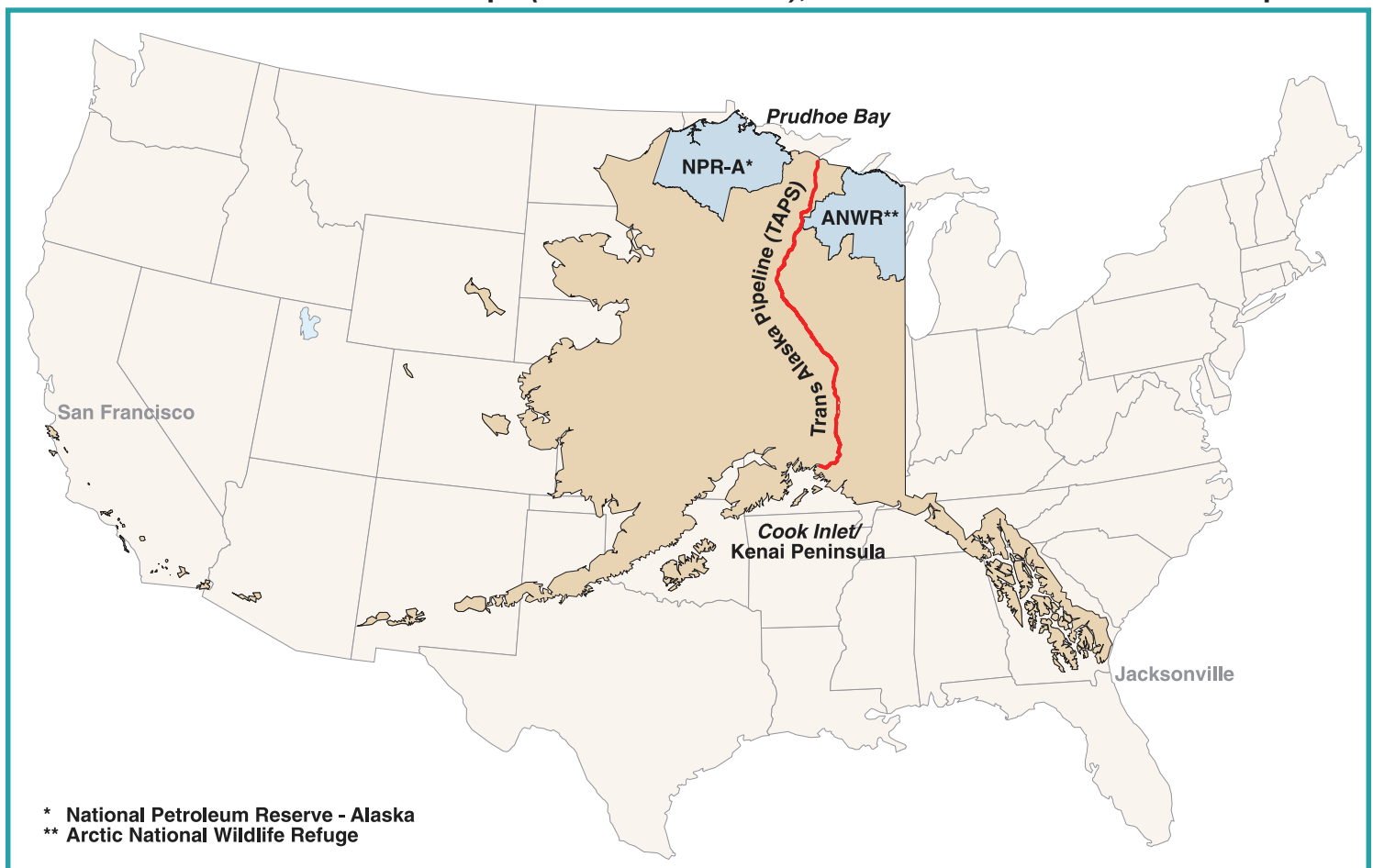
The Focus of Our Efforts

- NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Review and/or Preparation (as Lead Agency) of Environmental Impact Statements
- NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permitting
- UIC (Underground Injection Control) Compliance and Enforcement
- New Air Source Permitting on the Outer Continental Shelf
- Wetlands and Ocean Disposal
- Government-to-government consultation with Tribes

Environmental Outcomes by 2007

- ✓ High quality habitat for protected marine mammals and threatened and endangered species is maintained.
- ✓ Viability and success of subsistence food gathering is maintained.
- ✓ High quality of watersheds and airsheds is maintained.
- ✓ The overall environmental impact from exploration and development of oil and gas reserves is reduced.

Alaska Oil & Gas Areas: North Slope (NPR-A and ANWR), Cook Inlet & the Trans Alaska Pipeline



Trans Alaska Pipeline



Source: Joint Pipeline Office, Alaska

North Slope Crude Oil Production Facility



Source: Joint Pipeline Office, Alaska

North Slope Drill Rig



Source: Joint Pipeline Office, Alaska

Environmental Indicators for Measuring Success

- Quality of habitat for protected marine mammals and threatened and endangered species
- Viability and success of subsistence food gathering (primarily hunting, fishing and whaling)
- Quality of watersheds and airsheds
- Time spent reviewing and permitting oil and gas exploration and development activities
- Environmental impact of oil and gas exploration and development activities

Key Actions: Next 1-2 Years

- Create an internal EPA team to coordinate and expedite environmental review and permitting of oil and gas exploration and development activities
- Establish Oil & Gas Streamlining Task Force
 - *identify environmental priorities and opportunities to streamline permitting processes*
- Implement findings from Cumulative Effects of North Slope Oil and Gas Development Study
- Develop Alaska-based interagency team to assess and address environmental justice issues.