

Categorical Exclusion

Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

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Chapter 1. PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

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DOI-BLM-AKF010-2013-0009-CX

BLM Office: Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

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Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>
907-474-2200

Lease/Serial/Case File No.:FF093060, 2930.00 (AK012)

Applicant:Macgill Adams
DBA Wilderness Alaska
P.O. Box 113063
Anchorage, Alaska 99511

Proposed Action Title/Type: Special Recreation Permit

Description of Proposed Action:

The applicant, Wilderness Alaska (www.wildernessalaska.com), is proposing two commercial recreational trips in the NPR-A with the possibility of a third trip. The first trip would occur on Kokolik River from June 9-18 with 7 guests and 2 guides. Planned activities include river running, wildlife viewing, photography, day hiking and overnight camping. The second trip would include river rafting on the Utukok River from June 18-27. The trip would include 8 guests and 2 guides. Proposed activities are river running, day hiking, wildlife viewing and photography and overnight camping. A third, tentative trip could occur along the Nigu/ Etivluk Rivers, starting in the upper headwaters and paddling to the Colville River. The applicant states that the maximum number of guests would be 8 and 2 guides. The applicant has scheduled a personal trip to Archimedes Ridge from June 3 to the 9th.

All logistics for all trips would be done with fixed wing airplane and not utilize any helicopters. They are chartering with Coyote Air Service for the Kokolik trip. In addition, a Caravan (Wrights Air Service) would be utilized at Ivotuk on June 8 and June 17 trip to stage guests for shuttles to the put-in and take-out for both trips.

They do not plan to use fuel caches and would carry propane (20 # bottle) to fuel their small cook stove. The primary form of recreation they would like to provide to visitors is multi day floating trips. They would use inflatable canoes to travel downstream, moving camps regularly but not necessarily every day. On occasion they would stay at the same camp area for more than one night.

All food containers would be certified bear resistant by the IGBC. Mr. Adams cleans their trash as well as possible and stores it in rubbish bags within a sturdy dry bag. All trash would be backhauled to Fairbanks for disposal. On a rare occasion, burnable waste may be burned, however the applicant does not regularly have fires. When they do, they create pits in the flood zone and line them with sand to protect the rocks from scarring; they do not make fire rings. The applicant would use leave no trace standards for human waste disposal. Water will be obtained from free flowing natural sources and either boil or run water through a filter.

Wilderness Alaska has held a BLM permit with the Arctic Field Office on and off since 2000. Both Mr. Adams and his employee have completed safety training and have experience in remote

Alaska conditions. Trip leaders carry two forms of communication on the trips; an aviation band radio with a list of commonly used frequencies and a satellite phone. Both devices are carried in a pelican box which includes instructions and additional batteries. They also carry a backup GPS unit to aid in specific locating in case of emergency. At the beginning of each trip there is a safety discussion which touches on land and water protocol and introduces all the resources they are carrying.

Location of Proposed Action:

Legal Description:

Kokolik River Trip			
Township	Range	River Section on BLM managed land	River Section not on BLM managed Land.
Township	Range	Description	
1 North	39 West	1-2, 10-15, 22-26, 35-36	--
1 South	39 West	5-8, 18	--
1 South	40 West	12-14, 21-28, 33-35	--
2 South	40 West	3-9, 17-18	--
2 South	41 West	12-14, 21-29, 32-33 BLM Lands.	Sec 31 State Land
2 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
3 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
4 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
5 South	42 West	27, 34 BLM Managed Lands Only	State Land
6 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
7 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
7 South	43 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land
8 South	43 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land

Utukok River Trip			
Township	Range	River Section on BLM managed land	River Section not on BLM managed Land.
1 South	33 West	5-10, 14-17, 23,25-26, 35-36 (Excluding Private Land)	14, 23, 24 Private Land
2 South	33 West	1-3, 10-11, 14-23, 27	--
2 South	34 West	13-15, 21-24, 27-32	--
2 South	35 West	30-36	--
2 South	36 West	25-27, 33-36	--
3 South	36 West	3-4, 9-10, 15-16, 20-22, 28-33	--
3 South	37 West	33-36	--
4 South	36 West	6	--
4 South	37 West	1-8, 16-21, 29-32	--
5 South	38 West	3-4, 8-9, 16-20, 30	
5 South	39 West	25-26, 32-36	--
6 South	39 West	4-9, 16, 21, 28-29, 32-34 (Excluding Private Land)	8-9 Private Land
7 South	39 West	3-4, 10-14	--

Part I: Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents:

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2012

*Chapter 1 PLAN CONFORMANCE / NEPA
COMPLIANCE RECORD
Part I: Plan Conformance Review*

The National Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976

The proposed action is not inconsistent with the purposes of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976. The applicant will be provided with stipulations entitled “FF093060 Wilderness Alaska Stipulations 2013” and “United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Commercial Land Based Special Recreation Permit Stipulations.”

Date March 18, 2013

/s/Donna L. Wixon

Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office

Part II: NEPA Review

Categorical Exclusion Review

This proposed action meets the criteria for a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, BLM H-1790-1 national Environmental Policy Act Handbook Appendix 4- H. BLM Categorical Exclusions.

“Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan.”

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2.2 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.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 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.		X
2.8 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.		X
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X

2.11 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).		X
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the 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).		X

Date March 18, 2013

/s/Donna L. Wixon

Natural Resource Specialist, Arctic Field Office