



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Arctic District Office
222 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3816
<http://www.blm.gov/ak>



August 6, 2018

In reply refer to:
FF097424
3152.00 (AKR000)

Mr. Rick Trupp
SAExploration Inc.
8240 Sandlewood Place, Suite 102
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Ms. Suzan Simonds
Permit and Regulatory Manager
SAExploration Inc.
8240 Sandlewood Place, Suite 102
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

Subject: Oil and Gas Geophysical Exploration Application Complete

Dear Mr. Trupp and Ms. Simonds,

On April 19, 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Office received a confidential application from SAExploration, Inc. to conduct seismic activity in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain area. On May 3, 2018, the BLM Arctic District Office received a non-confidential application to conduct the seismic activity. In reviewing the May 3 application, the BLM identified several areas where more information was needed to process the application. The BLM requested additional information in a May 22, 2018 letter. We received your response on June 21, 2018 and now consider your application complete.

BLM's processing goal for a seismic application is to reach a decision within 90 calendar days of receipt of a complete application. 43 CFR 3152.2 (a) allows for a longer timeframe, if needed, to comply with statutory regulations such as the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). BLM does not expect to meet the 90 calendar day timeframe due to the level of NEPA complexity for this project, public interest and time required for consultation of listed wildlife species under the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act.

We have chosen to use an Environmental Assessment as the NEPA tool to analyze the impacts of this proposed project. We have formed an inter-agency interdisciplinary team using resource specialists from both the BLM and US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). We are working with FWS to streamline the Section 7 Endangered Species Act consultation processes associated with

this proposed action as it relates to both the FWS rulemaking for incidental take regulations and the BLM's environmental assessment pursuant to NEPA and the Tax Act.

On July 18,2018 we posted chapter 2 of the Environmental Assessment (EA) on the e-planning website and will accept public comments while working on the EA.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Wixon of my staff at 907-474-2301.

Sincerely,



Nichelle Jones, Manager
Arctic District Office