



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office

101 12th Avenue, Room 110

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

March 2, 2012



MEMORANDUM

To: Regional Director, Alaska Region, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Regional Director, Alaska Region, Bureau of Safety and Environmental
Enforcement

From: Sarah C. Conn, Field Supervisor, Fairbanks Fish & Wildlife Field Office 

Subject: Revised raven nest and fox den monitoring plan for Liberty Development

Cc: Allison J. Erickson, BPXA Wildlife Compliance Authority

Monitoring for raven nests and fox denning were part of the Proposed Action described in the Biological Opinion (BO) for the Liberty Development dated October 2007. Since the signing of this document, another fox and raven plan was adopted (approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on March 13, 2009). Monitoring reports have indicated that ravens are successfully nesting at the Liberty site, and the existing monitoring protocol needs to be revised to be effective. Discussions among the Bureaus of Ocean Energy management (BOEM) and Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), BP Exploration Alaska (BPXA), and the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office (FFWFO) have resulted in the following changes to the raven nest and fox den monitoring protocols. These new protocols (attached to transmittal email) replace the existing protocols for the Liberty Development.

Summary of changes to the raven protocol:

- Based on BPXA monitoring reports, raven nests appear to be constructed in late February. Past surveys have not detected nests prior to egg-laying, and nests were not removed until after the nesting season to avoid direct harm to eggs or young birds. Initiation of surveys will now occur on or before February 15 and continue through June 30;
- Based on BPXA monitoring reports, nests can be constructed from available materials (Photo 1) and a weekly interval was not able to detect new nests in time to deter nest-building. The nest survey interval will now occur no longer than every five days instead of weekly. Additionally, the new protocol will include surveys for raven nest-building activity as well as searching for constructed nests;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the new protocol, revised survey forms and reports from BPXA to BSEE will be due by December 31 annually.

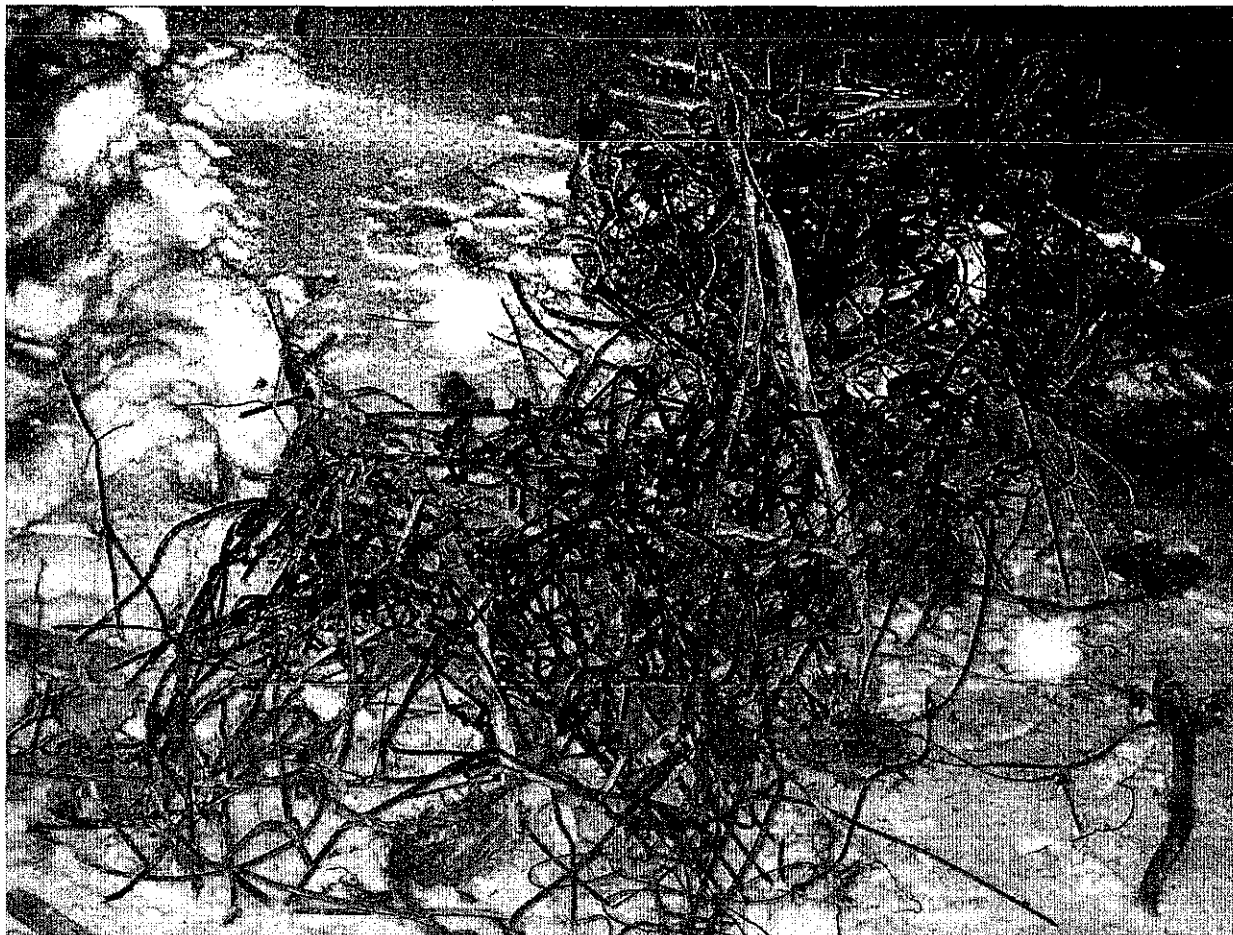


Photo 1. Nesting material from 2011 raven nest constructed on Liberty/Endicott Satellite Drilling Island.
Photo credit: BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc.

Summary of changes to the fox monitoring protocol:

- According to BPXA monitoring reports, no fox dens have been observed, but foxes are associated with the mine site. A reduction in the frequency of den surveys appears warranted. The requirement for annual monitoring and reporting is changed to every three years. The next monitoring would be required for the 2014 summer. The next BPXA monitoring report for this survey will be due to BSEE by December 31, 2014.

The new protocols supersede earlier protocols that were part of the Liberty BO. We appreciate your continued commitment to working with us to recover listed species. Please send the required reports to the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office by January 15.