



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
1011 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199



IN REPLY REFER TO:

AFES/MMM

MAY 16 2014

Mr. Charlie Kominas
Environmental, Regulatory, and Land Manager
Alaska LNG Project
ExxonMobil Development Company
16945 Northchase Drive, DEV-GP4-498
Houston, Texas 77060

Dear Mr. Kominas:

We have received your request, dated May 12, 2014, for a Letter of Authorization (LOA) for the incidental take of polar bears during activities associated with the ExxonMobil Development Company (Exxon) 2014 Hydrology Studies for the Alaska LNG Project on the North Slope of Alaska.

In response, and in accordance with regulations listed at 76 FR 47010, dated August 3, 2011, enclosed is LOA 14-08 authorizing Exxon to take small numbers of polar bears incidental to oil and gas exploration activities. The scope of the summer field work near the proposed Gas Treatment Plant (GTP) site on the Prudhoe Bay Unit (PBU) includes characterization of peak flow in the Putuligayuk (Put) River and several unnamed streams located near the Put River during breakup and during the summer; sampling lakes and streams for water quality; characterizing fish habitat; and assessing potential site locations for the GTP and ancillary facilities associated with the construction and operation of the GTP. Field work will be conducted in accordance with the following approximate schedule and activities:

- May 15-17: Mobilization of equipment and personnel to the PBU;
- May 15-25: Pre-breakup hydrology field work preparation. Field work will be located along the Put River and local small unnamed streams;
- May 25-June 30: Breakup hydrology monitoring including stream gauging to monitor flows during breakup and water quality sample collection on the Put River and local small unnamed streams at multiple locations; and pedestrian surveys along the proposed

- GTP facilities including access road areas to determine drainage features and to field check desktop preliminary design information;
- June 30-July 15: Documentation of fish presence within lakes, rivers, and streams; water quality sampling in lakes; bathymetry of lakes; and assessments of potential fish overwintering habitat;
- August 10-17: Late summer hydrology monitoring including stream gauging on the Put River (if flowing), and several small unnamed streams in the project area; and
- August 17-October 1: Completion of the field work tasks described above if they are interrupted by weather or other circumstances and subsequent demobilization of equipment and field personnel.

A full description of activities can be found Exxon's request for an LOA dated May 12, 2014, *Alaska LNG Project, Attachment A, Plan of Operations, 2014 GTP Summer Field Studies Overview and Methodology, Document Number: USAKE-PT-SGPER-00-0164-004*.

All provisions contained within Exxon's *Polar Bear Interaction and Monitoring Plan, Attachment B, Document Number: USAKE-PT-SGPER-00-00164-00* is incorporated by reference into this LOA. Exxon field camps and personnel may limit encounters of polar bears by being observant of approaching animals (i.e., the use of polar bear guards) and where practicable, by allowing the animals to pass unhindered. Exxon will also: 1) Provide copies of the polar bear observation form to all contractors operating under the LOA; 2) report any polar bear sightings, or signs of polar bears, such as tracks or excavations, to this office by phone or using the polar bear observation report; and, 3) report any possible den locations that are found during work activities immediately to our office. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) biologists are available for consultation if questions or concerns arise during the project period at the phone numbers listed below and noted in your interaction plan. Furthermore, please remove Susi Miller and Tom Evans from the USFWS Marine Mammals Contact List. Replace them with Christopher Putnam (Phone: 786-3844).

If a polar bear interaction escalates into a life threatening situation, section 101(c) of the MMPA allows, without specific authorization, the take (including lethal take) of a polar bear if such taking is imminently necessary for self-defense or to save the life of a person in immediate danger, and such taking is reported to the Service within 24 hours.

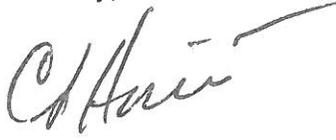
Polar bear conservation has benefited from monitoring programs associated with the Incidental Take Program since 1993. Monitoring serves to assess the effect of industrial activities on polar bears by evaluating trends and effects of bear encounter rates, take frequency, as well as the location and timing of encounters.

If any changes develop during the project, such as activities or location, the Service must be notified prior to the planned operation. This will allow us to evaluate the activity and, if appropriate, amend your LOA.

The Service has completed intra-Service consultation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), on the issuance of this LOA and has determined that this LOA is not likely to jeopardize the continuing existence of polar bears so long as Exxon follows the terms/conditions of this LOA. No additional authorization under the ESA is required.

If you have any further questions, please contact Mr. Craig Perham or Mr. Christopher Putnam of our Marine Mammals Management Office, at (907) 786-3810 or (907) 786-3844, respectively.

Sincerely,


Acting Chief, Marine Mammals Management

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Richard Shideler, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (email)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement
North Slope Borough, Department of Law



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION Incidental Take (14-08)

ISSUED: May 15, 2014
EXPIRES: October 31, 2014

ExxonMobil Development Company (Exxon) is hereby authorized to take small numbers of polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) incidental to activities occurring during the 2014 Hydrology Studies for the Alaska LNG Project on the North Slope of Alaska..

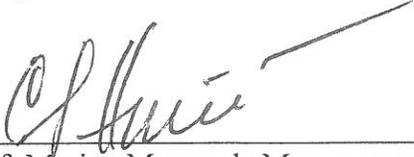
The scope of the summer field work near the proposed GTP site on the PBU includes characterization of peak flow in the Putuligayuk (Put) River and several unnamed streams located near the Put River during breakup and during the summer, sampling lakes and streams for water quality; characterizing fish habitat; and assessing potential site locations for the GTP and ancillary facilities associated with the construction and operation of the GTP. A full description of activities can be found Exxon's request for an LOA dated May 12, 2014, *Alaska LNG Project, Attachment A, Plan of Operations, 2014 GTP Summer Field Studies Overview and Methodology, Document Number: USAKE-PT-SGPER-00-0164-004*.

This Letter of Authorization (LOA) and the required conditions below apply to all Exxon employees, contractors and personnel performing Exxon-approved work under the scope of operations to be conducted. This authorization is subject to the following conditions.

1. Intentional take is prohibited under this LOA.
2. Exxon's *Polar Bear Interaction and Monitoring Plan, Attachment B, Document Number: USAKE-PT-SGPER-00-00164-00* is approved and all provisions must be complied with unless specifically noted otherwise in this LOA.

3. A copy of this LOA and the approved interaction and avoidance plans listed above must be posted and available for all personnel and in the possession of the operators of all vessels and aircraft engaging in the activities approved under the authority of this LOA.
4. Exxon Operations Managers, or designates, must be fully aware, understand, and be capable of implementing the conditions of this LOA.
5. At the discretion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Exxon must allow the Service to place an observer on site, including any facilities, vessels, aircraft or vehicles, to monitor the impacts of the activity on marine mammals, when requested.
6. Polar bear monitoring, reporting and survey activities will be conducted in accordance with 50 CFR § 18.128 and must comply with the following monitoring, mitigation and reporting requirements:
 - Exxon must cooperate with the Service, and other designated Federal, State, or local agencies to monitor the impacts of oil and gas exploration activities on polar bears.
 - If any changes develop in the project during the period approved under this LOA, such as activities, location or methods, Exxon must notify the Service, Marine Mammals Management Office (MMM) prior to the implementation of such changes.
 - Exxon must not conduct activities that operate nor pass within one mile (1.6 kilometers) of known polar bear dens (from October to April), and all observed dens must be reported to the Service, MMM within 12 hours of discovery. If occupied dens are identified within one mile of activities, work within the immediate area will cease and the Service must be contacted for guidance.
 - Exxon must designate a qualified individual or individuals to observe, record, and report the effects of the activity on polar bears to the Service within 24 hours of visual observation.
 - Exxon must submit an annual monitoring report to the Service, MMM as required under 50 CFR § 18.128, which will be received no later than 90 days after the expiration date of the LOA.

This Letter of Authorization is valid for the period indicated on this authorization, unless extended or terminated in writing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Marine Mammals Management Office.

Acting


Chief, Marine Mammals Management

MAY 16 2014

Date