

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

A. Background

DOI-BLM-AKF010-2013-0021-CX

Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3844
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>
907-474-2200

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: FF095708

Applicant: David Leonard
DBA: Mountain Monarchs of Alaska
35555 Kenai Spur Highway
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Proposed Action Title/Type:

Special Recreation Permit to conduct guided hunting trips in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A)

General Location of Proposed Action: Keitzman Lake, Lobe Lake, Pac Paddle Lake

Description of Proposed Action:

The applicant, Dave Leonard, of Mountain Monarchs of Alaska (MMA) has requested to renew his authorization for a special recreation permit to conduct guided hunting operations on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands within in the NPR-A.

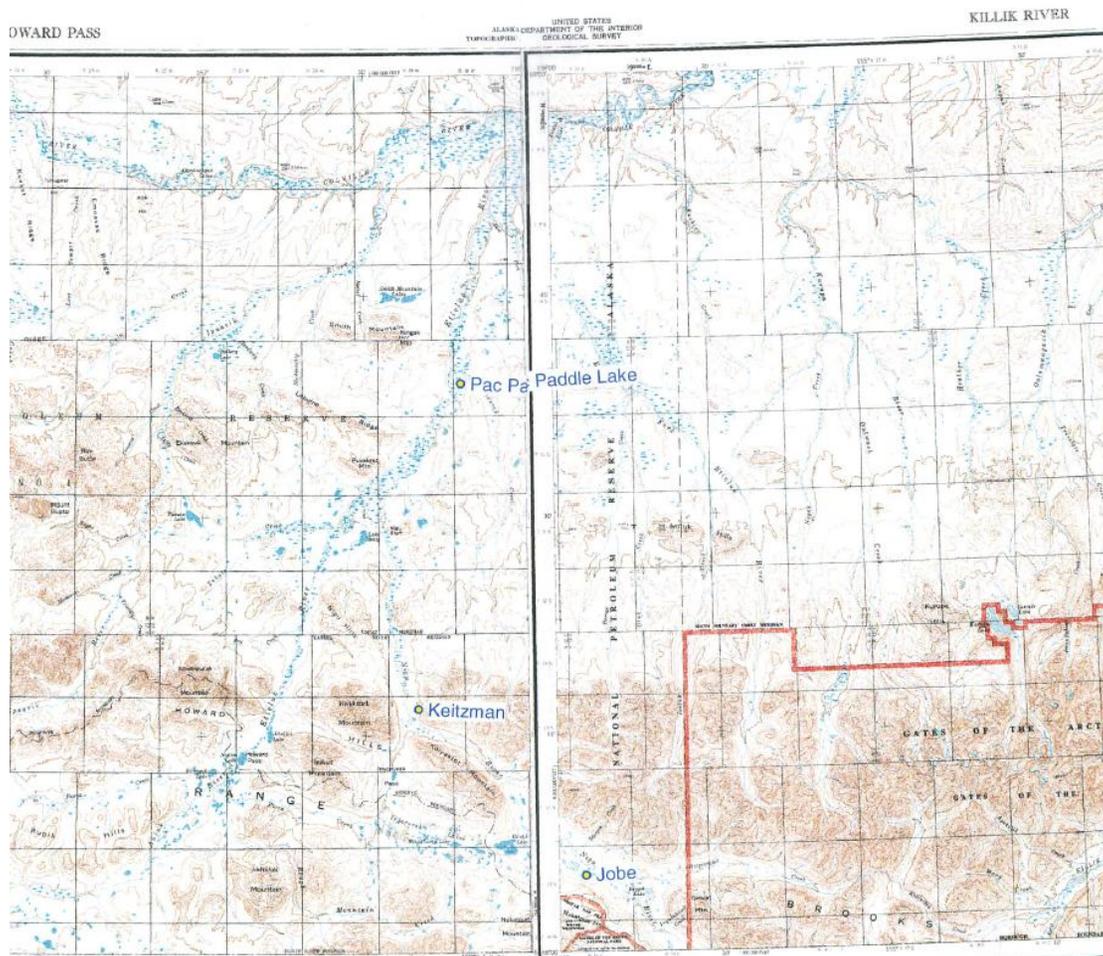
The proposed action would authorize a renewal of a Special Recreation Authorization to MMA to conduct guided hunting trips on BLM managed lands in the vicinity of the Etivluk and Nigu Rivers on the North Slope of Alaska (Map 1). The hunts would take place from July 13 to September 15, 2013. All hunting trips would be less than 14 days. Mountain Monarchs would guide a season total of between 8 and 10 hunters with up three guides. Hunters would fly commercially to Bettles and from there they would fly with Brooks Range Aviation by floatplane either a DeHavilland Beaver or a DeHavilland Otter Aircraft to Pac Paddle Lake to MMA's base camp. Mountain Monarch's operating plan includes the use of an operated by Brooks Range Aviation and based in Bettles. They estimate three trips and a total of six flights in and six flights out of camp.

MMA's clients primarily hunt caribou and incidentally grizzly bear targeting older male bears. Clients would either hunt in the vicinity of the lakes or fly to an area nearby.

Mr. Leonard and Mr. Riley Pitts are registered guides who would conduct the guided trips. Guides and pilots would have satellite phones (numbers on file with BLM), EPIRBS, and aircraft handheld radios. Mountain Monarchs subscribes to Global Rescue Insurance. Camping coordinates will be on file with them for emergency evacuation or extraction should the need arise. They recommend that all their clients purchase GR insurance prior to coming on an outdoor adventure with them. They have 24/7 access to Physicians at John Hopkins Medical University with instructions in each sat phone emergency case.

Cat holes are used for human waste following “Leave no Trace” principles and are a minimum of 200ft from water sources or campsites. Both Mr. Leonard and his employees have years of experience and have attended safety training. The only fuel use would be propane for cooking.

While Mr. Leonard has been conducting this kind of activity since 1985, this would be his fourth year of holding a BLM SRP.



Map 1. Location of proposed activity

Table 1. Legal Description of Lands Involved (Umiat Meridian)

Township	Range	Section of BLM Managed Land	Other land ownership and sections/Comments
5 South	24 West	1-36	--
5 South	23 West	1-36	--
5 South	22 West	1-36	--
5 South	21 West	1-36	--
5 South	20 West	1-36	--
5 South	19 West	1-36	--
5 South	18 West	1-36	--
5 South	17 West	1-36	--
5 South	16 West	1-33, 35-36	Excluding Regional Selection
6 South	24 West	1-36	--
6 South	23 West	1-36	--
6 South	22 West	1-36	--

6 South	21 West	1-36	--
6 South	20 West	1-36	--
6 South	19 West	1-36	--
6 South	18 West	1-36	--
6 South	17 West	1-27,29-32,34-36 (Excluding Private Lands)	Contains State Selection
6 South	16 West	4-6,9,16,18-21,28-33 (Excluding Private Lands)	Contains State Selection & Regional Selection (Reg/Sel not available for use)
7 South	24 West	1-36	--
7 South	23 West	1-36	--
7 South	22 West	1-36	--
7 South	21 West	1-36	--
7 South	20 West	1-36	--
7 South	19 West	1-36	--
7 South	18 West	1-36	--
7 South	17 West	5-8,17-20,29-32 (Excluding Private Lands)	--
7 South	16 West	4,5,8,9,16,17,20,21	Sec 17 & 20 SS 1-3, 10-15, 22-24 Private 6,7,18,19, 25-36 State
8 South	24 West	1-36	--
8 South	23 West	1-36	--
8 South	22 West	1-36	--
8 South	21 West	1-36	--
8 South	20 West	1-36	--
8 South	19 West	1-36	--
8 South	18 West	1-36	--
8 South	17 West	5-8,17-20,29-32 (Excluding Private Lands)	--
8 South	16 West	--	1-36 State Land
9 South	25 West	1-36	--
9 South	24 West	1-36	--
9 South	23 West	1-36	--
9 South	22 West	1-36	--
9 South	21 West	1-36	--
9 South	20 West	1-36	--
9 South	19 West	1-36	--
9 South	18 West	1-36 (Excluding Private Lands)	--
9 South	17 West	--	1-36 State Land
9 South	16 West	1,2, 11-14, 23-26, 35, 36	3-10, 15-22, 27-31 State Land
10 South	25 West	1-36	--
10 South	24 West	1-36	--
10 South	23 West	1-36	--
10 South	22 West	1-36	--
10 South	21 West	1-36	--
10 South	20 West	1-36	--
10 South	19 West	1-36	--
10 South	18 West	1-36 (Excluding Private Lands)	-
10 South	17 West	--	1-36 State Land
10 South	16 West	--	1-36 State Land
11 South	25 West	1-36	--
11 South	24 West	1-36	--
11 South	23 West	1-36	--
11 South	22 West	1-36	--
11 South	21 West	1-36	--
11 South	20 West	1-36	--

11 South	19 West	1-36	--
11 South	18 West	1-36 (Excluding Private Lands)	-
11 South	17 West	31-36 SS 13 & 24 State Land Within	1-30 State Land
11 South	16 West	5-8, 29-32 Reg Sel Not available for use.	1-4, 9-28, 33-36 Native Corporation Land
12 South	25 West	1-36	--
12 South	24 West	1-36	--
12 South	23 West	1-36	--
12 South	22 West	1-36	--
12 South	21 West	1-36	--
12 South	20 West	1-36	--
12 South	19 West	1-36	--
12 South	18 West	1-36 (Excluding Private Lands)	Contains State Selection
12 South	17 West	1-18 Contains SS	19-36 State Land
12 South	16 West	--	1-4, 9-16, 21-28 Native Corporation Land, 5-8,17-20, 29-30 State Land

Legal Description of Lands Involved (Kateel Meridian)

Township	Range	Section of BLM Managed Land	Equation 1. Categorical Exclusion
34 North	5 East	7-26, 35, 36	14,15,18-23,26-35 Noatak Preserve
34 North	6 East	7-36	--
34 North	7 East	7-34	23, 25-27, 33-36 Noatak Preserve
34 North	8 East	7-32, 36	26-36 Noatak Preserve
34 North	9 East	7-36	--
34 North	10 East	7-36	--
34 North	11 East	7-36	--
34 North	12 East	7-36	--
34 North	13 East	7-36	--
34 North	14 East	7-9, 16-21, 28-33	10-15, 22-27, 34-36 Gates of the Arctic
33 North	5 East	1, 2, 10-14, 24	2-11, 13-36 Noatak Preserve
33 North	6 East	1-22	13, 14, 18-36 Noatak Preserve.
33 North	7 East	4-8, 18	1-5, 7-36 Noatak Preserve.
33 North	8 East	1, 11-14, 24-26, 36	1-11, 13-36 Noatak Preserve
33 North	9 East	1-36	31, 32 Noatak Preserve
33 North	10 East	1-36	--
33 North	11 East	1-36	--
33 North	12 East	1-36	--
33 North	13 East	1-36	--
33 North	14 East	4-9, 16-21, 28-33	1-3, 10-15, 22-27, 34-36 Wdl Gates at the Arctic
32 North	5 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	6 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	7 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	8 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	9 East	1-4, 5, 11, 12	2-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	10 East	1-7, 10-15	3-10, 12-36 Noatak National Preserve
32 North	11 East	1-16, 24	7-9, 14-36 Noatak Preserve
32 North	12 East	1-28, 33-36	16, 17, 19-21, 28-33 Noatak Preserve
32 North	13 East	1-36	31 Noatak Preserve
32 North	14 East	2-11, 14-23, 26-35	1, 2, 11-14, 23-26, 35, 36 Gates of Arctic
31 North	5 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	6 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	7 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve

31 North	8 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	9 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	10 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	11 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	12 East	1-4, 9-16, 23, 24	4-9, 14-36 Noatak Preserve
31 North	13 East	1-3, 6, 7, 12, 17-22, 26-29, 34-36	4-6, 8-11, 13-17, 19, 20, 23-25, 27-34 Noatak Preserve
31 North	14 East	2-11, 14-18, 21-23, 26-28, 33-35	1, 2, 11-14, 19, 20, 23-26, 29-32, 35, 36 Noatak Preserve
30 North	6 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
30 North	7 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
30 North	8 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
30 North	9 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve
30 North	10 East	--	1-36 Noatak Preserve. 25, 36 Gates of the Arctic
30 North	11 East	--	1-22, 24, 28-30 Noatak Preserve. 13-15, 21-36 Gates of the Arctic.
30 North	12 East	--	1-24 Noatak Preserve. 19-36 Gates of the Arctic. 29, 32 Deed 012.
30 North	13 East	1-3, 12	2-36 Gates of Arctic
30 North	14 East	2, 3, 6-8, 14-23, 26, 27, 28	1-2,11-14, 18-21, 23-36 Gates of Arctic. 3-6, 8-10, 15-16 Noatak Preserve.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act, which allows for the authorization of uses consistent with the purposes of the Act.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The [NPR-A] IAP/EIS Record of Decision for the NPR-A developed stipulations and best management practices applicable to all activities in NPR-A. The stipulations and best management practices applicable to the proposed action will be provided, along with project-specific mitigation, to the applicant and are entitled: FF095708 Mountain Monarchs of Alaska 2013 Stipulations.

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.9, Specifically the 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(F-10) BLM Categorical Exclusions. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

“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.”

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.9,

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

D. Approval and Contact Information

I considered the proposed action and have determined that there is no potential for significant impacts.

/s/Lon Kelly
Authorized Officer, Arctic Field Office

Date: May 30, 2013

Contact Person

Donna Wixon
Natural Resource Specialist
Bureau of Land Management
Arctic Field Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Phone: 907-474-2301
Email: dwixon@blm.gov