



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Glennallen Field Office
P.O. Box 147
Glennallen, Alaska 99588
www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/gdo.html

In Reply Refer To:
2920 (012) AA-093356

CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

DECISION

Alaska Energy Authority : AA-93356
Sarah Fisher-Goad, Executive Director : 2920 Minimum Impact Permit
813 W. Northern Lights Boulevard :
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

NEPA Approved
Minimum Impact Permit Offered
Rental Rate Required

On August 20, 2012, you filed an application to perform data gathering and monitoring on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Glennallen Field Office. The application is pursuant to the Federal Land Policy Management Act (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat 2776), and the regulations issued there under, specifically 43 CFR Part 2800.

On October 1, 2012 Categorical Exclusion DOI-BLM-AKA-020-2012-0033-CX was approved, and this letter finalizes that decision. The permit is offered for a period of 3 years with an option for renewal, provided that the monitoring is still being performed as requested in the application.

The following public lands are affected by your application:

FAIRBANKS MERIDIAN

T. 21. S., R. 4 W., Section 25; T. 16 S., R. 3 W., Sections 18 and 28; T. 16 S., R. 4 W., section 13.

SEWARD MERIDIAN

T. 30 N., R. 10 E., Section 10 and 12.

Rental Rate

The rental rate for this permit has been determined to be \$225 per site annually. Your application requested seven separate locations for a total rental rate of \$1,575.00. The annual rental will be due January 1 of each year the permit is required.

How to appeal this Decision¹

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office (at the above address) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

How to Obtain a Stay of This Decision While Your Appeal is Pending²

If you wish to file a petition (request) pursuant to 43 CFR 2801.10 or 2881.10 for a stay (suspension) of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If you should have any questions regarding this decision please contact Joseph Hart, Realty Specialist at (907) 822-3217 or email jhart@blm.gov during normal business hours.

Sincerely,

/s/ Beth Maclean, 10/01/2012

Beth Maclean
Glennallen Field Manager

¹ 43 Code of Federal Regulations Part 4: 4.410-4.413

² 43 Code of Federal Regulations Subparts 4.21 and 2801.10(b)

Enclosure(s)
Form 1842-1



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<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

A. BACKGROUND

Project Name / Type: Environmental Study Sites associated with Susitna/Watana Dam

NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0033-CX

Case File Number: AA 093356

Location / Legal Description: T. 16 S., R. 3 E., sections 18 and 28; T. 16 S., R. 4 W., section 13; T. 21 S., R. 4 W., section 25, Fairbanks Meridian; T. 30 N., R. 10 E., sections 10 and 12, Seward Meridian.

Applicant (if any): Alaska Energy Authority (A.E.A.)

Description of Proposed Action: The Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) has submitted an application to Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC) to build a hydro-electric dam on the Susitna River, a.k.a. Susitna/Watana Dam Project. In doing so, they have begun a larger National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to review and consider what environmental impacts will occur should FERC approve their request to build the dam. The AEA has hired several businesses to perform the scientific study work required to prepare the Environmental Impact Study (EIS), and has submitted an application for the placement of 2 repeater stations for communications, 3 meteorological stations, a gaging station and a radio telemetry station on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to gather the necessary baseline data to assist in the assessment of what impacts may occur should FERC approve the request to construct the Susitna/Watana Dam.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Applicable Land Use Plan: East Alaska Resource Management Plan, Approved September 7, 2007.

The proposed action is in conformance with plan because it is specifically provided for in the following planning decisions:

East Alaska Resource Management plan, page 19, Section I, Lands and Realty.

I-1: Goals – second bullet; “Provide a balance between land use (rights-of-ways, land use permits, leases and sales) and resource protection that best serves the public at large.

I-2: Land Use Authorizations – “Land use authorizations include various authorizations and agreements to use BLM lands such as right-of-way grants, road, temporary use permits under several different authorities; leases, permits, and easements under section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); airport leases under the Act of May 24, 1928; and Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases.”

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

C. CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

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 the Interior Manual, Part 516, Chapter 11, which provides:

“E. Realty, 19. Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorization 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.”

D. EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

The proposed action must be screened against the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 43 CFR § 46.215 (listed below). Any “yes” finding requires that an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for the Proposed Action.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	No
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.	No
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	No
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	No
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	No
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	No
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.	No

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
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.	No
9. Violate Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	No
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	No
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).	No
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or 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).	No

G. SIGNATURE

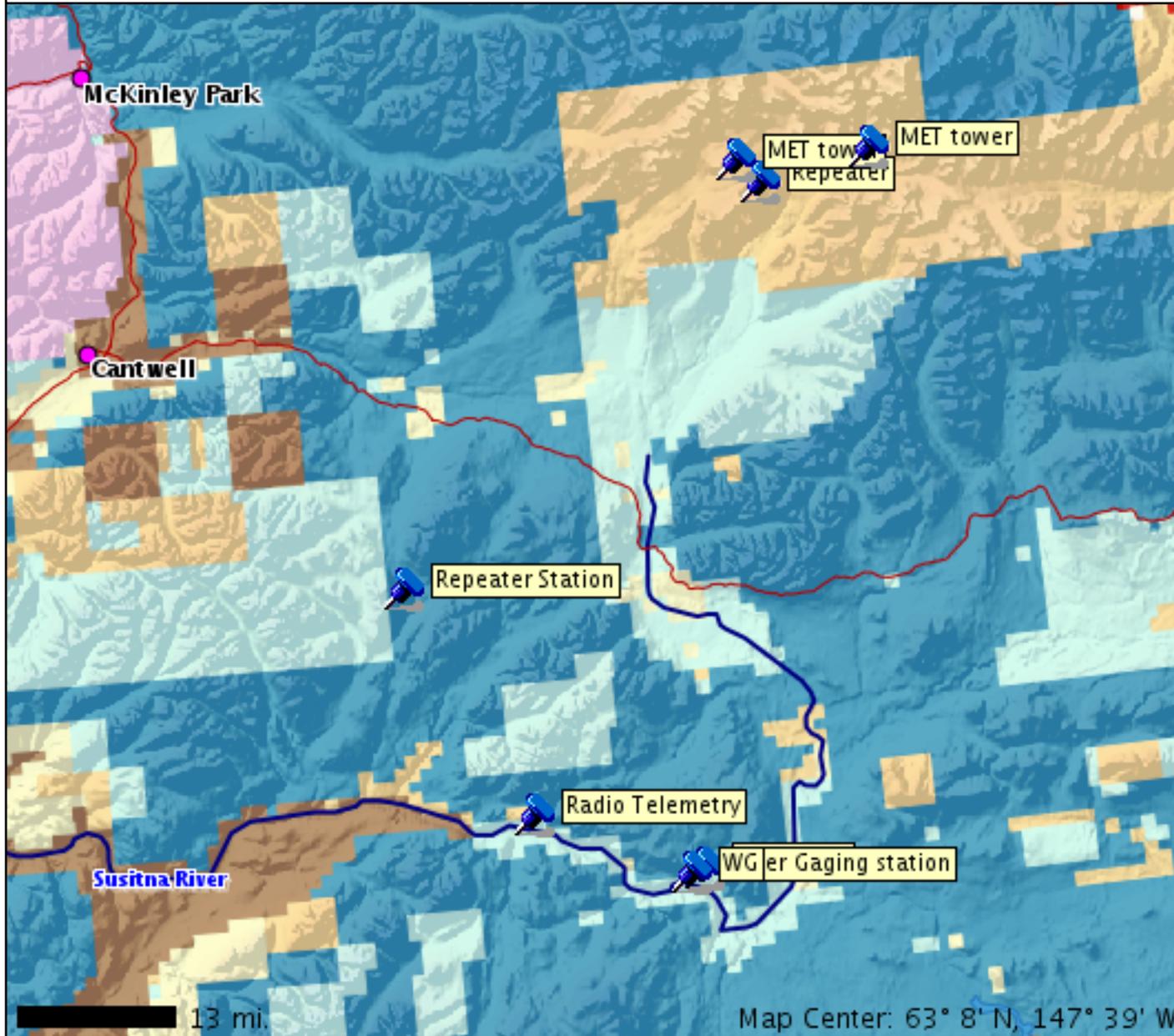
The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan and is an action that can be categorically excluded. The Proposed Action does not trigger any of the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 516 FM Chapter 2, Appendix 2. I recommend that the Proposed Action be allowed and that no further environmental analysis is required.

/s/ Beth Maclean
 Beth Maclean
 Glennallen Field Manager

10/1/2012
 Date

Map created September 19, 2012

Legend



- Towns
- Towns
- ↗ Highways
- ↘ Major Rivers

- Bureau of Land Management
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Forest Service
- Metlakatla Indian Reservation
- Military
- National Park Service
- Native Patent or IC
- Native Selected
- Private
- State Patent or TR
- State Selected

- Lakes

- International Boundary

Scale: 1:830,430

DO NOT USE FOR NAVIGATION

13 mi.

Map Center: 63° 8' N, 147° 39' W

Assessment of Undertakings Not Subject to Further Section 106 Review Glennallen Field Office

GDO Document No. GFO-12-31

BLM Serial No. AA09 **Environmental Assessment No.** DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-032-EA

Class of Inventory: No Further Review

Dates of Inspection: 08/31/2012

Inspector: John Jangala

Maps: Talkeetna Mountains (C-2, D-2) Healy (A-3)

Applicant: Alaska Energy Authority (AEA)

Location: The project will occur near the Susitna River. More specifically, the project will take place in several locations including: T. 16 S., R. 3 E., sections 18 and 28; T. 16 S., R. 4 W., section 13; T. 21 S., R. 4 W., section 25, Fairbanks Meridian; T. 30 N., R. 10 E., sections 10 and 12, Seward Meridian.

Project Description: The Bureau of Land Management proposes to authorize AEA to install several Susitna/Watana Dam environmental study sites in the vicinity of the proposed reservoir. These include 2 radio repeater stations, 3 meteorological stations, 1 gaging station, and 1 radio telemetry station. All stations will be placed on the ground surface and anchored with cables to rebar pounded into the ground. It is anticipated that ground disturbance from all of the proposed stations will be minimal.

Acreage: Less than 1 acres

Recommendations: According to the Protocol for Managing Cultural Resources on Lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Alaska, between the Bureau of Land Management and the State Historic Preservation Officer, signed April 17, 1998, this undertaking is not subject to further Section 106 review (Appendix 2: Category One). The project will involve less than one square meter of ground disturbance. As long as the applicant adheres to the attached stipulations, the applicant may proceed as proposed in the application. However, if heritage or paleontological resources are encountered during implementation of the project, the project will cease and the Glennallen Field Office, cultural resource staff, shall be notified.

The following stipulation should be attached to the permit: "There shall be no disturbance of any archaeological or historical sites, including graves and remains of cabins, and no collection of any artifacts whatsoever. Also, collection of vertebrate fossils, including mammoths and mastodon bones, tusks etc., is strictly prohibited. If historic resources are encountered then all artifacts will be respectfully left in place and the Glennallen Field Office's cultural resources staff will be notified immediately."

Signed:

John W. Jangala
Glennallen Field Office Archaeologist (AKA-020)