



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Glennallen Field Office  
P.O. Box 147  
Glennallen, Alaska 99588  
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

### A. BACKGROUND

**Project Name / Type:** Right-of-way renewal for an existing Seismic Recording Station

**NEPA Register Number:** DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0027-CX

**Case File Number:** AA053123

**Location / Legal Description:** Sec. 36, T.16 S., R. 14 E., Copper River Meridian

**Applicant (if any):** U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) / University of Alaska – Fairbanks (UAF)

#### **Description of Proposed Action:**

The BLM is proposing to renew a right-of-way grant for an existing Seismic Recording Station located on unencumbered lands on the Bering Glacier. This site consists of a buried sensor, small antenna mounted upon a 10-foot mast and post, batteries, and a 100mW radio transmitter; this is totally self-contained and operates continuously. This site encompasses one square yard. The station will be serviced during summer months via helicopter. This site has been authorized since 1984. This proposed renewed right-of-way grant would be for 20 years with the option for renewal.

### B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

**Applicable Land Use Plan:** East Alaska Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, 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):

#### I. LANDS AND REALTY

##### I-1 Goals

Provide a balance between land use (rights-of-way, 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.

## 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: 9. Renewals and assignments of leases, permits, or rights-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations.

## 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.

<b>EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
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
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	No

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	
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 \_\_\_\_\_ 8/2/2012  
 Beth Maclean Date  
 Glennallen Field Manager



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**U.S. Geological Survey / University of Alaska – Fairbanks Seismic Station,  
Right-of-Way Grant Renewal**  
Categorical Exclusion, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0027-CX

Case File, AA053123

## **DECISION RECORD**

### **Decision**

It is my decision to renew the seismic station right-of-way grant on BLM-managed lands for a period of 20 years, as described in the attached Categorical Exclusion documentation, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0027-CX.

The proposed action has been reviewed by Glennallen Field Office staff and appropriate Project Design Features or stipulations, as specified, will be incorporated during project implementation. Based on the attached Categorical Exclusion review, I have determined that the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

### **Appeal Opportunities**

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 § 4. To appeal you must file a notice of appeal at the BLM Glennallen Field Office, P.O. Box 147, Milepost 186.5 Glenn Highway, Glennallen, Alaska 99588, within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appeal must be in writing and delivered in person, via the United States Postal Service mail system, or other common carrier, to the Glennallen Field Office as noted above. *The BLM does not accept appeals by facsimile or email.* The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulation 43 CFR § 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) for a stay 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. Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards: (a) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied, (b) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits, (c) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and (d) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.



# Compliance with ANILCA §810

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**E.A No.:** DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0027-CX

**Applicant(s):** U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) / University of Alaska – Fairbanks (UAF)

**Proposed Action:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to grant a 20-year right-of-way renewal for an existing Seismic Recording Station located on unencumbered lands on the Bering Glacier. This site encompasses one square acre and consists of a buried sensor, small antenna mounted upon a 10-foot mast and post, batteries, and a 100mW radio transmitter; this is totally self-contained and operates continuously. The station will be serviced during summer months via helicopter.

**Location:** The existing Seismic Recording Station is located on unencumbered lands on the Bering Glacier.

**Township/Range:** Section 36, Township 16 South, Range 14 East, Copper River Meridian

**Map:** Bering Glacier B-6

**Evaluation by:** Sarah L. Bullock

**Discretionary Action?:** Yes

**Categorical Exclusion?:** Yes

**Type of Assessment / Sources:** Review of application materials, subsistence database, local knowledge, and interviews with staff knowledgeable of the area and the proposed action.

**Effect of the proposal on abundance of harvestable resources used for subsistence purposes:**

**Fisheries:** The proposed action would not significantly reduce harvestable fisheries resources that are available for subsistence use. The glacial environment lies within remote parts of the Chugach Mountain Range, consists primarily of rock and ice, and is difficult to access without the use of aircraft. There is also no regulated subsistence fishing near the proposed action.

**Wildlife:** The proposed action would not significantly reduce the abundance of harvestable wildlife resources that are available for subsistence use. The glacial environment lies within remote parts of the Chugach Mountain Range, consists primarily of rock and ice, and is difficult to access without the use of a helicopter. There is regulated subsistence hunting (GMU 6A) in the proposed action area. The most probably subsistence species occurring in area around the proposed action site are mountain goat, however, most subsistence hunting season takes place outside of operating season of the seismic recording station maintenance (which occurs only in

the summer months), the station is totally self-contained, and operates continuously. Due to the remote nature of the site and glacial environment, subsistence use is expected to be minimal to non-existent; therefore, the proposed action has no significant restriction on subsistence uses and needs for wildlife resources.

Other resources (edible flora, house logs, fuel wood, drinking water, etc...): The proposed action would not appreciably restrict any other harvestable resources such as wood, water, berries or vegetation. The glacial environment lies within remote parts of the Chugach Mountain Range, consists primarily of rock and ice with little vegetation, and is difficult to access without the use of a helicopter. The proposed action site is far from local villages and traditional gathering areas. Due to the remote nature of the site and glacial environment, subsistence use is expected to be minimal to non-existent; therefore, the proposed action has no significant restriction on subsistence uses and needs for other resources.

**Expected reduction, if any, in the availability of resources caused by an alteration in resource distribution, migration, or location:** None. Mountain goats may be temporarily displaced during the summer by helicopter maintenance in summer; however, due to the remote nature of the site and glacial environment, subsistence use is expected to be minimal to non-existent; therefore, the proposed action has no significant restriction on the availability of subsistence resources caused by the alteration in resource distribution, migration, or location.

**Expected limitation, if any, in the access of subsistence users resulting from the proposal:** None. Due to the remote nature of the site, the glacial environment that consists primarily of rock and ice, and difficult access without the use of a helicopter, subsistence use is expected to be minimal to non-existent; therefore, the proposed action has no significant restriction on the access of subsistence users to resources resulting from granting the proposed action.

**Availability of other lands, if any, for the purpose sought to be achieved:** None. The site has existed since the early 1980's and is applying for renewal of right-of-way; therefore, no other lands were considered for the proposed action to be achieved.

**Other alternatives, if any, which would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes:** None. The only other alternative would require BLM to reject the right-of-way renewal application; however, there is no substantial evidence that would indicate a significant restriction to use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes as a result of the proposed action. No other alternatives were evaluated.

### **Finding:**

This evaluation concludes that the proposed action of granting USGS/UAF a right-of-way renewal will not result in a foreseeable significant restriction in abundance, availability, or

access to subsistence resources and uses. The impacts to subsistence resources and access discussed above would be minimal.

/s/Sarah L. Bullock

11 July 2012

Sarah L. Bullock  
Wildlife Biologist  
BLM, Glennallen Field Office

Date

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

**GDO Document No.** GFO-12-25

**BLM Serial No.** AA-053123 **Environmental Assessment No.** DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-027-CX

**Class of Inventory:** No Further Review

**Dates of Inspection:** 07/17/2012

**Inspector:** John Jangala

**Maps:** Bering Glacier (B-6)

**Applicant:** U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF)

**Location:** The project will occur north of the Gulf of Alaska, west of Cape Yakataga and east of Cordova in the vicinity of the Bering Glacier. More specifically, this project will occur in the mountains north of the Bagley Ice Field in Sect. 36, T16S., R.14E., CRM.

**Project Description:** The Bureau of Land Management proposes to grant to USGS and UAF a renewal to their existing ROW for an automated seismic reporting station. This station currently exists and no additional ground disturbance is anticipated for this ROW renewal.

**Acreage:** Unknown

**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)

Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
**Glennallen Field Office**  
NEPA Interdisciplinary Review

Project Name: Seismic Recording Station – USGS/UAF

Casefile Number: AA053123

NEPA Document Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-0027-CX

NEPA Preparer: Brenda Becker

Please return to preparer by: July 20, 2012

Staff Specialist	Resource Area	Comments Provided Yes / No or n/a	Date Reviewed
Brenda Becker	Lands and Realty	n/a	7/6/12
Marcia Butorac	Recreation and Facilities	n/a	7/23/2012
Sarah Bullock	ANILCA, Section 810	Yes	7/11/2012
Sarah Bullock	T&E Animals	No	7/11/2012
Sarah Bullock	T&E Plants	No	7/11/2012
Sarah Bullock	Wildlife	No	7/11/2012
Heath Emmons	Wild and Scenic Rivers		
Marnie Graham	Public Affairs	No	7/12/2012
Denton Hamby	Special Recreation Use	No	7/13/12
Denton Hamby	Visual Resources	No	7/13/12
Brad Honerlaw	Law Enforcement		
Alysia White	Law Enforcement	no	7/10/12
John Jangala	Cultural Heritage	No	7/17/2012
John Jangala	Paleontology	No	7/17/2012
Cory Larson	Travel Management	no	7/10/12
James Whitlock	Minerals		
Ben Seifert	Fire Management	No	7/13/12
Ben Seifert	Forestry	No	7/13/12
Ben Seifert	Invasive Weeds	No	7/13/12
Mike Sondergaard	Soils	MS	7/10/12
Mike Sondergaard	Air Quality	MS	7/10/12
Tim Sundlov	Riparian & Wetlands	No	7/24/12
Mike Sondergaard	Water Quality	MS	7/10/12
Tim Sundlov	Fish Biology	No	7/24/12
Joseph Hart	Hazardous Materials	No	7/26/12
Elijah Waters	Branch Chief - resources	No	7/26/12
Molly Cobbs	ADO Planner	Yes	07/10/12

Authorized Officer Review:     /s/ Beth Maclean     Date:     8/2/2012