

# 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:  
FF095697  
2984.01 (023)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-LLAKF010-2010-0021-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

**Applicant:** Western Washington University  
Eric DeChaine, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor & Herbarium Curator  
516 High Street  
Biology Department, MS 9160  
Bellingham, Washington 98225

**Proposed Action:** Non-intrusive Arctic-Alpine Flora Research in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). (2984.01)

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant Eric DeChaine, with the Western Washington University (WWU) has requested authorization for field activity access, on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A), in support of arctic-alpine flora research.

The proposed action would authorize the WWU to conduct Arctic-Alpine Flora research in western NPR-A along the Kokolik River from June 15 – July 30, 2010. The goal of the project is to infer the effect that climate cycles of the last 2 million years had on the distribution and genetic divergence of arctic and alpine flora of North America. There would be two people conducting the work, Mr. DeChaine and an assistant. They propose to collect specimens of 16 species of plants from several sites in the NPR-A.

Transportation to and from the Kokolik River would be provided by Coyote Air in a fixed wing aircraft. They would travel along the Kokolik River by canoe and on foot. Specimens would be collected from multiple sites across the range of the species. To minimize the impact on plant populations, WWU proposes to only collect the material needed for genetic analyses and voucher specimens. They would document the occurrence and abundance of angiosperms observed along the Kokolik River, paying particular attention to those that are rare, threatened, or endangered, as outlined by the Alaska Natural Heritage Program.

The applicants would camp on gravel bars, away from game trails when possible and move camp every one or two days. Food and scented material would be stored in approved bear canisters, avoiding strong smelling foods. Bears would be avoided, but the applicants would carry bear pepper

spray as a precaution. They would use a PakCanoe 170, standard camping equipment, and field presses for the specimens.

The applicant would pack out waste in bear canisters. Human waste would be packed out if possible. If not they would bury it at least 150m from water sources. The only fuel used would be for cooking. The applicant states that both he and his assistant have experience in backcountry camping, canoeing, wildlife and botanical research, and mountaineering in Alaska.

**Location (All Umiat Meridian):**

	<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Section</b>	
Start	11 South	43 West	4 – 9 (SS)	
	10 South	43 West	16,17,19-21, 28-33 (SS)	5-8,18 State
	9 South	43 West	31 (SS)	
	9 South	44 West	23-26, 35, 36 (RS)	1,2,11-14 (Private)
	8 South	43 West		1-36 State
	7 South	43 West		1-36 State
	6 South	42 West		Western 1/2 = State
	5 South	42 West	1 -3, 10 - 15, 22- 27, 34-36	Western 1/2 = State
	4 South	42 West		State
	3 South	42 West		State
	2 South	42 West		State
	2 South	41 West	12-14, 21-29, 32	30, 31 State
	2 South	40 West	1 - 36	
	1 South	40 West	1 - 36	
	1 South	39 West	1 - 36	
	1 North	39 West	1-3, 10-15, 22-27, 34-36	
	1 North	38 West	10, 11, 13-15	
	2 North	39 West	1 - 36	
	2 North	38 West	18,19, 30	
	2 North	40 West	1-3, 10-14, 24	
	3 North	40 West	1 - 36	
	3 North	41 West	1,12	
	4 North	41 West	25,26,35,36 (Excluding Private Lands)	2-11, 14-23,26-35 (Private)
	4 North	42 West		1,2 State
	5 North	41 West		Private
	5 North	42 West		Private
	4 North	43 West		Private
	5 North	43 West		Private
	5 North	44 West		Private

**Part I: Plan Conformance Review**

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents: Kobuk-Seward Peninsula Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement approved 9/2008, Western Arctic Resource Management Plan (RMP) Management Situation Analysis evaluated 2/5/1990, Final Environmental Impact Statement on Oil and Gas Leasing in The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and Record of Decision approved 5/1983. 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 “FF095697 Western Washington University 2010 Summer Stipulations.”

Date June 7, 2010

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

**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.		<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		<b>X</b>

involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		
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 June 7, 2010

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