



Wixon, Donna <dwixon@blm.gov>

[EXTERNAL] RE: questions in regard to seals

1 message

Suzan Simonds <ssimonds@contractor.saexploration.com>

Fri, Aug 17, 2018 at 1:13 PM

To: "Wixon, Donna" <dwixon@blm.gov>

Cc: Marsh Creek Permitting <MarshCreekPermitting@saexploration.com>

Donna,

To answer your questions below:

1. We do not know of any sound propagation studies being conducted showing decibel levels under the ice from vibes on grounded ice or even floating ice. Why would a sound source verification test be considered or needed for vibe operations that stay only to grounded ice?
2. No, SAE is not willing to conduct work over lagoons first as the best ice for environmental and safety reasons for when working on ice is during mid-march to the end of the season. That is the timing when ice is at its greatest thickness and safest for operations with our vehicles and when we would plan to move thru across the near shore coastal plain.

Sue Simonds

Permits and Regulatory Manager

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From: Wixon, Donna <dwixon@blm.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 16, 2018 9:00 AM
To: Suzan Simonds <ssimonds@contractor.saexploration.com>
Subject: questions in regard to seals

Good Morning Sue,

Our BLM Alaska wildlife program lead met with NMFS (Greg Balogh) in regard to the Coastal Plain seismic proposal. As SAE plans to conduct seismic activities on and travel across the lagoons (even though staying within 10 ft on grounded ice) there is concern in regard to Ringed Seals. On February 12, 2018, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld NOAA Fisheries' decision to list Arctic ringed seals as threatened, therefore we have to consult with NMFS as part of our review process. To aid in the consultation process we have some questions for you.

Do you have any information, such as Sound Source Verification Reports from previous operations that you could send us that show the sound decibel levels under ice from the vibes?

Would SAE be willing to conduct the work over the lagoons first to avoid conducting the work after March?

Thank-you,

Donna

Donna L Wixon

Natural Resource Specialist

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