United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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DETERMINATION OF NEPA ADEQUACY (DNA) WORKSHEET

Proposed Action Title/Type: Special Recreation Permit Renewal (2015-2017)

NEPA Register Number: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2015-023-DNA

Case File Number: AA76601 / AA81925

Locations:
(Temsco) Chilkat, Ferebee, Grand Canyon and Norse Glaciers in: T27S, R58E; T26S, R57E; T26S, R58E; T25S, R57E; T25S, R58E; Copper River Meridian,

(AMG)Sections 1-36, T.32S, R.58E, Copper River Meridian,

Applicant (if any):
Temsco Helicopters Inc.
Eli Fierer – Alaska Mountain Guides

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM Glennallen Field Office has received two Special Recreation Permit (SRP) renewal applications. Alaska Mountain Guides (AMG) offers commercially guided ski mountaineering tours and Temsco provides glacial landing tours on BLM-administered lands near Haines/Skagway, Alaska. Temsco and AMG are currently the only BLM-permitted air tour operators within the Planning Area, though other operators may choose to submit permit applications in the future. Temsco has been permitted by the BLM to conduct air tours and glacier landing tours in the Planning Area since 1995, and AMG has been permitted to conduct guided trekking trips in the Planning Area since 2000.

Temsco Landings:	AMG Landings:
Chilkat Glacier-800	Harding Glacier-500
Ferebee Glacier-800	Davidson Glacier-150
Grand Canyon Glacier-150	Bertha Glacier-150
Norse Glacier-150	

Additional 300 summer landings may be authorized to accommodate future recreational demand for this type of recreational activity. If approved commercial recreational operations would continue to occur on BLM-managed lands in the Haines/Skagway area.

The requested permits would help meet public demand for guided recreational activities in the region. These permits would be valid for three years 2015-2017, May 1st through September 30th. If approved commercial recreational operations would continue to occur on BLM-managed lands in the Haines/Skagway area.

B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decision(s):

The BLM-Alaska's Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan (RMP) includes the goal to *provide opportunities for commercial recreation consistent with the area objectives for recreation management (page Record of Decision pg10).* The RMP also includes the primary management objective to *manage commercial recreation activities to maintain the quality of user experiences, avoid adverse effects on wildlife resources, and minimize disturbance to adjacent communities*.

C. IDENTIFY APPLICABLE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) DOCUMENTS AND OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS THAT COVER THE PROPOSED ACTION.

- EA AK-040-02-EA-022 Special Recreation Permits for Commercial Glacier Landing tours and Mountain Guiding , July 2002
- EA AK-040-00-005, Alaska Mountain Guides; March 2000
- EA AK-040-95-015, Helicopter Glacier Tours; May 1995

These documents are on file at the Glennallen Field Office.

D. NEPA ADEQUACY CRITERIA

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes. The proposed action is similar to the action analyzed in EA AK-040-02-EA-022 for Temsco and Alaska Mountain Guides completed in 2002. The type of commercial recreation use, number of participants, geographic area and dates of use are the same. In fact the use patterns for each operation have declined since the 2002 EA was approved. This decline is due to a variety of reasons including the additional use of U.S. Forest Service and Alaska Department of Natural Resources lands, land conveyance, changing geographic features and seasonal weather patterns.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes. The range of alternatives analyzed is appropriate given current environmental concerns. The analysis of impacts and alternatives in the 2002 EA considered current information on *wildlife*, *recreatio*n and *socio-economic* resources with respect to conducting guided mountaineering adventures and treks on BLM lands near Haines. The range for mountain goat habitat within the Haines planning area is known to be normally restricted to steep and broken mountain ranges and not on glaciers. Therefore, there are no new issues or concerns that would prompt development or consideration of additional alternatives.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is still valid. No new information or circumstances pertaining to summer uses have arisen since the EA was published in 2002 that would affect the applicability of the past analysis. The environmental consequences section regarding wildlife, recreation, and socio-economics was appropriate and adequate for the proposed action.

This analysis assumes the continuation of current SRP stipulations, or terms and conditions, for authorized aviation operations on BLM land within the Haines planning area, which were reviewed and updated in 2012. These conditions include restrictions intended to reduce potential impacts to wildlife, in general, as well as goat use patterns when dispersing to and/or occupying kidding habitat or high quality forage sites (see attached Special Stipulations).

Additionally, the proposed action has been analyzed for conformance with recent guidance for lands with wilderness characteristics (LWC). In 2012, an LWC inventory was completed for the Haines planning area and it was determined that the area contains wilderness characteristics. Since the new proposed action is limited in scope and there will be neither permanent construction nor any land disturbing activities, the proposed action may temporarily impact but not impair wilderness characteristics of the area with adherence to the attached Special Stipulations.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

Yes, the impacts of the current Proposed Action are anticipated to be substantially similar, if not identical, to those that were identified in the existing NEPA documents. The stipulations for the current Proposed Action are substantially similar to those identified in the previous NEPA documents.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes. Preparation of the 2002 EA included consultation with several government agencies, communities and organizations, as identified within the environmental document.

During the scoping meetings for EA-AK-040-95-015, specific areas were identified by the public where the impact of aircraft noise could adversely affect recreationists. The proposed action does not include any of these areas. There are still no known hiking trails to the snow fields and glaciers involving the proposed action.

In addition, public participation was accomplished through the development of the Ring of Fire RMP which anticipated routine land authorizations in accordance with Title III of FLPMA. Internal scoping was also conducted for the RMP by Anchorage Field Office staff and included threatened and endangered species, cultural clearances and ANILCA 810 analysis

E. PERSONS, AGENCIES, AND BLM STAFF CONSULTED

Note: Refer to the EA/EIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

Sarah Bullock	Wildlife Biologist, BLM
Denton Hamby	Outdoor Recreation Planner, Preparer BLM
John Jangala	Archeologist, BLM

F. CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation identified in Part C of this DNA Worksheet fully covers the proposed action and constitutes the Bureau of Land Management's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

/s/ Elijah Waters (for Dennis Teitzel) 5/4/2015

Dennis C. Teitzel, Glennallen Field Manager Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR § 4 and the program-specific regulations.