

**Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Central Yukon Field Office**

1150 University Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709  
(907) 474-2200

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**Categorical Exclusion**

**Use of an airstrip in the Baird Mountains on the North Fork of the Squirrel River**

**Applicant: Tintina Alaska Mining, LLC**

**Case File Number: F-96068**

**DOI-BLM-AK-03000-2012-0015-CX**



**Location:**

NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec. 2 and NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec. 3, T. 24 N., R. 11 W., Kateel River Meridian,  
containing approximately 4.13 acres

**Prepared By:**

Central Yukon Field Office

May 2012

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**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

**A. Background**

On March 3, 2008, NovaGold Resources, Incorporated requested a permit from BLM to use this same airstrip for the same activities as in the current proposal. These activities were analyzed in the EA-AK-025-08-041 dated May 19, 2008. Additionally, the following clearances were completed: 106 Clearance dated May 12, 2008, 810 and EFH Clearance dated May 14, 2008

BLM Office: Central Yukon Field Office Lease/Serial/Case File No: F-96068

Environmental Document No: DOI-BLM-AK-03000-2012-0015-CX

Proposed Action Title/Types: The applicant proposes to use an airstrip in the Baird Mountains near the North Fork of the Squirrel River on public lands to support drilling exploration on State mining claims to the east.

Location of Proposed Action: NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec. 2 and NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec. 3, T. 24 N., R. 11 W., Kateel River Meridian, containing approximately 4.13 acres, depicted on USGS Quad Baird Mountains C-5.

Description of Proposed Action:

The applicant proposes to access State mining claims via an existing airstrip on public lands and an airstrip on a conveyed Native allotment east of the BLM location. Fixed wing aircraft out of Kiana, Kotzebue and Fairbanks as well as helicopters out of Kiana and Kotzebue will be using the airstrip. They propose to use the airstrip on public lands for aircraft operations (mobilization and demobilization of drill rig equipment), temporary aircraft fuel depot, staging area for helicopter, transfer of equipment and supplies to a temporary base camp and exploration areas on State mining claims. Additionally, they propose to stage a 3,000 gallon fuel bladder on one end of the airstrip where the flatter apron area is to safely set up the containment. This bladder will be placed inside fabricated lined secondary containment. All other activities will be off public lands. They propose to use the airstrip from May 2012 through September 2012.

Applicant (if any): Tintina Alaska Mining, LLC

**B. Land Use Plan Conformance 43 CFR 1610.5-3(a)**

proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

Land Use Plan Name: Seward-Kobuk RMP

Date Approved: September 2008

Form Date: 6/2009

In Ch. II (g), Lands and Realty states: “meet public needs for use authorizations such as ROW, leases, and permits while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.

In Ch. III, Sec. 7, Lands and Realty Actions states: the primary objective of the lands program in the planning areas is to provide the public with the land it needs for rights-of-way, land use permits, leases, and sales.

**C. NEPA Compliance**

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with United States Department of the Interior 43 CFR §46.210 or United States Department of Interior Manual, Part 516, Chapter 11 which provides:

**11.9 E (Realty)**

- (19) Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage site, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition.

**D. Extraordinary Circumstances**

The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents must be prepared for actions which may:

	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>
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 affects 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 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).	_____	_____ <u>X</u>

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances in 43 CFR §46.215 are pertinent.

**F. Signature**

The proposed action is in conformance with a management framework plan or a resource management plan, 43 CFR § 1610.8(a)(3). The Department of the Interior has determined and found that the proposed action is within a category of actions that do not individually or

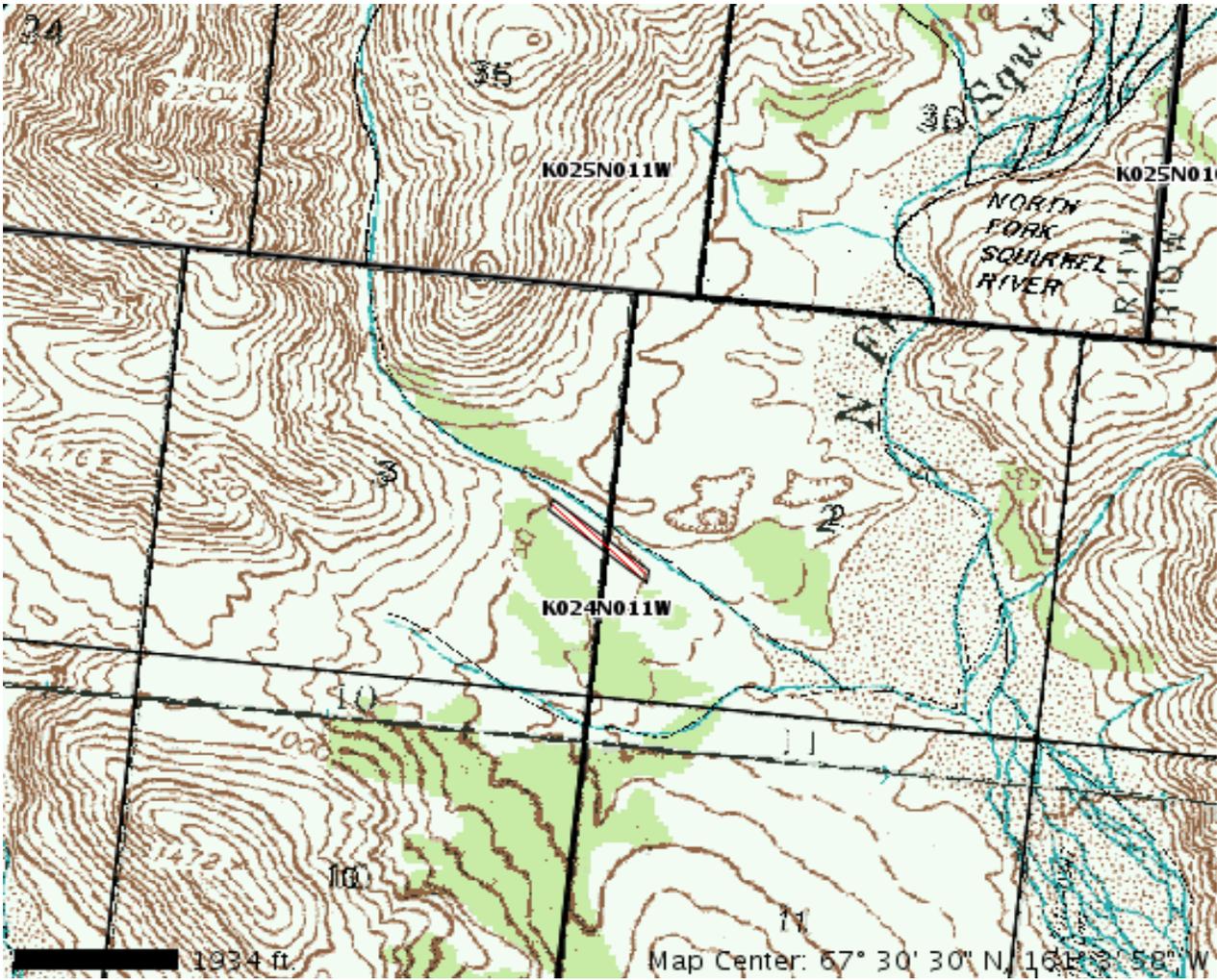
cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and that neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required, 40 CFR §1508.4.

It is therefore my decision to implement the action, as described, with appropriate mitigation measures or stipulations.

Mitigation Measures/Stipulations: (See Attached Appendices)

Authorized Official: /s/ Gary M. Foreman  
Acting, CYFO Manager

Date: May 31, 2012



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Central Yukon Field Office**

**1150 University Avenue**

**Fairbanks, Alaska 99709**

**Phone: (907) 474-2304**

**Fax: (907) 474-2282**

**DECISION RECORD**

**Use of an airstrip and fuel staging area in support of mineral exploration**

**F-96068**

**DOI-BLM-AK-03000-2012-0015-CX**

**Decision:**

It is my decision to approve a permit to Tintina Alaska Mining, LLC for a use of an airstrip and fuel staging area in support of mineral exploration as described in the proposed action. A permit will be issued for approximately four (4) months from June 1, 2012 through October 31, 2012.

**Proposed Action:**

The grant will be authorized under the authority of Title V of the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761).

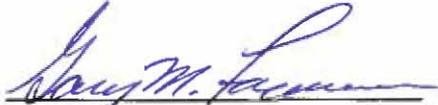
**Rationale for the Decision:**

1. This action is consistent with the principles of BLM and State plans for this area.
2. There are no anticipated impacts to cultural resources. See attachment.
3. The Proposed Action will not significantly restrict subsistence uses. See attachment.
4. There are no significant risks to existing boundaries and monumentation. See attachment.
5. A wilderness characteristic determination was completed and the action will not significantly impair wilderness characteristics. See attachment.

The proposed action is in conformance with the approved Bureau of Land Management Kobuk-Seward Resource Management approved September 2008. The project has been considered in the context of public health and safety and consistency with regards to Federal, State, and local laws.

**Appeal Procedures**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, in accordance with 43 CFR Part 4 and DOI Form 1842-1. The notice of appeal must be filed in the Bureau of Land Management Central Yukon Field Office (at the above address) within 30 days from receipt of this decision.



*for*

Nichelle W. Jacobson  
Field Manager  
Central Yukon Field Office



Date

**Contact Person:**

For additional information concerning this CX review and decision, contact Robin Walthour, Realty Specialist, Central Yukon Field Office at (907) 474-2304.