



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Pipeline Monitoring

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Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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## Determination of NEPA Adequacy

### Amendment of Temporary Use Permit Temporary Provisional Housing at Atigun Camp Pad

**DNA-AK-993-08-003**

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**BLM Office:** Office of Pipeline Monitoring

**Tracking Number:** DNA-AK-993-08-003

**BLM Case File No.** FF-095354

**Proposed Action Title:** Amendment of Temporary Use Permit for Temporary Provisional Housing at Atigun Camp Pad

**Location/Legal Description:** The site is located along the Dalton Highway at MP 250.0 and TAPS PLMP 162.8 west of the Atigun River in T. 14 S., R. 12 E., Sec. 31, S $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and T. 15 S., R. 12 E., Sec. 6, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , Umiat Meridian, Alaska.

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

**A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures:**

BLM proposes to amend Temporary Use Permit (TUP) FF-095354 issued on March 4, 2008, to Alyeska Pipeline Service Company (APSC), operator of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), to allow the temporary installation of a 1.8 meter, receive-only satellite antenna, antenna mount, and approximately 1500 feet of fiber optic and low voltage DC power cable (black). The antenna mount will be ballasted to prevent the wind from moving it using sand bags filled with locally available material. The antenna mount will be located within a 20' X 20' area and the cable will be laid along the ground for approximately 1500' from the antenna to the Old Atigun Camp Pad. Once the 1.8 meter antenna is placed on the mount the top of the antenna will be approximately 8' off the ground; it will be painted to blend in visually with the background. The housing provider, working in conjunction with AT&T Alascom, has determined that modern television reception will not be available via an antenna mounted within the permit area, as has occurred in the past. Due to the distance and lack of power the existing TAPS backbone site, Atigun, will not work for this camp location. Television reception will allow personnel who are housed at this remote site a means to receive news and a form of entertainment.

*Site Preparation:* APSC does not anticipate the need for site preparation. If the terrain is still covered by snow during the installation, then a snow machine and sled may be used to transport the equipment to the site. If not, it will be hand carried unless use of an off road vehicle is approved. No ground disturbance is proposed or required for installation of the antenna and cable.

## **B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance**

Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, January 1991

1. The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

Issuance of rights-of-way for oil and natural gas pipelines and related facilities are dealt with specifically on page 2-24 of the Utility Corridor RMP, "FLPMA leases on federal lands would be considered where environmentally feasible and compatible with management objectives" and on page 2-23 the issuance of rights-of-way for oil and natural gas pipelines and related facilities is referred to under the heading Rights-of-Way.

2. The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

N/A

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

1. List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

a. *Documentation of NEPA Adequacy (DNA), Temporary Use Permit To Authorize Land Use for Temporary Provisional Housing at Old Atigun Camp Pad in Support of Strategic Reconfiguration Project*, DNA No. AK-993-08-001, TAPS PLMP 162.8, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Joint Pipeline Office, March 2008. BLM determined that a temporary use permit for temporary provisional housing was within the scope of the existing NEPA documents and that the temporary use permit could be issued.

b. *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. The 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, including reconfiguration of the pump stations, and maintenance along TAPS for an additional 30 years.

c. *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System*, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Joint Pipeline Office, EA-03-009, January 2004. The proposed action is consistent with the historical use of lands in the TAPS Right-of-Way as discussed in the TAPS FEIS. The EA concluded strategic reconfiguration activities would not interfere with adjacent land uses and would not impact any protected resources in areas of special environmental concern managed by the BLM. The proposed action is in compliance with relevant land management plans, including the Utility Corridor Resource Management Plan, the Fort Greeley Resource Management Plan, and the Fort Wainwright Resource Management Plan. BLM issued a decision record containing a FONSI for this environmental assessment completed for issuance of various NTPs for the SR project.

d. *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. The U.S. Department of Interior completed a 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. This was the first NEPA analysis document completed for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. The FEIS analyzed and assessed environmental impacts of camp sites used during construction, including the Atigun Camp location.

2. List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

a. The BLM Renewal of the Agreement and Grant of Right-of-Way for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and Related Facilities, January 2003.

#### **D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA documents? 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 documents? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

The current proposed action is part of the actions 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 *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Proposed Trans-Alaska Pipeline 1972*. The satellite antenna is part of the temporary camp and all documents concluded environmental impacts would be short-term for the Atigun temporary camp.

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

The range of alternatives is appropriate with respect to the current proposed action in all four of the previously prepared NEPA documents listed above. The proposed action does not require any ground disturbance so does not change the overall footprint of the Atigun Camp location.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and 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?**

The existing analyses and conclusions are adequate, as no new listings of threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species have occurred since the January 2004, completion of the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS*. Both the TAPS FEIS for Renewal and the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS* (BLM 2004) contain interagency reviews by the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Alaska Region. Both agencies stated that pipeline reconfiguration and related activities would not incur adverse impacts to listed species during the environmental assessment process.

**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 documents?**

The direct and indirect effects 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 EAs. The cumulative effects from the proposed action have not changed substantially from the impacts analyzed in the 1972 and 2002 TAPS Final Environmental Impact Statements, the cumulative impacts analyzed in the 2004 *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS*, and both of the environmental assessments completed for the Atigun River Pipeline Replacement Project and Atigun Camp. 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 addresses strategic reconfiguration and related activities.

**5. 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:

- a. 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.

The JPO-BLM Authorized Officer determined a 30-day public review period was not necessary before finalizing the FONSI as a follow-up to the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS* (BLM 2004). Public review is necessary 1) when there is reasonable argument for preparation of an EIS., 2) if the proposal is a new action or a first intrusion of development into a pristine area, 3) when the proposal is similar to one which normally requires preparation of an EIS (40 CFR Sections 1501.4(e)(2) and 1508.27). The EA on reconfiguration did not meet these criteria, therefore the decision was made to finalize the FONSI and make both NEPA documents available to the public via internet access and by public reading room distributions around the State of Alaska.

b. 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 and the *Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS* (BLM 2004) contain interagency reviews by the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Alaska Region. Both agencies state the proposed pump station reconfiguration would not incur adverse impacts to listed species during the environmental assessment process.

#### **E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted**

1. Diann Rasmussen, Preparer, Realty Specialist, BLM
2. William Hedman, Archaeologist, BLM Central Yukon Field Office
3. Dennis Gnath, Habitat Biologist, Joint Pipeline Office-ADNR
4. Ron Doyel, Joint Pipeline Office-ADEC

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

#### **F. OTHER NEPA CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Cultural Resources – The BLM Northern Field Office completed an assessment of archaeological, historic, and paleontological resources January 24, 2008. The proposed project has no potential for adverse effect to historic properties. This project will take place on an improved surface constructed to serve as a large camp location. Further, no archaeological sites were identified in the immediate vicinity of the camp during the pipeline surveys or during subsequent surveys along the pipeline corridor.

2. Subsistence – The *Environmental Assessment for the Atigun Camp Expansion* (1990) stated “. . . there is no reasonably foreseeable restriction to subsistence activity or effect on the availability or productivity or resources for subsistence use which would result from the proposed action of a temporary camp.”

3. Environmental Impacts – The 2004 *Environment Assessment of the Proposed Reconfiguration of TAPS* states that unavoidable adverse impacts of strategic reconfiguration of the TAPS would be similar to those identified in the TAPS FEIS. It also states:

Short-term and minor impacts associated with reconfiguration would include increases in water use, wastewater generation, noise, and hazardous and domestic waste production. Because of the localized nature of the activities, on an already developed site and the short duration of the activities, fish and threatened and endangered species would not be impacted. Birds and mammals using construction sites as habitat would be disturbed during construction activities. Cultural resources and land use would not be affected. Short-term slight increases in impacts on visual resources may occur during reconfiguration activities. Delivery of equipment, transportation of the workforce, and removal of wastes would have a minor and short-term impact on traffic on adjacent highways. Short-term positive socioeconomic impacts would occur, as more jobs would be needed during installation and modification of equipment and during transition . . . Strategic reconfiguration of the TAPS would result in short-term increases in adverse impacts due to construction, however reconfiguration would result in future long-term reductions in TAPS operational impacts.

4. Non-objection – The proposed use is being reviewed by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. There was no objection to the previous request for this action, (per e-mail from Shari Howard, DOTPF to Pat Jarrett, JPO-DNR, 1/26/2005).

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM’s compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

  
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 Signature

Realty Specialist, BLM  
 Title

4/28/08  
 Date

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

Authorized Officer, BLM  
 Title

4/28/08  
 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 Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.