

Decision Record

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis (DOI-BLM-AK-F010-2014-0002-EA) to evaluate the effects of implementation of Linc Energy Operations, Inc. proposed plan of operations for an exploration program in the Northeast (NE) National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A).

MAJOR LAWS PERTINENT TO DECISION

Major laws pertinent to the decision to accept the environmental assessment are: the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Sustainable Fisheries Act, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, and the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (NPRPA).

SELECTED ALTERNATIVE

The proposed action as presented to the BLM is the selected alternative. The proposed action meets the purpose and need of the EA; the No Action Alternative was not selected because it would not meet the purpose and need. The No Action Alternative would prevent the applicant from exploration activity on Federal oil and gas leases.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. See FONSI for more information.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The proposed action was announced on the BLM Arctic Field Office website NEPA register (November 18, 2013). No comments have been received as of December 18, 2013.

For this project, the applicant attended and presented the proposed action at the Subsistence Advisory Panel meeting in Wainwright, Alaska on September 18, 2013. Public involvement during the development of the EA also included discussions and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No issues with the proposed exploration activity program were identified.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION

The decision to allow the proposed action does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation of the public lands. The proposed action is in conformance with the objectives outlined in the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Supplemental Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision signed July 2008 and the 2012 National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. This EA is tiered to this document and the documents incorporated by reference. All practicable alternatives and measures to reduce or eliminate impacts to wetlands and floodplains, done in compliance with Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, in the project area have been taken. The action, as proposed, is not in conflict with other resources in the area and in conformance with current policy of the Fairbanks District Office, BLM.

DECISION

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment including the explanation and resolution of any environmental impacts. I have determined that the proposed action with mitigation measures described therein will not have any significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on the human environment and that an EIS is not required. I have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved IAPS. It is my decision that the Application Permit to Drill and Sundry Notice be approved.

The environmental protection measures afforded by the Northeast NPR-A Supplemental IAP/EIS, the NPR-A IAP/EIS, the NPRPA and the additional mitigation of the EA and FONSI are to be included in all authorizations.

The applicant submitted a Waste Management Plan as required by the EIS/ROD and A-2 Best Management Practice. The plan is hereby accepted.

The applicant submitted an Orientation Program Plan for Oil and Gas Related Activities as required by the EIS/ROD I-1 Required Operating Procedure. The plan is hereby accepted.

The applicant submitted a Weed Plan as required by the EIS/ROD and M-2 Best Management Practice. The plan is hereby accepted.

The applicant requested a deviation from BMP B-2d. The deviation is hereby granted.

APPEAL PROVISIONS

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the authorized officer, December 18, 2013 and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2801.10(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the authorized officer at Arctic Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks Alaska 99709. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the authorized officer. If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards: (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied, (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits, (3) The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay. If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the authorized officer. A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 4230 University Drive Suite 300, Anchorage, AK 99508, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

/s/ _____
Lon Kelly
Arctic Field Manager

Date 12/18/2013