

Compliance with ANILCA §810

E.A. No.: DOI-BLM-AK-A020-2016-0006-EA

Applicant(s): Constantine North ltd.

Proposed Action: Constantine’s current and proposed exploration is in an area known as the Palmer Project, located within the Porcupine Mining District. Constantine is currently authorized under the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for up to 5 acres of ground disturbance to carry out exploratory activity on their Federal claims. In August of 2015, Constantine submitted a new plan that would expand their existing access road and put Constantine beyond the limits of their current permit.

The new plan proposes up to 2.5 miles of additional road construction and includes the installation of culverts and bridges over gullies and streams in the vicinity of Glacier Creek. It also includes a switchback road with rock fall berms and an area at the terminus of the switchback road to stage equipment and facilities such as temporary work trailers, storage containers, and a portable toilet facility. The proposed road would provide access for up to 40 new exploration drill sites. These drill sites are all planned to occur east of their current mineral exploration areas and would provide a staging area for helicopter and ground-supported exploration activities. Constantine plans to continue in the exploration phase of their project for the next 5 – 10 years.

Location: Porcupine Mining District; Haines, AK; southeast Alaska

Township/Range: S1/2, SE1/4, Section 19, S1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4, S1/2SE1/4NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4, SE1/4, Section 29, NE1/4, NE1/4NE1/4NE1/4SE1/4, Section 30, SW1/4, Section 31, S1/2, Section 32, S1/2NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, SE1/4NW1/2, S1/2, Section 33, S1/2 Section 34, E1/2NE1/4NE1/4, S1/2N1/2, S1/2, Section 35, NE/2, S1/2 Section 36, T. 28 S., R. 53 E, N1/2N1/2N1/2NE1/4, S1/2, SE1/4 Section 1, Section 2-3, E1/2 Section 10, NE1/4NE1/4 Section 11, NW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4, N1/2N1/2N1/2SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4 Section 12, S1/2 Section 14, Section 15, N1/2 Section 22, T. 29 S, R. 53 E, N1/2N1/2N1/2NW1/4 Section 4, N1/2N1/2N1/2NE1/4, NW1/4, Section 5, NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4, Section 6, T. 29 S., R. 54 E ., Copper River Meridian.

Discretionary Action?: No

Categorical Exclusion?: No

Type of Assessment / Sources: Review of application materials, subsistence database, local knowledge, and interviews with staff knowledgeable of the area and the proposed action.

Evaluation: Ownership of lands surrounding the Porcupine Mining area is State conveyed. The lands that the Constantine North Ltd. mining claims are upon are top filed by the State of Alaska and administered by BLM. The top filed, BLM administered lands, are encumbered by Federal mining claims and therefore not Federal Public Lands as defined in ANILCA sec 102 (3).

Effect of the proposal on abundance of harvestable resources used for subsistence purposes:

Fisheries: The proposed action occurs on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands, as such, there are no Federally regulated subsistence uses occurring. The proposed action area includes portions of Glacier Creek, which originates at Saksai Glacier and flows approximately 4.5 miles northeast to the Klehini River, which drains to the Chilkat River. The lower end of Glacier Creek, approximately 0.8 miles upstream from the Klehini River confluence, supports coho salmon as well as cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden char. Based on previous sampling results, species' habitat preferences, and habitat conditions throughout Glacier Creek, coho salmon and cutthroat trout are not expected to occur upstream from the 0.8 mile location. However, Dolly Varden have been confirmed further upstream, nearly 3 miles from the Klehini River confluence. Additional salmon species such as chinook, sockeye, pink and chum, are present in the Chilkat River.

Road construction, and the associated culvert and bridge infrastructure as proposed, is expected to cause a temporary increase in sedimentation during construction. This could potentially degrade fish habitat farther downstream through sediment deposition, however, operational performance standards and best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to minimize the potential for downstream impacts to fish habitat and water quality during construction and reclamation. As such, the proposed action would not result in a foreseeable significant restriction in the abundance of harvestable fisheries resources used for Federal subsistence purposes. Additionally, no Federal subsistence uses and needs occur in this area.

Wildlife: The proposed action occurs on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands, as such, there are no Federally regulated subsistence uses occurring. Recent wildlife surveys of the proposed action area identified big game such as moose, mountain goat, black bear and brown bear as well as other game such as ptarmigan, squirrels, and marmot. Additional small game, non-game and fur animals are known to be present throughout the area.

Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG) monitoring within Game Management Unit (GMU) 1D indicates that moose populations are considered to be stable while mountain goat populations are considered medium to high. Black bear densities are noted to be less than other southeast Alaska units while brown bear are abundant and often seen within the proposed action area.

Local wildlife species are expected to be temporarily disturbed or displaced during the seasonal nature of the proposed action of road construction and exploratory drilling. However, the proposed action would not result in a foreseeable significant restriction in the abundance of

harvestable wildlife resources used for Federal subsistence purposes. Additionally, no Federal subsistence uses and needs occur in this area.

Other resources: Although direct removal of other resources such as wood, berries or vegetation will occur, the proposed action takes place on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands. As such, there are no Federally regulated subsistence uses occurring. The abundance of those other resources available to Federal subsistence use will not be impacted.

Expected reduction, if any, in the availability of resources caused by an alteration in resource distribution, migration, or location: The proposed action occurs on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands, as such, there are no Federally regulated subsistence uses occurring. However, operations associated with the proposed action would be expected to disturb or displace animals in the immediate vicinity. These impacts would be occurring in a limited space and seasonal in nature. As such, the proposed action will not significantly reduce the availability of harvestable resources used for Federal subsistence purposes by an alteration of resource distribution, migration, or location.

Expected limitation, if any, in the access of subsistence users resulting from the proposal: The proposed action occurs on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands, as such, there are no Federally regulated subsistence uses occurring within the vicinity, resulting in no limitation to access by Federal subsistence users.

Availability of other lands, if any, for the purpose sought to be achieved: The lands available for the purpose sought by the applicant are limited to BLM lands that are within the applicant's Federal mining claim(s). Therefore, no other lands are available for this intended purpose.

Other alternatives, if any, which would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes: The no action alternative would require BLM to reject the current application. If rejected, Constantine would continue exploration activities as outlined in the approved Notice (J145690). Under this Notice, which expires at the end of 2018, Constantine is authorized to disturb 4.65 acres, including constructing 1.18 miles of new access road. To date, Constantine has disturbed 4.05 acres and has constructed 0.9 miles of access road. There is no substantial evidence that would indicate a significant restriction to the use, occupancy or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposed as a result of the proposed action. No other alternatives were analyzed.

Finding: The proposed action occurs on top filed and encumbered BLM administered lands and therefore not Federal Public Lands as defined in ANILCA sec 102 (3). As such, the proposed action will not significantly restrict Federal subsistence uses, there are no reasonably foreseeable significant decreases in the abundance or distribution of Federal subsistence resources and no reasonably foreseeable limitation to Federal subsistence access is expected.

/s/ Jesse Hankins

4/21/2016

Jesse Hankins
Wildlife Biologist
BLM, Glennallen Field Office

Date