



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

A. BACKGROUND

Project Name / Type: Hufman and Meier's Lake Community Gravel Pits

NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2013-0010-CX

Case File Number: AA093339 and AA093340

Location / Legal Description: The Meier's Lake community pit is located within section 19, T. 12 N., R. 1 W., CRM, Milepost 169.4 Richardson Highway.

The Hufman community pit is located within section 1, T. 13 N., R. 2 W., CRM near Milepost 179.1 Richardson Highway.

Applicant (if any): n/a

Description of Proposed Action:

Nonexclusive minerals disposals are made from sites to which the general public has access and more than one party has a right to remove materials. There are two types of nonexclusive disposal sites: the "community pit" and the "common use area." The distinction between the two is that common use areas are generally broad geographic areas which, after removal of the minerals, do not require reclamation. Community Pits are established based on an indicated need for multiple small disposals of a particular type of commodity in a given area.

The BLM is proposing to designate a portion of the existing material sites at Hufman Creek and Meier's Lake, both near Paxson, as Community Pits (case type 360413). There has been an increase in demand by property owners in these areas for small gravel sales on the scale of 50 to 250 cubic yards (cy), with material mainly used for residential fill and road improvement. The community pit establishment/designation would enable the BLM to streamline the future authorization of these numerous non-competitive requests, thereby efficiently meeting public demand. As no formally adopted site-specific mining and reclamation plan exists, the designation would also serve to promote pit development and eventual reclamation in a prudent

and orderly manner. Other exclusive and competitive sales, as well as the issuance of free use permits, may still be authorized within the pit.

The designated Community Pit area would be posted with signs and survey markers at each corner of the pit. A buffer of trees will be maintained between the Richardson Highway and the existing pits.

At the current time, the existing pits are approximately 2.5 acres in size. The proposed action will allow for the pits to expand up to 5 acres with a total of 50,000cy being removed.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Applicable Land Use Plan: East Alaska Resource Management Plan, September 2007.

The proposed action is in conformance with plan because it is specifically provided for in the following planning decisions:

Salable Minerals (Mineral Materials) decision *J-3-b* which states:

1. Maintain current mineral material sites until material is exhausted or other circumstances warrant closure.
2. Encourage extraction of mineral materials from previously disturbed sites rather than opening new sites.

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:

F. Solid Minerals 10. Disposal of mineral materials, such as sand, stone, gravel, pumice, pumicite, cinders, and clay, in amounts not exceeding 50,000 cubic yards or disturbing more than 5 acres, except in riparian areas.

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.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
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

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/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 Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	No
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

E. 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/ Elijah Waters, Acting for

4/18/2013

Beth Maclean
Glennallen Field Manager

Date