



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844  
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In reply refer to:  
FF094257  
2930.00 (AK012)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2012-0026-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** Arctic Wild  
P.O. Box 80562  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

**Proposed Action:** Special Recreation Permit to conduct wildlife viewing in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A).

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, Arctic wild has requested an amendment to their authorization for a special recreation permit to conduct wildlife guiding operations on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands within in the NPR-A.

The proposed action would authorize an amendment to a Special Recreation Authorization to Arctic Wild to conduct commercial rafting and hiking trips on the Utukok, Kokolik, Kukpowruk, and Pitmegea Rivers. Arctic Wild has operated in the NPR-A under a SRP (expires 5/31/2015) since 2004 . The trips would be similar in nature to those permitted in the past by BLM. Five trips would take place between the dates of June 13 and July 3, 2012 (See Legal Description Tables).

The groups would fly by charter air service, be dropped off and picked up on gravel bars. The proponent will remove all gear and equipment when they leave the campsites. Arctic Wild practices Leave No Trace guidelines. Their guides have many years of experience guiding remote wilderness trips in the Arctic and have received safety training.

The clients and guides would camp in portable tents each night and the camp would include a kitchen tent and separate sleeping tents. Proponents and guides would use a group latrine. Use of camp fires is not expected, unless necessary. Fuel use would be limited to white gas for cooking. For the river trips, crews would float along the river by day view and photograph wildlife and scenery as opportunities arise.

Figures 1 and 2 show the locations of the trips.

### Legal Description (All Umiat Meridian):

**Trip 1 June 13 – 21<sup>st</sup> Kokolik** (5 clients 1 guide)

<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
8 South	41 West	1 – 36	Trip Start Camp Site #1 June 13-14
8 South	42 West	1-36	(NPR-A Lands Only BLM Managed Lands) (W1/2 State Lands)
8 South	43 West	1-3, 10-15, 22- 24	No BLM Managed Land – Location of Camp Site #2 June 15
7 South	43 West	1-3, 10-15, 22- 27, 34-36	No BLM Managed Land
6 South	43 West	36	No BLM Managed Land
6 South	42 West	4-9, 16-21, 28- 33	No BLM Managed Land Camp Site #3 June 16-17
5 South	42 West	4-9, 16-21, 28- 33	No BLM Managed Land Camp Site #4 June 18
5 South	42 West	27	
4 South	42 West	1-3, 10-15, 22- 27, 34-36	No BLM Managed
3 South	42 West	35	No BLM Managed Land Camp Site #5 June 19-20 <b>Trip End</b>

**Trip 2 June 21 – 25 Kokolik** (6 clients 2 guides)

<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
3 South	42 West	1-2, 11-14	Trip Start Camp 1 June 21 -22 No BLM Managed Land
3 South	41 West	6	No BLM Managed Land
2 South	42 West	36	No BLM Managed Land
2 South	41 West	11-14, 21-29, 31- 32	Excluding Private Land
2 South	40 West	3-9, 17-18	Camp #2 June 23
1 South	40 West	12-14, 21-24, 26- 28, 33-34	
1 South	39 West	5-8, 18	
1 North	39 West	1-2, 10-15, 23-26, 35-36	Camp #3 June 24 <sup>th</sup> Trip End

**Trip 3 June 14 – 22 Kukpowruk River** (backpacking trip 2 clients 1 guide)

<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
10 South	48 West	24-27, 34-36	State Selected
10 South	47 West	7-36	Contains SS
10 South	46 West	7-9, 16-21, 28-33	
11 South	48 West	1-3, 9-16, 21-28, 33-36	Excluding Private Contains SS
11 South	47 West	1-36	Camp Site Contains SS
11 South	46 West	1-12, 14-22, 27-34	Excluding Private Land Contains SS
12 South	48 West	1-3, 11-12	Excluding Private Land
12 South	47 West	1-12	Excluding Private Land
10 South	46 West	5-7	No BLM Managed Land

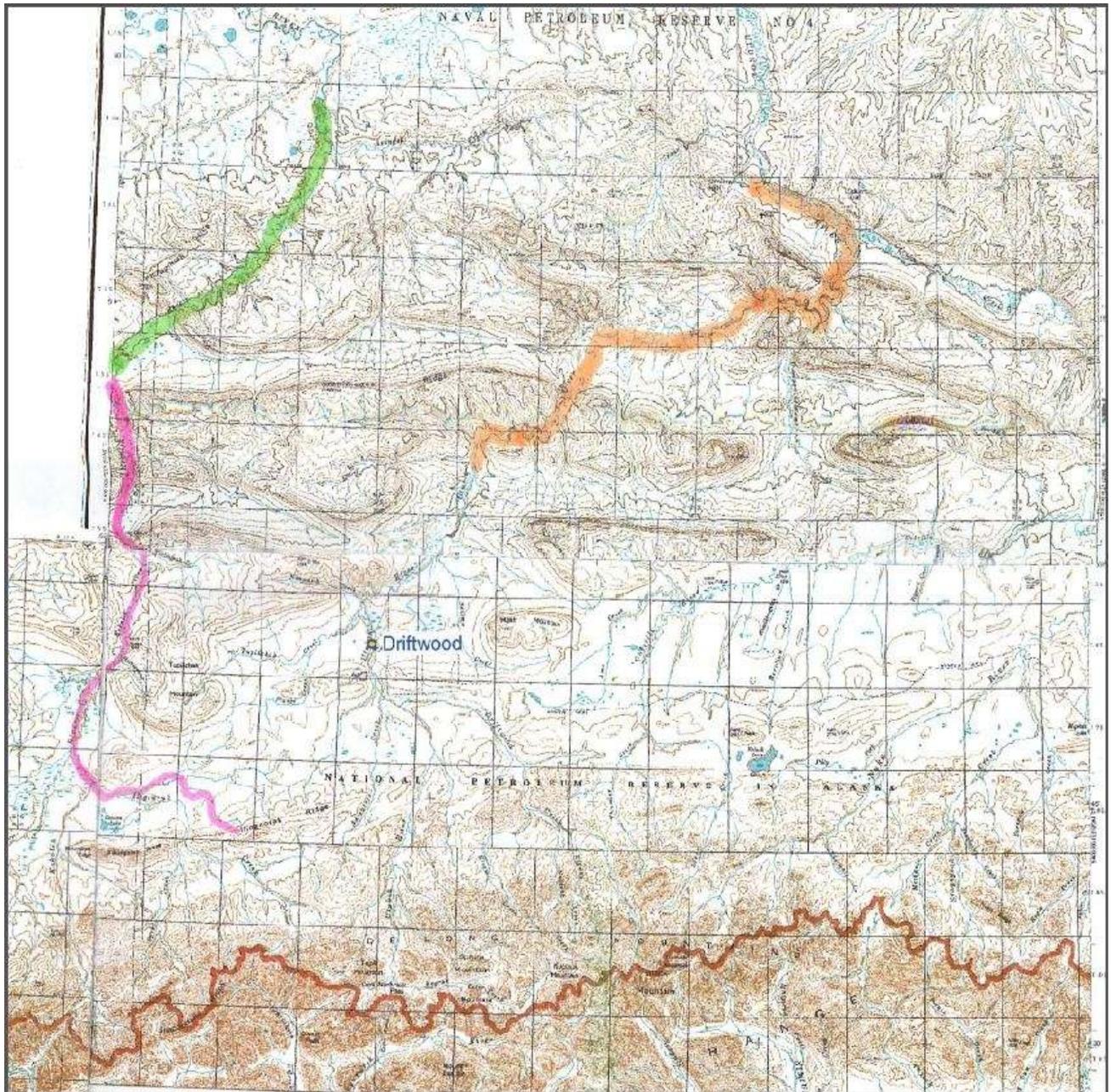
**Trip 4 June 17 – 22 Utukok River (2 clients 1 guide)**

<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
4 South	37 West	1-9, 17-20, 29-32	Trip Start Camp #1 June 17-18
3 South	37 West	32-36	
4 South	36 West	6	
3 South	36 West	3-4, 9-10, 15-16, 20-22, 28-33	
2 South	36 West	25-28, 33-36	Camp #2 June 19
2 South	35 West	25-36	
2 South	34 West	13-15, 20-24, 27-32	
2 South	33 West	1-3, 10-23	
1 South	33 West	5-10, 14-17, 23, 25-26, 35-36	Excluding Private Land Camp #4 June 21
1 South	34 West	1, 2	Trip End

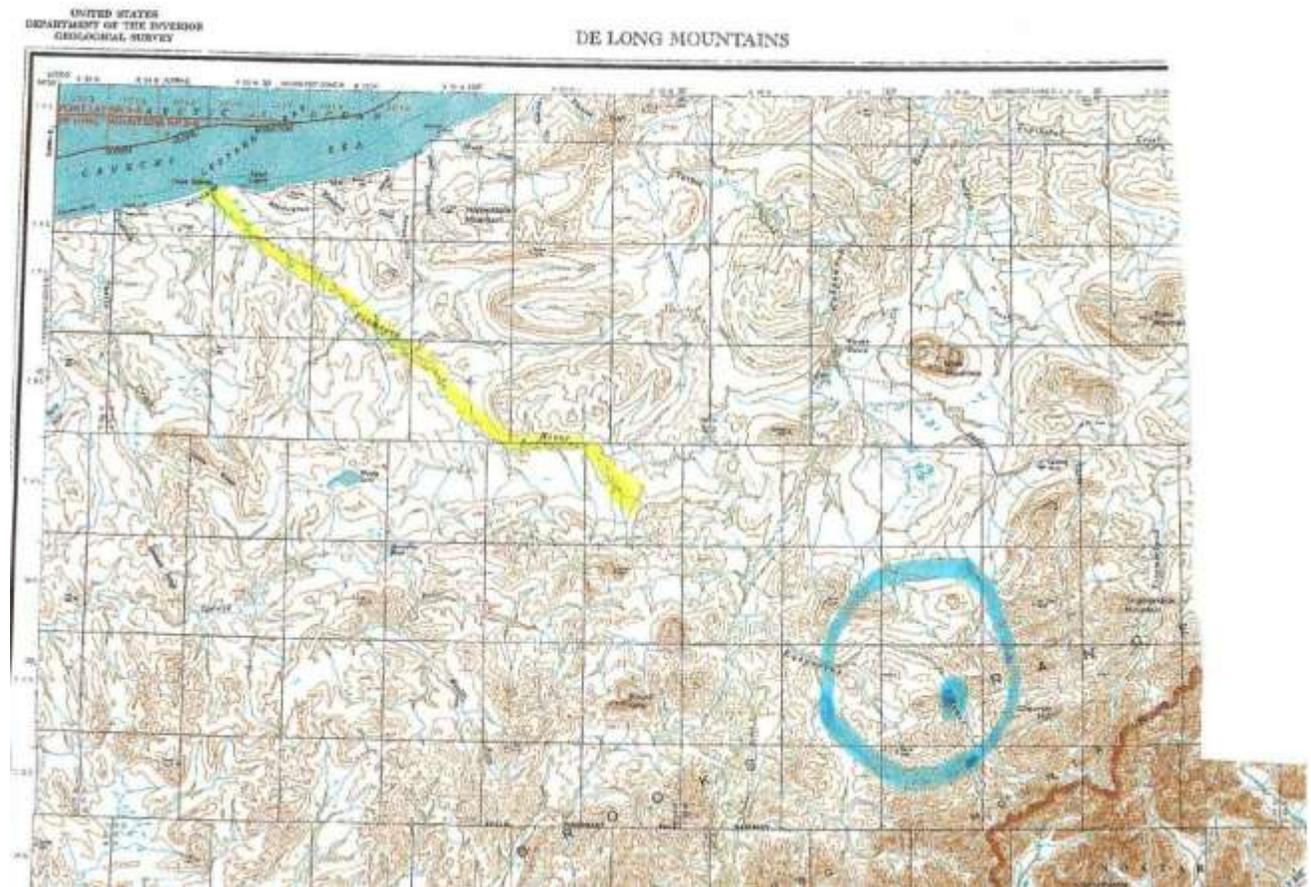
**Trip 5 June 25 – July 3 Pitmegea River [No BLM Lands] (5 clients 1 guide)**

<b>Meridian</b>	<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
Umiat	9 South	50 West	5-8, 17-18	Trip Start No BLM Managed Land Camp # 1 June 25-29
Umiat	9 South	51 West	1-6	No BLM Managed Land Camp # 2 June 30
Umiat	8 South	50 West	31-36	No BLM Managed Land

Umiat	8 South	51 West	6-8, 18-18, 20-22, 25-28, 35-36	No BLM Managed Land
Umiat	8 South	52 West	1-3, 11-12	No BLM Managed Land Camp #3 July 1
Umiat	7 South	52 West	7, 18-21, 27- 29, 33-36	No BLM Managed Land
Umiat	7 South	53 West	1-4, 11-12	No BLM Managed Land
Umiat	6 South	53 West	29-33	No BLM Managed Land
Umiat	6 South	54 West	24	No BLM Managed Land Trip End



**Figure 1 Arctic Wild Trips 1, 2, & 4**



**Figure 2 Arctic Wild Trip 3 & 5**

### **Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents:

- Kobuk-Seward Peninsula Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved 2008
- Western Arctic Resource Management Plan (RMP) evaluated 2/5/1990
- Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved 1/11/1991
- Utility Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement approved 9/27/1989
- Final Environmental Impact Statement on Oil and Gas Leasing in The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and Record of Decision approved 5/1983
- The National Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976

The proposed action is not inconsistent with the purposes of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976. The applicant will be provided with stipulations entitled "FF094257 Arctic Wild Special Recreation Permit Amendment Stipulations" and "United States Department of the

Interior Bureau of Land Management Commercial Land Based Special Recreation Permit Stipulations.”

Date June 6, 2012

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/s/Donna L. Wixon  
Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office

**Part II: NEPA Review**

Categorical Exclusion Review.

This proposed action meets the criteria for a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, BLM H-1790-1 national Environmental Policy Act Handbook Appendix 4- H. BLM Categorical Exclusions.

**“Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan.”**

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

<b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		<b>X</b>
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.		<b>X</b>
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		<b>X</b>
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		<b>X</b>
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		<b>X</b>
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		<b>X</b>
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.		<b>X</b>
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.		<b>X</b>

2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		<b>X</b>
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		<b>X</b>
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).		<b>X</b>
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 that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		<b>X</b>

Date June 6, 2012

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/s/Donna L. Wixon  
Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office