



National Marine Fisheries Service – Alaska Region

Cook Inlet Beluga Whales and the
Endangered Species Act



The ESA

- Purpose?
- To conserve the ecosystems upon which threatened and endangered species depend, and to provide a program to conserve (recover) these species
- Places an affirmative duty on NMFS to protect species under its jurisdiction from becoming threatened or endangered and take action to recover listed species

ESA Listing Process

- Petition
- Status Review initiated
- Extinction risk analysis
- ESA requirements
- Proposed and final rules

ESA - Continued

- Endangered: in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range
- The Act provides no quantitative criteria
- Five listing factors must be considered
- NMFS workshop on listing criteria for large whales recommended endangered for extinction risk > 1% in 100 years
- CIB risk: 26% in 100 years

CONSULTATION

Section 7 of the ESA requires a Federal agency to consult with NMFS on certain activities which may affect listed species or critical habitat.

Consultation is not required for non-federal actions

Examples of actions which might require consultation include Federal oil and gas lease sales, Corps of Engineers permits for structures, and EPA discharge permits.