

FF095842  
2984.01 (AK012)

## PLAN CONFORMANCE/NEPA COMPLIANCE RECORD

DOI-BLM-AKF010-2013-0028-CX

### Arctic Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

#### A. Background

Proposed Action: The applicant, Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game (ADFG), has requested authorization for a permit to conduct fish studies and aquatic habitat monitoring on lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to collect data on basic fish life history and population structure.

Date of Proposed Action: June 16<sup>th</sup> through September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Location: All in Umiat Meridian

Township	Range	BLM Managed Sections	
14 North	28 West	All	
13 North	15 West	All	
9 North	16 West	All	
17 North	14 West	All	
11 North	12 West	All, Except for Secs 3 & 24	

TOPO! map printed on 04/13/13 from "Untitled.tpo"

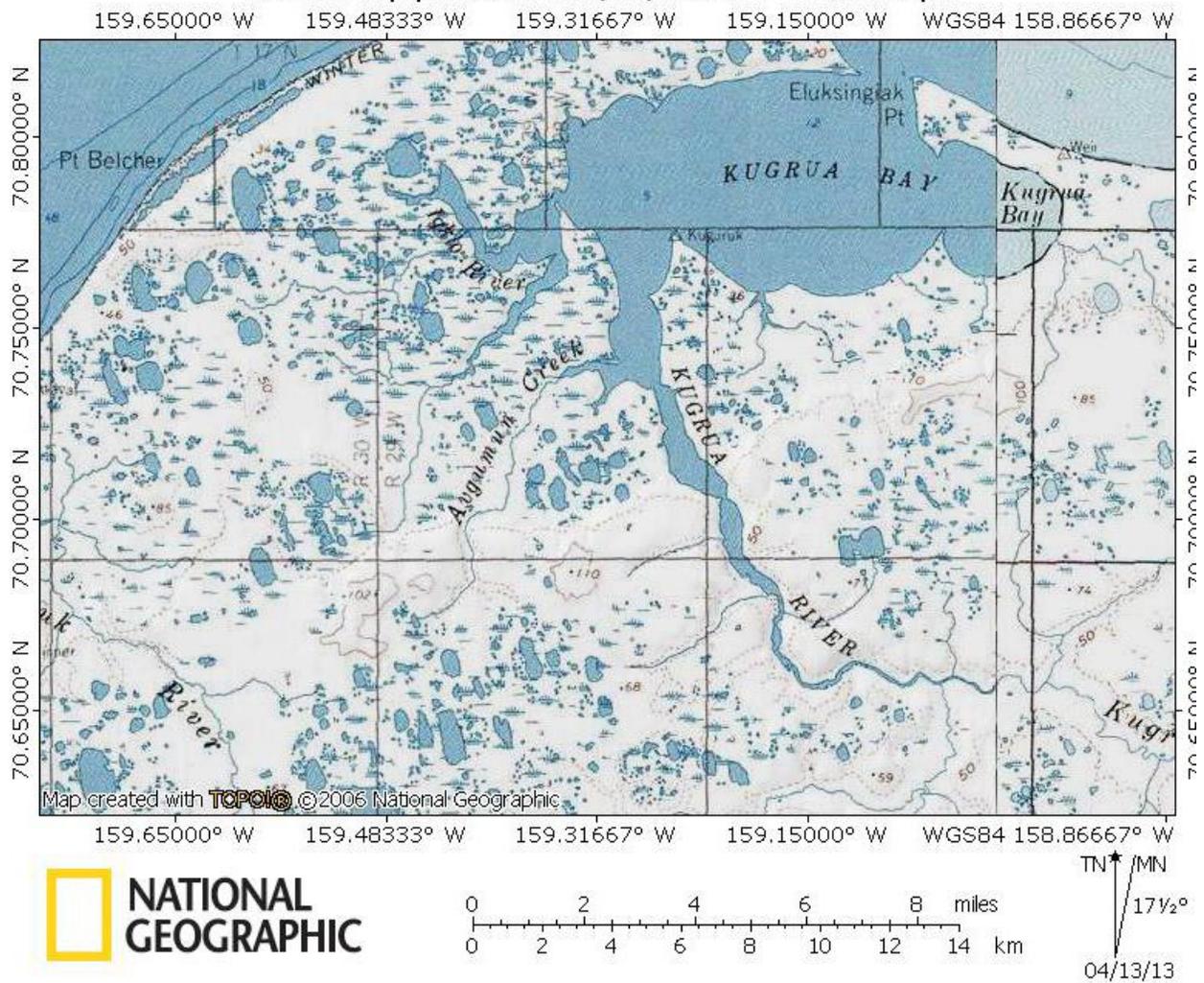


Figure 1. Map of 2013 Kugrua River study area.

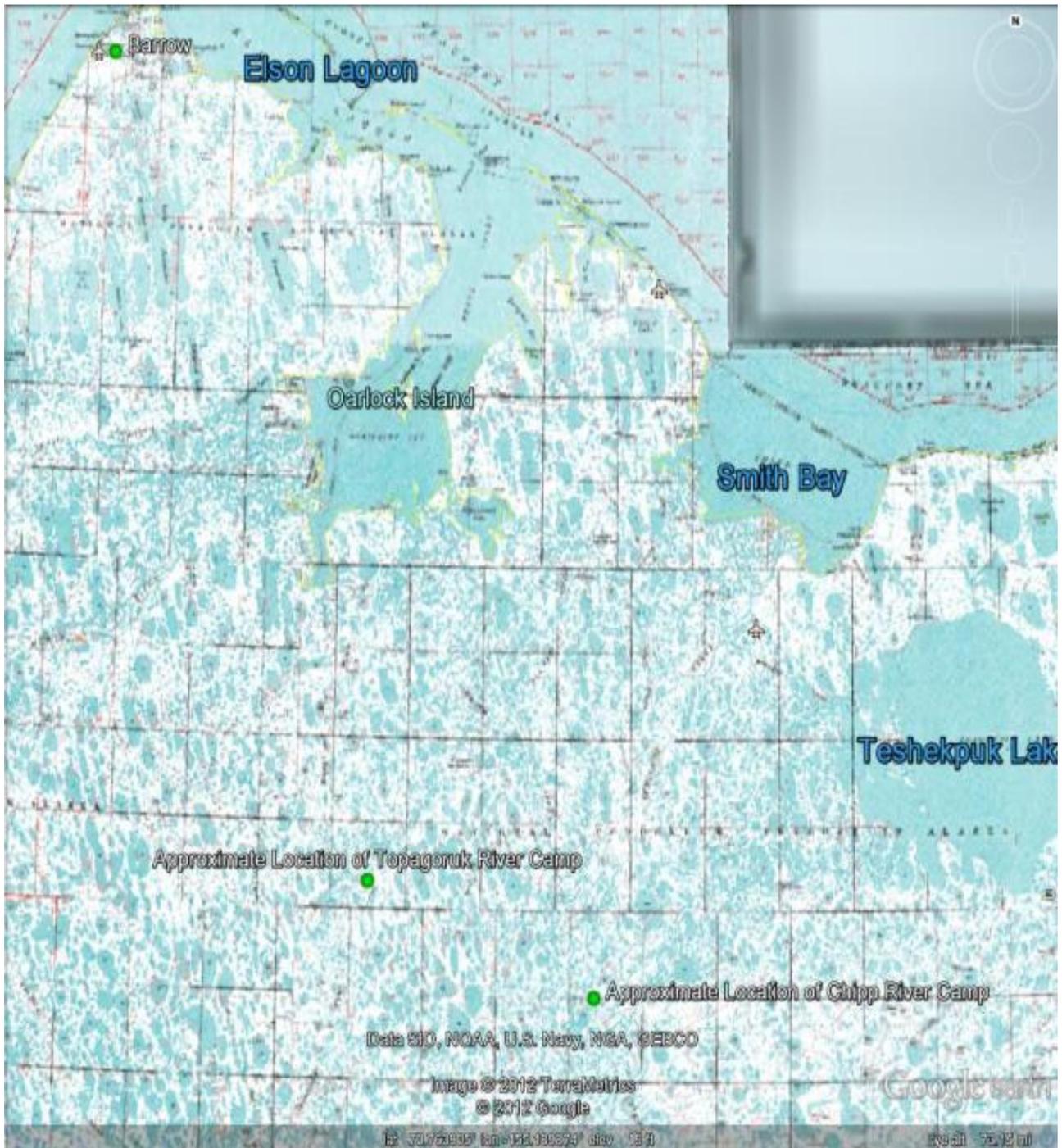


Figure 2. Map of 2013 Topagoruk and Chipp rivers sampling areas. The Topagoruk and Chipp River sampling areas lie well over 120 river km apart.

Applicant: Brad Wendling  
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game  
1300 College Road  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Serial Number: FF095842

**Description of Proposed Action:** The proposed action would authorize Brad Wendling of Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) to conduct studies within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) on basic fish life history and population structure.

They will be in the following locations on the dates as scheduled (weather permitting):

**KUGRUA:** They are flying out of Wainwright to stash gear at the Kugrua (figure 1) on June 16<sup>th</sup>. If the river is open, they will stay and conduct sampling at that time. If that happens, then they won't have to come back until July 26<sup>th</sup> at which point OC will bring them by boat for camp/sampling approximately July 26<sup>th</sup> – August 5<sup>th</sup>.

**TOPAGARUK**(figure 2): They are flying the gear in from Inigok on June 15<sup>th</sup>. They will return for camp/sampling June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 2<sup>nd</sup>. If work is not done by that point they have a backup helicopter scheduled for July 8<sup>th</sup> (flying out of Inigok).

**CHIPP**(figure 2): Flying in from Inigok to stash gear on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Flying in to camp/sample August 21<sup>st</sup> – September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Field Camp Locations – Kugrua River camp will be located at N70.65776°, W-159.04867°. Topagoruk River camp will be located between N70.457352°, W-155.751274° and N70.159741°, W-155.955529°. Chipp River camp will be located at N70.82895°, W-155.57109° and N70.32847°, W-154.90158°.

Camp occupancy will range from three to eight people at any given time. Topagaruk Camp will have 4 people. Camps will be accessed via helicopter, with the exception of possible boat access during the second sampling of the Kugrua River drainage. Fish sampling locations will be accessed via 14 ft. and/or 15.5 ft inflatable boats with outboard jet motors. Fish sampling will occur within 30 to 40 river miles from final camp locations.

Up to 250 gallons of motor gas for boat motors and generators will be stored at each camp location. Fuel will be hauled and stored in 15 gallon poly drums and two or three, five-gallon gas cans will also be used. Fuel containment equipment will be the same style used at BLM remote camps and will be able to hold at least two times the fuel stored at any given time. Absorbent material will be on site and all refueling of boat fuel tanks (max six gallon cruise-a-day tanks) and generators will occur within the containment. Helicopter refueling will occur at Wainwright, Barrow, Umiat, and possibly Inigok. No helicopter refueling at camp is currently proposed or planned.

## **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 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.

**“Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.”**

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.

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

species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		
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**D. Approval and Contact Information**

I have found that the proposed action is compatible with the LUP, and is an action that can be categorically excluded. The Proposed Action does not trigger any of the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 516 DM Chapter 2, Appendix 4. I recommend that the Proposed Action be allowed and that an Environmental Assessment of Environmental Impact Statement is not needed.

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/s/Lon Kelly  
Authorized Officer, Arctic Field Office

June 5, 2013  
Date

**Contact Person:**

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