



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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In Reply Refer To:
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October 17, 2011

Instruction Memorandum No. AK 2012-002
Expires: 09/30/2013

To: Deputy State Directors, District Managers, Field Managers, Authorized Officer, and Alaska Fire Service Manager

From: State Director

Subject: Boundary Risk Assessment for Significant Land or Resource Transactions

Program Area: All Land and Resource Programs within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Alaska

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) provides guidance and instruction on the implementation of Washington Office IM No. 2011-122 in Alaska. This policy is to ensure that all BLM-Alaska actions involving significant land or resource values appropriately assess boundary evidence and the risk of unauthorized uses, improper removal of resources, or encroachment on non-Federal lands.

Policy/Action: This policy applies only to high-valued land, resource transactions, or significant commercial projects where any part is within one-quarter mile of a federal boundary line. Before approving these transactions or commercial projects, Authorizing Officers (AO) must assess the significance of the action. If needed, the AO will request that the BLM-Alaska Chief Cadastral Surveyor perform a boundary risk assessment. This request should include a general project description, including the proponent, schedules, timeframes, and location. The Chief Cadastral Surveyor or delegate will provide a recommended action plan to the requestor within 15 working days of the request. When the requestor accepts the action plan, Cadastral Survey will issue the boundary risk assessment and corresponding certificate within 10 working days.¹

Process Overview: All BLM-Alaska AOs will follow the guidelines in WO IM No. 2011-122 to determine whether a proposed land, resource transaction, or commercial activity is within one-quarter mile of a federal boundary and is significant. If the AO determines that the proposed action does not meet this criterion, the AO will document this on the appropriate case file and provide a

¹ If Field Work is required, such as with a Certificate of Inspection and Possession, this schedule may be altered.

copy of this decision to the Chief Cadastral Surveyor. Only if the AO determines that the proposed action meets the boundary and significance criterion will the AO submit a formal request to the Chief Cadastral Surveyor to perform a boundary risk assessment.

After receiving a request for a boundary risk assessment, the Chief Cadastral Surveyor or designate will assign a Cadastral Surveyor to the project. Within 15 working days, the Cadastral Surveyor and the AO will decide the appropriate boundary risk assessment standardized product: Land Description Review, Chain of Survey, or Certificate of Inspection and Possession.

Once the AO accepts this recommendation, they will provide the funding necessary for the Cadastral Surveyor to perform the boundary risk assessment. The Chief Cadastral Surveyor will review and issue the appropriate level certificate within ten working days, which then becomes part of the project's administrative record.

The AO will take the results of the boundary risk assessment, decide whether to accept the Chief Cadastral Surveyor's recommendation, and document the decision and rationale in the case file. Should the results of the boundary risk assessment indicate a federal survey is warranted and the AO agrees, the AO or staff would request the survey through a separate procedure. A copy of the survey request goes to the Deputy State Director, Alaska Lands, to assess the impact to the Alaska Lands survey schedule.

Timeframe: This policy is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: It is anticipated that there will be a small increase in costs at the planning stage of land and resource transactions and commercial projects. To the extent possible, costs should be recovered from the benefiting external customers in accordance with existing BLM cost recovery authority and policy.

Background: In its Final Audit Report, "Department of the Interior's Management of Land Boundaries" (Audit No. C-IN-MOA-0001-2009, dated July 16, 2009), the Office of Inspector General found that land and resource "...transactions on lands with unreliable boundary surveys and high value resources were routinely processed and approved without the benefit of boundary evidence review by Cadastral Survey personnel," and that "using proper risk management procedures, less expensive cadastral services, and other procedures can make this very cost effective." The Office of Inspector General made nine recommendations; the BLM responded to numbers four and five by defining what constitutes a significant land or resource transaction or commercial project and how to incorporate a Cadastral review of these projects with the issuance of WO IM 2011-122.

Coordination: Alaska Leadership Team, State Budget Officer, Office of Communications.

Contact: Questions regarding these instructions should be directed to Michael Schoder, Deputy State Director, Division of Cadastral Survey (BLM-Alaska Chief Cadastral Surveyor), 907-271-5481.

Signed by:
Julia Dougan
Associate State Director

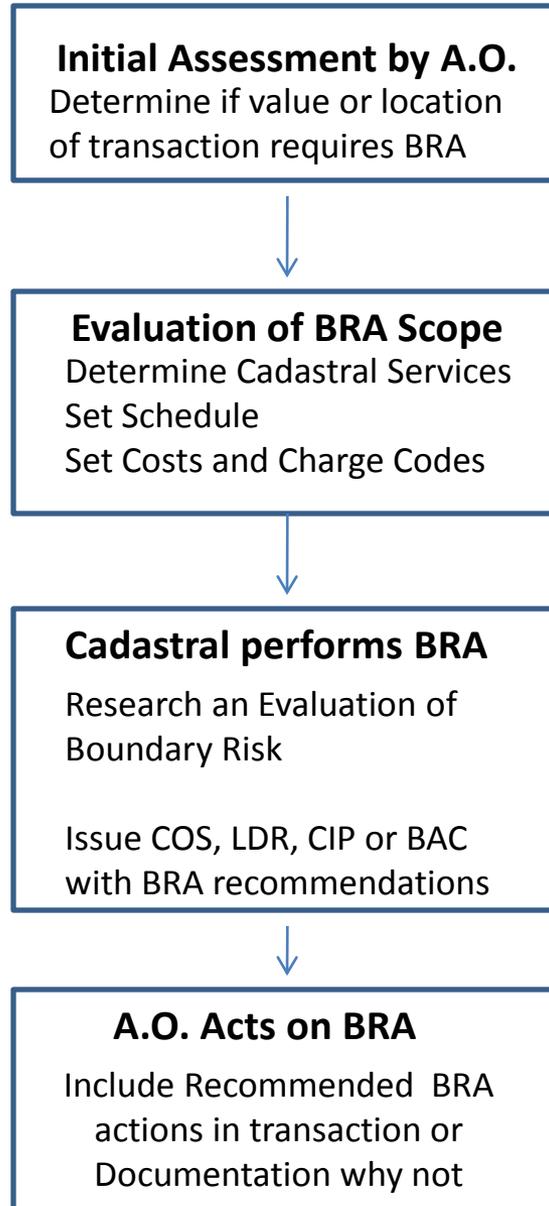
Authenticated by:
Anita R. Jette
Records Specialist

2 Attachments

- 1 – [Flowchart](#)
- 2 – [WO IM No. 2011-122](#)

ATTACHMENT 1

Boundary Risk Assessment Flow Chart



Process

If transaction or project has less than \$10,000 value at risk, or is more than ¼ mile from boundary, no Boundary Risk Assessment (BRA) is needed

AO/Transaction Specialist meets with Cadastral Survey and determines scope of BRA review
Outcome: fill out required Boundary Evidence Worksheets, BRA funding amount and accounts established

Cadastral Survey performs research and prepares analysis and recommendations specific to boundary risk for transaction. Outcome: Cadastral Chief provides COS, LDR, CIP or BAC Certificates

AO incorporates the BRA recommendations in the transaction documents, or documents why BRA recommendations are not followed in serialized case file