



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Anchorage Field Office
4700 BLM Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-2591
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>

Unicom Inc. Baldwin Peninsula Lease Amendment
Categorical Exclusion, DOI-BLM-AK-A010-2015-0006-CX

Case File, AA-93345-E

DECISION RECORD

Decision

It is my decision to authorize an amendment to an existing right-of-way (ROW) communication lease, case file AA-93345-E, granted to Unicom Inc. at the Baldwin Peninsula microwave repeater site. The amendment to the lease is described in full in the attached categorical exclusion documentation, DOI-BLM-AK-A010-2015-0006-CX.

Rationale for the Decision

The Proposed Action has been reviewed by Anchorage Field Office staff and its conformance to existing ROW lease stipulations. Based on the NEPA Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the Proposed Action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

The rationale for the decision is based on the limited environmental impacts associated with the proposed helicopter landing mat remaining within the existing ROW lease area. The helicopter landing mat would encompass approximately 25 feet by 25 feet of the 30,000 square foot ROW lease area. The landing mat would provide for safe helicopter landings in support of maintenance and operations of the Baldwin Peninsula microwave repeater. The mat would be removed and lands rehabilitated at the termination of the ROW lease.

The Proposed Action is in conformance with Kobuk-Seward Peninsula Resource Management Plan, September 2008. The Proposed Action will not significantly restrict Federal subsistence uses, decrease the abundance of Federal subsistence resources, alter the distribution of Federal subsistence resources, or limit Federal subsistence user access from currently existing conditions. No further analysis is necessary at this time.

Appeal Opportunities

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR § 4. To appeal you must file a notice of appeal at the BLM Anchorage Field Office, 4700 BLM Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507, within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appeal must be in writing and delivered in person, via the United States Postal Service mail system, or other common carrier, to the Anchorage Field Office as noted above. *The BLM does not accept appeals by facsimile, email, or other electronic means.* The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulation 43 CFR § 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards: (a) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied, (b) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits, (c) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and (d) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR § 4.413); Office of the Regional Solicitor, Alaska Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 4230 University Drive, Suite 300, Anchorage, Alaska 99508; at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

/s/

March 9, 2015

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Manager

Date

Attachments

1. Categorical Exclusion, DOI-BLM-AK-A010-2015-0006-CX
2. Map of Helicopter landing mat



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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX)

A. BACKGROUND

Project Name / Type: Unicom Inc. Baldwin Peninsula Lease Amendment
NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A010-2015-0006-CX

Case File Number: AA-93345-E

Location / Legal Description:

Kateel River Meridian, Alaska
T. 13N. R. 15 W., sec. 14 (within),

Applicant (if any): Unicom Inc.

Description of Proposed Action:

Unicom Inc. has filed an amendment to an existing right-of-way (ROW) communication lease, case file AA-93345-E, to keep existing crane mats within the ROW Lease area for use in helicopter landings. During an inspection of the Baldwin Peninsula ROW Lease, conducted in August of 2014, the existing crane mats were used by the helicopter pilot as a landing pad. The pilot expressed safety concerns regarding the tussock tundra conditions and helicopter operations at the site which the crane mats help to mitigate. This prompted Unicom Inc. to file an amendment to leave a number of mats in place within the ROW Lease boundary for safe helicopter landings in support of maintenance and operations of the Baldwin Peninsula microwave repeater.

If approved the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would authorize an amendment to the existing ROW Lease valid until its expiration on December 31, 2033. The amendment would allow crane mats used in the development of the Baldwin Peninsula microwave repeater site to remain within the ROW Lease boundary (150X200 feet, 30,000 square feet or 0.69 acres). The crane mats would cover a 25 feet by 25 feet area approximately 16 feet from the northwest corner of the ROW Lease. The original ROW Lease was issued by the Bureau of Land Management Anchorage Field Office in July of 2013.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Applicable Land Use Plan(s): Kobuk-Seward Peninsula Record of Decision and Approved Management Plan (RMP), September 2008

Rights-of-Way are addressed in the Kobuk-Seward RMP under Lands and Realty H-1. Goal number 1 is to “Meet public needs for use authorizations such as ROW, leases, and permits while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values. The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan, because it is consistent with the following land use plan decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions) as well as the aforementioned goal of H-1-1:

H. Lands and Realty

H-2: Land Use Authorizations

Land use authorizations include various authorizations and agreements to use BLM lands such as right-of-way grants, temporary use permits under several different authorities; leases, permits, and easements under Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA); airport leases under the Act of May 24, 1928; and Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases.

H-2-a: Management Actions (Land Use Authorizations)

6. Rights-of-Way:

- Right-of Way (ROWs) will be located near other ROWs or on already disturbed areas to the extent practical
- Communication site ROWs shall be co-located when feasible
- Public use cabins may be constructed under a ROW reservation

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:

Realty E-13. Amendments to existing rights-of-way, such as upgrading existing facilities, which entail no additional disturbances outside the right-of-way boundary.

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
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/

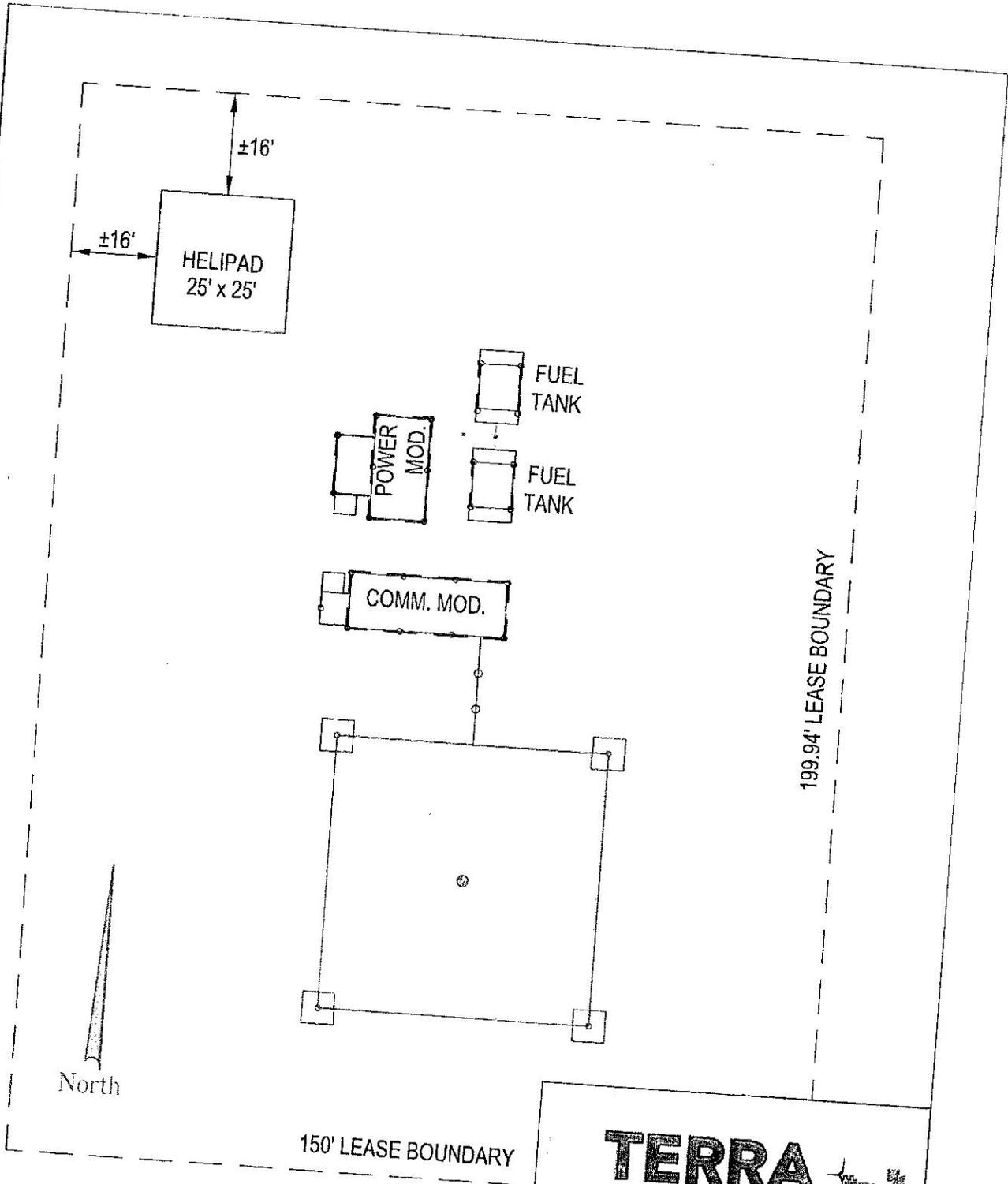
March 9, 2015

Alan Bittner
Anchorage Field Manager

Date

Attachments

1. Map of proposed ROW Amendment



Site Layout: 1" = 25'

TERRA

**BALDWIN SITE PLAN
HELICOPTER PAD**

SCALE: NTS FORMATTED: 8.5"x11"	
DRAFTED BY: T.WEST	DATE: 09/25/2014
REVISION	PAGE 1
	DATE