

BBC Squirrel Filming

Introduction

Students and professionals have been conducting various types of projects in the Toolik and Galbraith Lake areas for many years.

Summary

Joe Tuck with BBC Broadcasting House proposes to film arctic squirrels in the Toolik and Galbraith Lake areas from April 15, 2014 through August 1, 2014 to produce a documentary which would be for publication and sale.

Alternatives Considered

The No Alternative Option is the only alternative considered and was not selected as it would not allow BBC Broadcasting House to film arctic squirrels in the Toolik and Galbraith Lake areas in order to produce a documentary for sale.

Decision

I have decided to authorize a permit to Joe Tuck with BBC Broadcasting House on public lands for the purpose of filming arctic squirrels in order to produce a documentary which would be for sale from April 15, 2014 through August 1, 2014.

Management Considerations

The Categorical Exclusion and supporting documentation have been prepared consistent with the requirements of various statutes and regulations, including but not limited to:

- Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA)

One BLM land use plan applies to the overall project area, the Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan.

Public Involvement

It was determined that due to the remoteness of the action, there would be no impact to the general public. Additionally, this document was published to the electronic Central Yukon Field Office NEPA Register on April 1, 2014. No comments have been received as of

Appeal or Protest Opportunities:

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, in accordance with 43 CFR Part 4 and DOI Form 1842-1. The notice of appeal must be filed in the Bureau of Land Management Central Yukon Field Office, 1150 University Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709 within 30 days from receipt of this decision. If you decide to file an appeal, you must carefully follow the procedure described on the enclosed form 1842-1. If you

don't file your appeal at the locations specified on the form within 30 days, the Board may dismiss your appeal as untimely without considering its merits. Be sure to send a copy of your notice of appeal to each party named in this decision and to all of the addresses on the enclosed form 1842-1. You may also ask the Board to stay or suspend the effect of this decision while your appeal is pending. If you desire a stay, you must enclose your request for a stay with your notice

of appeal. You have the burden of showing a stay is justified. The Board will grant a stay only if you provide sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the Board grants or denies the stay,
2. The likelihood of the success of your appeal on its merits,
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the Board does not grant the stay, and;
4. Whether the public interest favors granting a stay.

Approval from Authorized Official:

Field Office Manager Decision

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated impacts, and public and agency input, I have decided to adopt and implement the attached Approved Plan in conformance with the Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan.

Signature
Nichelle W. Jacobson
Field Manager
Central Yukon Field Office

Date

Essential Fish Habitat Assessment

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F-030-2014-0022-CX

Prepared by: Bob Karlen

Date: 4/2/14

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Finding: There are no salmon species catalogued by the State of Alaska present in the area to be used or impacted by this action. Based on this finding, it is anticipated that the proposed action will not have an adverse effect on EFH for salmon. Therefore, the proposed action is assigned the EFH determination: *No affect.* EFH consultation with NMFS is not required

References: Alaska Department of Fish and Game. 2014. Fish distribution database. Internet website at: <http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us>.

Wilderness Characteristics Assessment

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F-030-2014-0022-CX

Serial No.: F-96769

Applicant: BBC Broadcasting House, Joe Tuck

Location: Toolik Research Station and Galbraith Lake more particularly described as within Secs. 20, 21, 28, 29 and 32, T. 9 S., R. 11 E., Sec. 36, T. 12 S., R. 11 E., and Secs. 29, 30, 31 and 32, T. 12 S., R. 12 E., Umiat Meridian, Alaska, containing approximately 2.50 acres.

Prepared by: Lisa Shon Jodwalis

Date: 2 April 2014

Proposed Action

BBC Broadcasting House proposes to film a documentary of arctic ground squirrels along with research scientists from the University of Alaska at Anchorage twice throughout the spring and summer with the first session beginning April 20 through May 5, 2014 and the second June 28 through July 11, 2014. They propose to use a vehicle to drive up the Dalton, park their vehicle and walk in to all locations. Then they would set up blinds so as to minimize disturbance of the squirrels and commence filming using a tripod and hand held camera. After completion they intend to sell the video.

Evaluation

The basis for this evaluation is BLM Manual 6310-Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands, and BLM Manual 6320 - Considering Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process, which direct offices to conduct and maintain inventories regarding the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics, and to consider identified Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) in land use plans and when analyzing projects under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Effects on wilderness characteristics on BLM lands within the Utility Corridor are evaluated according to the Nonwilderness Assessment, a special project approved by the BLM Director and conducted by the BLM along portions of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) corridor in 1980. This assessment identified lands under BLM administration that were considered lacking in the wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964. The assessment was conducted in a manner that met the requirements of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

The action being considered is located within the Sagavanirktok Segment of the Nonwilderness Assessment, which covered approximately 512,000 acres total in 1980. Portions of this segment meet the 5,000 acre minimum size. However it was determined that the Sagavanirktok Segment did not meet the standards for naturalness due to roads, camps, airfields, pipelines, material sites and associated facilities. These disturbances bisect the entire length of the segment.

FINDING

The proposed action will not occur on lands identified as having wilderness characteristics and therefore will not affect wilderness characteristics. Some mitigation is requested to protect the recreation values for which Galbraith Lake ACEC is designated and the natural setting of the road corridor as prescribed in the Dalton Highway Recreation Area Management Plan for Semi-Primitive Motorized zones.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Permittee and film crew must adhere to Leave No Trace principles for camping and hiking in Alaska as specified by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (www.LNT.org)

Type of Assessment/Sources

- Department of Interior, BLM, 1980. Nonwilderness Assessment: The Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, Final Decision. Anchorage, Alaska
- topographic map Philip Smith Mountains B-5; GIS data; Google Earth images

Section 810 Analysis

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F030-2014-0022-CX

Applicant: BBC Broadcasting House, Joe Tuck

Serial No.: F-96769

Proposed Action: BBC Broadcasting House proposes to film a documentary of arctic ground squirrels along with research scientists from the University of Alaska at Anchorage twice throughout the spring and summer with the first session beginning April 20 through May 5, 2014 and the second June 28 through July 11, 2014. They propose to use a vehicle to drive up the Dalton, park their vehicle and walk in to all locations. Then they would set up blinds so as to minimize disturbance of the squirrels and commence filming using a tripod and hand held camera. After completion they intend to sell the video.

Location: Toolik Research Station and Galbraith Lake

Township/Range: Secs. 20, 21, 28, 29 and 32, T. 9 S., R. 11 E., Sec. 36, T. 12 S., R. 11 E., and Secs. 29, 30, 31 and 32, T. 12 S., R. 12 E., Umiat Meridian, Alaska, containing approximately 2.50 acres.

Evaluation by: Erin Julianus and Bob Karlen

Date: and 4/2/14

Type of Assessment/Sources:

Effect of the proposal on subsistence uses and needs

Fisheries: Though there are fish present in the Toolik and Galbraith Lake drainages, no subsistence use of fish is documented for residents of Alaska within the permitted area (USDI BLM 1989). Even if there was fish movement and subsequent subsistence use of fish upstream or downstream from the study sites, the proposed action would not significantly reduce harvestable fisheries resources that are available for subsistence use since this activity will not affect fish or their habitat. The proposed action will not alter the distribution, migration or location of harvestable fisheries resources. The proposed action will not create any legal or physical barriers that would limit access by subsistence users of the fisheries resource.

Wildlife:

Other resources:

Expected reduction, if any, in the availability of resources due to alteration in resource distribution, migration, or location:

Expected limitation, if any, in the access of subsistence users resulting from the proposal:

Availability of other lands, if any, for the purpose sought to be achieved:

Other alternatives, if any, which would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes:

Findings:

References

USDI Bureau of Land Management. 1989. Utility Corridor Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement. USDI/Northern Field Office. Fairbanks, Alaska.