



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

March 2009



# **Spencer Glacier Mineral Material and Recreation Withdrawal Proposal and Application Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

**Chugach National Forest  
Glacier Ranger District  
Girdwood, Alaska**



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## Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

### Spencer Glacier Mineral Material and Recreation Withdrawal Proposal and Application

USDA Forest Service

Region 10

Juneau, Alaska

**After considering the environmental effects described in the attached Spencer Glacier Mineral Material and Recreation Withdrawal Proposal and Application Environmental Assessment (EA) (40 CFR 1508.13), and the project planning record, I have determined that the actions associated with Alternative 2, the proposed action, will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of its impacts (40 CFR §1508.27). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.**

/s/

3/31/2009

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DENNIS E. BSCHOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Regional Forester

### **Summary:**

I am recommending to the BLM to act on the Forest Service's application to formally withdraw the area for twenty years does not have a significant effect on the environment. It is an administrative action with no on-the-ground activities associated with it. Should the BLM and Secretary of Interior approve the withdrawal as recommended in Alternative 2, there will not be a significant effect on the environment.

### ***FONSI***

**Context:** This project is a site-specific administrative action that by itself does not have international, national, region-wide or statewide importance. The discussion of the significance criteria that follows applies to Alternative 2 and is within the context of local importance in the area associated with the Spencer Glacier area.

**Intensity:** The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40CFR 1508.27).

*These paragraphs describe how the action effects the “human environment”. The human environment shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of the people with that environment. This means that economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement.*

1. The analysis considered both beneficial and adverse effects. Chapter 4 of the EA contains a complete discussion of effects. The ability to provide a secure, unencumbered, source of mineral materials and the value of recreation infrastructure far exceeds the mineral value that the area may contain.
2. There are no known adverse impacts to public safety. This recommendation will not affect public health and safety.
3. No unique characteristics of the geography, such as cultural resources and wetlands, will be adversely affected. As stated in Chapter 3 of the EA, the Spencer Glacier area is not known for a specific geographic feature, other than the glacier, as a place that holds religious or cultural values tribes of Alaska, or containing wetlands of significance. Therefore, no unique characteristics have potential for adverse affects by this recommendation. Consultation with American Indian tribes is complete.
4. The effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. This recommendation has no effect on existing valid claims and that mining on them could occur. The effects of the project are limited to Spencer Glacier area. While some people, specifically P.R. Associates, may disagreed with my recommendation, no person has provided evidence that the environmental effects of the withdrawal have been wrongly predicted; therefore the effects described are not likely to be controversial. Section 1.7 of the EA shows comments received.
5. The degree of possible effects on the human environment is not highly uncertain, nor are there unique or unknown risks involved. The environmental effects are typical of other withdrawals done on National Forest lands. Effects are discussed in *Chapter 4* of the EA.
6. Site specific actions found as part of this recommendation do not set a precedent for future actions, which may have significant effects, nor does this represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. This recommendation does not establish any future precedent for other actions that may have a significant effect. Future actions will be evaluated through the NEPA process and will stand on their own as to the environmental effects and project feasibility.
7. This recommendation is not related to other actions that, when combined, will have significant impacts. Cumulative effects are documented throughout *Chapter 4* of the EA, where they are expected. There is not a significant cumulative effect to the environment, or to the economy of the Alaska region or the Nation, from implementing Alternative 2.
8. This recommendation will not contribute to the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources. There are no ground disturbing activities associated with this recommendation.

9. This recommendation will not adversely affect any threatened or endangered species of plants or animals or habitat critical for the management of these species. *Chapter 4, Section 4.6* of the EA describes threatened or endangered species in the Spencer Glacier area. There would be no adverse affect to threatened or endangered species.
10. This recommendation does not violate or threaten to violate Federal, State, or local laws, or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. This recommendation complies with relevant laws, including but not limited to the following; the Clean Air act as amended; Protection of Wetlands Executive Order 11990; the Safe Drinking Water Act; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended; the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979; the Native American Religious Act; the National Forest Management Act of 1976; and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. This recommendation also complies with Alaska State laws regarding natural resource protection, including but not limited to water quality, as well as Borough resource protection measures.