

**Proposed Pebble Project  
Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Review Comments**

**Reviewer:** NARF Technical Team  
**Date:** December 21, 2018  
**Chapter:** Chapter 3: Affected Environment  
**Document:** Sec3.4\_EnvJustice\_reviewdraft\_2018.11.02

**Comments**

**General.** The text in this section should be modified to be more sensitive to the unique aspects of Alaska Native communities. While the terms “minority and low-income populations” may have been used in the original Executive Order, in this context, one could just as easily say “*Alaska Native and subsistence populations*” and be both more accurate and more respectful. Subsistence populations are, by definition, low income; however, they are not necessarily lacking in resources. Alaska Natives are certainly not a minority in the areas affected by the proposed project, and they have occupied these areas for millennia prior to colonization by immigrants and others who moved to the region from other parts of the world. Therefore, once the initial explanation of the terms used in national directives and policy are provided, additional terminology should be introduced, and the discussion should shift to respectfully and accurately reflect the people, communities, and lifeways that currently exist in the areas affected by the proposed project.

***3.4.1 Definitions of Minority and Low-Income Populations.***

In the first sentence, please cite Executive Order 12898 directly. Executive Order 12898 (1994) requires that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States and its territories.”

***3.4.2 Minority and Low-Income Populations.*** Referring to Page 3.4-4, it is difficult to interpret or check the information provided without having read a previous discussion of subsistence activities and its contribution to these communities. If Section 3.3 is retained in the EIS, Section 3.9 should be integrated into it, to present a balanced picture of the economies and welfare of subsistence communities. If Section 3.3 is not retained, the Subsistence section should come before the Environmental Justice section. Similarly, Section 3.4.3 references a number of later

sections in Sections 3 and 4. To the extent possible, sections describing impacts potentially associated with environmental justice should be grouped together.

Section 3.4 and Section 4.4 should be moved near the end of their respective chapters, after all the environmental impacts of the project have been presented and adjacent to the discussion of cumulative impacts. It is difficult to ascertain whether impacts of a project may disproportionately affect an environmental justice community without yet knowing what the overall impacts are.

The list of “potentially affected communities” is incomplete. Table 3.4-1 and the following tables in Section 3.4.1 are missing several low-income and/or minority communities evaluated for impacts in Section 3.9 Subsistence. Executive Order 12898 states in Section 4–4, Subsistence Consumption of Fish and Wildlife, sub-section 4–401:

“In order to assist in identifying the need for ensuring protection of populations with differential patterns of subsistence consumption of fish and wildlife, Federal agencies, whenever practicable and appropriate, shall collect, maintain, and analyze information on the consumption patterns of populations who principally rely on fish and/or wildlife for subsistence. Federal agencies shall communicate to the public the risks of those consumption patterns.”

The Bristol Bay, Dillingham, and Kenai boroughs in Table 3.4-1 and the following tables in Section 3.4.1 need to be expanded to show the individual communities: King Salmon, Naknek, Aleknagik, Clarks Point, Manokotak, Dillingham, South Naknek, Ninilchik, and Seldovia like the tables do for the Lake and Peninsula Borough. All but Nikiski are included in Section 3.9 Subsistence, and this is an error because components of the proposed project would potentially impact the people of Nikiski’s subsistence use areas.

**Figure 3.4-1: Minority and Low-Income Communities in the EIS Analysis Area.** This figure would be easier to interpret if it used variously colored or shaped symbols that distinguished among Alaska Native, other minorities, low-income, and subsistence-based communities.

Figure 3.4-1 does not show all the minority and low-income communities that should be included in the areas potentially affected by the proposed project (EIS Analysis Area). The figure needs to include King Salmon, Naknek, Aleknagik, Clarks Point, Manokotak, Dillingham, South Naknek, Nikiski, Ninilchik, and Seldovia as minority and low-income communities.