

# U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Glennallen Field Office  
P.O. Box 147  
Glennallen, Alaska 99588  
(907) 822-3217

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## Categorical Exclusion Timber Salvage

**Case File Number: AA093174  
DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0010-CX**



### **Location:**

Copper River Meridian, T2S R3E, SW1/4 SE1/4, Sec 16, NE1/4 NE1/4, NE1/4 NW1/4 NE1/4,  
NE1/4 SE1/4 NE1/4, Sec 21, W1/2 NW1/4 Sec 22.

### **Prepared By:**

Ben Seifert  
Natural Resource Specialist

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**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

**A. Background**

BLM Office: Glennallen Field Office      Lease/Serial/Case File No: AA093174

Environmental Document No: DOI-BLM-AK-A010-2012-0010-CX

Proposed Action Title/Types: Tonsina Bluff II Timber Sale

Location of Proposed Action: SW1/4 SE1/4, Sec 16, NE1/4 NE1/4, NE1/4 NW1/4 NE1/4,  
NE1/4 SE1/4 NE1/4, Sec 21, W1/2 NW1/4 Sec 22, T2S R3E  
Copper River Meridian.

Description of Proposed Action: Timber Salvage

The Bureau of Land Management, Glennallen Field Office, as part of its forest management program will offer the following timber salvage for sale during the winter of 2012. BLM proposes this forest development project on the Tonsina Bluff, located between the Tonsina River and the Edgerton Hwy near Kenny Lake, Alaska. This salvage activity proposes to harvest approximately 391 MBF of sawlog and 147 cords of firewood from approximately 87 acres. Local public demand for commercial firewood and wood products has remained steady. Regal Enterprises, the only established local mill operator is dependent upon a continued supply of forest resources to ensure continued mill operations and supply of forest products and firewood to the surrounding communities.

Access to the permitted area will utilize existing access road located on private property at approximately mile 11.5 of the Edgerton Hwy. Prior authorization has been granted to allow the contractor to access the permit salvage area through land that is privately owned.

This BLM timber sale contract will be in effect for a period of 36 months, with harvest activities occurring during winter months when adequate snow cover and subzero temperatures will reduce ground disturbance and accommodate mechanized equipment. All trees with a 6 inch diameter (DBH) will be severed and removed. Skidding will be accomplished by tracked or rubber tired skidders. Logs will be skidded to a landing where they will be delimbed and topped before being loaded onto trucks. There will be no permanent roads authorized under this proposed timber sale. Access roads developed under this proposed harvest will consist of temporary winter roads.

Slash and tops will be left on site in the landings and are to be piled and burned when the conditions are appropriate. Once the slash has been removed, fire danger will be reduced and natural regeneration will be promoted. Successional forest growth will be desired, with stands of Salix (Willow), species along with slower growing hardwoods and Picea Glauca (White Spruce). Successional forest growth is a critical factor for the development of suitable wildlife habitat.

Applicant (if any):

**B. Land Use Plan Conformance 43 CFR 1610.5-3(a)**

This Proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan: East Alaska Resource Management Plan (EARMP)

Date Plan Approved: September 2007

The proposed action is in conformance with the plan even though it is not specifically provided for because it is clearly consistent with the following planning decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

**G. FOREST AND WOODLAND VEGETATION, AND FOREST PRODUCTS**

***G-1: Goals***

- Maintain and restore the health, productivity, and biological diversity of forest and woodland ecosystems.
- Consistent with other resource values, provide personal use wood products for local consumption and opportunities for commercial harvests.

***G-2: Objectives (Desired Conditions)***

Timber stands managed for commercial production of white spruce.

- Reduce hazardous fuels
- Improve forest health through salvage of bark beetle-kill spruce.
- Benefit wildlife habitat.
- Consider potential for commercial harvest.

**C. NEPA Compliance**

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with United States Department of the Interior 43 CFR §46.210 or United States Department of Interior Manual, Part 516, Chapter 11 which provides:

The Proposed Actions qualify as categorical exclusions pursuant to 516 DM 11.9, Appendix 4, Part C. 8:

“Salvaging dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 mile of temporary road construction. Such activities:

- a. May include incidental removal of live or dead trees for landings, skid trails, and road clearing.
- b. May include temporary roads which are defined as roads authorized by contract, permit, lease, other written authorization, or emergency operation not intended to be part of the BLM transportation system and not necessary for long-term resource management. Temporary roads shall be designed to standards appropriate for the intended uses, considering safety, cost of transportation, and impacts on land and resources; and
- c. Shall require the treatment of temporary roads constructed or used so as to permit the reestablishment, by artificial or natural means, of vegetative cover on the roadway and areas where the vegetative cover was disturbed by the construction or use of the road, as necessary to minimize erosion from the disturbed area. Such treatment shall be designed to reestablish vegetative cover as soon as practicable, but at least within 10 years after the termination of the contract.
- d. For this CX, a dying tree is defined as a standing tree that has been severely damaged by forces such as fire, wind, ice, insects, or disease, and that in the judgment of an experienced forest professional or someone technically trained for the work, is likely to die within a few years.”

**D. Extraordinary Circumstances**

The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances apply to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents must be prepared for actions which may:

- 1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X
- 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.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

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.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

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.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

9. Violate Federal law or a State, local or Tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

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10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X
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 site (Executive Order 13007).  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X
13. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  X

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances in 43 CFR §46.215 are pertinent.

The proposed action is in conformance with a management framework plan or a resource management plan, 43 C.F.R. § 1610.8(a)(3) (2006). The Department of the Interior has determined and found that the proposed action is within a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and that neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required, 40 C.F.R. §1508.4 (2006).

**E. Signature**

I considered

Mitigation Measures/Other Remarks: In addition to conditions and stipulations attached to the permit, annual compliance inspections and performance evaluations shall be conducted and documented within the permittee's case file.

Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_ /s/ Elizabeth Maclean Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 3/26/12

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Name: Elizabeth Maclean

Title: Field Manager

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Ben Seifert, Natural Resource Specialist, Glennallen Field Office, PO Box 147 Glennallen, Alaska, 907 822-3217