

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR
MP 216.3 WORKPAD ACCESS REALIGNMENT

APPLICANT:

ALYESKA PIPELINE SERVICE COMPANY
1835 S BRAGAW STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99512

RIGHT-OF-WAY APPLICATIONS
FF088222
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. BPM 92-009

PREPARED BY:

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ALASKA STATE OFFICE
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April 15, 1992

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, ALASKA
BRANCH OF PIPELINE MONITORING (983)

I. NEPA REQUIREMENTS

(A) Introduction

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska) has requested authorization to expand the workpad near PLMP 216.3. The work will be authorized by a right-of-way grant under the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act, 97 Stat. 584 (1973). This site was field examined in August, 1991.

(B) Issues

BLM staff members have raised the following issues and concerns: (1) potential impacts to cultural resources, (2) potential impacts from hazardous and solid wastes, (3) potential impacts to visual resources, (4) potential impacts to subsistence resources, and unnecessary or duplicative road development.

(C) Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, Policies, Plans or other Environmental Analyses

The statute that applies to this proposed action is the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act. Alyeska holds a Federal right-of-way grant for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). The project area is located within the inner Utility Corridor on lands managed by BLM. The relevant planning document is the Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved on January 11, 1991. The proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5.

The proposed action is a requirement of Alyeska's Oil Spill Contingency Plan for the TAPS, Stipulation 2.14 of the Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way for TAPS, and the National Oil Hazardous Pollution Contingency Plan 36 FR 16215, August 20, 1971.

Four (4) environmental impact statements have been completed for three separate pipeline projects and for the BLM RMP, each of which cover the application area. Information describing the existing environment is available in these documents.

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

(A) Purpose and Need for Action

The proposed action is needed to provide surface access as part of the requirements of Alyeska's OSCP. This plan consists of General Provisions and 12 Section Plans which delineate specific response actions for spills located between pump stations. Contingency Area Plans, mapped and described in each

Section Plan, give response actions for pipeline spill within specific drainages. Containment sites were selected within the 12 Contingency Areas to enable rapid response to oil spills thereby minimizing the amount of oil that could reach sensitive areas. Most of these preplanned sites have been located on small drainages and points of confluence. Permanent vehicle access is needed at the site served by the workpad in this permit action.

(B) Proposed Action

The proposed action is to expand the pipeline workpad by adding a 100 foot by 300 foot area downstream of the pipeline river crossing. The access road will swing to the downstream side of the existing block point and pipeline workpad to cross the creek. The high creek banks will require cut and fill effort to equalize the grade. Excavation of the river bed and placement of classified materials will be necessary at the low water crossing. This will provide access to waterways served by the OSCP sites. A block point at Cushing creek at this location will be voided.

A temporary use permit may be initially used to authorize the construction, followed by a right-of-way grant amendment upon survey.

The construction area is located in Section 18, T. 31 N., R. 10 W., Fairbanks Meridian. This road provides alternate access along the workpad to Sheep Creek.

(C) No Action Alternative

The no action alternative would be denying Alyeska's request to utilize the public lands. If the proposed action can be mitigated through standard operating procedures, denying of a permit (no action alternative) would be inconsistent with Bureau policy formulated in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 USC 1701). FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield.

Not having access to preconstructed containment sites next to the waterways may result in extensive environmental damage should an oil spill occur, as response time would be longer. Continuous access along the work pad may make the difference of whether or not an oil spill is contained.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

(A) Introduction

The affected environment for the area of the proposed action is adequately discussed in the following documents: Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Utility Corridor, Alyeska's Oil Spill Contingency Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Trans-Alaska Gas System.

(B) The following critical elements of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation or Executive Order. These critical elements have been analyzed for the proposed action and no significant impacts are likely to occur:

<u>Critical Elements</u>	<u>May Be Impacted</u>	<u>Can be Mitigated</u>
1. Air Quality	No	
2. ACEC's	No	
3. Cultural and Historic	No	
4. Farmland, Prime or Unique	No	
5. Floodplains	No	
6. Nat. Amer. Rel Concerns	No	
7. Paleontological	No	
8. Threatened/Endangered	No	
9. Visual Resources	No	
10. Waste, Hazardous/Solid	No	
11. Water Quality	No	
12. Wetlands/Riparian Zones	No	
13. Wild & Scenic Rivers	No	
14. Wilderness Values	No	

Cushing Creek is listed as possibly containing grayling. This listing, in BLM's open file report on TAPS fish streams (April 1, 1987), is unconfirmed. The waterbody is shown as sensitive for the months of April through October based upon the potential presence of fish, and their potential passage or use during open water periods. A title 16 permit has been issued by ADF&G for the low water crossings line wide on the pipeline.

No ACECs are affected.

No known cultural resource sites are located in the immediate project area. These right-of-ways were surveyed prior to original construction.

Grading of the existing bed and banks may be necessary. This will become a permanent low water crossing. No artificial structures or culverts will be used in construction of the low water crossing. Seasonal or annual blade work may be necessary to maintain access. It is not expected that the blade work will impact resources.

There is no reasonably foreseeable restriction to subsistence activity or effect on the availability or productivity of resources for subsistence use which will result from the proposed action. Substantial benefits to subsistence resources would occur if the sites were successful in the rapid containment of spilled oil.

No refueling or storing of hazardous materials would occur on site.

The proposed action is confined within the area designated as the utility corridor. No wilderness values would be affected by the proposed action.

(C) Mitigation

1. Prior to commencement of surface disturbing activities, the right-of-way limits, as well as the construction zone limits, shall be staked.

(D) RESIDUAL IMPACTS

No long term residual impacts are expected to occur.

IV. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Persons and Agencies Consulted.

Ken Durley, APSC
Tm Coghill, APSC
Ken Hunt, BLM (983)
Phil Brna, ADF&G (JPO)
Arctic District Specialists, BLM

V. ANILCA REQUIREMENTS

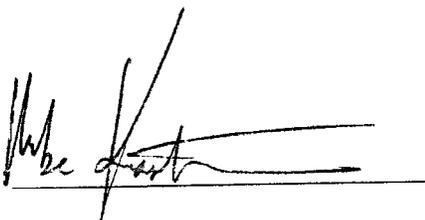
Section 810 Subsistence Evaluation

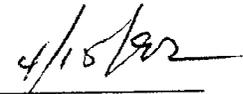
This action is not likely to cause any significant restriction to the subsistence resources of the area.

VI. LOCATION REFERENCES

Preliminary design drawings (2), Access Roads Prudhoe Bay to Valdez Terminal, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, 1/92.

G-100 series, Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, sheet 39, as revised.

Preparer: 

Date: 

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND DECISION RECORD

Decision: It is my decision to grant a right-of-way to authorize realigning the access road on an expanded work pad at PLMP 216.3 as part of the of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan. Individual site requirements, including mitigation if necessary, will be incorporated into the Notices to Proceed written for this action. These actions are authorized pursuant to the Pipeline Authorization Act, 87 Stat. 584 (1973). A rental fee based upon fair market value appraisal will be collected for the rights-of-ways.

I have selected the proposed action as the environmentally preferred alternative provided with the mitigation measures identified in this environmental assessment.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based upon the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that the impacts on the human environment are not expected to be significant and that an environmental impact statement is not required.

The evaluation and finding done to comply with Section 810 of ANILCA found no significant restrictions to subsistence use.

Rationale for the Decision: The decision to allow this proposed action does not result in undue or unnecessary environmental degradation, will not restrict subsistence activity or resources, and is consistent with PLO 5150 which has withdrawn the area for use as a utility corridor. Additionally, the proposed action is necessary to complete the requirements of Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

Nofan Health
Chief, Branch of Pipeline Monitoring

Nofan Health
Date |
5/6/92