



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Arctic Field Office
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In reply refer to:
FF095718
2984.01 (AK012)

PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF012-2010-0035-CX

Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

Applicant: Dirk V. Derksen
U. S. Geological Survey
Alaska Science Center
Glenn Olds Hall
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Proposed Action: Avian Research in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A)
(2984.01).

Description of Proposed Action: The applicant Dirk Derksen, with the USGS Alaska Science Center has requested authorization for field activity access and landing by a floatplane, on lands within the Northwest National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A) in support of avian research.

The project would be conducted in July and August of 2010 with the objective to investigate prospective study sites for a multi-year global climate change research program focused on waterbirds (e.g., yellow-billed loons, greater white-fronted geese, spectacled eiders, and other ducks), their preferred foods (e.g., fish, non-woody vegetation, and invertebrates), and how climate warming may alter hydrologic parameters that influence this forage base.

This initial site visit is being proposed to assist in determining future field logistics and to provide initial sampling for habitat stratification and sampling design. The reconnaissance would also provide a broad scale assessment of avian species composition and abundance, and opportunity select potential camp locations (see map on page 2).

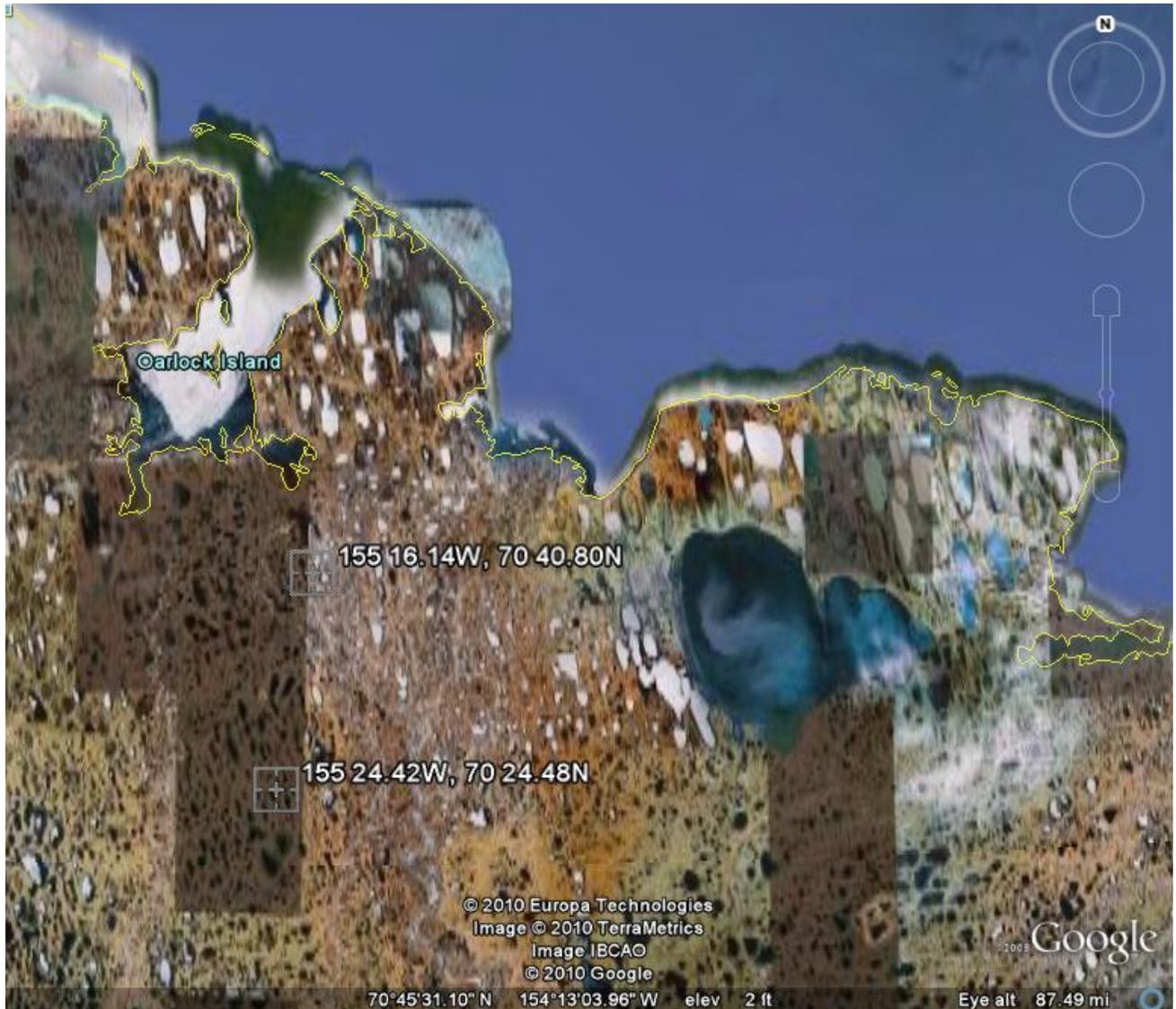
The project would involve:

Low level (i.e., 150 feet) aerial surveys to record avian species observed (i.e., waterfowl and loons), classify wetlands into broad strata and classify terrestrial vegetation into several broad strata, and identify potential camp locations

Crews would be dropped off at each site to evaluate suitability of camp locations, access to potential drinking water, locate flat dry tundra, conduct initial vegetation sampling, and to mark and identify potential locations of experimental plots.

If time permits in late July or early August the applicant may transport materials for weatherport floors to selected camp locations. No fuel or hazardous materials would be stored, only raw building materials.

A separate NEPA analysis would be required for further studies.



General location of proposed water bird study sites (155 16.14W, 70 40.80N and 155 24.42W, 70 24.48N)

Legal Description (All Umiat Meridian):

Plot 20	Township	Range	Section
	15 North	14 West	1,2,11-14,23-26,35,36
	15 North	13 West	1-24
	16 North	14 West	23-26,35,36
	16 North	13 West	19-36
Plot 50	12 North	13 West	6,7,18,19,30
	12 North	14 West	1-30
	13 North	14 West	32-36
	13 North	13 West	31-32

Part I: Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is subject to the following planning document: Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (IAP/EIS) 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 "FF095718 USGS Derksen Summer 2010 Stipulations."

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

Date July 7, 2010

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.		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

Date July 7, 2010

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