



# 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:  
FF095707  
2984.01 (AK010)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2011-0033-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** Peter P. Flaig  
Post Doctoral Fellow  
University of Texas at Austin  
Jackson School of Geosciences

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Sedimentological Survey of the Colville River Bluffs

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, Peter Flaig of the University of Texas School of Geosciences, has requested authorization for field activity access and landing with a fixed-wing aircraft on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A) for sedimentological surveys of the bluffs along the Colville River east of Umiat Alaska from approximately August 8 through September 3, 2011.

This study is a continuation of a 2010 project, DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2010-0039-CX. The purpose of the project is to:

- (1) Continue measurement of 7-10 stratigraphic geologic sections near the contact of the Prince Creek Formation and the lower Schrader Bluff Formation at coordinates N 69° 25', W 151° 46' at Shivugak Bluff to the transition of the Prince Creek Formation from braided stream deposits to meandering stream deposits at the ~ coordinates N 69° 30.5', W 151° 28.5'.
- (2) Collect sand samples for petrographic, chemostratigraphic, and palynological analyses.
- (3) Collect ashfall deposits for radiometric dating of the Prince Creek Formation at this location.
- (4) Collect coal samples for Rock EVAL analysis with a goal of constraining the depth of burial for the Prince Creek Formation in this area

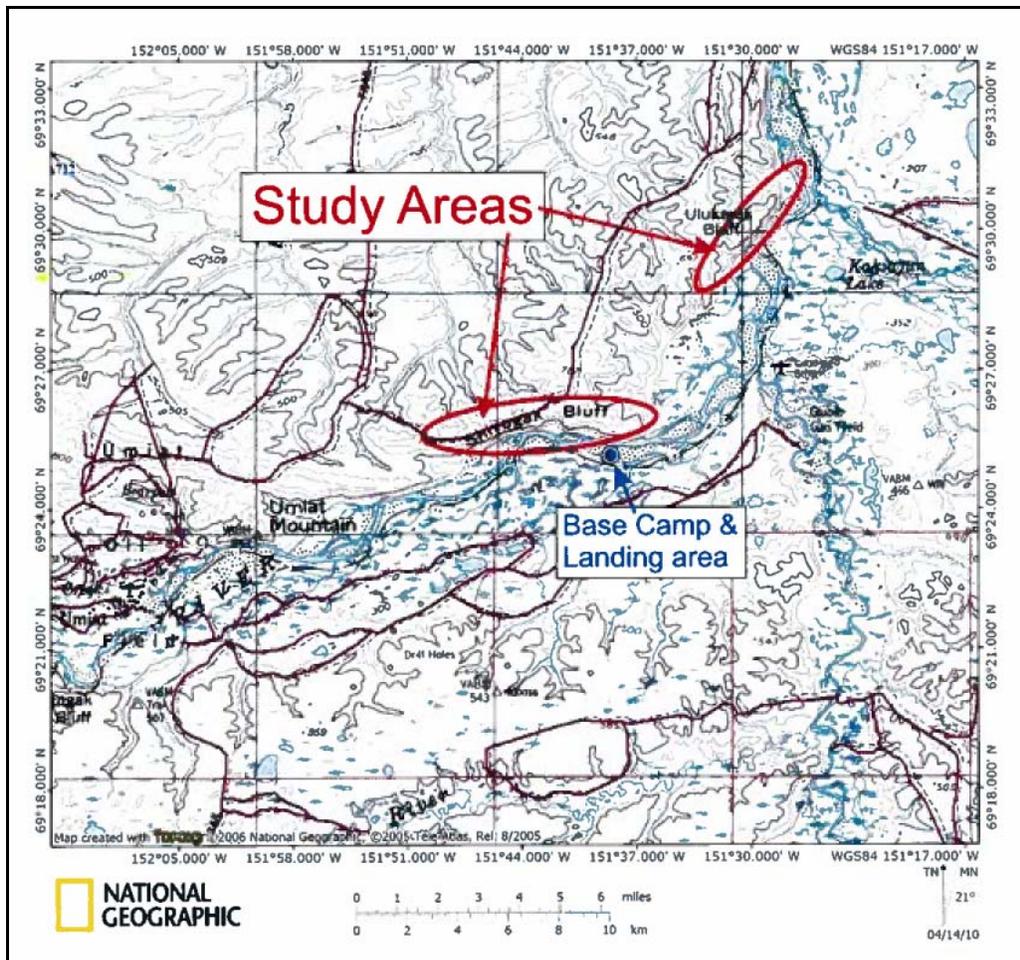
The 2010 survey was not completed due to weather and scheduling constraints.

Transportation to the site will be via small plane. The workers (Dr. Flaig and two associates) intend to land a small plane and set up a small base camp (2-3 small tents) on a point bar on state-owned land across the Colville River from the bluffs (east of the Colville River) at coordinates N 69° 25.2',

W 151° 39.5' (Map 1). Camp set-up will require two aircraft (small planes) landing at the beginning of the proposed field dates and camp tear-down will require two small aircraft landings at the end of the proposed field dates. Access to the bluffs during the field season will be via a single inflatable raft with attached motor (e.g. Zodiac) assembled and anchored at our proposed base camp across the Colville river from the bluffs. A small fuel cash of approximately 35 gallons of regular unleaded gasoline for this single boat will be stored at the base camp location (N 69° 25.2', W 151° 39.5') within a secondary containment system.

**Legal Description:**

|                       | <b>Township</b> | <b>Range</b> | <b>Section</b> |                         |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Shivugak Bluff</b> | 1 North         | 1 East       | 13,14,23-25    | Excluding Private Lands |
|                       | 1 North         | 2 East       | 14-23          | Excluding Private Lands |
| <b>Ulukrak Bluff</b>  | 2 North         | 2 East       | 13,23-26,35,36 | Excluding Private Lands |
|                       | 2 North         | 3 East       | 17-20,30       | Excluding Private Lands |



**Map 1. Location of field camp and sampling sites.**

**Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska IAP/EIS (2008) and Colville River Special Area Management Plan and EA (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 “FF095707 Flaig, University of Texas Austin Stipulations 2011.”

Date July 21, 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.

| <b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 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. |            | <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   |            | <b>X</b>  |

|  |  |          |
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| 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> |

Date July 21, 2011

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