

Shrub and Soil Sampling

A. Background

DOI-BLM-AK-F030-2014-0036-CX

BLM Office:Central Yukon Field Office

Case File No.:F-96785

Proposed Action Title/Type:Shrub and Soil Sampling and Analysis

Location of Proposed Action:Toolik Lake Research Station, mile post 285 off Dalton Highway, more particularly described as Secs. 28,29, 32 and 33, T. 9 S., R. 11 E., Umiat Meridian, Alaska, containing approximately 1.00 acre.

Description of Proposed Action:Carly Phillips with the University of Georgia proposes to use public lands for ecological research investigating the impact of expanding shrub species on soil carbon storage. As a small part of the research she would conduct a small amount of shrub and soil sampling for laboratory analysis near Toolik Lake Research Station at milepost 285 on the Dalton Highway, from June 1, 2014 through July 31, 2014. Ms. Phillips proposes to access nine (9) sites of which four (4) sites are on public lands by driving the Dalton Highway, parking alongside the road and walking to established points for her sampling. She proposes to collect less than 20 grams of leaf and root litter along with the less than 3 kilograms of soil. Sampling would occur using a standard pocketknife, a punch soil auger, garden spade and a common serrated bread knife. Litter would be collect by removing leaves from shrubs by hand. Roots would be collected by digging with spade into the first 5 to 10 centimeters of soil, removing roots using a pocketknife, and then repacking the disturbed soil area. Soils would be sampled using a combination of auger, bread knife and spade. These samples would then be packed out and transported on foot back to Toolik Lake Research Station. Ms. Phillips would be conducting most of the sampling along with two (2) others persons.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name:Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan

Date Approved/Amended: January 11, 1991

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): Utility Corridor RMP, Appendix N — Lands

7. Process applications for land use authorizations from the general public, Federal and State agencies and research organizations on a case by case basis.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

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. Appendix 3, Departmental Categorical Exclusions

1.6 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.

D. Approval and Contact Information

/s/ Gary M. Foreman for Nichelle W. Jacobson Field Manager, Central Yukon Field Office	July 11, 2014 Date
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Contact Person

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