



Environmental Assessment
for Dirk V. Derksen USGS
EA# DOI-BLM-LLAK010-2011-0009-EA
Preparing Office: Arctic Field Office

Project Title/Type of Action: **NPR-A Right of Way (2884.01)**

Serial/Lease/Case File Number: **Serial #FF095789**

Land Use Plans/Acts:

**Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity
Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated 2003**
**Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated
Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated 2008**

Applicant: **Dirk V. Derksen**
USGS Alaska Science Center

Address: **4210 University Drive**
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Date: **April 7, 2011**

Land Description

Field Camp Locations

Township	Range	Section	Latitude	Longitude	Site as named by USGS
18 North	5 West	17	N70.909600	W153.242233	Lonely
15 North	3 West	2	N70.679000	W152.562417	Garry Creek
15 North	13 East	5	N70.685900	W155.304417	Chipp North
12 North	14 West	15	N70.395033	W155.408217	Chipp South

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Glossary/Acronyms

105C Study- A study conducted in 1977 & 1978 at the direction of the Secretary of the Interior under section 105C of the NPRPA of 1976

AAC.....Alaska Administrative Code

ACEC.....Area of Critical Environmental Concern

ADFG/ADF&GAlaska Department of Fish and Game

AFO.....Arctic Field Office

ANILCA- The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act passed in 1980, modified and established designation of federal lands in Alaska for conservation and wilderness. These lands are managed by the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Forest Service.

BLM.....Bureau of Land Management

EA.....Environmental Assessment

EFH.....Essential Fish

Habitat

EIS.....Environmental Impact Statement

EO.....Executive Order

ESA.....Endangered Species Act

FLPMA – The Federal Land Policy And Management Act of 1976 is a Public Law 94-579 passed by Congress October 21, 1976 that gave direction to the way in which the public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management are managed.

IAP.....Integrated Activity Plan

NEPA- National Environmental Policy Act. This law, passed in 1969, went into effect on January 1, 1970. It requires all Federal Agencies to disclose the environmental effects of their actions.

NPRA- National Petroleum Reserve Alaska, formally named The Naval Petroleum Reserve #4(NPR-4) is an area of more than 23 million acres in the northernmost part of Alaska, and was established by executive order on February 27, 1923.

NPRPA- The Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (PL 94-258), dated April 5, 1976, transferred jurisdiction of NPR-4 to the Secretary of the Interior and renamed it the NPR-A. This act authorized the Secretary to begin further petroleum exploration and closed the NPR-A to all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including mining and mineral leasing laws.

NPR-4- The Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 was established by Executive Order 3797, dated February 27, 1923.

USFWS (FWS)United States Fish & Wildlife Service

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Dirk V. Derksen (the Applicant) with the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) Alaska Science Center has applied for a Right of Way (ROW) grant for the purpose of the temporary placement of conexas at 4 sites (See Figure 1). The sites are to be used for research of the distribution of wildlife species and community structure on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A). The timeframe for the requested use is April 2011 – April 2015. The research is part of the USGS ongoing research program known as Changing Arctic Ecosystems.

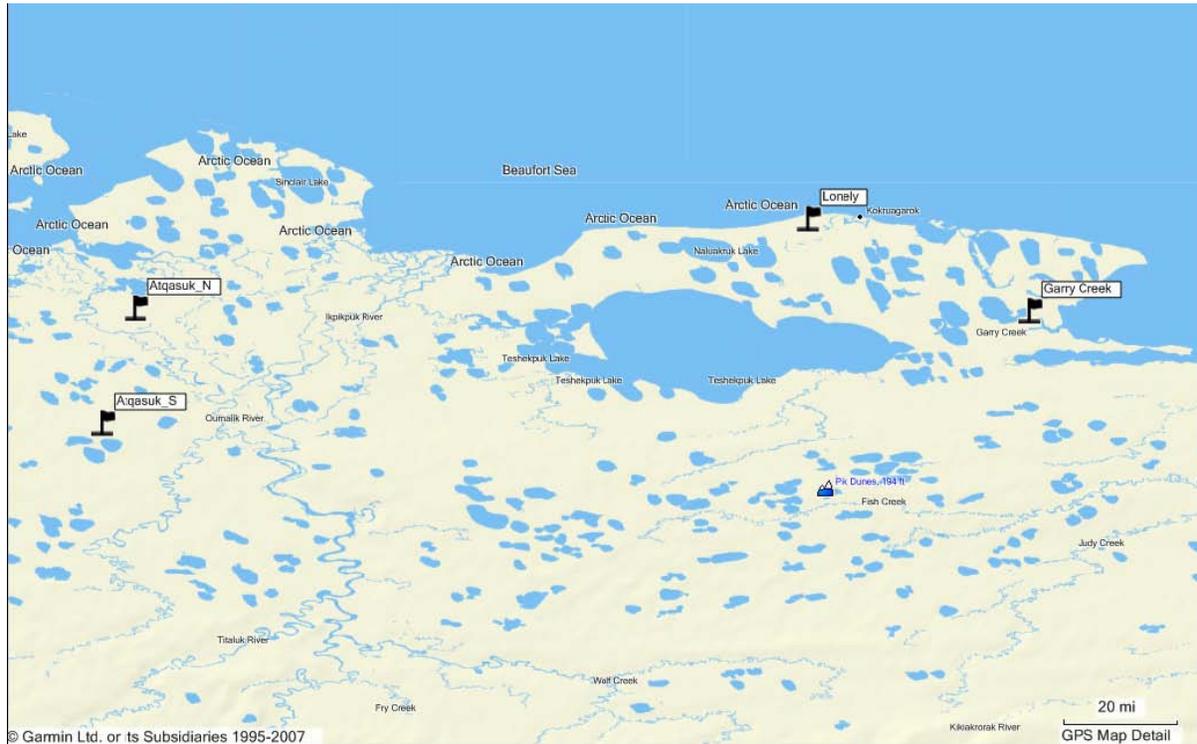


Figure 1: Applicant Map

1.1 Need for Action

The need for action is established by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of FLPMA of 1976 (FLPMA) direction to respond to requests for a right-of-way and to grant rights-of-way to qualified individuals or agencies.

1.2 Purpose of Action

The purpose for action is to provide access and use of public lands within the NPR-A in a manner that protects the natural resources of public lands and prevents unnecessary or undue degradation. The objective of the proposed action is to allow the applicant a ROW to store conexes on BLM managed lands for a four year period.

1.3 Laws, regulations, other EAs that influence this EA

This EA will be based on the findings, management controls, and protective measures of the 2003 NW NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) and the 2004 NW NPR-A IAP/EIS ROD, the NE NPR-A Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/

Environmental Impact Statement (SIAP/EIS) and the 2008 NE NPR-A SIAP/EIS ROD, as well as other laws and regulations. The action, as proposed, is consistent with the objectives outlined in these documents and not in conflict with other resources in the area. The proposed use is in conformance with current policy of the Arctic Field Office, BLM.

The proposed action is in conformance with the NW IAP/EIS, NE SIAP/EIS, associated RODs, National Petroleum Reserve Production Act (NPRPA), Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Endangered Species Act, Sustainable Fisheries Act, Executive Order (EO) 11988, EO 11990, and terms of the federal leases.

1.4 Decision to be made

The BLM must conduct a project-specific NEPA analysis and determine whether the proposed project should be approved, rejected, or approved with modifications, and if additional mitigation is needed. This EA will be based on the findings, management controls, and protective measures of the 2004 NW ROD, 2008 NE ROD, as well as other laws and regulations. The scope of this EA includes analysis that enables the BLM to select among alternatives that meet the purpose and need, and are within the BLM’s jurisdiction (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1506.1(a) (2)). The scope and timing of potential summer monitoring and mitigation are currently undefined, and are subject to future BLM evaluation.

1.5 Scoping and Issues

Public notification of the Environmental analysis was announced on March 7, 2011 in the NEPA Register on file at the Arctic Field Office Environmental Assessment web site. No public comments have been received through April 7, 2011. Development of the 2003 NW IAP/EIS and 2008 NE IAP/EIS involved extensive input from other Federal agencies, the State, the NSB, thousands of individuals, and many institutions. BLM guidelines include a list of issues that are addressed, where applicable, in NEPA assessments, (BLM, 2003, BLM 2008). Some elements are not present in the project area and are, therefore, not discussed further. A summary listing of related issues considered by AFO Field Staff is provided in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1 Issues Considered in Evaluating Impacts

Resources/Environmental Considerations for Issues and Analysis	Determination	Basis of Determination (See Note)
ACEC’s	Not Present	
Air Quality	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by: State of Alaska Air Non-Point and Mobile Program and regulations (18 AAC 50);
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act,

Table 1.1 Issues Considered in Evaluating Impacts

Resources/Environmental Considerations for Issues and Analysis	Determination	Basis of Determination (See Note)
Environmental Justice	Not Present	Protection provided by: EO 12898
Fish	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by: permit stipulations II-A, B, C, D, E, F; VIII-A, B; XI-C; ADFG Fish Habitat Permits.
Flood Plains/Wetlands and Riparian Zones	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by Permit Stips IV-C, X-A, XI-C EO 11988 and EO11990
Invasive, Non-native species	Not Present	
Native American Religious Concerns	Not Present	
Recreation	Minimally Impacted	Protection Provided by Stipulations : IIB, VIIA, VIIIA, X, XI
Socialcultural Systems	Not Present	
Subsistence	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by: ANILCA
Threatened & Endangered Species Spectacled and Steller’s eider	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (J), Permit Stipulations III. A.D, IV.A.B.C, XI.B.C and XII.B.C, XII.B.C
Threatened & Endangered Species Polar Bear	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (J), and Permit Stipulations III.A, IV.A.B.C, XI.B.C and XII.B.C, XII.B.C
Non threatened and endangered birds	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by Permit Stipulations III. A.D, XI.B.C, IV.A.B.C and XII.B. C, XII.B.C
Non threatened and endangered mammals	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by Permit Stipulations III.A,B, D, E, XI.B.1, and XII.A, B, C.
Vegetation	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by Permit Stipulations IV.C, and X.A.
Visual Resource Management	Minimally Impacted	Protection Provided by: VIIA, VIIIA, X, and XI
Water Resources	Not Present	
Waste (Hazardous/Solid)	Minimally Impacted	Protection provided by: SPCC Plan and NPDES permits; State of Alaska regulations 18 AAC 30, 60, 62, 63, 72, and 75; and by permit Stips
Wild & Scenic Rivers	Not Present	
Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands	Potentially Affected	See Chapters 3 and 4. Protection provided by VIIA, VIIIA, X, and XI
<p>Key to Table 1.1:</p> <p>AAC- Alaska Administrative Code ACEC- Area of Critical Environmental Concern ADFG- Alaska Department of Fish and Game ANILCA- Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act System BLM – Bureau of Land Management EFH – Essential Fish Habitat</p> <p>EO- Executive Order EPA- Environmental Protection Agency ESA- Endangered Species Act NPDES- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ROP- Required Operating Procedure SPCC- Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures</p> <p>Potentially Affected: The proposed action or alternative could result in potential impacts to resource or issues to the level that additional mitigation may be required, or there is a need to evaluate potentially significant issues.</p>		

Table 1.1 Issues Considered in Evaluating Impacts

Resources/Environmental Considerations for Issues and Analysis	Determination	Basis of Determination (See Note)
<p>Minimally Impacted: Resources or issues would not be affected to a degree requiring further analysis because either the expected impacts from the proposed action and alternative would be minimal, or standard protections (e.g., ROPs and Stipulations from overriding BLM plans or other legal protections) would reduce impacts. Minimally impacted resources or issues will not be analyzed further in this EA.</p>		
<p>Not Present: Resources or issues are not expected to be affected by the proposed action or alternatives because activities would occur at a different time or place. Resource or issues not present will not be analyzed further in the EA.</p>		

Note: Determination tiered from: 2003 NW IAP/EIS and 2004 ROD, 2008 NE IAP/EIS; and 2008 NE ROD, and laws and regulations as noted.

In summary, BLM resource specialists have identified the following issue for further evaluation in this EA: Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands.

1.6 Public Involvement

Public notification of the Environmental analysis was announced on March 7, 2011 in the NEPA register on file at the Arctic Field Office Environmental Assessment web site. The applicant provided informational flyers to several agencies and organizations in Nuiqsut, Barrow, and Atqasuk on 03/11/2011. These flyers explain the locations and purposes of the camps and invite residents to contact USGS personnel with any questions they may have. The applicant has agreed to provide updated flyers every spring to the same institutions. The applicant will also make the same information available on the side of the conexas themselves.

Chapter 2 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Introduction

This chapter both describes the alternatives (potential actions) and compares the alternatives in terms of their environmental impacts (from Section 1.5) and their achievement of objectives (from Section 1.2).

2.2 Description of Alternatives

2.2.1 Alternative A: No Action

Under No Action, the BLM would not issue a ROW to Dirk V. Derksen of the USGS for

storage of conexes on public land in support of conducting research in the NPR-A. Current land management situation and activities would continue but access and activities related to those requested by the proponent would not occur.

See Chapter III (Affected Environment) of the NW IAP/EIS for a more detailed profile of the current environmental situation at the sites.

2.2.2 Alternative B: Proposed Action

The proposed action as submitted by the applicant is that of temporary placement and storage of conexes at 4 sites to aid in conducting research on the Arctic Coastal Plain. The objective of the research is to quantify changes in distribution of wildlife species and community structure relative to climate-induced changes on the landscape, and ultimately, to inform knowledge-based models to predict future population abundance and distributions under a range of climate change scenarios.

USGS describes the research activities as critical components of “Changing Arctic Ecosystems” (CAE), a long-term research program of the U.S. Geological Survey that is focused on addressing Department of Interior need for new approaches to understand climate effects on important biological resources and ecosystems in order to develop successful resource management and conservation strategies. This research is funded through a Presidential budget increase to the USGS directed specifically for CAE. The findings would inform knowledge-based models to predict future population abundance and distributions of plants and wildlife under a range of climate change scenarios.

2.2.2.1 Conex Information

USGS proposes to place one conex box (20 ft × 8 ft × 8ft) at each site to be used over the duration of research activity for use as living quarters and base camp. The conexes would provide safety as a bear-proof living structure, and would ensure that all food items and potential bear attractants are inaccessible to bears at all times. This would allow storage of field gear over the winter and eliminate the need for helicopter use and reduce the number of required aircraft flights. The fixed wing flights for resupply and personnel travel would take place on skis or floats with the exception of Lonely which has a gravel air strip.

The applicant would contract with Crowley to transport the conexes in April 2011 via Rolligons from Deadhorse to the study sites. There would be no construction and facilities would be limited to a small number of personal tents in the near vicinity of each camp site.

The Conexes would be painted tan to minimize visual impacts. Noise resulting from use of the structures (conexes) would be minimal and limited to the occasional use of small, four-stroke generators from which sound would not carry beyond the immediate vicinity of the structures. The structures would be elevated above the ground on blocks to minimize effects on the vegetation below. The blocks consist of 5ft sections of 8 in×8 in untreated lumber that cross in a diagonal at each corner. The blocks would sit on a base of 2in × 12 in

untreated lumber to provide more surface area and prevent the blocks from sinking into the tundra. Below is a diagram looking down through the top of a conex.

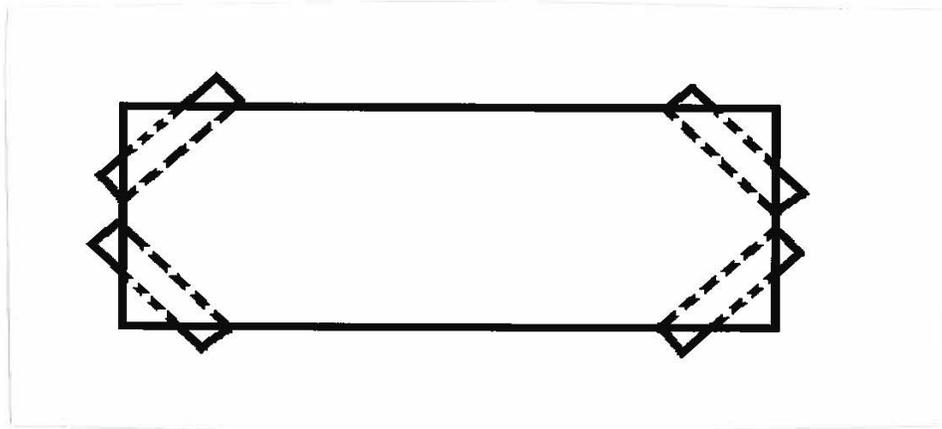


Figure 2 Example of Conex on blocks

The structures would be located in areas of elevated, dry tundra to minimize effects on plant life, and to avoid potential nesting habitat of threatened or endangered species such as Steller's and spectacled eiders. The conexas would be removed during the winter of 2014-2015.

The proposed sites were evaluated last summer to ensure the locations were viable and able to support the structures. The four sites of temporary storage of the conexas are: Lonely, Garry Creek, Chipp North and Chipp South.

2.2.2.2 Site Locations

The proposed location of the conexas are Lonely and Garry Creek, and Chipp North and South, the coordinates of which are shown in the land description on page 2.

2.2.2.3 Fuel use

Up to 50 gallons of diesel fuel would be stored on site to be used for heating of living quarters. Up to 50 gallons of unleaded gasoline would be stored on site for outboard motor and snowmobile use. The applicant would use white gas and/or propane for cooking and

drying vegetation samples. All fuel would be stored in secondary containment structures and fuel absorbent material would be readily available in case of a spill. When personnel are not on site the fuel would be stored in the conexs, but would be outside when there are personnel present.

2.2.2.4 Reclamation

The applicant would remove the 4 conex boxes and all related material from the sites during the winter of 2014-2015. They would return to each of the sites during the summer of 2015 to assess the extent of any damage in the area directly beneath and surrounding the conex sites. Regrowth and recolonization of vegetation is expected to occur naturally. USGS would monitor the sites' revegetation and, in the event that vegetation does not return to its pre-existing state naturally, they would collaborate with BLM to identify potential management actions.

2.3 Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the: NE and NW IAP/EISs and associated RODs, Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Endangered Species Act, Executive Order (EO) 11988, EO 11990, and terms of the federal leases.

In the two respective IAP/EISs, the BLM evaluated the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of winter exploration in the NPR-A. These analyses concluded that the stipulations and ROPs provided adequate protection for surface resources and subsistence activities in both planning areas. In each of the associated RODs, several changes were made to those protective measures to address new data, new regulations, and new public concerns.

Chapter 3 Affected Environment

Environmental characteristics of the general project area have been extensively described in the 2004 NW NPR-A IAP/EIS, the 2008 NE NPR-A IAP/EIS (Vol. 1, Chapter 3), to which this analysis is tiered, with some site-specific features described below.

Based on the proposed project and the issues analysis in Section 1.5, the following discussion of the affected environment covers Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands.

3.1 Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands

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. The four sites are all remote parcels that have not been altered from their natural state. They are at least 50 miles from any village.

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 (USDOI, BLM, 1978). Some areas within NPR-A contain excellent ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic, and historical values.

Chapter 4 Environmental Impacts

Because the proposed activities are not substantially different from those previously evaluated, and because no significant new scientific information or analyses have been developed since the most recent related evaluation (i.e., May 2008), this NEPA analysis will focus on impacts due to the project-specific/site-specific differences of the proposed action.

4.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

The proposed action is built on experience gained from decades of similar operations on the North Slope. This EA is tiered from the 2003 NW IAP/EIS and its ROD and the 2008 NE IAP/EIS and its ROD. Related discussion of impacts is found in: 2008 NE IAP/EIS, Vol. 2, Chapter 4.6 (Environmental Consequences of Alternative D, the preferred alternative); and 2003 NW IAP/EIS, Vol. 2, Section V.B (Environmental Consequences of the Preferred Alternative).

Issues specifically identified in Section 1.5 for further analysis in this EA are discussed below.

4.1.1 Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands

Activities associated with the proposed action, including use of temporary structures, vehicles (e.g., Rolligons or low pressure ground vehicles), 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 mile 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. 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 VIIA, VIIIA, X and XI described in Section 4.3 Mitigation and Monitoring.

4.1.1.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative the ROW for the temporary storage of 4 conexas would not be granted. Aircraft use would increase, and there could be higher noise levels in areas near the landing fields. Such impacts would be short term and localized.

4.2 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative impacts result from the incremental addition of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. Each action may be individually minor by itself, but when added to others could become significant over a period of time.

The time frame for the proposed action for the project area is 1977 (designation of NPR-A) to 10 years into the future, assuming that the relatively low level of activity and management would remain at about the same level as present. Due to the limited scope and intensity of the proposed action the geographic area would be limited within 1 mile of the proposed use area. Additional past, present, and future activities in the area include recreation, subsistence, and research and monitoring. While the level of such activities may increase slightly within the next 10 years, there are no development proposals that would substantially add to the current levels. The incremental addition of the proposed action would be short-term and highly localized and would not add to increased cumulative effects.

The proposed action is not anticipated to result in cumulative impacts due to the remoteness of the portion of the area where the activity would occur, the low impact levels associated with the activity.

4.2.1 Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands

Impacts from temporary trails and disturbance from noise and other activities would be short term, localized, and not accumulate.

4.3 Mitigation and Monitoring

The stipulations (Appendix A) for the proposed action are a subset of the 2004 NW NPR-A IAP/EIS ROD, the 2008 NE NPR-A SIAP/EIS ROD, and project specific stipulations developed in the NEPA process.

4.4 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The potential issue identified in the evaluation of the proposed action for this EA was Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands. The analysis found that impacts would be short term and localized and that mitigation measures in Appendix A would adequately reduce any adverse effects to Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands in the area. Likewise, the analysis also found that mitigation measures would adequately reduce any adverse effects to Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands which would also be short term and localized.

The proposed action would not contribute to significant cumulative effects to Wilderness Characteristics and Wild Lands in the proposed project areas.

Chapter 5 Consultation and Coordination

5.1 Agencies, Organization, Persons Consulted

Public notification of the Environmental analysis will be on file at the Arctic Field Office and available on the Arctic Field Office Environmental Assessment web site.

5.2 List of Preparers

Dave Yokel, Wildlife Biologist
Michael Kunz, Archaeologist
Susan Flora, Environmental Scientist
Richard Kemnitz, Hydrologist
Donna Wixon, Natural Resource Specialist
Debbie Nigro, Wildlife Biologist
Matthew Whitman, Fish Biologist
Stacey Fritz, Anthropologist/Subsistence Specialist
Roger Sayre, NEPA Specialist

ANILCA Requirements

Section 810 Subsistence Evaluation

This action is not likely to cause any significant restriction to the subsistence resources of the area (see ANILCA section 810 Evaluation within the ROW case file).

APPENDIX A: BLM Arctic Field Office Right of Way Stipulations/Required Operating Procedures

Dirk V Derksen USGS FF095789 Right of Way Stipulations

ARCTIC FIELD OFFICE NON OIL AND GAS PERMIT STIPULATIONS

[This is a subset of the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/ Final Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision Required Operating Procedures, the Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/ Final Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision

Required Operating Procedures, Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement, The Colville River Special Area Management Plan, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement on Oil and Gas Leasing in The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and Record of Decision approved 5/1983.]

I. AUTHORIZED OFFICER

The Authorized Officer (AO) is the Manager, Arctic Field Office.

II. AIR & WATER

- A. All operations shall comply with applicable Air and Water Quality Standards of the State of Alaska.
- B. Grey wash water and kitchen waste water may be filtered to remove the solids and the liquid discharged to the land surface, provided the disposal area is a minimum of 100 feet from any water body or stream.

WINTER ONLY:

- C. Water withdrawal from rivers and streams during winter is prohibited.
- D. Compaction of snow cover or snow removal from fish-bearing water bodies shall be prohibited except at approved ice road crossings, water pumping stations on lakes or areas of grounded ice.

E. NORTHEAST SPECIFIC

- 1. Lakes that are ≥ 7 feet with sensitive fish (any fish except ninespine stickleback or Alaska blackfish), water available for withdrawal is limited to 15% of calculated volume deeper than 7 feet; lakes that are between 5 and 7 feet with sensitive fish, water available for withdrawal would be calculated on a case by case basis.
- 2. Lakes that are ≥ 5 feet with only non-sensitive fish (i.e., ninespine stickleback or Alaska blackfish), water available for withdrawal is limited to 30% of calculated volume deeper than 5 feet.
- 3. Any lake with no fish present, regardless of depth, water available for withdrawal is up to 35% as specified within the permit.

F. NORTHWEST SPECIFIC

Water withdrawal from lakes may be authorized on a site-specific basis depending on size, water volume, depth and fish population and species diversification. Current water withdrawal requirements specify:

- 1) Water withdrawals from any fish bearing lake 7 feet or deeper shall be limited to 15 percent of the estimated free water volume located beneath the ice.
- 2) Water withdrawals from lakes with depths between 5 and 7 feet that contain only ninespine stickleback and/or Alaska blackfish are limited to up to 30 percent of the under-ice volume.

III. AIRCRAFT

- A. Hazing of wildlife by aircraft is prohibited. Pursuit of running wildlife is hazing. If wildlife begin to run as an aircraft approaches, the aircraft is too close and must break away.
- B. Aircraft shall maintain an altitude of at least 1,000 ft AGL (except for takeoffs and landings) over caribou winter ranges from December 1 through May 1, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices. Caribou wintering areas will be defined annually by the AO.
- C. Use of aircraft, especially rotary wing aircraft, near known subsistence camps and cabins or during sensitive subsistence hunting periods (spring goose hunting and fall caribou and moose hunting) should be kept to a minimum.

D. NORTHEAST SPECIFIC

Aircraft used for permitted activities shall maintain an altitude of at least 2,000 feet AGL (except for takeoffs and landings) over the Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Habitat Area (Map 1) from May 20 through August 20, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices. Aircraft use (including fixed wing and helicopter) in the Goose Molting Area (Map 2) should be minimized from May 20 through August 20, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices.

E. NORTHWEST SPECIFIC

1. Aircraft used for permitted activities shall maintain an altitude of at least 2,000 ft AGL (except for takeoffs and landings) over the Caribou Study Area (Map 91) from June

15 through July 31, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices.

2. Aircraft shall maintain an altitude of at least 2,000 ft AGL (except for takeoffs and landings) over the Caribou Coastal Insect-Relief Areas (Map 91) from June 15 through July 31, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices.

F. SOUTH SPECIFIC

Aircraft shall maintain an altitude of at least 2,000 ft AGL (except for takeoffs and landings) over groups of caribou from May 20 through August 20, unless doing so would endanger human life or violate safe flying practices.

IV. CAMPS

- A. The Permittee accepts responsibility for their campsite conditions and will be liable for identified rehabilitation activities.
- B. Provide BLM with a detailed map of all camp locations, trails used located accurately on a USGS quadrangle map of the 1:63,360 scale. Please include the dates of the trip, the number of people camped at each site, and GPS location (with datum noted).
- C. Camps will be situated on gravel bars, sand, or other durable lands.

V. CULTURAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- A. In accordance with the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 470aa), the removal or disturbance of archeological or historic artifacts is prohibited. The excavation, disturbance, collection, or purchase of historical, recent, ethnological, or archaeological specimens or artifacts is prohibited.. Such items include both prehistoric stone tools and sites, as well as historic log cabins, remnants of such structures, refuse dumps, and other such features. The disturbance, excavation and collection of vertebrate paleontological (fossil) remains is also prohibited.
- B. Any cultural or Paleontological resource discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, situated on lands owned or controlled by the United States shall be promptly reported to the AO. Discoveries must be left in place allowing an examination by BLM cultural or paleontological specialists.
- C. Prior to any ground-disturbing activity the permittee shall conduct a cultural and paleontological resources survey.

VI. FIRE

- A. The BLM, through the AO, reserves the right to impose closure of any area to operators in periods when fire danger or other dangers to natural resources are severe.
- B. The authorized user shall be financially responsible for any damage done by a wildfire caused by its operations. Costs associated with wildfires include but are not limited to; Damage to natural resources and costs associated with any suppression action taken on the fire.

VII. OPERATIONS

- A. It is the responsibility of the authorized user to ensure that all individuals brought to the project area under its auspices adhere to these stipulations. Authorized users of the planning area shall provide all employees, contractors, subcontractors, and clients with a briefing regarding stipulations applicable to the lease and/or permit.
- B. A copy of applicable stipulations will be posted in a conspicuous place in each work site and campsite.
- C. The provisions of this permit do not relieve the Permittee of any responsibilities or obligations required by the laws or regulations of the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or other applicable regulations related to this permit.
- D. The authorized user shall protect all survey monuments and be responsible for survey costs if remonumentation is required as a result of the user's actions.
- E. Survey monuments include, but are not limited to, General Land Office and Bureau of Land Management Cadastral Survey Corners, reference corners, witness points, U.S. Coast and Geodetic benchmarks and triangulation stations, military control monuments, and recognizable civil (both public and private) survey monuments.
- F. In the event of obliteration or disturbance of any of the above, the Permittee shall promptly report the incident, in writing, to the Authorized Officer and the respective installing agency, if known. Where General Land Office or Bureau of Land Management right-of-way monuments or references are obliterated during operations, the Permittee shall secure the services of a registered land surveyor or a Bureau Cadastral surveyor to restore the disturbed monuments and references using surveying procedures found in the Manual of Surveying Instructions for the Survey of Public Lands of the United States, latest edition. If the Bureau cadastral surveyors or other Federal surveyors are used to restore the disturbed survey monuments, the Permittee shall be responsible for survey costs.

- G. Removal of greater than 100 cubic yards of sand and/or gravel from cliffs shall be prohibited.

VIII. STREAMS

- A. All operations shall be conducted with due regard for good resource management and in such a manner as not to block any stream, or drainage system, or change the character or course of a stream, or cause the pollution or siltation of any stream or lake.

Winter Only

- B. Travel up and down streambeds in winter is prohibited unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no additional impacts from such travel to over-wintering fish or the invertebrates they rely on. Rivers and streams shall be crossed at shallow riffles from point bar to point bar whenever possible.

IX. SUBSISTENCE

- A. The permittee will take no action that interferes with subsistence activities of rural users or restricts the reasonable access of subsistence users to public lands. This may include but is not limited to disturbance of wildlife and their movements near subsistence hunters, and damage to cabins, trails, traditional campsites or caches used by subsistence users.
- B. Permittee shall notify potentially affected local communities about the nature and extent of their proposed activity at least one week prior to the start of their activity. This notification should take the form of an informational flyer that includes: 1) the entity conducting the proposed activity; 2) a description of the proposed activity; 3) the purpose of the proposed activity; 4) the time period of the proposed activity; 5) the location of the proposed activity (including a general map); and 6) a primary point of contact including contact information. Five (5) hard-copy flyers should be provided to each community's local North Slope Borough Liaison with a request for posting on community bulletin boards. One copy of the flyer shall be provided to the BLM for posting at the Barrow Field Station.

X. VEGETATION

- A. All activities shall be conducted to avoid or minimize disturbance to vegetation. The clearing of vegetation for camps or aircraft landing areas is prohibited.
- B. On a case-by-case basis, BLM may permit low ground- pressure vehicles to travel off of gravel pads and roads. Permission for such use would only be granted after an applicant has:
1. Submitted studies satisfactory to the AO of the impacts on soils and vegetation of the

specific low-ground-pressure vehicles to be used. These studies should reflect use of such vehicles under conditions similar to those of the route proposed for use and should demonstrate that the proposed use would have no more than minimal impacts to soils and vegetation.

2. Submitted surveys satisfactory to the AO of subsistence uses of the area as well as of the soils, vegetation, hydrology, wildlife and fish (and their habitats), paleontological and archaeological resources, and other resources as required by the AO.

XI. WASTE

A. HUMAN WASTES

1. Toilet paper: Toilet paper must be packed out or a natural alternative used. Natural options for toilet paper include snow, smooth stones or sticks, leaves and moss. Natural TP options should be disposed of the same as the human waste. Feminine hygiene products and diapers must also be packed out.
2. Urine: Urine can attract animals seeking salt: avoid urinating on plants that can be defoliated by animals attracted to the salt residue. Urinate 200 feet away from camps and trails on rock or bare ground.
3. Recommended human excreta disposal in riparian areas: Packing out human wastes is the most eco-friendly means of disposal and the toilet can be located wherever is most appropriate. This method helps areas that receive high-levels of use retain their naturalness, and preserves pristine areas. Disadvantages include: it incurs cost and requires logistical considerations. The WAG (Waste Alleviation and Gelling) Bag has become the overall term for any pack-it-out bag system. It generally involves one bag with which holds the excrement and another sturdier, sealable bag. Commercial vendors of waste bag kits, powders and supplies include ReStop, Biffy Bags, and Cleanwaste.

B. GARBAGE

1. Attracting wildlife to food and garbage is prohibited.
2. Burial & burning of garbage is prohibited. Burial of human waste is prohibited except as authorized by the AO. [*Special Recreation Permit holders meet all requirements by following the guidelines in Leave No Trace, Alaska Tundra.*]
3. Areas of operation shall be left clean of all debris.

C. FUEL

1. Notice of any spill shall be given to the AO as soon as possible or to the BLM Arctic Field Office Hazmat Coordinator, Susan Flora (work/message 907-474-2303). Other Federal, State, and NSB entities shall be notified as required by law.
2. All spills shall be cleaned up immediately and to the satisfaction of the AO and all agencies with regulatory authority over spills, including the Alaska Department of Environmental Concerns (ADEC),(1800-478-9300) (Alaska Statute Title 18, Chapter 75, Article 2).
3. State and Federal safety standards for fuel handling will be followed.
4. All fuel containers, including barrels and propane tanks, shall be marked with Permittee's name, product type, and year filled or purchased (e.g. company Name, Fuel Type, 1993).
5. Sorbant pads will be stored and used at all fueling points and maintenance areas. Drip basins and/or sorbent pads will be placed under all non dry-disconnect-type fuel line couplings and valves.
6. Fuels shall not be stored on the active floodplain of any waterbody. Although fuels may be off-loaded from aircraft on ice, fuels shall not be stored on lake or river ice.
7. Refueling of equipment within 500 feet of the highest high water mark of any waterbody is prohibited with the exception of refueling motor boats, float planes, and ski planes. Small caches (up to 210 gallons) for motorboats float planes, ski planes, and small equipment, e.g. portable generators and water pumps, will be permitted.
8. Fuel, other petroleum products, and other liquid chemicals designated by the AO in **excess of 1,320 gallons** in storage capacity, shall be stored within an impermeable lined and diked area or within approved alternate storage containers such as overpacks, capable of containing 110 percent of the stored volume. The liner material shall be compatible with the stored product and capable of remaining impermeable during typical weather extremes expected throughout the storage period.

D. PESTICIDES

Use of pesticides without the specific authority of the AO is prohibited.

XII. WILDLIFE

- A. Chasing wildlife with ground vehicles is prohibited. Particular attention will be given to avoid disturbing caribou.
- B. The feeding of wildlife is prohibited.

- C. With the exception of authorized guide hunting trips, hunting and trapping by permittees is prohibited.

FF095789
2884.01

Finding of No Significant Impact

Type of Action: NPR-A Right of Way

Serial Number: FF095789

Environmental Assessment Number: DOI-BLM-AK-F010-2011-0009-EA

Applicant: Dirk V. Derksen
USGS Alaska Science Center

Address: 4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

District: Arctic Field Office

Planning Unit: Northeast National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Supplemental
Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated
2008

Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity
Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated 2003

Lands Involved:

Township	Range	Section	Latitude	Longitude	Site as named by USGS
18 North	5 West	17	N70.909600	W153.242233	Lonely
15 North	3 West	2	N70.679000	W152.562417	Garry Creek
15 North	13 East	5	N70.685900	W155.304417	Chipp North
12 North	14 West	15	N70.395033	W155.408217	Chipp South

Context and Intensity of Environmental Impacts

Based upon a review of the EA prepared by the Arctic Field Office and the supporting documents, I have determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance as defined at 40 CFR 1508.27. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. We reviewed the context of the proposed action and found that it would not result in any significant effects to resources and values in NPR-A. The mitigation measures and environmental protections would ensure that the Proposed Action would not add significantly to adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative environmental impacts.

The need for this project is for the USGS to temporarily store 4 conexas on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

The following factors were considered in the EA to evaluate the significance this proposal (40 CFR 1508.27): Beneficial and adverse impacts; effects on public health and safety; unique cultural or ecological areas within or near the project area; potentially controversial or uncertain effects; whether the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effect; cumulative effects; adverse impacts to important scientific, cultural or historical resources; effects to endangered or threatened species or habitat; or whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, local or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements:

Monitoring and Mitigation

BLM will monitor on the ground activities periodically. Mitigation measures will be implemented as described in the attached authorization stipulations.

APPROVED:

/s/Lon Kelly
Arctic Field Office Manager

April 7, 2011

Date