

A. Background

BLM Office: Arctic Field Office LLAKF01000

Lease/Serial/Case File No. FF095695

Applicant: Lincoln Parrett
Wildlife Biologist, ADFG
300 College Rd.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Date of Proposed Action: From June 3 to July 16, 2015

General Location of Proposed Action: Throughout NPR-A with most activity in NE portion surrounding Inigok and Teshekpuk Lake and much less in southern NPR-A than previous years.

Description of Proposed Action:

The applicant, Lincoln Parrett, with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), has requested authorization for field activity including access and landing by fixed wing aircraft and a helicopter on lands within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). The activities of the project are similar to those permitted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 2012, 2013, and 2014 but much less activity is planned over a shorter time period.

ADFG would conduct caribou calving surveys and calf capture from June 3-12, adult caribou captures from June 22-28, and photocensus of caribou herds from July 5- 16.

ADFG would use a fixed-wing aircraft working out of Umiat and Inigok for all three periods of activity and an R-44 helicopter from June 7-10 and June 22-28. The applicant anticipates approximately 120 remote helicopter landings and take offs during the June and July activity periods. Locations would be dictated by caribou movement. ADFG anticipate an additional 20 remote fixed wing landings and 20 fixed-wing landings at Umiat or Inigok, proportional in space and time to the distribution of helicopter landings.

The camp activities would be based out of Umiat and Inigok. Field crews would consist of two to five people. They would place 350 gallons of aviation gas at Inigok in June for use during caribou capture, and 2000 gallons of fuel would be used from Umiat (either UMIAQ or ADFG storage).

Location:

The work could potentially occur throughout NPR-A, but it is much less likely to occur in Southwest NPR-A. Most of the activity would occur within 40 miles of the coast in areas surrounding Inigok and Teshekpuk Lake (Figure 1) but is dictated by caribou movement. BLM requires summer permittees at the end of the field season to provide coordinates for landings within the NPR-A. Because the area of use cannot be determined until the activity takes place, BLM would use the coordinates provided post use to determine the legal description of the permit.

Teshekpuk Caribou Herd Seasonal Ranges

Revised September 2010

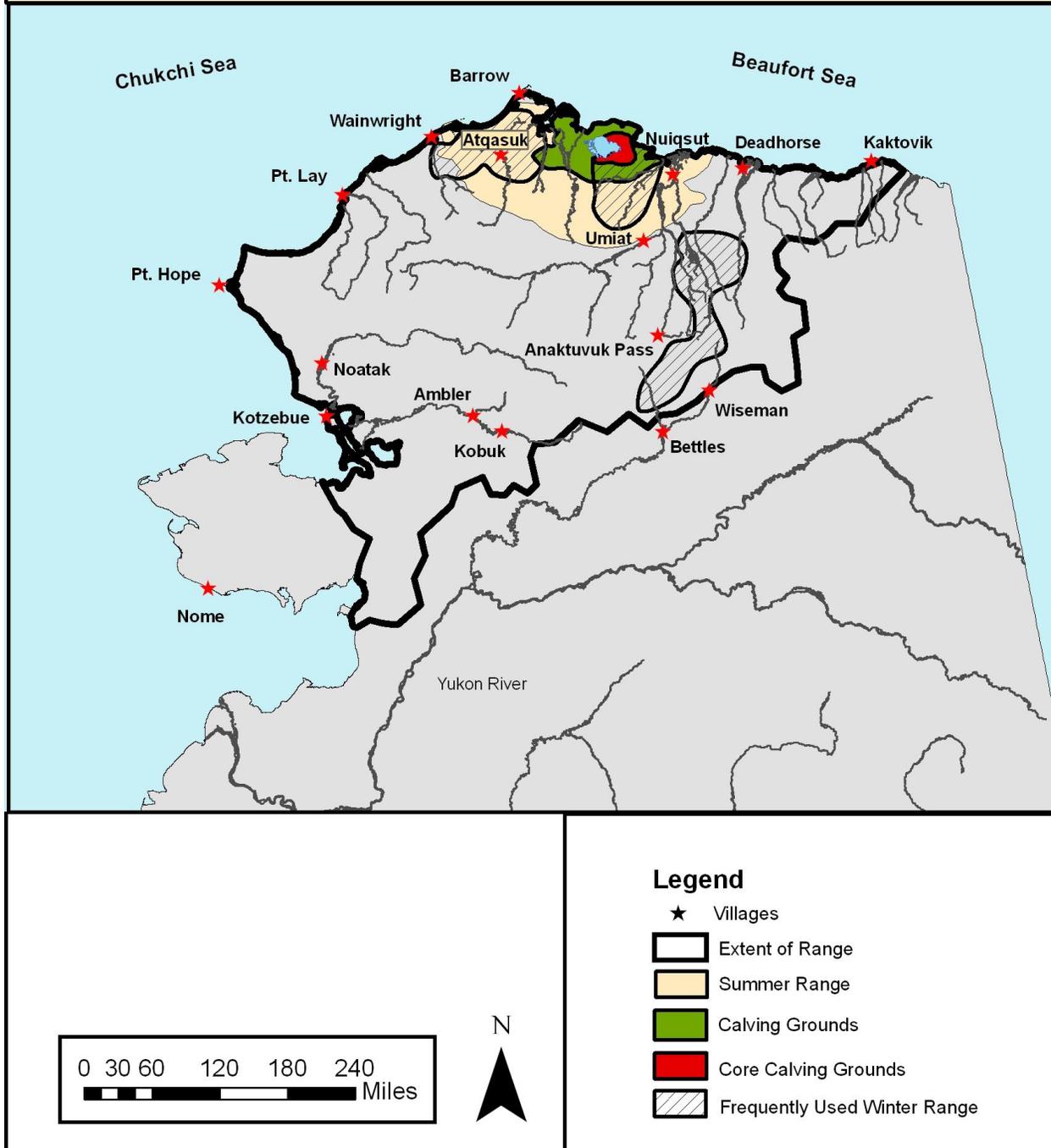


Figure 1: Applicant submitted map.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is subject to the following planning documents:

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement 2012 and Record of Decision 2013

Colville River Special Area Management Plan (2008)

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 Decision 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 would be provided, along with project-specific mitigation, to the applicant and are entitled: FF095695 ADF&G Parrett Summer 2015 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.

“Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.”

The proposed action would 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

