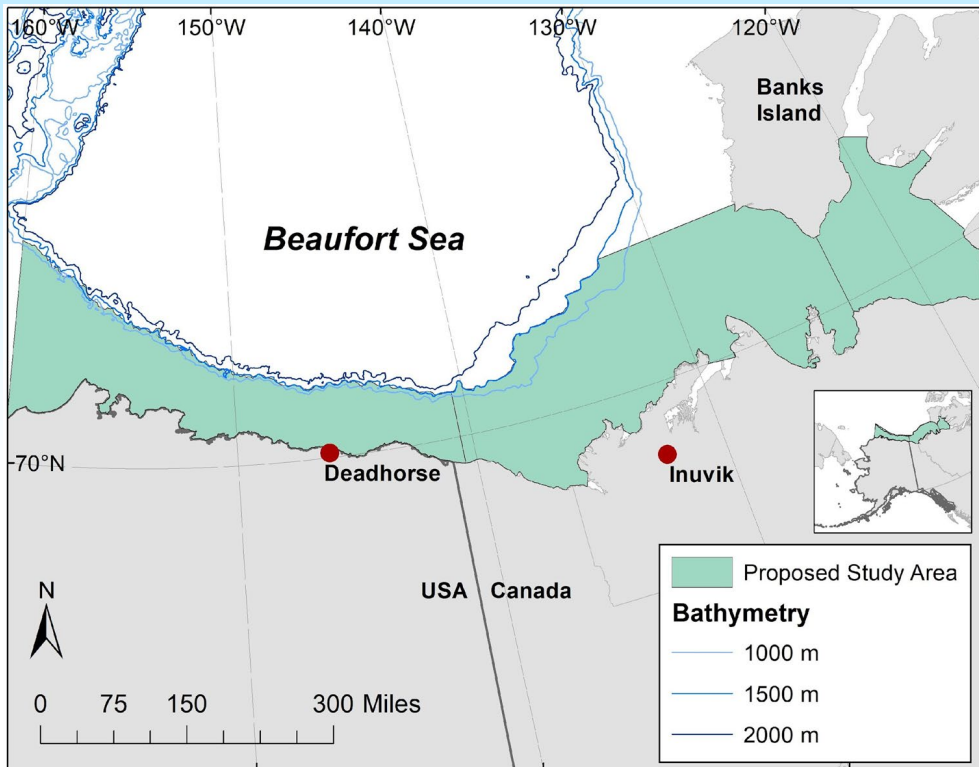




2025 Bowhead Abundance & Distribution Aerial Survey

July 27 – August 21



Map of proposed study area in the Beaufort Sea and Amundsen Gulf to document bowhead and beluga whale distribution and abundance in U.S. and Canadian waters.



What is the research objective?

To collect data for a new estimate of the abundance of the Western Arctic stock of bowhead whales as well as the Beaufort Sea stock of beluga whales.

Who is conducting the research?

This project is a collaboration between NOAA Fisheries, the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management, the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Canadian Fisheries Joint Management Committee, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and University of Washington, Cooperative Institute for Climate, Ocean, & Ecosystem Studies.

Where is the research being conducted?

Line transect surveys will be flown from west of Utqiagvik, Alaska (~160°W long.) east into Amundsen Gulf in Canada. Lines will run perpendicular to the shoreline out to the ~1500 m isobath offshore. One aircraft will be based in Deadhorse, Alaska, and two aircraft will be based in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada.

Why are the data important? How will data be used?

Data from this survey will be used to provide an estimate of abundance for these populations. When compared to previous estimates it will be possible to look at the population trend, whether it is increasing, declining, or stable. These species are an important subsistence resource. Data will be used in support of the International Whaling Commission quota for bowhead whales.



Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce

Vice Admiral Nancy Hann
Deputy Under Secretary for
Operations and performing the duties
of Under Secretary of Commerce for
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Research Schedule

Science Teams fly to Deadhorse, AK, and Inuvik, Canada.	26-27 July
Science Teams install equipment and conduct safety brief.	27-28 July
Science Teams begin aerial surveys.	28 July
Daily flights occur (weather permitting)	28 July – 20 Aug.
Survey operations end, teams remove equipment.	20 August
Science Teams depart Alaska and Canada	21-22 August



What steps are you taking to ensure that your research does not impact subsistence hunting?

We are working closely with the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Canadian Fisheries Joint Management Committee, and local Hunter & Trapper Committees to document hunting areas and ensure all permits are in place.

How do you plan to communicate research results? (e.g., outreach document, webstory, radio interview, community meeting, etc.)

The project PIs will present their results virtually to interested members of Alaskan and Canadian communities and the public. A short written summary of preliminary results will be available to the public after the survey ends. Final results will be presented at conferences (e.g., Alaska Marine Science Symposium), seminars, research meetings, and published in an AFSC Report.

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