



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Glennallen Field Office
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<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

A. BACKGROUND

Project Name / Type: Majestic Heli Ski Special Recreation Permit (2930)

NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2015-0002-CX

Case File Number: AA-93596

Location / Legal Description: Areas within the north central Chugach Mountains, Alaska on state-selected BLM administered lands south of the Glenn Highway.

Section 4-9.T.19 N., R. 12 E.; Section 28-33, T. 20 N., R. 12 E. Seward Meridian

Section 18-19, 30-31, T. 2 S. R. 10 W.; Section 13-14, 23-26, 35-36, T. 2 S. R. 11 W. Copper River Meridian

Applicant (if any): Njord Rota, Operating as Majestic Heli-Ski

Description of Proposed Action: Majestic Heli Ski (MHS) has applied to the BLM Glennallen Field Office for a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) to operate day-use commercial heliskiing activities on BLM administered lands within the north central Chugach Mountains.

The applicant anticipates a maximum of 30 clients for the 2015 season. The applicant proposes a maximum of 130 landings. A “landing” is defined by two helicopter touch-downs: the first to drop-off skiers the second to pick-up the same group of skiers. The duration at each landing site would be approximately 10 minutes. The applicant would be using a Bell 407 or the Euro-copter AStar helicopter. Operations would occur during the months of February through early May, 2015-2017. The SRP would be valid for the 2015 thru 2017 season and is subject to annual renewal.

A detailed operation and safety plan has been submitted to the BLM. Special stipulations, general terms and conditions for the proposed action will be consistent with similar permitted heliskiing operations on BLM-managed lands within the region.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Applicable Land Use Plan:

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

East Alaska Resource Management Plan (EARMP) and Record of Decision (ROD), September 2007

The proposed action is in conformance with the plan even though it is not specifically provided for because it is clearly consistent with the following planning decisions (EARMP ROD, p. 35):

M. Recreation

M-1: Goal

Manage recreation to maintain a diversity of recreational opportunities.

6. Other Areas

Areas outside those identified above would be managed as Extensive Recreation Management Areas, with recreation management based on maintenance of existing ROS classes in the areas. Inventory and monitoring could occur and standards may be identified for trail density in these areas based on monitoring and inventory information. Some education/interpretation at trailheads may occur, particularly at 17(b) easement trailheads within these areas.

C. CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with United States Department of the Interior 43 CFR 46.210 or United States Department of the Interior Manual, Part 516, Chapter 11, which provides:

Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 (cumulative) staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan. This CX cannot be used for commercial boating permits along Wild and Scenic Rivers. This CX cannot be used for the establishment or issuance of Special Recreation Permits for "Special Area" management (43 CFR 2932.5).

D. EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

The proposed action must be screened against the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 43 CFR § 46.215 (listed below). Any "yes" finding requires that an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement be prepared for the Proposed Action.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
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EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES/NO
1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	No
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.	No
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	No
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	No
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	No
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	No
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.	No
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.	No
9. Violate Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	No
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	No
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).	No
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or 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).	No

E. SIGNATURE

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan and is an action that can be categorically excluded. The Proposed Action does not trigger any of the Extraordinary Circumstances found in 516 FM Chapter 2, Appendix 2. I recommend that the Proposed Action be allowed and that no further environmental analysis is required.

/S/ Dennis C. Teitzel

1/23/2015

Dennis C. Teitzel
Glennallen Field Manager

Date