

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:
FF094663
2884.01 (AK012)

PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF012-2011-0003-CX

A. Background

BLM Office: Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

Case File No.: FF094663

Proposed Action Title/Type: Right of Way Renewal.

Location of Proposed Action: NPR-A Area wide

Description of Proposed Action: The applicant, Marsh Creek LLC has requested to renew their NPR-A area wide ROW for a period of five years. The proposed action as submitted by the applicant is that of authorizing tundra travel with approved vehicles on BLM managed lands. The scope of this multiyear activity may change but will always be conducted on approved, cleared right-of-way routes.

Typical equipment that may be used include: Case Steiger tractors (rubber tracked), freight trailers (rubber tracked), CAT D7 (steel tracked), case 977 loader (steel tracked), and ski-equipped Attaco freight sleighs, camp units, and fuel sleighs.

During a typical 60 day season a refueling trip (5,000 gallons) would be required every 2 to 3 days depending on the size of equipment spread and burn rates. Per project this would amount to approximately 20 to 30 roundtrips dedicated to the movement of fuel. Typically onsite storage would not exceed about 11,000 gallons. The maximum amount of fuel that might be stored onsite would be about 21,000 gallons. This would typically only occur during poor weather conditions or if resupply trip capacity was being used for other project support.

Marsh Creek typically supports the following winter activities in the NPR-A: remote site environmental projects, exploratory well plug and abandonments, site remediation, and solid waste removal.

Camp Strings include an incinerator for camp waste management along the trail and during the project. All solid waste would be backhauled to Deadhorse for disposal or to Fairbanks for recycling if appropriate. Water sources may include lakes close to the ROW, but are not identified at this time.

No ice roads are requested under this authorization. Future requests for ice roads would be identified on a project-specific basis.

On December 23, 2010 the Secretary of the Interior signed a secretarial order for the BLM management of Wild Lands. Based on that order BLM has implemented a draft manual. To comply with the directive a short narrative about wild lands is presented here.

Activities associated with the proposed action, including use of temporary structures, vehicles (e.g., Rolligons or low pressure ground vehicles), noise from generators, aircraft, human presence, and associated activity all would have some minimal short-term impact on solitude, or naturalness. These adverse, short-term impacts would be confined primarily to the activity sites (travel routes, camps, etc.) and view shed (i.e., approximately ½ mi in any direction from the sites).

The impacts from the proposed action would have minor to negligible impacts, within a relatively small area. Activities such as winter overland moves and transport of materials have occurred for decades in NPR-A, and are considered as typical winter activities consistent with the current management of these lands. Also typical is the activity of plugging and abandonment of oil and gas exploration wells. These types of activities are consistent with the current laws and regulations, in particular the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (NPRPA). Measures to protect the characteristics of these lands, including Stipulations III, IV, VIII, X and XI are described in the attached stipulation package.

This year's proposed activity would be working for the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Umiat area at Umiat Well #9, with the possibility of plugging wells for the BLM. The Corp activity was analyzed in DOI-BLM-LLAKF01000-2009-0010EA. The well plugging would be analyzed under a project specific EA.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: The area is covered under the Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NW NPR-A) Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS).

Date Approved: 2004 and 2008

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable IAP/EIS, because it is specifically provided for in the following IAP/EIS decision: NW NPR-A IAP/EIS and NE SIAP/EIS Record of Decisions.

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; this proposed action qualifies as a BLM Categorical Exclusion E.9. Realty (BLM H-1790-1),

“Renewals and assignments of leases, permits, or rights-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations”.

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 described in 516 DM2 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.		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 that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X

I considered the effects of the right of way renewal allowing the applicant to continue their activity in the NPR-A.

D. Signature

Authorizing Official: _____ Date: January 18, 2011
//Lon Kelly

Name: Lon Kelly
Title: Arctic Field Office Manager

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Donna L Wixon, Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709, 907-474-2301.