

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Arctic Field Office  
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Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844  
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In reply refer to:  
FF095369  
2984.01 (AKF012)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF012-2010-0018-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** Wildlife Conservation Society  
Pacific West Program  
Joe Liebezeit  
718 SW Alder Street, Suite 210  
Portland, Oregon 97205

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

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, Joe Liebezeit, with the Wildlife Conservation Society(WCS) has requested authorization for field activity access and landing by fixed-wing aircraft, on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A), in support of avian research. Mr. Liebezeit is proposing to conduct the research over a 3 year period of summer activity.

The proposed activity would take place on the East side of the main river branch of the Ikpikpuk River. The WCS propose to conduct bird nesting studies. The study plots would consist of twelve 10 ha plots and two 40 ha plots in a 5 km radius from the camp location, where they would search for bird nests of all species. The nests would be monitored every three to five days for nest success. They would conduct predator surveys and deploy cameras to monitor a subset of discovered nests. Also, they would band several shorebird species using color bands. The WCS propose to have a weather station on site (solar-powered) that would be used to record hourly temperature, wind speed, wind direction and precipitation. They would measure snow cover by estimating the percent of each grid in the study plots covered by snow.

They are collaborating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to collect avian influenza samples from nine shorebird species. For dunlin they would collect blood and feather samples and place geolocators on captured individuals.

The time period of proposed use is 3 June to 17 July for the next three years. For 2010 there would be eight people participating. The site would be accessed via a fixed wing aircraft. They anticipate nine landings per year. In Early June they would have five to six flights to drop off crew and gear and a resupply flight in late June. The crew and equipment would be picked up in mid June with two anticipated flights.

The camp would consist of two weather port tents, eight sleeping tents, a pett toilet tent, a solar-powered electric fence (wooden stakes and baygard wire) surrounding the sleeping tents and another one surrounding the weather port tents. All food would be stored in twelve metal bear-proof containers while they are in the field. With the exception of some large items such as the weatherport tents all gear would be transported out of the field at the end of each years work. All food and human waste would be removed each year.

The proposed field camp location is 70.55242 North and 154.73222 West. Their fuel site locations would be Deadhorse, Nuiqsut and Barrow. They would have five gallons of gasoline to power a generator and three twenty pound canisters of propane for cooking and on site.

**Location:**

Sections 21, Township 14 North, Range 11 West, Umiat Meridian

**Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents: Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2004 and Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2008. The applicant will be provided with stipulations entitled “FF095369 Wildlife Conservation Society 3 Year Permit.”

Date May 18, 2010

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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 meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion in accordance with 516 DM 6, Appendix 5.4E (19).

**“..Issuance of short term (3 years or less) rights-of ways or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and constructions sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition.”**

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any extraordinary circumstances 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.		<b>X</b>
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 future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		<b>X</b>
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 May 18, 2010

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