

**A. Background**

**BLM Office:** Arctic Field Office LLAKF01000

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.** FF093060

**Applicant:** Macgill Adams  
DBA Wilderness Alaska  
P.O. Box 113063  
Anchorage, Alaska 99511

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Special Recreation Permit

**Dates of Proposed Activity:** June 7 – 25, 2014

**General Location of Proposed Action:** Nigu River, Colville River, Kokolik River & Etivluk River

**Description of Proposed Action:** The applicant, Mr. Macgill Adams with Wilderness Alaska ([www.wildernessalaska.com](http://www.wildernessalaska.com)) is requesting a 1-year renewal of his Special Recreation Permit (SRP). Wilderness Alaska is proposing to conduct two commercial recreational trips in the NPR-A in 2014. The first trip would occur on the Nigu and Etivluk Rivers from June 7-16 with eight guests and two guides. Planned activities include river running, wildlife viewing, photography, day hiking and overnight camping. The float trip would start on National Park Service (NPS) land and participants would float onto Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in a day or so, weather and wildlife dependent, ending on the Colville River for take-out. The second trip would include river rafting on the Kokolik River from June 16-25. The trip would include seven guests and two guides. Proposed activities are river running, day hiking, wildlife viewing, photography, and overnight camping. If circumstance prevents either of these trips from taking place, Mr. Macgill would substitute a trip along the Utukok River. The applicant states that the maximum number of guests would be eight with two guides.

All logistics for all trips would be done with fixed wing airplane and not utilize any helicopters. They would charter Coyote Air Service for all trips. In addition, a Caravan (Wrights Air Service) would be utilized at Iivotuk on June 16 and June 25 to stage guests for shuttles in the Coyote aircraft. On the 16<sup>th</sup> the same plane that carries clients in for trip 2 would carry out clients from trip 1.

Wilderness Alaska does not plan to use fuel caches and would carry propane (20 # bottle) to fuel their small cook stove. The primary form of recreation they would like to provide to visitors is multi day floating trips. They would use inflatable canoes to travel downstream, moving camps regularly but not necessarily every day. On occasion they would stay at the same camp area for more than one night.

In the past Wilderness Alaska has carried their food in rigid locking dry vault sold by NRS. This year they are upgrading their coolers to locking airtight Engel and Yeti coolers. All food containers are certified bear resistant by the IGBC. Food and eating are confined to a particular area/tent located away from sleeping areas. They would have a shotgun and bear spray with

them. Mr. Adams cleans their trash as well as possible and stores it in rubbish bags within a sturdy dry bag. All trash would be backhauled to Fairbanks for disposal; recyclable items would be taken to a recycling center in Anchorage. On a rare occasion, burnable waste may be burned, however the applicant does not regularly have fires. When they do, they create pits in the flood zone and line them with sand to protect the rocks from scarring; they do not make fire rings. The applicant would use leave no trace standards for human waste disposal. Water will be obtained from free flowing natural sources and either boil or run water through a filter.

Wilderness Alaska has held a BLM permit with the Artic Field Office on and off since 2000. Both Mr. Adams and his employees have completed safety training and have experience in remote Alaska conditions. Trip leaders carry two forms of communication on the trips, an aviation band radio with a list of commonly used frequencies and a satellite phone. Both devices are carried in a pelican box, which includes instructions and additional batteries. They also carry a backup GPS unit to aid in specific locating in case of emergency. At the beginning of each trip, there is a safety discussion which touches on land and water protocol and introduces all the resources they are carrying.

**Legal Description:**

Kokolik River Trip (Umiat Meridian)				
In N 68° 47.89 W 162° 03.86 Out N 69° 20.99 W 161° 27.69				
Township	Range	River Section on BLM managed land	River Section not on BLM managed Land.	USGS TOPO GUADRANGLE
1 South	40 West	12-14, 21-28, 33-35	-- (Out)	Utukok River B-5
2 South	40 West	3-9, 17-19	--	Utukok River B-5
2 South	41 West	12-14, 21-29, 32-33 BLM Lands.	Sec 30, 31 State Land	Utukok River A-5 & B-5
2 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	Utukok River A-5
3 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	Utukok River A-5/Pt. Lay A-1
4 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	Utukok River A-5
5 South	42 West	27, 34 BLM Managed Lands Only	State Land	Misheguk Mountain D-5/Utukok River A-5
6 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	Misheguk Mountain D-5
6 South	43 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	DeLong Mountains D-1
7 South	42 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land	Misheguk Mountain D-5
7 South	43 West	No BLM Managed Lands.	State Land (In)	DeLong Mountains D-1

Nigu/Etivluk River Trip					
In - National Park land Out N68° 56.60 N155° 54.87					
Meridian	Township	Range	River Section on BLM managed land	River Section not on BLM managed Land.	USGS TOPO GUADRANGLE
Kateel	31 North	14 East	None	19,30,31,32	Killik River A-5
Kateel	31 North	13 East	None	5,6, 8-11,13-15,24	Killik River A-5
Kateel	32 North	13 East	None	31,32	Killik River A-5
Kateel	32 North	12 East	2-4,10-14,23-26,36	--	Howard pass

					A-1
Kateel	33 North	12 East	19,29-33	--	Howard pass A-1
Kateel	33 North	11 East	5,6,8,9,14-17,22-25	--	Howard pass A-1 & B-1
Kateel	34 North	11 East	7,8, 17-20,29-32	--	Howard pass B-1
Umiat	12 South	19 West	5-8,17-20,29,30	--	Howard pass B-1
Umiat	11 South	19 West	6-8,17-20,29-32	--	Howard pass B-1 & C-1
Umiat	11 South	20 West	1,12	--	Howard pass C-1
Umiat	10 South	19 West	1,2,10-16,19-23,27-31	--	Howard pass C-1
Umiat	10 South	20 West	36	--	Howard pass C-1
Umiat	9 South	19 West	1,12,13,24,25,35,36	--	Howard pass C-1
Umiat	9 South	18 West	18,19,30,31	--	Howard pass C-1
Umiat	8 South	18 West	2-4,9-11,15-17,19-22,27-33	--	Howard pass C-1 & D-1
Umiat	7 South	18 West	1-3,10-16,21-23,26-28,32-35	--	Howard pass D-1
Umiat	6 South	18 West	23-27,34-36	--	Howard pass D-1
Umiat	6 South	17 West	17-20	--	Howard pass D-1
			3, 4,5,8,9,10,17 State Selected	--	Killik River D-5

Utukok River Trip (Contingency Plan)			
Township	Range	River Section on BLM managed land	River Section not on BLM managed Land.
1 South	33 West	5-10, 14-17, 23,25-26, 35-36 (Excluding Private Land)	14, 23, 24 Private Land
2 South	33 West	1-3, 10-11, 14-23, 27	--
2 South	34 West	13-15, 21-24, 27-32	--
2 South	35 West	30-36	--
2 South	36 West	25-27, 33-36	--
3 South	36 West	3-4, 9-10, 15-16, 20-22, 28-33	--
3 South	37 West	33-36	--
4 South	36 West	6	--
4 South	37 West	1-8, 16-21, 29-32	--
5 South	38 West	3-4, 8-9, 16-20, 30	--
5 South	39 West	25-26, 32-36	--

6 South	39 West	4-9, 16, 21, 28-29, 32-34 (Excluding Private Land)	8-9 Private Land
7 South	39 West	3-4, 10-14	--

### Part I: Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents:

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) 2012

Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved 1/11/1991

Utility Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement approved 9/27/1989

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

### B. 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: “FF093060 Wilderness Alaska Stipulations 2014” and “United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Commercial Land Based Special Recreation Permit 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.

**“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.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
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.		
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 species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		<b>X</b>

#### **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

April 21, 2014  
Date

#### **Contact Person:**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:

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](mailto:dwixon@blm.gov)