

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Arctic Field Office  
1150 University Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844  
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In reply refer to:  
FF095707  
2984.01 (AK012)

## PLAN COMFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2010-0039-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** University of Texas at Austin  
Peter P. Flaig, Post Doctoral Fellow  
Dolores A. van der Kolk  
Jackson School of Geosciences  
2845 Shoal Crest Avenue  
Austin, TX 78705

**Proposed Action:** Sedimentological Survey of the Colville River Bluffs

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicants Peter Flaig and Dolores van der Kolk with the University of Texas at Austin (UTA) have requested authorization for field activity access on land within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A) for research of sedimentological data along the bluffs of the Colville River.

The proposed action would authorize UTA to conduct a reconnaissance sedimentological survey in the Northeast NPR-A along the bluffs of the Colville River east of Umiat. The dates proposed are August 15 to the 30<sup>th</sup>, but are flexible. There would be up to three people participating in the survey. Transportation to and from the site will be a small fixed wing aircraft. A small base camp would be located on state lands across the Colville River from the bluffs (east of the Colville River). Camp setup would require one fixed wing landing and takeoff at the beginning of the field work and removal at the end of the project would require one landing and takeoff. Access to the bluffs during the field season would be a single inflatable raft with attached motor. A small fuel cache of 25 gallons of regular unleaded gasoline for this single boat would be stored at the base camp location within secondary containment.

The proposed survey consists of the following activities:

- Measure a series of 7-10 stratigraphic geologic sections near the contact of the Prince Creek Formation and lower Schrader Bluff Formation at coordinates N 69° 25', W 151° 46' at Shivugak bluff to the transition of the Prince Creek Formation from braided stream deposits to meandering stream deposits at N 69° 30.5', W 151° 28.5'.

- Collect sand samples for petrographic and chemostratigraphic analysis. Samples for chemostratigraphy would be delivered to the Alaska Department of Geological and Geophysical surveys to aid in their ongoing regional North Slope chemostratigraphic provenance analysis.
- Collect ashfall deposits for radiometric dating of the Prince Creek Formation.
- Collect coal samples for Rock EVAL analysis with a goal of constraining the depth of burial for the Prince Creek Formation.

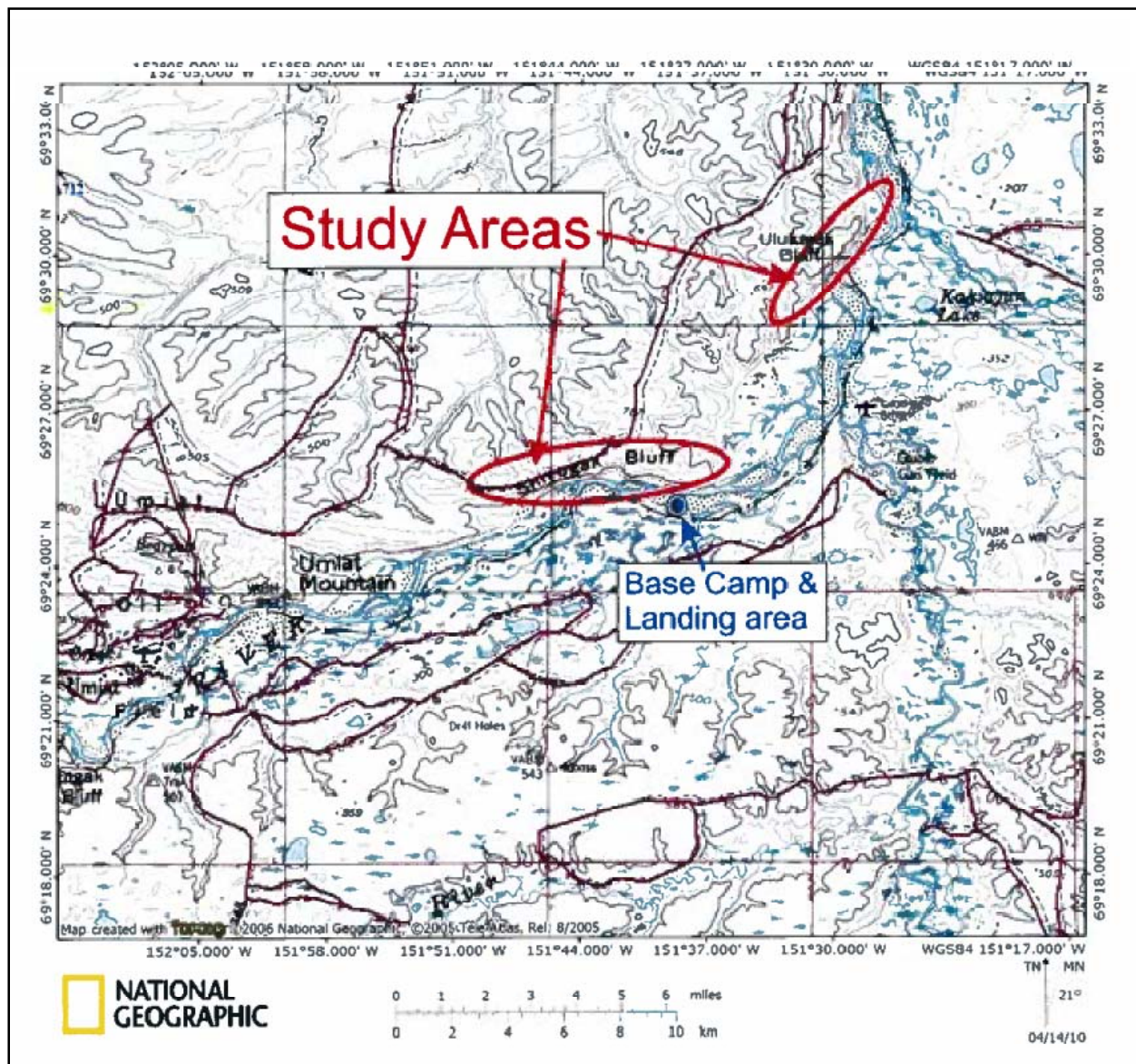


Figure 1 Applicant Map, showing study areas east and northeast of Umiat

**Legal Description (All Umiat Meridian)**

	<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
<b>Shivugak Bluff</b>	1 North	1 East	13,14,23-25	Excluding Private Lands
	1 North	2 East	14-23	Excluding Private Lands
<b>Ulusrak Bluff</b>	2 North	2 East	13,23-26,35,36	Excluding Private Lands
	2 North	3 East	17-20,30	Excluding Private Lands

**Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2008, and Colville River Special Area Management Plan 2008. The proposed action is not inconsistent with the purposes of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976. The applicant will be provided with stipulations entitled "FF095707 University of Texas at Austin Summer 2010 Stipulations."

Date: July 23, 2010

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//Donna L. Wixon  
Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office

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**Part II: NEPA Review and Decision****Categorical Exclusion Review**

This proposed action meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D.10,

This proposed action qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion 1.6 under 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215

**"Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities."**

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any of the exceptions described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

<b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		<b>X</b>
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		<b>X</b>
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		<b>X</b>
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		<b>X</b>
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		<b>X</b>
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		<b>X</b>
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		<b>X</b>
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		<b>X</b>
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		<b>X</b>
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		<b>X</b>
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		<b>X</b>
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		<b>X</b>

Date: July 23, 2010

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/s/Donna L. Wixon  
Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office