



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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**Documentation of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
And Land Use Plan Conformance**

**Temporary Use Permit to Authorize Land Use for Channel Stabilization
to Protect Integrity of Trans-Alaska Pipeline at Ruby Creek
PLMP 570.2**

DNA No. AK-993-07-005

A. BLM Office: Joint Pipeline Office (JPO)

BLM Case File No. AA087236

Applicant: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, P.O. Box 196660, MS 502, Anchorage, AK 99519-6660

Proposed Action Summary: BLM proposes to grant a Temporary Use Permit to Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (Alyeska), as operator of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), to authorize land use outside of the TAPS Right-of-Way for the purpose of excavating a new channel for Ruby Creek where it crosses the pipeline for erosion control to protect the integrity of the pipe. The work consists of installing three stream grade control structures within the Ruby Creek floodplain above the Richardson Highway Bridge (RHMP 233.5). The structures will be rip rap grade control sills approximately 24 ft. wide, 80 ft. long, with a 5 ft. depth.

The project area will encompass an area of 500 ft. north to south, and 400 ft. east to west, where heavy equipment will be used for excavation and construction. The work will take place within 300 ft. upstream and 100 ft. downstream of the TAPS Right-of-Way. The banks will be stabilized with natural materials consisting of transplanted willow and brush layers. The low water crossing in the TAPS Right-of-Way drive lane will be constructed with Class I and Class III rip-rap.

Purpose of Action: The purpose of the proposed action is to authorize land use for Alyeska to stabilize the existing creek channel upstream and downstream of the pipeline crossing adjacent to the TAPS Right-of-Way. A flood event occurred at this site in July 2006 that created a new channel across the buried pipeline and workpad, causing erosion near the main pipe. Installation of three grade control structures is expected to restore the low water crossing in order to re-establish vehicle access and protect the pipeline from further erosion.

Location of Proposed Action: The location of the project proposal is the Trans-Alaska Pipeline crossing of the Ruby Creek drainage, at PLMP 570.2, east of the Richardson Highway at RH Milepost 233.5. The project area is east of the Delta River, which is a Wild and Scenic River, in the vicinity of Donnelly, which is near the Richardson Highway Milepost 235. The site is 43

miles south of Delta Junction, Alaska and 6 miles north of Pump Station 10 of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. In this area the pipeline is located on the eastern side of the Delta River Valley and follows the valley through Isabel Pass.

Location and Legal Land Description: T. 15 S., R. 10 E., Section 7, NE1/4, Fairbanks Meridian, Alaska. The proposed action will take place at TAPS Pipeline Milepost 570.2 at Ruby Creek, directly northeast of the Delta River drainage, and near Pump Station 10. The application area is on land under BLM jurisdiction.

Description and Scope of Work for Proposed Action:

Site Description. Currently the pipeline pad is being eroded by a side channel of Ruby Creek, which has bypassed its original hardened channel over the pipeline. The area in which construction is to take place is an alluvial fan of Ruby Creek, where large gravels to cobbles have been deposited in the past. The area has seen dramatic erosion and deposition in the recent past.

Project Description. The project consists of excavation and construction of three stream grade control structures within the Ruby Creek floodplain above the Richardson Highway Bridge (RHMP 233.5). The structures will be rip rap grade control sills approximately 24 ft. wide, 80 ft. long, with a 5 ft. depth. The work will take place within 300 ft. upstream and 100 ft. downstream of the TAPS Right-of-Way. The low water crossing in the TAPS Right-of-Way drive lane will be constructed with Class I and Class III rip-rap. Material will be excavated and pushed into berms to better define the existing channel. The upstream and downstream approaches across the right-of-way will be tied into existing vegetation and armored with rip-rap. The soils are thaw stable gravels. The vegetation consists of dry tundra, mature birch, black spruce and cottonwood. The banks will be stabilized with natural materials consisting of transplanted willow and brush layers. The equipment to be used for the project are bulldozers, backhoes, loaders and dump trucks. The project is expected to take two weeks to complete, the first two weeks of July 2007.

Authorities: 1) The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act of 1973 (TAPAA) (43 U.S.C. § 1652) and Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act, as amended, 30 U.S.C. § 185;
2) 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2880, Rights-of-Way Under the Mineral Leasing Act;
3) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969;
4) The Renewal of the Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and Related Facilities, January 8, 2003.

B. Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plans and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans.

The project activity will occur on federal lands managed by BLM Alaska, which were withdrawn as a utility corridor under Public Land Order 5150, December 28, 1971. The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plans as required by 43 CFR 1610.5, although this project is not specifically addressed as it is clearly consistent with the objectives, terms, and conditions of the *BLM Southcentral Resource Management Plan*, approved in 1982.

C. Identify the applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

1) *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Renewal of the Federal Grant for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way*, U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management Joint Pipeline Office, BLM-AK-PT-03-005-2880-990, November 2002. BLM completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that identified and analyzed the probable direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts associated with renewal of the TAPS Right-of-Way. The FEIS and the Record of Decision stated there were no probable significant adverse environmental impacts from the TAPS Right-of-Way authorization and continued operation and maintenance along TAPS for an additional 30 years.

2) *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Proposed Trans-Alaska Pipeline*, prepared by a Special Interagency Task Force for the Federal Task Force on Alaskan Oil Development, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1972. Before TAPS was constructed, the U.S. Department of the Interior completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that identified and analyzed the probable direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System for the first 30-year term of the Right-of-Way Grant. The Record of Decision stated there were no probable significant adverse environmental impacts from the TAPS Right-of-Way authorization and continued operation and maintenance along TAPS. This was the first comprehensive NEPA analysis document completed for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System and the first EIS that was completed after passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action.

1. The Renewal of the Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and Related Facilities, January 8, 2003.
2. Alyeska plans to file an application for a Fish Habitat Permit for this proposed action with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Habitat Division. Unless unforeseen or unusual circumstances ensue, the ADNRR Habitat Biologist plans to issue the permit for the proposed action.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Are the current proposed actions substantially the same actions or part of those actions as previously analyzed?

The proposed action is the same action previously analyzed in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Renewal of the Federal Grant for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way*, BLM-AK-PT-03-005-2880-990, November 2002, and the first TAPS NEPA analysis, the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Proposed Trans-Alaska Pipeline 1972*. All documents concluded no long term adverse environmental impacts would be expected to occur as the result of continuous routine operations and maintenance, including projects to control erosion and prevent streams from threatening pipeline integrity. The EIS stated that ongoing streambank reinforcement and restoration would decrease long term impacts because the pipeline would be

better protected against the possibility of pipe rupture caused by streambank erosion and subsequent washing out of the pipeline.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA documents appropriate with respect to the current proposed actions, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances?

Yes, the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA documents is appropriate with respect to the current proposed action. This proposed activity was previously analyzed in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Renewal of the Federal Grant for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way*, BLM-AK-PT-03-005-2880-990, November 2002. The FEIS recognized and analyzed the need for streambank restoration after flood events in critical areas where the pipeline crosses the streams.

3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances, for example, most recent Fish and Wildlife Service lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action?

The Record of Decision for the TAPS Renewal FEIS states:

“Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Essential Fish Habitat provision of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the BLM initiated consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the BLM prepared the Biological Evaluation of the Effects of Right-of-Way Renewal for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System on Threatened and Endangered Species and Designated Critical Habitat (Biological Evaluation), dated June 2002. The Biological Evaluation identified five species of concern within the action area: spectacled eider, Steller’s eider, humpback whale, fin whale, and Steller sea lion. It found there was no designated critical habitat within the action area for the TAPS renewal. The Biological Evaluation concluded that the proposed action was not likely to adversely affect the five species or any critical habitat. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service each concurred with BLM’s determination that the proposed action would not adversely affect the species of concern. BLM prepared an Essential Fish Habitat analysis. The National Marine Fisheries Service concurred that the Essential Fish Habitat consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act have been satisfied and further concurred with BLM’s determination that any short-term adverse effects on Essential Fish Habitat can be adequately avoided, minimized and mitigated by the conservation measures associated with the proposed action.”

4. Does the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA documents continue to be appropriate for the current proposed actions?

The methodology and analytical approaches used in the existing NEPA documents are appropriate for the current proposed action. All of the documents addressed the aspects of the affected environment and environmental consequences for soils, permafrost, sand and gravel; surface water and groundwater resources, air quality, noise, terrestrial vegetation, wetlands and riparian zones; fish, birds, mammals, threatened and endangered species, land use, economy, subsistence, environmental justice, cultural resources, recreational and visual resources, transportation, hazardous materials and waste management, and oil spill contingency plans. The TAPS Renewal EIS of November 2002 systematically addressed cumulative impacts, mitigation and other NEPA considerations.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA documents? Do the existing NEPA documents sufficiently analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action?

The direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action do not deviate from the impacts identified in the existing NEPA documents. Site-specific impacts related to the current proposal were sufficiently analyzed in the previous EISs.

6. Can you conclude without additional analysis or information that the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA documents?

The cumulative impacts from the proposed actions have not changed substantially from the impacts analyzed in the 1972 and 2002 TAPS Final Environmental Impact Statements. The TAPS FEIS for Right-of-Way Renewal contains an extensive discussion of the cumulative effects of TAPS operations for the 30-year renewal period, and addressed impacts from stream bank restoration and erosion control activities. The 2002 TAPS Renewal FEIS discusses erosion control in Section 4.2.2.5, River Crossing and River Training Structure Repairs in the Environmental Consequences section of the FEIS:

“River training structures are required when changes to the natural course of rivers and streams represent a threat of erosion of pipeline structures and a loss of pipeline integrity. Because river channels are subject to seasonal change, all locations requiring river training structures could not be identified during initial design and construction. While some locations requiring river training could be identified in the design phase, other locations could only be identified by monitoring changing river conditions over time or after major flood events. It was anticipated that maintenance of existing river training structures would be necessary and that new structures might be needed in response to major floods or stream migration. Historically, some repair to existing structures, as well as construction of new structures, has occurred almost every year. A typical repair may involve adding rip rap to a washed out spur nose or a riverbank. All work is conducted in accordance with environmental permits. Emergency or temporary repair work is performed in accordance with methods practical at the time for the specific location, with oversight by regulatory agencies...In addition to maintenance of

river training structures to ensure pipeline integrity or to pre-empt problems from erosion, repairs or additions may also be made to facilitate TAPS Right-of-Way access.”

The 2002 TAPS Renewal FEIS also states in the Environmental Consequences section, 4.3.6.2, Surface Water Impacts on the TAPS Pipeline:

“For the proposed action, the pipeline would remain subject to the impacts of flooding, debris flows, erosion, and sedimentation. Historically, rapid response and immediate implementation of appropriate mitigation activities have been used to prevent or minimize damage to the pipeline from these natural processes. Contingency planning, continued surveillance, and timely mitigation would continue to be used in the future, and impacts for the proposed action would be similar to those that have previously occurred.”

7. Are the public involvement and interagency reviews associated with existing NEPA documents adequate for the current proposed actions?

The public involvement and interagency review associated with the existing NEPA documents are adequate for the current proposed action due to the following:

1) Public Involvement. The TAPS FEIS for Renewal underwent an exhaustive public involvement process. BLM enlisted all interested stakeholders in the renewal process, including government-to-government involvement with Alaska tribes, state and federal agencies that regulate TAPS activities, and special interest groups affected by TAPS activities. The entire renewal process, including all public hearings and meetings received extensive coverage by newspaper, television and radio media.

2) Interagency Review. During the TAPS Renewal EIS process, BLM coordinated closely with the State of Alaska, as well as all JPO State and Federal stakeholder agencies and other Federal land management agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. The TAPS FEIS for Renewal contains interagency reviews by the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Alaska Region, which concurred with the BLM finding that any short-term effects can be adequately avoided, minimized, and mitigated by the conservation measures associated with the proposed action.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis. Identify those team members consulted or participating in the preparation of this document.

1. Lois Simenson, Realty Specialist, BLM/JPO
2. Dennis Gnath, Habitat Biologist, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) JPO
3. Patricia Perry, Realty Specialist, BLM/JPO
4. Stan Bronczyk, Realty Specialist, BLM/JPO
5. John Jangala, Archaeologist, BLM Glennallen District Office

F. OTHER NEPA CONSIDERATIONS

1. Cultural Resources

The BLM Glennallen Field Office completed a field exam and *Assessment of Heritage and Paleontological Resources* on May 14, 2007 (GFO Document No. GFO-07-13). The report stated under "Known and Reported Cultural Resources" that two known sites are located within 1-2 miles of the project area. The first is the Yardang Flint Station, a prehistoric site on the north bank of Ruby Creek near the Richardson Highway approximately ¼ mile west of the project area. The second site, referred to in the report as Windy Ruby Creek Butchery, is located approximately one and one-half miles east of the project area on a ridge overlooking Ruby Creek. The report concluded that no other cultural resources were located closer than ¼ mile from the project area, and since both sites are well outside of the proposed work area, neither sites will be affected by the proposed project. The report stated that the proposed project be allowed to proceed as described with no additional archaeological work required.

The report specified that the following stipulation be attached to the Temporary Use Permit:

"There shall be no damage or disturbance of any archaeological or historical sites, and artifacts, including prehistoric stone tools and sites, historic log cabins, remnants of such structures, refuse dumps, graves, and no collection of any artifacts whatsoever. In addition, collection of vertebrate fossils, including mammoths and mastodon bones, tusks, etc. is strictly prohibited. If historic or archaeological resources are encountered, the procedures as outlined in the *Programmatic Agreement Regarding Consideration and Management of Historic Properties Affected by Operations and Maintenance Activities Along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System*, dated September 2005, will be followed, and the BLM Glennallen Field Office cultural resources staff will be immediately notified."

2. ANILCA Section 810 Subsistence Evaluation

The TAPS Renewal Record of Decision signed January 8, 2003 contained the following conclusion: BLM determined that the effect of the proposed action on subsistence would not significantly restrict subsistence uses. BLM undertook a series of public hearings to review the effects of the TAPS on subsistence and published a notice in the Federal Register July 5, 2002, that cumulative impacts may significantly restrict subsistence uses. BLM held public hearings throughout Alaska in Cordova, Valdez, Glennallen, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Minto, and Barrow, between July 26 and August 9, 2002. Based on the hearings and the Section 810 evaluation, BLM concluded:

- 1) TAPS Renewal would not significantly affect the subsistence rights of rural Alaskans. Some small or slight impacts might occur under a renewal for thirty years. The subsistence impacts likely related to the TAPS potentially would be (1) limited reduced access to portions of subsistence use areas and (2) possible disruptions to the movement of game. It is likely that the magnitude of these consequences would be very small, and would not significantly restrict subsistence uses.
- 2) Since the TAPS is constructed and is an operational system, there is no other land available to accomplish the purpose sought to be achieved. The proposed action will

involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purpose of renewing TAPS.

3) There is no other alternative that would reduce or eliminate the use of public lands needed for subsistence purposes and accomplish the public purpose.

D. List mitigation measures identified, analyzed, and approved for the current proposal, which will become stipulations to the Temporary Use Permit.

1. Environmental Impacts

The 2002 TAPS Renewal Record of Decision authorized renewal of the right-of-way under the administration of the Department of the Interior with the understanding that the monitoring and mitigation that is currently required and operative shall be followed as directed by the Authorized Officer. Mitigation measures include those covered by technical, environmental, and general stipulations of the Federal Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way. The FEIS stated:

“The unavoidable adverse impacts under the renewal of the Grant for another 30 years are small and may be mitigated or offset by the positive aspects of the actions. There would be continued localized impacts to the environment as a result of operation, construction, and maintenance activities, such as soil and vegetation disturbances, the use of surface and groundwater resources, and air emissions. However such impacts are readily mitigated through measures already in place.”

2. Mitigation Measures

1. The Temporary Use Permit (TUP) shall be subject to the terms, conditions and stipulations of the Renewal of the Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and Related Facilities between the United States of America and Amerada Hess Corporation, et. al. dated January 8, 2003, which became effective on January 24, 2004. It shall be provided, however, that in the event of a conflict, either express or implied, between any provisions of the Federal Agreement for TAPS and any provision of this Temporary Use Permit, such conflict shall be resolved in favor of this permit.
2. Primary access shall be limited to the work pad and existing roads, unless specifically authorized in writing.
3. The TUP area limits shall be staked prior to commencement of surface disturbing activities.
4. The TUP area shall be restored to the satisfaction of the Authorized Officer, as stated in writing.
5. Construction activities shall be conducted to minimize disturbance to existing vegetation.
6. Fuel storage is not allowed within the TUP area.

7. Temporary trash storage is not allowed in the TUP area. Waste materials will be removed from the TUP area to appropriate facilities on a regular basis.
8. The Authorized Officer may require that his authorized representative be on site during operations conducted under this TUP if deemed necessary.
9. The TUP holder shall inform and ensure compliance with these stipulations by its agents, employees, and contractors (including subcontractors at any level).
10. This TUP applies to lands under jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management.
11. There shall be no damage or disturbance of any archaeological or historical sites, and artifacts, including prehistoric stone tools and sites, historic log cabins, remnants of such structures, refuse dumps, graves, and no collection of any artifacts whatsoever. In addition, collection of vertebrate fossils, including mammoths and mastodon bones, tusks, etc. is strictly prohibited. If historic or archaeological resources are encountered, the procedures as outlined in the *Programmatic Agreement Regarding Consideration and Management of Historic Properties Affected by Operations and Maintenance Activities Along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System*, dated September 2005, will be followed, and the BLM Glennallen Field Office cultural resources staff will be immediately notified.

