

Warm Springs Productions, LLC

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Filming Permit

For

Warm Springs Productions, LLC
(Gregory Vanger)
235 N. 1st. 2nd Floor
Missoula, Montana 59802

FF095971
DOI-BLM-AK-02000-2012-0001-EA

Located in:

Eastern Interior Field Office
Township 12N. Range 27E., Fairbanks Meridian
Approximately 31.5 miles Northeast of Snowy Peak, Alaska

Prepared by:

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Eastern Interior Field Office
1150 University Ave.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844

I. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

BLM Purpose and Need:

BLM manages and administers the use of federal public lands and resources in the Eastern Interior of Alaska and is obligated to respond to applications for legitimate uses of those lands and resources.

Warm Springs Productions has filed an application for a Land Use Permit to authorize their commercial filming of activities on public lands. BLM needs to respond to the application under the authority of Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the regulations found in 43 CFR 2920.

Applicant's Purpose and Need:

Warm Springs Productions, LLC (located in Missoula, Montana) has applied for a Land Use Permit to authorize their filming of an Alaska trapper while engaging in his normal activities of setting traps, checking traps and removing traps. Their filming is for commercial purposes and they plan to use the video footage in a TV documentary called "Day in the life of a Local Trapper".

Their plan is to conduct filming on three separate days; one day in November for setting traps, one day in December for checking traps and one day sometime in the spring for removing traps. They will use private aircraft to leave the Fairbanks area and arrive at the general area where filming will be conducted.

BLM Decision to be Made: The BLM will make a decision whether or not to issue Warm Springs Productions, LLC a Land Use Permit to conduct commercial filming activities on public lands. The BLM will also determine whether or not mitigation measures will be required to minimize adverse impacts to the environment and to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands.

II. Potential Issues:

Internal Scoping: There are no known issues associated with this proposed action.

External Scoping: The proposed action is not likely to cause any public concern or controversy; therefore, no external scoping is planned.

III. Location, Land Status and Conformance with Land Use Plans:

Location: The proposed action would be located approximately 35 to 40 (straight line) miles northeast of Snowy Peak in the Black River drainage. The specific lands affected are in Township 12N. Range 27E., Fairbanks Meridian and may include some adjacent/surrounding townships.

Land Status: The subject lands were withdrawn by Public Land Order (PLO) in March, 1972 to reserve them for selection by native corporations. That PLO was later amended by Public Land Order 5252 in September, 1972 to make some of those lands available for selection by the State of Alaska.

Conformance with Land Use Plans: The Proposed Action is located within an area that is not covered by any Land Use Plan. Therefore, an environmental assessment is being completed as required by 43 CFR 1610.8(b)(1).

IV. Proposed Action and Alternatives:

Proposed Action Alternative:

The proposed action is to authorize Warm Springs Productions to conduct filming activities on public lands for commercial purposes. They plan to film a local trapper while engaging in his normal activities of setting, checking and removing traps. One day of filming is planned for each of the three activities. The film crew will consist of two cameramen and one producer. The only planned filming from the air are some plane to plane shots as they travel out to the location.

The trapper will fly to filming location in his private airplane. The camera crew will hire a local aviation company to fly them and their equipment out to the general filming location via fixed-wing aircraft. The planes will be equipped with skis and will be landing on frozen, snow covered lakes or streams. There will be no "construction" of any landing strips and no helicopters will be used. Once on the ground, snowmachines will be used for overland travel. These will be provided by the trapper and will not be stored on BLM-managed land while not in use for filming. Fuel needed to operate the snowmachines will be flown in.

No camping or overnight stays on public lands are planned. No fuel will be stored on BLM-managed land. Authorization will be in the form of a Land Use Permit. Filming is planned to begin early November, 2011 and anticipated to be completed by March 31, 2012. The plan is for filming to occur on approximately three separate days during this timeframe.

No Action Alternative:

The no action alternative would result in the applicant not being issued a Land Use Permit to conduct filming activities on public lands for commercial purposes. Therefore, filming activities would not be authorized and should not occur on BLM managed land.

V. Affected Environment:

The Black River drainage is located in a remote part of Interior Alaska and has no road access. Ongoing uses of the area consist primarily of subsistence activities, trapping, and dispersed recreation. Use levels are very low due to the difficulty of accessing the area.

VI. Impacts – Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative:

Normally, this proposed action would have been categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, item 1.1 which includes activities which are educational, informational, or consultative to other agencies, public and private entities, visitors, individuals, or the general public. However, there is no BLM land use plan for the Black River drainage and 43 CFR 1610.8(b)(1) requires that an environmental assessment be completed for activities occurring in areas with no land use plan in order to help inform the decision maker. Internal scoping was conducted to identify issues that needed further analysis; none were identified.

Mitigating Measures for Proposed Alternative

No mitigating measures are proposed.

Residual Impacts:

There would be no residual impacts.

VII. Consultation and Coordination:

Persons/Agencies Consulted

Warm Springs Productions, LLC	Applicant		
Jim Herriges	Wildlife Biologist	Invasive, Nonnative Species, Vegetation, Threatened/Endangered Species, Subsistence, Wildlife/Terrestrial	BLM
Jason Post	Fisheries Biologist	Essential Fish Habitat, Wildlife/Aquatic	BLM
Holli McClain	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Recreation, Wilderness	BLM
Robin Mills	Archeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	BLM
Skip Theisen	Fire Management Specialist	Fire Management	BLM
Vic Wallace	Realty Specialist	Lands	BLM
Ben Kennedy	Hydrologist	Air Quality, Floodplains, Water Quality, Wetlands/Riparian, Soils	BLM
Collin Cogley	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Environmental Justice, Farm Lands	BLM
Rebecca Hile	Physical Scientist	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	BLM
Darrel Vandeweg	Geologist	Mineral Resources	BLM

List of Attachments

Attachment A	Assessment of Archeological, Historical, and Paleontological Resources (2 pp)
Attachment B	Compliance with ANILCA Section 810 Evaluation and Findings (1 pp)


Preparer's Signature _____ Date 11-10-2011
Vic Wallace
Realty Specialist

Decision Record

Issuance of a Land Use Permit (2920 09) to Warm Springs Productions, LLC to conduct commercial filming activities on public lands in the Black River drainage (relatively) near Snowy Peak, Alaska.

FF095971

Decision: It is my decision to authorize commercial filming activities on BLM-managed lands in the Black River drainage of the Eastern Interior Field Office geographic area. A Land Use Permit will be issued to Warm Springs Productions, LLC for a period of six (6) months; in accordance with regulations found in 43 CFR 2920 and pursuant to Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Rationale:

1. The proposed action is consistent with the use of public lands under the authority of Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy Management Act and the regulations found in 43 CFR 2920.
2. All concerns are appropriately addressed in EA DOI-BLM-AK-02000-2012-0001. This includes cultural resources and subsistence concerns (see attached NHPA Section 106 and ANILCA 810 findings).



Manager, Eastern Interior Field Office

11-21-11

Date

Appeal Provisions:

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the authorized officer and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2801.10(b)).

Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the authorized officer at Eastern Interior Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks Alaska 99709. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the authorized officer. If you wish to file a petition for stay of the effectiveness of this decision pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and must 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 irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is

not granted, and (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay. If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the authorized officer. A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 4230 University Drive Suite 300, Anchorage, AK 99508, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

Contact Person

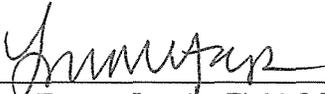
For additional information concerning this decision, contact Vic Wallace at the Eastern Interior Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99709, or by telephone at 907-474-2363.

Finding of No Significant Impact

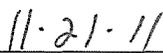
Land Use Permit (2920 09) application FF095971
for commercial filming on public lands

Finding of No Significant Impact:

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-AK02000-2012-0001 and have concluded that the impacts of conducting filming activities on public lands for commercial purposes within the Black River drainage of the Eastern Interior Field Office area (T.12N., R.27E., Fairbanks Meridian) have been adequately addressed. There are no impacts that approached the threshold of significance. Therefore, I have determined that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate and an environmental impact statement is not required.



Manager, Eastern Interior Field Office



Date