

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Glennallen Field Office
P.O. Box 147
Glennallen, Alaska 99588

**Gulkana Hatchery Bunkhouse
Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA**

Applicant: State of Alaska, Dept. of Fish and Game
Case File Number: AA085605

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On July 7, 2004, the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), applied for a hatchery site south of Paxson Lodge, west of a State of Alaska Department of Transportation stockpile site. ADF&G's request resulted in two authorizations: one for a land use lease for one building and the second for a right-of-way grant for the associated pipeline to bring water into the building and to return water to the Gulkana River. These authorizations, encompassing approximately two acres, were approved on March 23, 2006. The lease for the hatchery building is for a period of five years and expires March 1, 2016; the associated pipeline right-of-way grant is for 10 years and also expires on March 1, 2016.

On April 12, 2012, the ADF&G submitted an application to amend their original authorization for the land lease to include a 30-foot wide by 165-foot long bunkhouse/office building, well, sewer system, portable generator, fuel tank, and parking area.



Figure 1. Project site showing existing lease area and proposed lease amendment area outlined in black.

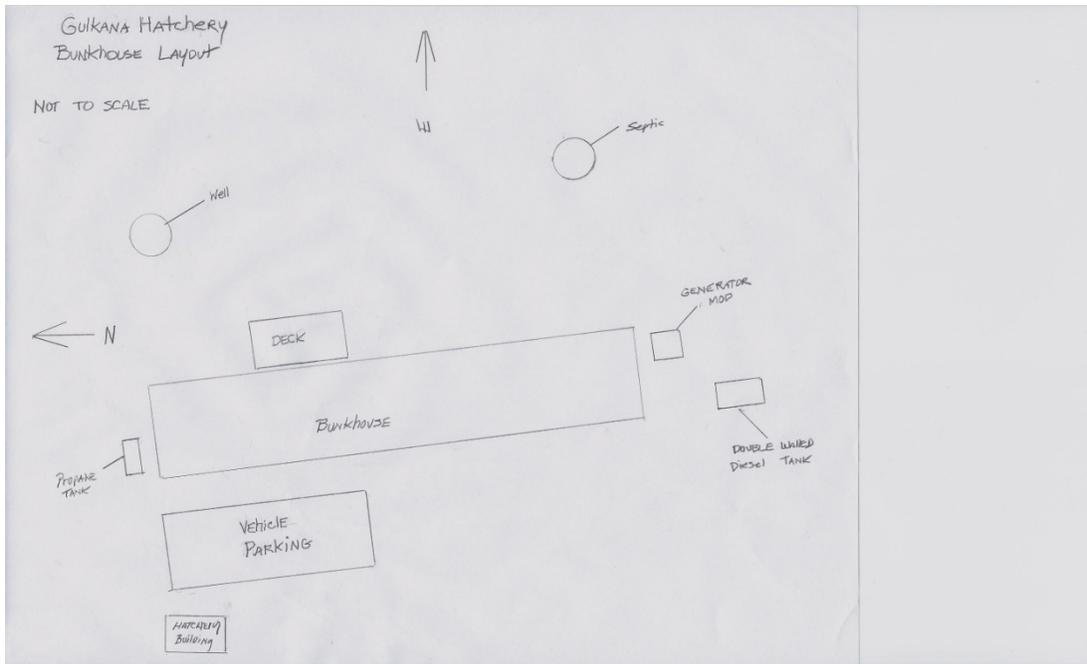


Figure 2. Conceptual layout of proposed new bunkhouse facilities.

1.1 Purpose and Need

The BLM action under consideration is an amendment to the existing right-of-way authorization. The need for the action is established by BLM’s responsibility under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to respond to a request for a lease on public lands. The purpose of the action is to allow ADF&G legal access to public lands for their proposed bunkhouse and associated facilities.

The decision to be made is whether to authorize the requested amendment to the current authorization and, if authorized, what terms and conditions would apply to the lease.

1.2 Land Use Plan Conformance

The East Alaska Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision (RMP/ROD) of September 2007 provide the overall long-term management direction for lands encompassed by the proposed project. The proposed action and alternatives are consistent with the RMP/ROD. Specifically, the proposed action is consistent with the following decisions in the RMP/ROD:

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.

The proposed action would be subject to an array of laws, regulations, and acts including, but not limited to:

- National Historic Preservation Act as Amended 1992

- North America Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 (as amended 1990 and 1994)
- Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA) Section 810
- Executive Order 11987 of May 1977 (Exotic Organisms)
- Executive 11990 of May 1977 (Protection of Wetlands)
- The Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (as amended 1959, 1962, 1972, and 1978)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (as amended 1936, 1960, 1969, 1974, 1978, 1986, and 1989)

1.3 Land Status

This proposed project site is on lands within Sec. 7 that are State selected, and Sec. 8 that is within lands that are withdrawn by Public Land Order 5150. These lands are BLM administered lands.

Sec. 7-8, T. 22 S., R. 12 E., Copper River Meridian

1.4 Scoping and Issue Identification

Public notice of this EA was posted on the BLM Glennallen Field Office NEPA Register website on June 5, 2012. To date, no comments have been received.

An interdisciplinary team was assembled and met on April 16, 2012. Internal scoping identified the following issues to be considered: travel management and recreation, riparian, vegetation and invasive weeds.

- Would access to the river be affected by the proposed action? (Travel Management and Recreation)
- How would ground disturbance affect riparian habitat, native vegetation, and potential for invasive species? (Riparian and Vegetation)

The following issues were considered but eliminated from further analysis:

- *Effects to subsistence resources* - The project area is closed to the taking of big game, therefore the area is closed to subsistence hunting.
- *Effects to riparian habitat and resources* - The project footprint and the construction activity areas are located in previously disturbed areas upland of the riparian corridor.
- *Effects to Federally threatened and endangered species* - Currently, there are no Federally threatened or endangered wildlife species inhabiting the project area.
- *Effects to Cultural Resources* - The proposed site development would involve placing trailers on a previously disturbed and over-grown gravel pad that is unlikely to contain intact heritage resources. Stipulations will be included in the lease to protect cultural resources in the event of inadvertent discovery.
- *Effects to Wild and Scenic Rivers* – A segment of the Gulkana River is designated as a Wild and Scenic River; however, the project site is not adjacent to the designated segment.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Alternative 1 – No Action

The No Action Alternative would be to deny authorization of the requested lease amendment. Denying the amendment would prevent ADF&G from developing additional buildings and facilities at this site.

2.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The BLM would authorize a land lease for a period of five years, with an option to renew, for up to a ten-acre site encompassing the existing building adjacent to the existing authorization. The amended land lease would allow ADF&G to construct the temporary residential facilities on the site as described below. Of the total lease area, approximately two acres would be new disturbance.

Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp., acting as a private contractor for ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, would install a bunkhouse for permanent and seasonal hatchery staff. The bunkhouse would be in operation each year from March 1 through November 30. When not in use, the bunkhouse would be shut down and secured for the winter.

The bunkhouse would consist of six units, four would be 56 feet long by 12 feet wide, and two units would be 52 feet long by 12 feet wide. The total length of the completed bunkhouse once set up would be 165 feet long by 30 feet wide with a 5-foot center walkway. The bunkhouse would house four permanent hatchery staff members as well as up to ten seasonal staff. The bunkhouse would also include kitchen and dining facilities, dayrooms, an exercise area, storage, and lab and office space for hatchery staff. The foundation for this building would consist of 28 concrete piers (described below).

Additionally, ADF&G is proposing a 45-kilowatt (KW) trailered portable generator and double-walled diesel storage tank; propane tank for the furnace in the bunkhouse, hot water heater, and cooking stoves; a 12 feet by 12 feet outside storage building; well and septic system; a three-yard dumpster; and parking for up to eight vehicles.

Private contractors would be used to build the foundation, set up the building, drill and well, install the septic system, set up and connect the portable generator, and install the propane storage tank. Prior to installation, the private contractors would clear the overburden from the location; no trees would be removed for construction.

The contractor would pour 28, 24-inch by 24-inch by 12-inch deep concrete piers for the approved foundation. The housing units would be trucked to the site and moved into place by a crane and would sit on wooden cribbing on top of the concrete piers. Private contractors would also be involved in installing the septic system, drilling a well, set-up and connection of the portable generator and double-walled diesel tank, as well as the installation and connection of a propane storage tank to the bunkhouse. The facility, in addition to all of the ancillary systems,

would be constructed to meet all State of Alaska building and fire codes. Both the well and septic system will be to ADEC standards and any certification will be on file with the BLM.

The bunkhouse generator would be started March 1 each season and power would be turned on to the bunkhouse, slowly bringing the unit up to a comfortable living temperature. A submersible water pump would be placed into the well casing supplying water to the units. Both site and bunkhouse maintenance would be completed by hatchery staff, this would include general maintenance on the buildings, generator, water pump, yard maintenance and trash removal. The hatchery already has monthly garbage service through a local vendor. At the end of November each season the bunkhouse would be shut down, draining the water and sewer lines, pulling the submersible pump, shutting down the generator and securing the unit for winter. If there is a need for any major generator maintenance it would be hauled into Anchorage for service. Spring snow removal would be performed by hatchery staff using out equipment.

AS-BUILT site drawings would be supplied to the BLM Glennallen Field Office once the permit is issued and the bunkhouse is installed.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Detailed Analysis

No other alternatives were identified for consideration.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Wildlife

The Proposed Action is located in previously disturbed gravel/salt storage area in the vicinity of the East Fork of the Gulkana River. The disturbed area is used to store a gravel/salt mixture for application on local roadways in winter. Large mammals such as moose are drawn to this area and actively use it as a mineral lick. Heavily browsed willow and moose are frequently encountered in and around the site. The site is also located within the Nelchina caribou herd's migration route between winter and summer ranges. Various species of migratory birds, including BLM sensitive species (blackpoll warblers, rusty blackbirds, trumpeter swans, short-eared owls, and olive-sided flycatchers) can migrate through, or nest near the disturbed site. There is one active bald eagle nest approximately 0.3 miles northwest of the proposed facility site. The distance is beyond the required 0.25-mile buffer that is required of granting surface disturbing activities.

3.2 Vegetation and Invasive Weeds

The Proposed Action is located in a previously disturbed area. Vegetation consists of low-shrub and herbaceous materials that have regrown since the original disturbance. Species include willow and dwarf birch. Non-native plant species of low invasive ranking found on the site include plantain, pineapple weed and dandelion.

3.4 Travel Management and Recreation

The Proposed Action is located along a secondary gravel route providing access to the East Fork of the Gulkana River. Three to four dispersed camping sites are located along the river bank as well as a winter trail system primarily utilized by local dog mushers and, to a lesser extent, snowmachine traffic. The primary use is in the summer months for recreational camping and access to the river for sport fishing of grayling. To a lesser extent, the site is also used as a salmon viewing area in the months of July and August to observe spawning red salmon. The estimated annual use is 250 visits per year.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Wildlife

4.1.1 Effects of Alternative 1 – No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no direct or indirect effects on wildlife resources in the project area. The current conditions would remain the same. Wildlife species inhabiting the area would not be further affected.

4.1.2 Effects of Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would remove up to 2.0 acres of previously disturbed vegetation that can serve as food, cover, and nesting habitat for local and transient wildlife species. Disturbance by hatchery personnel and associated equipment may cause seasonal avoidance of some wildlife species in the area during facility operation. Effects to wildlife species are expected to be minimal, due to disturbance localized to a small area immediate around constructed facility, habituation of resident wildlife species to previous disturbance associated with the active material site storage adjacent to facility site, and seasonal nature of human disturbance.

4.2 Vegetation and Invasive Weeds

4.2.1 Effects of Alternative 1 – No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no direct or indirect effects on vegetation resources or invasive weeds in the project area. Existing vegetative conditions would remain unchanged.

4.2.2 Effects of Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would remove up to two acres of existing regrowth vegetation exposing gravels that could increase opportunities for the introduction of non-native plants. Following construction, opportunities for the introduction of non-native plants would remain as they are currently.

4.3 Travel Management and Recreation

4.3.1 Effects of Alternative 1 – No Action

The No Action Alternative would have no direct or indirect effects on travel management or recreation opportunities in the project area. Travel management and recreational access/opportunities would remain unchanged. Use patterns and user numbers would remain stable.

4.3.2 Effects of Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would have little effect to recreational opportunities and access if the route of travel from the Richardson Highway to the East Fork of the Gulkana River remains open for public use. If the route of travel from the Richardson Highway to the river does not allow for public access recreational opportunity within the project area would be eliminated. If access through the project area is eliminated, the effects to recreation could be mitigated by providing river access at an alternative location that does not affect the applicant's plan of operations.

4.4 Cumulative Effects

For the purposes of cumulative effects analysis, the geographic scope is defined as the immediate project area. The proposed activities are site-specific in nature and do not extend beyond the project site. The temporal scope is defined as the life of the right-of-way authorization, five years.

As described above, the No Action Alternative would not result in any direct or indirect effects. Given that there would be no potential for direct or indirect effects, this alternative, by definition, would have no potential to incrementally contribute to cumulative effects to resources in the project area.

The Proposed Action Alternative would occur in an existing disturbed area in rural, largely undeveloped central Alaska. As described above, up to two acres of vegetation and/or habitat

would be removed during construction. This two-acre loss of vegetation and/or habitat is inconsequential in the context of the landscape overall in this part of state. This alternative would have a negligible contribution to cumulative effects.

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

5.1 Native Entities

The lands affected by the proposed action are not encumbered by Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) selections. The Native village of Cantwell (nearest federally recognized Tribe) is 135 road miles to the west; therefore no Native entities were consulted.

5.2 List of Preparers

This EA was prepared through an interdisciplinary team process. The interdisciplinary team initially met to review the proposed project and conduct internal scoping on April 16, 2012. The interdisciplinary team consisted of:

Brenda Becker	Lands and Realty Specialist
Sarah Bullock	Wildlife Biologist
Denton Hamby	Outdoor Recreation Planner, Visual Resources
John Jangala	Archaeologist
Cory Larson	Outdoor Recreation Planner, Trails and Travel Management
Ben Seifert	Forestry and Weeds
Mike Sondergaard	Hydrologist
Tim Sundlov	Fisheries Biologist

Appendix 1.

COMPLIANCE WITH ANILCA SECTION 810 EVALUATION AND FINDING

E.A. No.: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA

Applicant: State of Alaska, Dept. of Fish and Game.

EVALUATION:

1. Effect of Proposed Action on Subsistence Uses and Needs

Fisheries: The proposed action would not significantly reduce harvestable fisheries resources that are available for subsistence use. The project area and facilities are in the vicinity of the East Fork of the Gulkana, however, there is also no regulated subsistence fishing.

Wildlife: The proposed action of granting a authorization consisting of 1 building and associated rights-of-way to bring water into the building and water back out to the Gulkana River would not reduce harvestable wildlife resources that are available for subsistence taking on BLM administered lands. The proposed action is located within a previously disturbed gravel pit adjacent to the Richardson highway and big game such as moose and caribou occur in the area and may avoid disturbance during construction season. Small game and upland birds in the immediate vicinity of the gravel pit may also be temporarily displaced when human disturbance is occurring. The area of the proposed action in the Paxson Closed Area and is closed to taking any big game species. The area is also located on state-selected land, therefore, is not open to federal subsistence hunters. Under these conditions, the proposed action has no significant restriction on subsistence uses and needs for wildlife resources.

Other Resources: The proposed action would not appreciably restrict any other harvestable resources such as wood, water, berries or vegetation. The proposed action is located on previous disturbed gravel pit adjacent to the Richardson highway and there are no harvestable resources such as berries, willows, and spruce roots in the parking lot that the proposed action is to occur. Hence, the action will not significantly restrict non-fish/wildlife subsistence resources in the area.

2. Availability of other lands, if any, for the purposes sought to be achieved:

The proposed action includes BLM-administered lands that are within the applicant's area of use west of the Richardson Highway within the Paxson Closed area. The land within this proposed action is BLM managed lands, however, it is state-selected lands. Lands available for the purposes proposed by the applicant are limited to a small area around previously authorized hatchery site that occur near the East Fork of the Gulkana. Therefore, no other lands were considered.

3. Other alternatives, if any, which would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes:

The no action alternative would require BLM to reject the amendment to the existing right-of-way authorization; 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. Hence, no other alternatives were evaluated.

FINDINGS:

The proposed activity would not significantly restrict subsistence use in or near the proposed action area. The impacts to subsistence resources and access discussed above would be minimal. There is no reasonably foreseeable significant decrease in the abundance of harvestable resources, and in the distribution of harvestable resources.

_____/s/Sarah L. Bullock_____

Sarah L. Bullock
Wildlife Biologist
BLM, Glennallen Field Office

_____07-10-2012_____

Date

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

Project Name: Paxson Hatchery Amendment

Casefile Number: AA085605

NEPA Document Number: DOI-BLM-AKA-020-2012-0025-EA

NEPA Preparer: Brenda Becker

Please return to preparer by: June 29, 2012

Staff Specialist	Resource Area	Comments Provided Yes / No or n/a	Date Reviewed
Brenda Becker	Lands and Realty	n/a	
Marcia Butorac	Recreation and Facilities	yes	7/9/2012
Sarah Bullock	ANILCA, Section 810		
Sarah Bullock	T&E Animals	No	7/6/2012
Sarah Bullock	T&E Plants	No	7/6/2012
Sarah Bullock	Wildlife	Yes	7/10/2012
Heath Emmons	Wild and Scenic Rivers	No	6/21/2012
Marnie Graham	Public Affairs		
Denton Hamby	Special Recreation Use	no	6/26/12
Denton Hamby	Visual Resources		
Brad Honerlaw	Law Enforcement		
Alysia White	Law Enforcement	no	6/21/12
John Jangala	Cultural Heritage	No	06/18/2012
John Jangala	Paleontology	No	06/18/2012
Cory Larson	Travel Management	Yes	6/26/12
James Whitlock	Minerals		
Ben Seifert	Fire Management	No	6/27/12
Ben Seifert	Forestry	No	6/27/12
Ben Seifert	Invasive Weeds	Yes	6/27/12
Mike Sondergaard	Soils	No	6/22/2012
Mike Sondergaard	Air Quality	No	6/22/2012
Tim Sundlov	Riparian & Wetlands	No	6/22/2012
Mike Sondergaard	Water Quality	No	6/22/2012
Tim Sundlov	Fish Biology	No	6/22/2012
Joseph Hart	Hazardous Materials		
Elijah Waters	Branch Chief - resources		
Molly Cobbs	ADO Planner		

Authorized Officer Review: /s/Elizabeth Maclean Date: 7/13/12



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Gulkana Hatchery Bunkhouse
Environmental Assessment, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA

Case File, AA085605

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Background

On July 7, 2004, the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), applied for a hatchery site south of Paxson Lodge, west of a State of Alaska Department of Transportation stockpile site. ADF&G's request resulted in two authorizations: one for a land use lease for one building and the second for a right-of-way grant for the associated pipeline to bring water into the building and to return water to the Gulkana River. These authorizations, encompassing approximately two acres, were approved on March 23, 2006. The lease for the hatchery building is for a period of five years and expires March 1, 2016; the associated pipeline right-of-way grant is for 10 years and also expires on March 1, 2016.

On April 12, 2012, the ADF&G submitted an application to amend their original authorization for the land lease to include a 30-foot wide by 165-foot long bunkhouse/office building, well, sewer system, portable generator, fuel tank, and parking area.

Finding of No Significant Impact

This action and its effects have been evaluated consistent with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for determining *significance*. Per 40 CFR § 1508.27, a determination of *significance* requires consideration of both context and intensity. The former refers to the relative context in which the action would occur such as society as a whole, affected region, affected interests, etc. The latter refers to the severity of the impact.

Context

The proposed land use lease amendment would be used to expand existing ADF&G operations at a previously disturbed site. The project site is located in rural central Alaska. The project's effects are specific to the immediate project site. This project would not affect local, regional, or national resources or interests. The land use lease amendment would benefit a state agency.

Intensity

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The EA identifies limited adverse effects as a result of the land use lease amendment and subsequent bunkhouse construction (EA, pp. 3-6). Ultimately, the amendment would benefit the ADF&G by providing enhanced residential options for hatchery staff.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The Proposed Action identifies standard construction practices for developing the bunkhouse facilities. The effects are limited to the immediate project footprint. Therefore, there is no potential for the Proposed Action to affect the health and safety of the public at large.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are no parks, prime farmlands, or ecologically critical areas in proximity to the Proposed Action. Historic and cultural resources were not identified, neither internally or externally, as an issue for consideration in the EA (EA, pp. 2-3). A segment of the Gulkana River is designated as a Wild and Scenic River; however, the project site is not adjacent to the designated segment (EA, p. 3). However, the project effects are site-specific in nature and would not affect Wild and Scenic River resources.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The anticipated effects are similar to many other land use lease authorizations in remote geographic settings. No unique or appreciable scientific controversy has been identified regarding the effects of the Proposed Action or alternatives. The project area is rural and the concentration of recreational site users is low (EA, pp. 3-6).

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

Similar to Item 4 above, the anticipated effects are similar to many other land use lease authorizations in central Alaska as well as in other rural geographic settings. The analysis has not shown that there would be any unique or unknown risks to the human environment.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

Per the East Alaska Resource Management Plan, the project area is open to multiple uses, including the requested use. This authorization is consistent with the Record of Decision for the applicable land use plan. This project neither establishes a precedent nor represents a decision in principle about future actions.

7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

There is no indication that the Proposed Action is related to any other action(s).

8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.*

“The proposed site development would involve placing trailers on a previously disturbed and over-grown gravel pad that is unlikely to contain intact heritage resources,” (EA, pp. 2-3). Historic and cultural resources were not identified, neither internally or externally, as an issue for consideration in the EA (EA, pp. 2-3).

9. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*

There are no Federally threatened or endangered species within the project area (EA, p. 2).

10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

The Proposed Action and/or alternatives do not threaten to violate any law. The Proposed Action and alternatives are in compliance with the 43 CFR § 2800 regulations and are consistent with East Alaska Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision (2007), which provides direction for the protection of the environment on public lands (EA, pp. 1-2).

Conclusion

Therefore, on the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that:

1. None of the environmental effects identified meet the definition of significance as defined by context and intensity considerations at 40 CFR § 1508.27;
2. The alternatives are in conformance with East Alaska RMP/ROD (2007); and
3. The Proposed Action and alternatives do not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment.

Therefore, neither Environmental Impact Statement nor a supplement to the existing EA is necessary and neither will be prepared.

/s/Beth Maclean
Beth Maclean
Glennallen Field Manager

7/13/12
Date

Attachments

Gulkana Hatchery Bunkhouse Environmental Assessment, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA



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DECISION RECORD

Background

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On April 12, 2012, the ADF&G submitted an application to amend their original authorization for the land lease to include a 30-foot wide by 165-foot long bunkhouse/office building, well, sewer system, portable generator, fuel tank, and parking area.

Decision

I have decided to select *Alternative 2 – Proposed Action* for implementation. It is my decision to authorize a land use lease for a five-year term to facilitate the construction of residential facilities for hatchery employees.

My decision to authorize this lease is summarized as follows (refer to EA, pp. 3-4 for more detail):

1. This land use lease is issued for five years, with the option for renewal.
2. All best management practices identified in the EA or attached as stipulations, terms, or conditions of the lease will be utilized by ADF&G in the development of the project site.

This decision is based on site-specific analysis in the *Gulkana Hatchery Bunkhouse* (DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA) and the management decisions contained in the 2007 East Alaska Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision. The attached Finding of No Significant Impact

(FONSI) indicates that the selected alternative has been analyzed in an EA and has been found to have no significant environmental effects. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

Rationale for the Decision

Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, was not selected because it would not meet the BLM's purpose for action nor would it meet the BLM's land use authorization objectives identified at 43 CFR § 2801.2.

Alternative 2 was selected because it fulfills the BLM's objectives to meet the needs of local governmental agencies for uses of public lands, consistent with BLM regulations at 43 CFR § 2801.2. Furthermore, the EA has demonstrated that the land use lease authorization can be granted and the bunkhouse facility developed in a manner that protects the natural resources, prevents unnecessary and undue degradation of the public lands, and effectively consolidates the new facility with existing ADF&G infrastructure at the project site (EA, pp. 4-6; 43 CFR § 2801.2).

Laws, Authorities, and Land Use Plan Conformance

The EA and supporting documentation have been prepared consistent with the requirements of various statutes and regulations, including but not limited to:

- Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA)

BLM-managed lands in the project area are subject to the East Alaska Resource Management Plan (2007), which allows for making public lands available for the development of multiple use activities when balances with resource protection (EA, pp. 1-2). The selected alternative is therefore consistent with the direction in the applicable land use plan.

Public Involvement, Consultation, and Coordination

A Glennallen Field Office interdisciplinary team of resource specialists prepared the EA (EA, p. 7). ADF&G representatives were consulted throughout the process as needed.

Public notice of the project was provided on the BLM Glennallen Field Office NEPA Register website on June 5, 2012 (EA, p. 2). No public comments were received.

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 Anchorage 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.

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 Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR § 4.413); Office of the Regional Solicitor, Alaska Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99508; 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.

/s/ Beth Maclean
Beth Maclean
Glennallen Field Manager

7/13/12
Date

Attachments

Finding of No Significant Impact, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2012-0025-EA
Lease Stipulations