



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

FAIRBANKS FIELD OFFICE
Regulatory Division
CEPOA-RD
1046 Marks Road
Fort Wainwright, Alaska 99703

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: January 22, 2024

EXPIRATION DATE: February 22, 2024

REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-2017-526

WATERWAY: Piledriver Slough

Interested parties are hereby notified that a Department of the Army permit application has been received for work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the enclosed project drawings.

All comments regarding this Public Notice should be sent to the address noted above. If you desire to submit your comments by email, you should send it to the Project Manager's email as listed below or to regpagemaster@usace.army.mil. All comments should include the Public Notice reference number listed above.

All comments should reach this office no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Please contact John Sargent at (907) 347-1801 or by email at John.C.Sargent@usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this notice.

APPLICANT: Randy Reese, 6035 Homesite Court, Salcha, Alaska 99714

LOCATION: The project site is located at 6035 Homesite Court, Eielson Small Tracts, Tract C; southbound on Richardson Highway towards Salcha, turn right onto Stringer Road, then right onto Homesite Court. The property is on left at end of circle in Salcha, Alaska.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to establish a pastureland for livestock.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes to clear vegetation and stockpile vegetation to create pasture for livestock. The clearing of vegetation and excavation to remove tree and shrub roots, and placement of plant material stockpiles would result in the discharge of fill

material into about 23 acres of black spruce scrub-shrub wetlands. Land clearing is planned when the ground is frozen in spring or late autumn. All work would be performed in accordance with the enclosed plans (sheets 1-4), dated January 16, 2024.

APPLICANT PROPOSED MITIGATION: The applicant proposes the following mitigation measures to minimize for impacts to waters of the U.S. from activities involving discharges of dredged or fill material.

a. Avoidance: Approximately 16 acres of wetlands on the northern portion of the property would be avoided. The entire project footprint area contains wetlands, therefore, complete avoidance of wetlands is not possible.

b. Minimization: Vegetation clearing would be done when the ground is frozen in early spring or autumn to minimize disturbance to adjacent wetlands and migratory bird breeding periods. Land would be cleared in 4 acre increments over a 5-year period. Strips of native vegetation would be in place that would serve as partial wind breaks and provide some wildlife habitat. The project is located in common scrub-shrub wetlands and not within stream or slough habitats, and largely avoids, higher value emergent marsh, and remnant slough habitats that are more common in the third of the property. Culverts would be installed if necessary to allow surface water connectivity to adjacent waters and wetlands. Heavy machinery for construction would be staged in uplands to prevent unnecessary disturbance wetlands. Seed for pasture grasses and forbes would be weed free. Work equipment would be sprayed before starting work to prevent the spread of invasive species onto the project site and adjacent wetlands and waters. Work area boundaries would be marked to prevent unauthorized disturbance to adjacent wetlands.

c. Compensatory Mitigation: Compensatory mitigation for unavoidable loss of wetland functions was not proposed by the applicant. Wetlands and relatively undisturbed waters are generally viewed as abundant and characterizes the larger Tanana River and Salcha River watershed and associated sloughs.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The latest published version of the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRs) has been consulted for the presence or absence of historic properties, including those listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. There are no cultural resources in the permit area or within the vicinity of the permit area. The permit area has been determined to be the entire property. Consultation of the AHRs constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the Corps at this time, and we are otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources. The Corps has made a No Historic Properties Affected (No Effect) determination for the proposed project. This application is being coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Any comments SHPO may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit will be considered in our final assessment of the described work. The Corps is requesting the SHPO's concurrence with this determination.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: No threatened or endangered species are known to use the project area.

We have determined the described activity would have no effect on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species and would have no effect on any designated or proposed critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). Therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is not required. However, any comments they may have concerning endangered or threatened wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, requires all Federal agencies to consult with the NMFS on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

While EFH (for chum and chinook salmon) is known to occur in Piledriver Slough and the Tanana River, no EFH occurs within the project footprint area. The project would be a minimum of 1,200 feet from Piledriver Slough, the nearest waterbody containing EFH. Therefore, we have determined the described activity would not adversely affect EFH in the project area and consultation with NMFS would not be required.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Alaska District fully supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between Federally recognized Tribes and the Federal government. Tribes with protected rights or resources that could be significantly affected by a proposed Federal action (e.g., a permit decision) have the right to consult with the Alaska District on a government-to-government basis. Views of each Tribe regarding protected rights and resources will be accorded due consideration in this process. This Public Notice serves as notification to federally recognized tribes within the area potentially affected by the proposed work and invites their participation in the Federal decision-making process regarding the protected Tribal right or resource. Any comments federally recognized tribes and other consulting parties may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historical data that may be lost or destroyed by the work under the requested permit will be considered in the Corps final assessment. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Commander.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The outcome of the general balancing process would determine whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. The decision should reflect the national

concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Commander determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

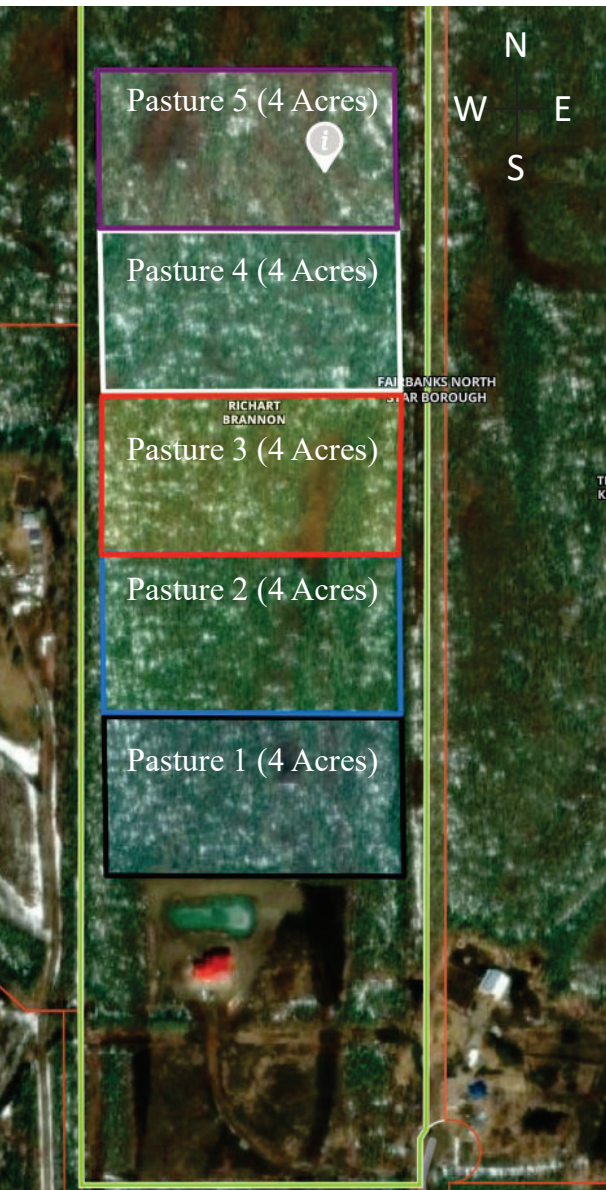
AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authorities:

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States – Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

Project drawings are enclosed with this Public Notice.

District Commander
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Enclosures



6035 Homesite Ct. Salcha AK, 99714—Owners Jesse & Randy Reese
 Latitude 64.5966° N., Longitude 147.0721° W

Proposed Land Clearing Plan: Goal is to clear up to 20 acres in the course of 5 years in 4 acre increments. This will allow for sufficient amount of time to allow for each plot to develop and stabilize.

Purpose for land clearing—develop pasture land for livestock and improve agricultural sustainability on the 45 acres.

Clearing Plan—

* Clearing timeframe will be conducted during the months of April-May or Sept-Oct while the land has the least amount of snow and is during the hard frost to prevent the least amount of soil distribution.

* Equipment—**Dozer** (main bulk of the clearing) **Loader** with grading blade on a float (level land and remove excess debris) **Excavator** (establish berms left and right of each pasture)

* Soil Stabilization—Alaska Pasture Seed Mix will be planted at each plot during the growing season.

* Water Flow and Drainage—Berms will be place Left and Right (East/West) of each plot and swells will be developed in order to maintain drainage and strips of tress will be maintained between each 4 acre plot to allow for a wind break for livestock.

POA-2017-00526
 Sheet 1 of 3
 January 16, 2024

Table Key

<div>////</div>	(Cleared Land)
<div>BERM</div>	(Berms)
<div>Tree Break/Wind Break</div>	
<div>(Wind Break/Tree Break)</div>	Apprx. 25 Feet Wide x 570 Feet Long
<div><div>↓</div><div></div></div>	Placement of 30 foot access gaps to move livestock between each different pasture plots.

