

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Arctic Field Office  
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844  
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In reply refer to:  
FF095671 & FF095712  
2984.01 (AK012)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2011-0013-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.  
P.O. Box 100360  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 9951 0-0360

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Hydrologic Studies in NPR-A

**Description of Proposed Action:** ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. (CPAI) has requested a permit to conduct hydrologic studies in NPR-A. Hydrology monitoring would occur in the Fish Creek Basin area, proposed GMT road corridor, west bank of the Colville River, and Fiord West areas (Figure 1 ). These studies would commence approximately May 9, 2011 and could continue through June 4, 2011. Additional hydrologic and environmental studies are planned beginning June 5, 2011 and these actions will be analyzed along with other actions in DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2011-0012-CX.

The hydrological studies would primarily be conducted using helicopters for transport to and from the study area (See map for locations). Up to 49 helicopter landings are anticipated. Hydrological monitoring would occur in the Fish Creek Basin area, proposed GMT road corridor, west bank of the Colville River, and Fiord West areas. Crew sizes would consist of two to four people. Inflatable boats and or other similar small watercraft may be used for data collection on various lakes and streams in the area if the need arises. Samples may be obtained from any or all of the lakes and streams in the study area. Hydrologists would use manual measuring tools and GPS instrumentation to collect information on stream width/depth ratios, stream slope/cross sections, and to document stream bank stability.

CPAI does not plan on any remote field camps or fuel storage for any of the proposed activities. CPAI and its contractors would adhere to all applicable stipulations and required operating procedures for the NPR-A during the performance of all study activities.

**Figure 1: Map of Study Area**

## Part I: Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2008. 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 "FF095671 and FF095712 Conoco Phillips Hydrologic Studies 2011 Permit Stipulations."

Date May 9, 2011

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

## Part II: NEPA Review and Decision

### Categorical Exclusion Review

This proposed action meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D.10,

This proposed action qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion 1.6 under 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215

**"Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities."**

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

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		
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		X

future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
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>

<b>Wilderness Characteristics &amp; Wild Lands further evaluation required</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
The NPR-A was evaluated for wilderness characteristics in Section 105(c) studies during 1977 and 1978. Although activities such oil and gas leasing, subsistence practices, overland moves, excavation, recreation, aircraft use, site clean-ups, and scientific research or monitoring continue in NPR-A, most of the area remains in a natural state as it was during that study. Residents of the area do occupy seasonal dwellings or fish camps and people travel extensively by motorized vehicle over parts of NPR-A, but there are no roads outside the established communities. The overall character of NPR-A (excluding private lands) remains natural, and there are relatively few obvious signs of modern human influence or presence. A visitor to the area or an inhabitant from the settlements in or near the NPR-A can easily find opportunities for solitude (USDOJ, BLM, 1978). Some areas within NPR-A contain excellent ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic, and historical values.		<b>X</b>

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

Date May 9, 2011