



United States Department of the Interior

KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

P.O. Box 2139

Soldotna, Alaska 99669-2139

(907) 262-7021



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Shadura 3-D Seismic Program
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

BACKGROUND

NordAq Energy, Inc. (NordAq) proposes to conduct a three dimensional (3-D) seismic survey within a 46 square mile area in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). The project area lies in the northwestern portion of the Refuge and west of the existing Swanson River Oil and Gas Field. The action is necessary for the collection of subsurface geophysical or geological imaging data to further evaluate the development of potential natural gas resources owned by Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) within the Refuge. CIRI has leased portions of their subsurface ownership to NordAq. Under Section 1110(b) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and Federal regulations (43 CFR 36.10), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) must provide "adequate and feasible access" to owners of valid inholdings within the Refuge, subject to reasonable regulation to protect natural and other values of the Refuge.

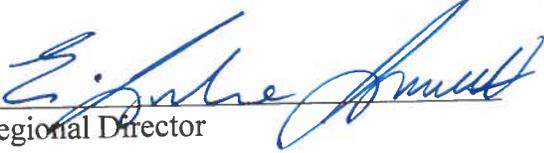
The project will require drilling source holes, and placement and detonation of explosives to generate a sound source, and placement of receivers to record the speed and intensity of the returning signal. Helicopters will be used to support all phases of the seismic survey; snowmachines will also be used (dependent upon adequate snow cover) for ground transport of crews and equipment. Drilling will utilize heliportable drilling units, and the survey will employ cable-free receivers. Source holes will be drilled to a depth of 25 feet and loaded with a 2.2 pound explosive charge. Approximately 4,000 source holes will be drilled and 6,800 receivers will be deployed within the project area. The 3-D seismic survey will be conducted from February through April, 2013. If necessary, an extension to complete work during the winter of 2013 – 2014 may be granted by the Refuge Manager without further study.

FINDINGS

Based on a review and evaluation of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment (EA) referenced below, I have determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act. The environmental review conducted by the Service supports the conclusion that the project impacts do not exceed a threshold of significance. Accordingly, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed action is not required. A Special Use Permit will be issued by the Service for the project, and will contain stipulations deemed necessary to minimize environmental impacts and protect Refuge resources to the maximum extent practicable.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Environmental Assessment, Shadura Seismic Survey
2. ANILCA 810 Evaluation included in the Environmental Assessment


Regional Director

2/28/13
Date



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UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Environmental Action Memorandum

Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulation for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and other statutes, orders and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, we have established the following administrative record and have determined that the proposed action for conducting a three dimensional (3-D) seismic survey on selected lands within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge is found not to have significant environmental effects as determined by the attached Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact.


Initiator

2/1/2013
Date


Refuge Manager, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

2-1-2013
Date


Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System - Alaska

2/25/2013
Date


Regional Director - Alaska Region

2/26/2013
Date