

Anders Filming

Introduction

Students and professionals have been conducting various types of projects in the Toolik Research Station area for many years.

Summary

Uwe Anders with one additional crew member proposes to film arctic ground squirrels in the Toolik Research Station area from April 15, 2014 through May 6, 2014. He would use a hand held camera and tripod to produce a documentary which would be for publication on German television.

Alternatives Considered

The No Alternative Option is the only alternative considered and was not selected as it would not allow Uwe Anders to film arctic ground squirrels for the purpose of producing a documentary.

Decision

I have decided to authorize a permit on public lands for the purpose of filming arctic squirrels in the Toolik Research Station area from April 15, 2014 through May 6, 2014 for the purpose of producing a documentary for German television.

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 3, 2014. No comments have been received as of April 9, 2014.

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.

Tim Hammond
Signature
for Nichelle W. Jacobson
Field Manager
Central Yukon Field Office

April 9, 2014
Date

— Essential Fish Habitat Assessment

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F-030-2014-0023-CX

Prepared by: David Esse

Date: 4/3/14

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Finding: Based on the finding that there are no anadromous species in the area encompassed by this permit (ADF&G 2014) and the unlikelihood of impacts beyond this same area, the proposed action is assigned the EFH determination: *No effect*. EFH consultation with NMFS is not required.

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

— Wilderness Characteristics Assessment

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F-030-2014-0023-CX

Serial No.: F-96782

Applicant: Uwe Anders

Location: Mile post 285 off the Dalton Highway around Toolik Research Station more particularly described as within Secs. 20, 21, 28 and 29, T. 9 S., R. 11 E., and Sec. 3, T. 10 S, R. 11 E., and Secs. 29 and 32, T. 11 S., R 12 E., Umiat Meridian, Alaska, containing approximately 1.75 acres.

Prepared by: Lisa Shon Jodwalis

Date: 8 April 2014

Proposed Action

Uwe Anders along with one crew member proposes to film arctic ground squirrels from April 15, 2014 through May 6, 2014, for the purpose of producing a documentary for German television. He proposes to use a vehicle to drive up the Dalton, park his vehicle (license plate FLW576) and walk in to all locations. He would set up blinds so as to minimize disturbance of the squirrels and commence filming using a tripod and hand held camera. After completion he intends to sell the video and must submit a copy to BLM for inclusion in the case file.

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

1. 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

- U.S. Department of Interior, BLM, 1980. Nonwilderness Assessment: The Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, Final Decision. Anchorage, Alaska
- U.S.G.S. topographic map Philip Smith Mountains C-5; GIS data; Google Earth images
- Personal familiarity with area, and aerial survey of area July 2013.

— Section 810 Analysis

NEPA Document No.: DOI-BLM-AK-F030-2014-0023-CX

Applicant: Uwe Anders

Serial No.: F-96782

Proposed Action: Uwe Anders along with one crew member proposes to film arctic ground squirrels from April 15, 2014 through May 6, 2014, for the purpose of producing a documentary for German television. He proposes to use a vehicle to drive up the Dalton, park his vehicle (license plate FLW576) and walk in to all locations. He would set up blinds so as to minimize disturbance of the squirrels and commence filming using a tripod and hand held camera. After completion he intends to sell the video and must submit a copy to BLM for inclusion in the case file.

Location: Mile post 285 off the Dalton Highway around Toolik Research Station

Township/Range: Secs. 20, 21, 28 and 29, T. 9 S., R. 11 E., and Sec. 3, T. 10 S, R. 11 E., and Secs. 29 and 32, T. 11 S., R 12 E., Umiat Meridian, Alaska, containing approximately 1.75 acres

Evaluation by: Erin Julianus and David Esse

Date: 4/9/2014 and 4/3/14

Type of Assessment/Sources: Review of application materials, subsistence database, local knowledge, interviews with staff knowledgeable about the area and the proposed action.

Effect of the proposal on subsistence uses and needs

Fisheries: No subsistence use of fish is documented for residents of Alaska within the permitted area (USDI BLM 1989). Even if there was subsequent subsistence use of fish in waters near the permitted areas or downstream from the waterbodies surrounding the permitted areas (Toolik River headwaters), the proposed action would not 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:

The proposed action is located in Game Management Unit (GMU) 26B. Species of wildlife that are used for subsistence harvest in the area include moose, sheep, bears, furbearers, and small game. These species may temporarily avoid the area when activities associated with the permitted action are occurring, but the activity will not permanently impact their distribution in the area. Although subsistence activity occurs throughout the area, the proposed action will not significantly affect subsistence uses and needs.

Other resources:

The proposed activity will not significantly impact other resources such as water, wood, or berries. Subsistence activities that target these resources occur in a much broader area than

where the proposed action is to take place. Therefore, the proposed action will not significantly affect subsistence uses and needs.

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

The proposed action would not alter the distribution, migration, or location of subsistence resources.

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

None. Access to resources by subsistence users will not be limited by the proposed action.

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

The proposed action will occur in an area reasonably accessible from the Dalton Highway, and in an area with other activities such as scientific research are ongoing. Therefore, no alternative sites were proposed.

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

The only alternative that would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes is to not allow or permit any activities on public lands. However, such an alternative is not viable because the BLM manages public lands for multiple uses.

Findings:

The proposed action will not significantly restrict subsistence uses. Access to subsistence resources will not be hampered by the proposed activity. There is no reasonably foreseeable significant decrease in the abundance of harvestable resources and in the distribution of harvestable resources due to the proposed action.

References

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