

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Arctic Field Office  
1150 University Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844  
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

In reply refer to:  
FF095556  
2984.01 (AKF012)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF01000-2009-0016-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** University of Alaska-Fairbanks  
Dr. Mary Beth Leigh  
Institute of Arctic Biology  
902 North Koyukuk Drive  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7000

**Proposed Action:** Perform Lake Studies at Qalluuraq Lake.

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, University of Alaska-Fairbanks Dr. Mary Beth Leigh, has requested authorization to conduct lake studies at Qalluuraq Lake. Qalluuraq Lake is located near the village of Atqasuk in the Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The field activities proposed are:

1. Acquire Samples (~50 cc volumes) of lake mud from the lake
2. Acquire Samples of lake water (~50 cc volumes) from the lake
3. Acquire a core (~2-5/8" internal diameter) of the sediments present in the lake to determine the age of the lake.
4. Acquire samples of methane gas bubbling from the lake bottom.

Dr. Leigh proposes to visit the site on 3 different occasions: May 7-13, 2009, July 1-31, 2009 and spring 2010. This CX addresses only the 2 spring trips. A determination of the NEPA analysis required for the summer work will be made at a later date. The spring work will be conducted via snowmachine while the summer work will involve All Terrain Vehicles and a slightly different route. This CX will be used to make a decision on the authorization of the spring 2009 and 2010 work only.

There will be 8 people working on the project this spring and 3 people the spring of 2010. The crew will be accompanied by Atqasuk residents to act as guides and serve as polar bear watch. The crew will be flown commercially from Barrow to Atqasuk. Personnel will be staying at the village of Atqasuk. Transportation to and from the site will be via snow machine. There will be no fuel stored on BLM lands.

**Location:**

Sections 2,11,12,13,24, Township 12 North, Range 22 West, Umiat Meridian

**Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated 1/22/2004. 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 "FF095556 University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Dr. Mary Beth Leigh Spring Lake Studies 2009-2010 Stipulations" and Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills & Ethics Alaskan Tundra.

Date May 5, 2009

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

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**Part II: NEPA Review**

Categorical Exclusion Review.

This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 2, Appendix 1.6

**"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 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Date May 5, 2009

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