

# Categorical Exclusion

DOI-BLM-AKF010-2013-0034-CX

## A. Background

**BLM Office:** Arctic Field Office LLAKF010

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.:** FF095846

**Applicant:** Terri Lomax  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation  
555 Cordova St  
Anchorage, AK 99501

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Lake Surveys / NPR-A Permit (298401)

**Dates of Proposed Activity:** July 15, 2013 – August 31, 2013

**General Location of Proposed Action:** Lakes within the NPR-A

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, Terri Lomax of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), has requested authorization for field activity and access to conduct lake surveys within the NPR-A.

The ADEC proposes to conduct soil, botanical, biological, water quality, and habitat observations at multiple sites. They have identified 40 random wetland points and 10 targeted wetland points as the study area. In the event that one of the random sites cannot be accessed, 40 oversample points have been selected as alternatives. At each of the sites the following would occur:

**Water quality** samples would be taken and analyzed for general water condition, various chemical analytes, and evidence of disturbance. Measurements will include temperature, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, chlorophyll, water clarity, turbidity, and color. Up to 4 liters of water may be collected from each lake.

**Soil cores** would be collected from the lake bottom with a gravity corer. Diatoms changes over the lake bottom core are used to estimate nutrient changes over time. Soil collections of up to 500mL would be collected from each lake.

**Biological samples** would be collected from substrates and from the surface of vegetation stems and leaves, and from the water column. Data on species composition and abundance, and the presence of algal toxins would be collected. Samples for zooplankton, phytoplankton, macroinvertebrate, and microcystin would be collected.

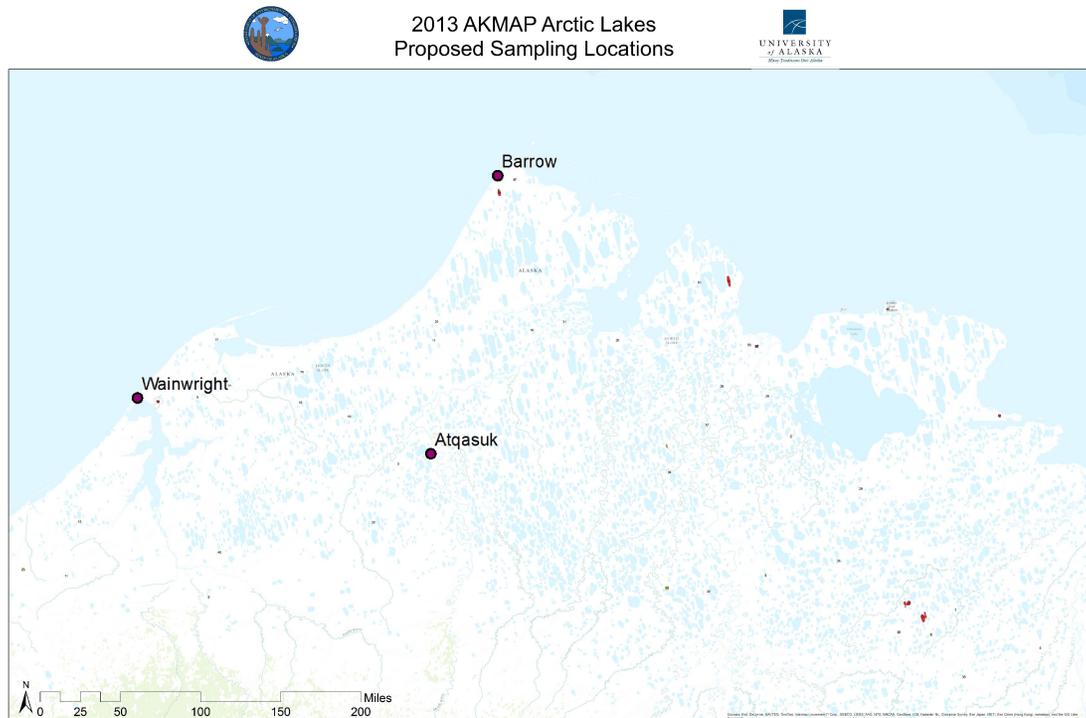
**Habitat data** will include an assessment of hydrologic sources and connectivity, documentation of hydrology alterations, and condition of habitat along shoreline and riparian areas. No physical collections would occur, only observations would be made.

The proposed time frame is July 15 – August 31, 2013. The field crew would consist of ten people, with a maximum of six people present at any given time. The mode of transportation would be an R-44 helicopter, transportation methods throughout the sample location is on foot

and via 12' inflatable raft with electric motor. ADEC would make three helicopter landings per site. The field camp locations would be Wainwright, Barrow and Inigok.

Fuel storage of approximately 1,250 gallons is proposed for Wainwright and Inigok. Fuel barrels would be stored at Inigok and Wainwright; fuel would be purchased at Barrow. The helicopter company would use hand pumps with filters to refuel from the barrels. No fueling would occur on lakes; all fueling operations would occur on land at airports or gravel pads at the remote site.

ADEC has consulted with the North Slope Borough and they will contact communities in the survey area by phone or mail regarding the project.



**Figure 1.** Applicant Supplied Map

**Legal Description:**

Project #	Township	Range	Section	Land Manager/Owner
NLA-AK13-0001	7 North	3 West	4, 5	BLM
NLA-AK13-0002	8 North	30 West	21	BLM
NLA-AK13-0003	13 North	23 West	36	BLM
NLA-AK13-0004	13 North	13 West	9, 10, 16, 17	BLM
NLA-AK13-0005	6 North	1 East	16	BLM
NLA-AK13-0006	7 North	4 West	33 & 34	BLM
NLA-AK13-0007	14 North	9 West	34, 35	BLM
	13 North	9 West	2, 3	BLM
NLA-AK13-0008	9 North	10 West	34, 35	BLM
NLA-AK13-0009	15 North	30 West	24	Olgoonik Corporation
NLA-AK13-0010	19 North	12 West	26, 27	BLM
NLA-AK13-0011	9 North	35 West	25, 26, 35, 36	BLM
NLA-AK13-0012	17 North	28 West	19, 20	BLM
NLA-AK13-0013	11 North	34 West	32, 33	BLM
NLA-AK13-0014	17 North	18 West	12	BLM

NLA-AK13-0016	15 North	26 West	27	BLM
NLA-AK13-0017	17 North	21 West	22, 27	BLM
NLA-AK13-0019	14 North	24 West	8	BLM
NLA-AK13-0020	17 North	15 West	24, 25	BLM
NLA-AK13-0021	17 North	21 West	2, 3	BLM
	18 North	21 West	34, 35	BLM
NLA-AK13-0022	15 North	28 West	7	BLM
NLA-AK13-0023	9 North	36 West	20, 21, 28, 29	BLM
NLA-AK13-0025	16 North	26 West	26, 27	BLM
NLA-AK13-0026	15 North	11 West	8, 9	BLM
NLA-AK13-0027	18 North	16 West	31	BLM
	17 North	16 West	6	BLM
NLA-AK13-0028	15 North	10 West	24	BLM
NLA-AK13-0029	12 North	6 West	30	BLM
NLA-AK13-0030	7 North	5 West	28, 29, 32, 33	BLM
NLA-AK13-0032	8 North	12 West	16	BLM
NLA-AK13-0033	11 North	24 West	35	BLM
	10 North	24 West	2	BLM
NLA-AK13-0034	12 North	13 West	8, 17	BLM
NLA-AK13-0035	9 North	7 West	8, 17	BLM
NLA-AK13-0036	8 North	14 West	12	BLM
NLA-AK13-0037	14 North	12 West	23	BLM
NLA-AK13-0038	5 North	3 West	14, 15, 22, 23	BLM
NLA-AK13-0040	9 North	29 West	5	BLM
	8 North	29 West	32	BLM
NLA-AK13-0041	14 North	2 West	12	BLM
	14 North	1 West	7	BLM
NLA-AK13-0044	19 North	11 West	23, 26	BLM
NLA-AK13-0045	18 North	5 West	8, 9, 16, 17	BLM (Lonely)
Alternate	18 North	5 West	19, 20	BLM (Lonely)
NLA-AK13-0047	22 North	18 West	11	Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation
NLA-AK13-0048	8 North	5 West	34	BLM (Inigok)
NLA-AK13-0050	14 North	31 West	3	Olgoonik Corporation
Alternate	15 North	31 West	27	Olgoonik Corporation
Alternate	17 North	10 West	34, 35	BLM
Alternate	17 North	10 West	28, 33	BLM
NLA-AK13-0054	22 North	18 West	5	Isatkook Lagoon – BLM. Land South West of Lagoon - Village of Barrow. Land East of Lagoon - Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation
Alternate	22 North	18 West	19	Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation
NLA-AK13-0055	7 North	4 West	7-9, 16-18	BLM
NLA-AK13-0058	17 North	10 West	34, 35	6-8,13-36 BLM
NLA-AK13-0059	17 North	10 West	28, 33	6-8,13-36 BLM

## B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the following planning document: National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated November 2012 and associated Record of Decision dated February 2013.

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 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: “FF095846 ADEC Lomax NPR-A Permit Stipulations 2013.”

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.		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

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/s/Lon Kelly  
Authorized Officer, Arctic Field Office

Date: June 24, 2013

### **Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:

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