



Bureau of Land Management

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

**Categorical Exclusion
Iditarod Trail Signage**

**Applicant: NA
Case File Number: NA
AK-040-06-CX-049**



Location:

Kateel River Meridian

T. 11 S., R. 27 W.

T. 11 S., R. 28 W.

T. 11 S., R. 29 W.

Prepared By:

Thomas Sparks
Natural Resource Program Coordinator
Nome Field Station
June 24, 2006

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Anchorage Field Office
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) FORM

CX No.: AK-040-06-CX-049

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: NA

Proposed Action Title/Types:

The Bureau of Land Management proposes to replace (and future maintenance) Iditarod Trail Markers blown down by the fall storms of 2005 and 2004 (chronic problem given the storm ravaged coastline) along the coast of Norton Sound from Solomon (Bonanza River) to Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge, Topkok Head Subunit of the Bering Sea Unit, located in Section 3, T. 11 S., R. 27 W., Kateel River Meridian.

Location of Proposed Action:

Kateel River Meridian
T. 11 S., R. 27 W., Secs. 3-6
T. 11 S., R. 28 W., Secs. 1-6
T. 11 S., R. 29 W., Secs. 11 and 12;

along the coast of Norton Sound from Solomon to the Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge, Topkok Head Subunit of the Bering Sea Unit, located in Section 3, T. 11 S., R. 27 W., Kateel River Meridian.



Figure 1, Project Area.

Description of Proposed Action:

The Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage Field Office, Nome Field Station, has scheduled a project to replace Iditarod Trail Markers along the coast of Norton Sound from Solomon to the Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge, Topkok Head Subunit of the Bering Sea Unit, located in Section 3, T. 11 S., R. 27 W., Kateel River Meridian., excluding that portion of the trail that crosses lands patented under US Patent Number 50-91-0352. A four-wheeler will be transported from Nome by truck and trailer to Bonanza River and off loaded onto a boat to access the beach east of Bonanza River on Norton Sound. The four-wheeler will be used to drag driftwood onto shore and to transport personnel during the course of the project. Driftwood will be cut to develop a prong that can be set into the sand to hold the driftwood in place. A gas-operated auger will be used to drill into the beach so that the driftwood markers can be set in place. Once set in place, sand will be packed around the prong and driftwood and reflectors (Figure 2, below) will be set on the driftwood so that the markers can be seen at night. The Nome field station anticipates doing the project the week of Monday, August 14, 2006. Four people will be engaged in the project. The project is expected to take approximately four days. Personnel will camp on the beach throughout the duration of the project. Twenty to thirty markers are expected to be installed along 10 miles of the Iditarod Trail on the Norton Sound beachfront.

Approximately two and one half miles of the trail crosses lands conveyed to Solomon Native Corporation, approximately six miles of the trail project area cross lands selected by the state of Alaska and the remainder cross Native Allotments wherein the trail was reserved.



Figure 2, Iditarod Trail Reflector

PART I - PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

This Proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan: Management Framework Plan, Southwest Planning Area

Date Plan Approved: 10/5/82

The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM MS 1617.3).

Remarks: Reinstalling the Iditarod Trail markers helps preserve a National Historic Trail.

PART II - NEPA REVIEW

A. Categorical Exclusion Review.
This Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 2, Appendix 1. or 516 DM 11.5 G (4): "Placement of recreational, special designation or information signs, visitor registers, kiosks and portable sanitation devices."

B. Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review.
The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances apply to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents **MUST BE PREPARED** for actions which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.)

	YES	NO
1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	_____	<u> X </u>
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.	_____	<u> X </u>
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	_____	<u> X </u>

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|-----|---|-------|--------------|
| 4. | Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 5. | Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 6. | Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 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. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 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. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 9. | Violate Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 10. | Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898). | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 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). | _____ | <u> X </u> |
| 12. | Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112). | _____ | <u> X </u> |

**Case File No.: NA
AK-040-06-CX-049**

I certify that none of the Departmental Extraordinary Circumstances listed in the above Part B (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action.

Remarks:

The Special Recreation Permit would cover this type of activity if it were not being filmed for later use in a commercial project.

Preparer(s): Thomas S. Sparks Date: June 24, 2006

PART III – DECISION

I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the project, as described, with the mitigation measures either identified below or stipulation(s) attached in this case file.

Mitigation Measures/Other Remarks:

Authorized Official: Mike Zaidlicz

Date: 8/14/06