



Bureau of Land Management

Anchorage Field Office
6881 Abbott Loop Road
Anchorage, AK 99507
<http://www.anchorage.ak.blm.gov>

**Administrative Determination (AD)/Documentation of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
Reindeer Grazing Permit**

Applicant: Clifford Weyiouanna,
Case File No.: F-11516
AK-040-06-AD/DNA-018

Location:

T. 8 N., R. 32 W., Sections 23-26, 32-36 K.R.M.
T. 8 N., R. 33 W., Sections 31, K.R.M.
T. 8 N., R. 34 W., Sections 30-36, K.R.M.
T. 8 N., R. 35 W., Sections 19, 20, 22-27, 29-32, 34-36, K.R.M.
T. 8 N., R. 36 W., Sections 2-5, 7-11, 14-29, 32-36, K.R.M.
T. 8 N., R. 37 W., Sections 10-16, 19-36, K.R.M.
T. 5 N., R. 38 W., Sections 1-5, 9-16, 22-27, 35, 36, all east of the
Nuluk River, K.R.M.

Prepared By:

Thomas S. Sparks
Natural Resource Program Coordinator
3/1/06

Administrative Determination (AD)
Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management
Anchorage Field Office

A. BLM Office: Anchorage Field Office **Lease/Serial Case File No.:** F-11516

Proposed Action Title/Type: Reauthorization of Reindeer Grazing Permit for a four (4) year period/4300

Location of Proposed Action: Traditional boundary of the Weyiouanna Reindeer Grazing Allotment described as:

Beginning at the mouth of the Nuluk River, thence southeasterly up the north limit of the Nuluk River to the junction of the North Fork and South Fork; thence northeasterly up the northern limit of the North Fork until its confluence with a major tributary on its eastern bank; thence up the northern limit of this tributary and continuing easterly over the Continental Divide along the crest of a branch of mountains separating the American River and drainage and the Agiapuk River drainage to the point directly east of the headwaters of Luther Creek; thence easterly from, that point to the headwaters and continuing in a easterly direction along the northern bank of Luther Creek to its confluence with American River; thence northeasterly up the northern limit of Budd Creek to its confluence with Eldorado Creek; thence southeasterly along the northern limit of Eldorado Creek to its confluence with Pirate Creek to its headwaters and passing on in a northerly direction to Kougarok Mountain; thence northeasterly along the Continental Divide to a point that lies directly south of the headwaters of McKinley Creek; thence northerly to these headwaters and continuing northeasterly up the western limit of McKinley Creek to its confluence with Bryan Creek; thence northerly up the northwest limit of Bryan Creek to its confluence with Hot Springs Creek; thence northwesterly along the western limit of Hot Springs Creek to its confluence with the Serpentine River to its mouth in Shishmaref Inlet; thence southerly along the southern bank of Shishmaref Inlet, Arctic Lagoon, and Ikpek Lagoon, to the mouth of the Nuluk River, the point of beginning.

In addition to this described parcel, the Island of Sarichef and the spit lying between the Chukchi Sea and Ikpek and Arctic Lagoons is also included as a portion of the Traditional boundary of the Weyiouanna Reindeer Grazing Allotment.

Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to renew a Reindeer Grazing Permit to Mr. Clifford Weyiouanna from 1/1/06 to 12/31/09, a four (4) year period, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU, AK 025-2003-05) signed between the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

Applicant (if any): Clifford Weyiouanna

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans

The proposed action is consistent with the Northwest Management Framework Plan completed in 1982. The objective for range management of the Northwest Management Framework Plan was to encourage proper utilization of range by livestock. Reindeer grazing was recognized as an important use by livestock non public lands. Conflicts between reindeer and caribou were identified by allowing for adjustments of reindeer allotment boundaries and/or designating non use areas to avoid conflict with caribou winter range. The area of potential conflict concern at the time of the Plan was east and west of the Buckland River. The Northwest Management Framework Plan also called for the development of an Allotment Management Plan to support objectives to maintain and improve the range resource and reduce fire control costs. Only one Allotment Management Plan has ever been signed, that of Mr. Henry, for the lands near Koyuk.

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action.

CAT X AK-070-90-09; EA AK-026-EA2-007; AK-026-EA1-019 (references AK-026-EA0-044 (Olanna, Case File F-11729)) and the MOU, AK 025-2003-05

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

- 1. Is the current Proposed Action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current Proposed Action located at a site specifically analyzed in an existing document?**

The proposed action is identical as that analyzed in CAT X AK-070-90-09; EA AK-026-EA2-007; AK-026-EA1-019 (references AK-026-EA0-044 (Olanna, Case File F-11729)) and the MOU, AK 025-2003-05. The proposed action is located on the same lands as previously analyzed.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current Proposed Action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

The range of alternatives analyzed in CAT X AK-070-90-09; EA AK-026-EA2-007; AK-026-EA1-019 (references AK-026-EA0-044 (Olanna, Case File F-11729)) and the MOU, AK 025-2003-05 is appropriate with respect to the proposed action given current circumstances. The Weyiouanna family has been in the reindeer business since 1971. In the past 10 years, the Weyiouanna herd has declined to a manageable zero due to the relatively recent westerly migration of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) onto the Seward Peninsula in the winter months. The Weyiouanna herd was struck hard during 1999 and 2000 when the western front of the WACH ranged unto the Weyiouanna traditional grazing area. The BLM lands within the Weyiouanna Grazing Allotment area are minor, comprising less than 66,000 acres out of approximately 972,000 acres. The National Park Service has issued a Special Use Permit to Mr. Weyiouanna for a four year period (1/4/06-12/31/09). The adjacent landowner, Shishmaref Native Corporation, Bering Straits Native Corporation, and the State of Alaska have all issued letters of non objection. Other than intermittent use as winter caribou range, there are no competing resource values, environmental concerns or interests in the BLM administered lands.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances?

Although the WACH had entered unto the Seward Peninsula when the previous NEPA documents were analyzed, only in 1999 and 2000 did the WACH overtake the Weyiouanna range. Given the cyclical nature of the WACH and its traditional wintering grounds within the far eastern Seward Peninsula the existing analysis is appropriate given the over 38 year history of the Weyiouanna's use of the range for reindeer herding activities over that of the competing WACH interests. The existing analysis acknowledged the potential for overgrazing of vegetation (lichen) and the potential impact on the plant ecosystem.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current Proposed Action?

The methodology and analytical approach used in the existing EA is appropriate for the current proposed action.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA

document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document analyze site-specific impacts related to the current Proposed Action?

The direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action are substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing EA. Analyzing the impacts of the proposed action under a new EA would result in the same conclusions drawn by the existing EA. The existing EA addresses the critical elements and sufficiently analyzes site-specific impacts of the proposed action by addressing impacts related to soils, vegetation, cultural resources, socioeconomic conditions, terrestrial wildlife, wastes, hazardous substances, and subsistence.

6. Are the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

The cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action would have the same results as those analyzed in the existing EA.

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current Proposed Action?

The existing EA was publicized in the Anchorage Daily News on 5/2/90. Agencies consulted for the existing EA included Bering Straits Native Corporation, Shishmaref Native Corporation, National Park Service, State of Alaska, Departments of Fish and Game, Habitat Division, and Division of Governmental Coordination.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis:

The following individuals of the Anchorage Field Office and their disciplines were consulted in the analysis of the proposed action:

*ACECs	Kelley
*Air Quality	Chuck Denton
*Cultural Resources (Paleontology)	Redding
*Environmental Justice	Sparks
*Farmlands, Prime/Unique	Lead Preparer

Fire	Sterbenz
Fisheries	Scott
*Floodplains	Chuck Denton
Forestry	Sterbenz
Iditarod Trail	Svejnoha/Schlapfer
*Invasive, Nonnative Species	Kelley/Seppi
Land Status	Sparks
Lands/Realty	Realty Specialist
Minerals	Persson
*Native American Religious Concerns	Redding
Recreation	Schlapfer
Soils	Kelley
*Subsistence	Jeff Denton
Surface Protection	Kelley
*T&E Species	Seppi
Vegetation	Kelley
Visual Resources	Schlapfer
*Wastes, Hazardous/Solid	Beck
*Water Quality, Surface & Ground	Chuck Denton
*Wetlands/Riparian Zones	Seppi
*Wild & Scenic Rivers	Schlapfer
*Wilderness	Schlapfer
Wildlife	Seppi

F. Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation measures enacted by the National Park Service, under Permit # ARO WEAR 2600 004, "conditions of permit" and "Additional Conditions of the Weyiouanna Reindeer Grazing Permit" are recognized by the BLM as per the MOU.

G. Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the Proposed Action and constitute BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Gary Reimer
Anchorage Field Manager

May 1, 2006
Date