

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### BLM Seeks Public Input for Proposed Guided Hunting Operation in the Glacier Mountain Area

January 28, 2013

Alaska Peak Air Adventures/Jeff Burwell has applied for a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) to continue big game guiding activities for another year, 2013, in the Glacier Mountain Area SW of Eagle, Alaska on BLM-managed lands. Alaska Peak Air Adventures (APAA) was authorized for limited guided hunts in the area in 2012 and all permit requirements were successfully met. In analyzing the 2012 APAA proposed big game guiding application, the BLM received nearly 30 public comments. These comments were sorted into nine issues or concerns and addressed as follows:

1. Will the proposed action allow for a sustainable sheep harvest in this area?  
This issue is outside of the BLM's jurisdiction. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) manages wildlife and sets harvest limits. The BLM and the applicant met with Jeff Gross of ADF&G to discuss possible resolution of this issue. The applicant agreed to limit his clients to harvest of one Dall sheep within the Controlled Use Area (CUA). An additional two sheep may be harvested outside the CUA. This change is reflected in the Record of Decision.
2. Should guiding be allowed in this area?  
The BLM's current land use plan for the area does not limit the number of guides allowed in this area. Setting a guide use allocation for this area is outside the scope of this EA and is not addressed any further.
3. What aircraft use will be allowed and what impact will it have?  
Limitations on aircraft use within the CUA are the jurisdiction of the state. The applicant is required to comply with all applicable state laws. An ADF&G Trooper was involved in discussions for the permit and provided the applicant and agency with a letter covering what is allowed and not allowed within the CUA.
4. Will user conflict occur due to the nature and small size of the area?  
There is limited potential for user conflict in the area. Changes in the proposed action and Decision Record reflect that only one sheep hunt will be allowed in the CUA and no sheep hunting will begin before August 15<sup>th</sup>, five days after the season opening. These changes should further mitigate user conflict in the area.
5. Will there be a loss of the unique hunting qualities of the area?  
There is potential for the loss of some of the unique hunting qualities of the area. Changes in the proposed action and Decision Record reflect that only one sheep

hunt will be allowed in the CUA and no sheep hunting will begin before August 15<sup>th</sup>, five days after the season opening. These changes should mitigate loss of the unique hunting qualities of the area.

6. Are there issues with the applicant?  
The State of Alaska is responsible for licensing guides and outfitters. The applicant is a licensed guide.
7. Will horse use increase the spread of invasive plants?  
There is a potential for the spread of invasive plants. These impacts are discussed in Section VI of this document. Mitigation measures are proposed and carried forward as Stipulations in the Record of Decision.
8. Will vegetation be damaged with the level of horse use proposed?  
Some possible short term vegetation damage may occur along the trail and at holding areas. Much of the trail access route is outside of BLM management. The proposed action is well within the acceptable uses of two easements along the trail and still within anticipated use levels on BLM-managed lands. Discussions with the applicant state that he will attempt to minimize travel in and out of the area and time at staging areas where the livestock will be held. No further mitigation has been proposed.
9. How many guides will be allowed over time?  
Setting a guide use allocation for this area is outside the scope of this EA.

The new APAA application for 2013 remains the same as 2012 with one exception; APAA would like to be allowed to guide for up to two sheep hunters within the Glacier Mountain CUA. APAA was only authorized one sheep hunting client during the 2012 season.

The BLM has also developed an alternative action for review that would delay guided sheep hunts by the applicant until August 25 thus allowing roughly a two week window of specifically non-guided sheep hunting in the area.

The BLM is evaluating possible impacts of this proposal in an Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public comments on the proposal are welcome for 30 days starting Monday, January 28, 2013. After evaluating impacts of the proposed action, alternatives, and issues, the BLM will issue a decision whether or not to re-issue an SRP to APAA.

Comments concerning the proposal may be mailed to: BLM Eastern Interior Field Office (Attn: Collin Cogley), 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709; or sent by e-mail to: [ccogley@blm.gov](mailto:ccogley@blm.gov).

More information including a map about the proposal is available at the office address above and may be accessed via the project web page online at:

<https://www.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/projectSummary.do?methodName=renderDefaultProjectSummary&projectId=35867>

For additional information about the proposal, you may also contact Outdoor Recreation Planner Collin Cogley at (907) 474-2382 or [ccogley@blm.gov](mailto:ccogley@blm.gov) .

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