



United States Department of the Interior



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SEND Recreation and Public Purposes Reversionary Clause Purchase and Sewage Lagoon Environmental Assessment, DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2015-0007-EA

Case File, A-042498 and A-058393

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Background

A non-profit organization originally named Central Alaska Missions Inc. (CAM), later to become SEND International, came to Glennallen in 1957 to begin development of not for profit services to assist the community of Glennallen and surrounding areas with a focus on education, medical and religious services. In 1958 the BLM issued an R&PP lease and approved a plan of development submitted by CAM to achieve their mission. Upon successful development they could request the land to be patented. BLM monitoring ensured the parcels 210 acres were developed according to the plan of development and in 1961 CAM completed its original infrastructure. At this time the BLM converted their lease into a patent, patent number 1221491, per guidance under the R&PP act.

During the development phase in the late 1950's CAM constructed a small hospital in Glennallen, known as Faith Hospital, which offered medical services to the Copper River Valley. CAM, in their efforts to create the new hospital, realized a need for sewer services associated with the facility. CAM applied for and received 2.5 acres to create a sewage lagoon for all the hospital/clinic liquid waste under the same R&PP act. In 1963 that 2.5 acre parcel was patented (patent 1232741) to SEND with a reversionary clause.

The R&PP act required a reversionary clause be included in the patents, which says if the lands are not used as stated within the patent document it will be revoked and the land will revert back to the Federal Government. Also within the R&PP program, there are provisions that permit a patent holder to request purchase of the reversionary interest. There is no time requirement to when or if they can submit such request.

SEND has requested from the BLM to purchase the rights the Government has in the reversionary clause within the patented document number 1221491. Additionally SEND has paid for an appraisal of the property. The BLM would sell SEND the reversionary interest in the 210 acres of land for the appraised fair market value as determined by the appraisal, less any funds already paid to the BLM for the patented parcel, and allow a merger of property interest to occur. Concurrently with this action the BLM would also

remove reversionary interest for the 2.5 acre patented parcel of land utilized as a medical waste and sewage lagoon.

The BLM Handbook H-2740-1 and WO IM 94-65 give current guidance to BLM field offices to convey the reversionary interest in R&PP parcels that have liability for the Release of a Hazardous Substance. The patented 2.5 acre sewage lagoon meets the criteria for the BLM to convey the reversionary interest to SEND per that guidance.

Finding of No Significant Impact

This action and its effects have been evaluated consistent with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for determining *significance*. Per 40 CFR § 1508.27, a determination of *significance* requires consideration of both context and intensity. The former refers to the relative context in which the action would occur such as society as a whole, affected region, affected interests, etc. The latter refers to the severity of the impact.

Context

The BLM would sell the reversionary interest in the 210 acres of land in patent 1221491 allowing the merger of property interest to SEND. The sale would be at the established fair market value set by the appraisal performed to the Department of Interior's Yellow Book standards, less any funds that have already been paid during the patent process which occurred in the early 1960's.

Additionally, BLM would convey the reversionary interest in the 2.5 acres of land patent 1232741 which contain a sewage lagoon. Property interest would be merged and the government's liability concerning the lagoon would no longer exist.

Intensity

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The loss of 212.5 acres of public land, although adverse to the public domain, the action reduces the exposed liability the U.S. Government has to all hazards that are present on the 212.5 acres of land.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action affects the public health and safety very minimally if any. The proposed action is a document process that will affect only how the BLM and the patent holder are able to continue to perform their missions, and not impact the public health and safety.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

These parcels of land hold no unique characteristics as listed here. When they were developed they were undeveloped public land and the patent holder has developed all the characteristics that are currently present upon the land.

- 4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

During the public scoping no controversial or negative comments were received, comments in support of the sale of the reversionary interest were submitted, although out of the scope of our project, it lends to the position that this action is not going to have any effects to the quality of the human environment and not be received as a controversial action.

- 5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

Any possible effects to the human environment with regards to these 212.5 acres of public land occurred at the time of the parcels being patented to SEND, North. The action of today is the removal of a reversionary clause from the patent and allowing the merger of land ownership to occur on parcels of land that have been private patented property since the late 1950's and early 1960's. It is not anticipated that this action will have any degree of effect to the human environment and has no unique or unknown risks.

- 6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

The sale of this reversionary interest is not unique or does not establish a precedent with regards to Recreation and Public Purposes patented parcels. Each R&PP parcel is administered per guidance that is established within regulation and to each R&PP qualified organizations mission and desired use of the public land under that act. This action is not the first with regards to R&PP patented reversionary interest being sold.

- 7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

The sale of the reversionary interest with regards to these parcels will not impact other actions.

- 8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.*

This action will not adversely affect any of the above listed resources, all that is present and the parcels locations since initial development has been unimproved and undeveloped public lands, and free of all such resources, all that is currently present on these parcels was developed and placed by the patent holder since the initial development began.

- 9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*

As this is a sale of a reversionary interest in real property, the action is not anticipated to have any impacts to any threatened or endangered species.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The sale of the reversionary interests to the patent holder is within the authority created under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) and the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), and further supported within the East Alaska Resource Management Plan (EARMP) approved September 7, 2007. Further the action poses no threat of violation to other Federal, State or local laws for the protection of the environment.

Conclusion

Therefore, on the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that:

1. None of the environmental effects identified meet the definition of significance as defined by context and intensity considerations at 40 CFR § 1508.27;
2. The alternatives are in conformance with East Alaska Resource Management Plan; and
3. The Proposed Action and alternatives do not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment.

Therefore, neither Environmental Impact Statement nor a supplement to the existing EA is necessary and neither will be prepared.

/s/ Dennis C. Teitzel

5/1/2015

Dennis C. Teitzel
Glennallen Field Manager

Date

Attachments

DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2015-0007-EA