

National Wildlife Refuge System - Alaska
Special Use Permit Application Guidance
For Commercial Visitor Services

The following guidance should be followed in completing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Special Use Application and Permit* (FWS Form 3-1383) for the following commercial visitor services providers: air and water taxi, big game transporter, and guided recreational and educational activities such as river or float trips, sport fishing, wildlife watching, and backpacking, etc. This guidance does not apply to big game hunting guides or other permits that are issued through a competitive selection process. Please contact the appropriate refuge headquarters office if you have any questions about completing the application form.

Block 1. Please indicate the name of the national wildlife refuges in Alaska on which you propose to conduct your commercial activity.

Block 2. Enter the date of the application.

Block 3. Indicate the starting and ending dates for the period when the activity on the refuge will be conducted. Note: permits are valid within a single calendar year.

Block 4. Please complete the applicant information as requested. The applicant must be an individual who is legally responsible for the company's activities and for compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit.

Block 5. Check the box for "Commercial Visitor Services," and indicate the specific type of activity in Block 6.

Block 6. Submit a plan of operations with your application, which describes in detail your proposed activity, and includes the following information, where applicable (add additional sheets as necessary):

- a) Submit a map showing the location of the proposed activities. Indicate the locations of any proposed base camps. Note: If the area of use is designated wilderness, or will occur on Native or state selected lands, please see additional information below.
- b) Describe your safety plan, including safety equipment (e.g., communications, first aid) available, and provide the names and contact information for individuals who will be monitoring the activity away from the field.
- c) Will fuel caches be needed on the refuge? If so, describe locations, amount of fuel to be stored, and containers to be used. Note: Fuel storage on the refuge

must comply with the *Region 7 Fuel Storage Policy* (contact the refuge for more information).

- d) Provide the names and contact information for all employees who will be participating in the field, and indicate the functions they will perform. Note: employee information must be provided before the employee enters the Refuge, but is not required for permit issuance.
- e) Provide copies of all federal and state licenses and certificates that are required for your proposed activity for the permit holder and all employees who will operate in the field, such as Alaska business license, FAA air taxi certificates, Alaska sport fish guide licenses, U.S. Coast Guard license, etc.
- f) For guide applicants:
 - 1. Attach a summary of your proposed trip offerings including the start and end dates for each trip.
 - 2. Describe your proposed methods for reducing the risk of wildlife interactions, for storage and handling of food, and for disposal of human waste.
 - 3. Estimate your maximum number of clients per day and per season.
 - 4. Identify the methods of access into the Refuge, including the names of air and water taxi operations to be used. Note: All transportation providers must hold an individual permit to operate on the Refuge.

Block 7. Click on this button to print the application form.

Block 8. Sign and date the application and submit it to the appropriate refuge office. If the application is approved, the refuge office will provide a list of special permit conditions, which you must sign and return to the refuge office. You will then receive a signed special use permit authorizing your activity.

Fees and Insurance

You must submit a \$100 administration fee along with your completed and signed application, prior to permit issuance. This fee is in addition to any required client use day fees.

Prior to issuance of the permit, you must provide proof of liability insurance (contact refuge for insurance requirements) with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service named as coinsured.

Additional information

Alaska Native and State Selected Lands: In accordance with the regulations at 43 CFR 2650.1, if the proposed activity would occur on Refuge lands that have been selected by an Alaska Native Corporation, the applicant is required to obtain a signed statement from each appropriate Native Corporation documenting their views on the proposed activity, prior to the special use permit being issued. On State selected lands, permission must be obtained from the Alaska Department of Natural Resources for any activities that involve construction of permanent facilities, or the removal of minerals or materials. If you are not familiar with the land status of your proposed use area, please contact the refuge office well in advance (at least six weeks) of your activity so the appropriate contacts can be made.

Wilderness Guidelines: If your proposed activity will occur on Refuge lands that are designated as wilderness, certain restrictions may apply. The Wilderness Act of 1964 prohibits the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, motorboats, or other forms of mechanical transport, the landing of aircraft, or the establishment of structures or installations on wilderness lands. However, section 1110 (a) of ANILCA allows for public use of snowmachines, motorboats, airplanes, and nonmotorized surface transportation methods for traditional activities. Section 1316 allows for the use of temporary facilities (i.e., shelters, campsites, etc.) and equipment directly and necessarily related to the taking of fish and wildlife. Commercial visitor services providers operating in designated wilderness areas are limited to access methods, temporary facilities, and equipment that are allowed for the general public. Contact the refuge office if you have questions regarding allowed activities in wilderness.