

A. Background

BLM Office: Arctic Field Office LLAKF010

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: FF096880

Applicant: Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Alaska Army National Guard
P.O. Box 5800
Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, Alaska 99505

Dates of Proposed Activity: January 9, 2015 – December 31, 2035

Proposed Action Title/Type: Barrow National Guard Armory ROW

Description of Proposed Action: On October 14, 2014, the Barrow National Guard Armory applied to renew their Right-of-Way (ROW) at Barrow, Alaska within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). Use of the current location is documented back to 1961 when it was withdrawn for the Armory by PLO 2323 (Public Land Order). With the passing of the Naval Petroleum Reserve Production Act of 1976 (NPRPA) the withdrawal was terminated and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) determined that use would be authorized under a BLM Right-of-Way (ROW). At the time that BLM was converting withdrawn military lands to ROWs the Corps of Engineers was the agency acting on behalf of the military. A ROW was granted to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for continued use of the site as the National Guard Armory. At the time of issuance, the USACE was the applicant for all the military ROWs established due to the passage of the NPRPA. The original ROW will expire January 8, 2015. The original ROW was granted as an NPR-A ROW. The Arctic Field Office has determined that the ROW should be a FLPMA ROW, therefore a new case file has been established for the authorization (FF096880). The Alaska Army National Guard (AKARNG) falls under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans (DMVA). The DMVA has decided that they will be the applicant for the current ROW and will assume responsibility for the site.

The ROW is for the full use of the property including improvements of a c-shaped building (the armory), a 50 foot communication tower, and other improvements as needed to use the property for its intended purpose. The facility is maintained by the AK ARNG Facility Management Division. The armory is maintained and operated by the State of Alaska with state and federal funds.

ARNG stated on the application “A continued presence in the community would provide enhanced disaster relief and emergency response for the community as well as the anticipated increase in shipping as the sea lanes in the region become more viable due to the decrease in sea ice. Other possible agencies that we anticipate may use the facility are the US Coast Guard, the Alaska State Troopers, The Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, FEMA, as well as other emergency response organizations.”

Equipment batteries and typical “household” types of hazardous materials will be used and stored on the site. They are handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with Federal and State Environmental Laws as well as State of Alaska developed spill and contingency plans. All of these materials would be in small quantities and properly stored. Any waste materials would be properly stored and disposed of timely and in accordance with Federal and State laws. The North Slope Borough’s Polar Bear Awareness, Avoidance, and Interaction Plan or similar is used to minimize interaction and maximize avoidance of any polar bears.

The Armory is located at 1879 Momeganna Street in Barrow. The site was last inspected by BLM on July 8, 2014. The building was in good condition with no trash visible on-site. The compliance report stated “The site appears to be in good condition with no issues requiring action, and no issues to prevent the ROW from being renewed.”



Figure 1: Photograph of Armory Building with the Barrow BLM office in the background.



Figure 2: Photograph of the Armory showing the tower in the background.

Site Legal Description:

71.29099°, -156.78207°

Lot 3, Block 20, USS 4615, Section 6 NENW, Township 22 North, Range 18 West, Umiat Meridian

B. Land Use Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is in conformance with the following planning document: National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated November 2012 and associated Record of Decision dated February 2013.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act, which allows for the authorization of uses consistent with the purposes of the Act.

C. Compliance with NEPA

The IAP/EIS Record of Decisions for the NPR-A developed stipulations and best management practices applicable to all activities in NPR-A. The stipulations and best management practices applicable to the proposed action will be provided, along with project-specific mitigation, to the applicant and are entitled: “FF096880 Barrow National Guard Armory Right-of-Way Stipulations”.

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. Specifically, the proposed action meets the criteria for a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, BLM H-1790-1 National Environmental Policy Act Handbook Appendix 3 Departmental Categorical Exclusions.

“Renewals and assignments of leases, permits, or rights-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations.”

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.

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any of the exceptions described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2.2 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.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 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.		X

