

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:
FF095698
2984.01 (AK012)

PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF012-2010-0028-CX

Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

Applicant: Paul Flint
Research Wildlife Biologist
USGS Alaska Science Center
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Proposed Action Title/Type: Black Brant Research in NPR-A.

Description of Proposed Action: The applicant, Paul Flint of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), has requested authorization for field activity access and landing with fixed-wing aircraft on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A), in support of ecological research and monitoring. A Beaver on wheels is the proposed aircraft for Lonely and Kogru then a 206 would be used for the other requested areas. Proposed activities would be in the Kogru River, the Colville River Delta, Cape Simpson, Gary Creek, and Piasik River area (Table 1).

Table 1. Timing, location, and type of location of proposed USGS black brant field studies for summer 2010.

| Date | Loc. | Type of Activity | Number of People | Access | Number of Landings | Fuel Sites | Field Camp Location |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| July 10 – July 15 | Kogru POW-B | Vegetation Sampling | 2 | Fixed Wing | 12 | Lonely | Airstrip |
| July 12 – July 17 | Colville River Delta | Vegetation Sampling | 2 | Fixed Wing | 12 | Lonely | Airstrip |
| July 14 – July 18 | Cape Simpson | Vegetation Sampling | 2 | Fixed Wing | 12 | Lonely | Along Piasik River |
| July 9 – July 10 | ACP | Aerial Survey | 2 | Fixed Wing | 0 | none | None |

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 | | X |

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| populations (Executive Order 12898). | | |
| 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 2, 2010

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