



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Arctic Field Office

1150 University Avenue

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844



## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

### A. Background

**BLM Office:** Arctic Field Office

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.:** FF095874

**NEPA Number:** DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2011-0004-CX

### Proposed Action Title/Type

CAA/FAA Communication Site / NPR-A Short-Term Rights-of-Way (2884.01)

### Location and Site Description of Proposed Action

Inigok Airstrip: Section 34, Township 8 North, Range 5 West, Umiat Meridian; located on the existing gravel pad within an existing right-of-way and less than 1 acre in size.

Knifeblade Ridge: Section 19, Township 3 South, Range 12 West, Umiat Meridian; located on a ridgeline consisting of rock outcroppings and less than 1 acre in size. The site was an old staging area located on an old trail that is still visible to date. See attached map for both facilities.

### Description of Proposed Action

The proposed action is to authorize the FAA and/or its agent short-term (no more than three years) access to existing CAA/FAA facilities – that have no prior authorization – at the above referenced locations that were used in the late 1970's and early 1980's during the Department of the Interior's NPR-A exploration programs; see attached photos of the two facilities. Facilities will be managed and ultimately removed in accordance with all applicable Required Operating Procedures. Site characterization, facility removal, and reclamation plans will be submitted to the BLM for approval prior to removal. Such plans may require up to four visits over the next three years. Facility visits may generally last no longer than two weeks at a time, and may generally occur during the summer season. Access to each facility will be via aircraft.

The following stipulations will be applicable to the proposed action:

The site characterization at the Knifeblade facility will require confirmation soil samples due to an interim emergency removal action of leaking POL containers conducted in 1996 by the BLM.

### B. Land Use Plan Conformance

**Land Use Plan Name:** 2008 NE NPR-A IAP/EIS  
2003 NW NPR-A IAP/EIS

**Date Approved:** July 16, 2008  
January 2004

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions): the protection of the environment, resources, and human health and safety.

**C. Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, Realty E.20: Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original conditions.

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, as documented below, none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

| <b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.   |            | X         |
| 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. |            | X         |
| 2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA Section 102(2)(E)).   |            | X         |
| 2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.  |            | X         |
| 2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.  |            | X         |
| 2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.  |            | X         |
| 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.  |            | X         |
| 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  |            | X         |
| 2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.  |            | X         |
| 2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).  |            | X         |
| 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).   |            | X         |
| 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  |            | X         |

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| that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112). |  |  |
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**D. Signature**

Authorized Official: /s/Lon Kelly  
(Signature)

Date: February 6, 2012

Name: Lon Kelly

Title: Arctic Field Office Manager

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Shane Walker, Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99709, or (907) 474-2306, or swalker@blm.gov.