

December 17, 2012

Re: Release and review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Shadura Natural Gas Development Project

Dear Interested Party,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is evaluating an application for a right-of-way (ROW) permit for a proposed natural gas project within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Kenai NWR), Alaska. The project proposed by NordAq Energy, Inc. includes the construction and operation of facilities associated with exploration and production of natural gas in the northwestern portion of the Kenai NWR. Although the Service owns the land surface in the project area, Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) owns the subsurface oil and gas resources. CIRI has entered into a lease with NordAq to develop the gas resources. NordAq's application for a right-of-way was made subject to ANILCA Section 1110 (b), Access to Inholdings.

The Service's evaluation includes analyzing the project as directed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA (42 United States Code [USC] 4371, et seq.), as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500–1508. This DEIS documents the site-specific impact analysis of NordAq's proposed Shadura Natural Gas Development Project as well as three alternatives. The three alternatives were developed in response to comments that the Service received during scoping. The analysis also evaluated a No Action Alternative.

The Service has released this DEIS for public review and comment. The public comment period will run for 45 days beginning December 21, 2012, and ending February 4, 2013. During that time, you are welcome to submit written comments to the Service at the address listed below. Also during mid-January 2013, the Service will hold public meetings to provide an opportunity for the public, organizations, and regulatory agencies to provide comments on the DEIS. Notices about the meetings will be placed in local newspapers on the Kenai Peninsula and in Anchorage early in January at least 14 days before the meetings.

Following the comment period, the Service will prepare a Final EIS (FEIS). The Service is required to respond in the FEIS to all substantive comments on the DEIS. The comment period mentioned above provides you, the public, with an opportunity to make an impact on the content of the document and, therefore, potentially affect the decision that will be made after the FEIS is released. We ask that your comments relate directly to the EIS, that you are as specific as possible, and that you cite the location(s) in the document on which you are commenting.

If you have any questions or wish to obtain additional copies of this document, go to <http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/planning/nepa.htm> or contact:

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