



IN REPLY REFER TO

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199



AFES/MMM

JAN 02 2014

Mr. William "Randy" Reed
Permits and Regulatory Compliance
CGG Land US, Inc.
2450 Cinnabar Loop
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Dear Mr. Reed:

We have received your request, dated November 5, 2013, for a Letter of Authorization (LOA) for the incidental take of polar bears during activities associated with the CGG Land US, Inc. (CGG) 2014 Winter Seismic Surveys (Great Bear, Niksik, Cronus, and West Canning 3D projects) 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 13-22 authorizing CGG to take small numbers of polar bears incidental to oil and gas exploration activities at the locations identified in your LOA request that are within the geographical region of the Beaufort Sea Incidental Take Regulations.

Activities will occur within the defined areas of the Great Bear, Niksik, Cronus, and West Canning 3D projects located on the maps (*Great Bear & Niksik 3D 2014 Permit Area*, *Cronus 3D 2014 Project Area*, and *West Canning 3D 2014 Permit Area*) provided with your application packet. If additional seismic prospects outside of the area previously identified are developed during the 2013 winter/spring season you are requested to notify the Service of their locations prior to the planned operation. This will allow us to evaluate the activity and, if appropriate, to amend your LOA.

Historic polar bear denning activity reveals that polar bear denning habitat occurs along creek cutbanks and river bluffs. For example, approximately 1782 miles (2870 kilometers) of potential polar bear denning habitat is located between the Colville River and the Canning River alone. Disturbance during denning could lead to abandonment of dens and possible mortality to cubs. Seismic vibroseis activities occurring near preferred denning habitat may encounter denning polar bears. The Service seeks to limit disturbance to maternal polar bear den sites, both known dens and those areas that could possibly be preferred by denning polar bears. With this in mind, please use caution when operating near these areas during the maternal denning period (mid-November to mid-April).

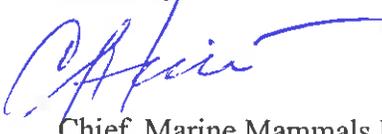
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IN AMERICA 

The U.S. Geological Survey has posted information regarding polar bear denning habitat including the polar bear den habitat GIS coverage. The den habitat map (ARC/INFO export file), the mapping manuscript (PDF file) and a picture of den habitat (JPG file) are now available for downloading on the Alaska Science Center website (http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/biology/polar_bears/pubs.html). Please use these resources when planning activities in potential denning areas. You must contact us within 24 hours if any dens are found during your activities. You must also: 1) Provide copies of the polar bear observation form to all CGG contractors operating under the LOA; and 2) report any polar bear sightings or signs to this office by phone, FAX, or email using the polar bear observation form. If questions or concerns arise during the project period, Service biologists are available for consultation at the phone numbers listed below, and noted in your interaction plan.

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 the issuance of this LOA is not likely to jeopardize the continuing existence of polar bears. No additional authorization under the ESA is required.

This authorization is issued in accordance with MMPA Incidental Take Regulations published in the *Federal Register* (76 FR 47010), dated August 3, 2011. Please review these regulations. If you should have any further questions, please contact Mr. Craig Perham, at (907) 786-3810, or Mr. Christopher Putnam, at (907) 786-3844, of our Marine Mammals Management Office.

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 (13-22)

ISSUED: January 2, 2014

EXPIRES: June 30, 2014

CGG Land US, Inc. (CGG) is hereby authorized to take small numbers of polar bears incidental to activities occurring during the 2014 Winter Seismic Surveys (Great Bear, Niksik, Cronus, and West Canning 3D projects) on the North Slope of Alaska. Activities for this project are discussed in detail in the *Plan of Operations, 2014 Winter Seismic 3D Surveys, North Slope, Alaska, State Lands and Waters* (Modified: October 29, 2013) received with your application packet.

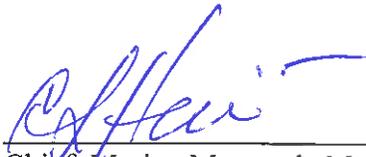
This Letter of Authorization (LOA) is subject to the following conditions:

1. The Operations Manager, or equivalent, must be fully aware of, understand and be capable of implementing the conditions of this authorization.
2. This authorization is valid only for those activities identified in the request for an LOA dated November 5, 2013.
3. The polar bear interaction plan, *APPENDIX B, Field Operating Procedure, Polar Bear Protocol* and *APPENDIX C, Polar Bear Awareness and Interaction Plan*, is approved and all provisions unless specifically noted are incorporated into this authorization by reference. A copy of the current polar bear interaction plan must be available on site for all personnel.
4. Intentional take is not authorized under this LOA.
5. Polar bear monitoring, reporting, and survey activities will be conducted in accordance with 50 CFR 18, section 18.128. The basic monitoring and reporting requirements follow:
 - CGG must cooperate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), and other designated Federal, State, or local agencies to monitor the impacts of oil and gas activities on polar bears.



- CGG must not conduct activities that operate nor pass within one mile (approximately 1600 meters) of known polar bear dens, and all observed dens must be reported to the Service within 24 hours of discovery. Should occupied dens be identified within one mile of activities, CGG must cease work within the immediate area and contact the Service for guidance. The Service will evaluate these instances on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate action. Potential actions may range from cessation or modification of work to conducting additional monitoring, and CGG must comply with any additional measures specified.
- CGG must designate a qualified individual or individuals to observe, record, and report the effects of the activity on polar bears and must report evidence of polar bears such as tracks, carcass, or scat to the Service within 24 hours of visual observation.
- CGG must allow the Service to have an observer on site to monitor the impacts of its activity on polar bears, at the discretion of the Service.
- CGG must submit an annual monitoring report to the Service as required under 50 CFR 18.128(f), 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.



Chief, Marine Mammals Management

(Acting)

JAN 02 2014

Date