



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Alaska Regional Office
3801 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 500
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-5823

David S. Wilkins
Senior Vice President
Hilcorp Alaska, LLC
3800 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 1400
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear David S. Wilkins:

On February 25, 2020, Hilcorp Alaska, LLC, (Hilcorp) submitted an application to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Alaska Regional Office to obtain a Geological and Geophysical (G&G) permit to conduct geophysical exploration operations on certain Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) lands under the authority of 30 CFR part 551. The activity is in the Lower Cook Inlet area shown on the map accompanying your application and will be conducted on Hilcorp's behalf by Terrasond LTD (hereafter referred to as Terrasond). Terrasond will conduct operations using the vessels described in the Environmental Evaluation Document. Operations are proposed to begin on or after April 1, 2020 and will be completed on or before October 31, 2020. The proposed activity is part of a geohazard survey which utilizes a suite of geophysical tools (echosounder, sidescan sonar, sparker, magnetometer, etc.) to image and investigate the seafloor and shallow subsurface for potential obstructions and geohazards. This activity is in conjunction with Hilcorp's Ancillary Activities notification (See Letter of Non-Objection, Attachment 1).

After reviewing Hilcorp's proposed Cook Inlet Shallow Hazard Survey (Proposed Action) and the analysis provided in the Lease Sale 244 Environmental Impact Statement (LS244 EIS), BOEM has determined that the activities described in the Proposed Action do not constitute a change from the activities and associated environmental impacts analyzed in the LS244 EIS; there are no significant new circumstances or information that would result in significantly different environmental effects from those considered in the LS244 EIS; the site of the activities does not present unique circumstances that require additional analysis beyond that addressed in the LS244 EIS, and thus conducting additional NEPA analyses (e.g., a site-specific EA) is not necessary or warranted at this time before BOEM can proceed with a decision on the Proposed Action. BOEM has completed consultation which covers the proposed action under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act from both the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

At Hilcorp's request, the NMFS issued Incidental Take Regulations (ITRs) for whales and pinnipeds on July 31, 2019. Correspondingly, the USFWS issued ITRs for sea otters on August 1, 2019. Hilcorp applied for and was granted Letters of Authorization (LOAs) from NMFS and USFWS covering these permitted and ancillary activities.

OCS Permit 20-01 is hereby granted to conduct geohazard survey operations on the OCS in the area and manner described in the application. Hilcorp shall notify BOEM in writing of intent to begin operations at least 24 hours prior to start of operations. All operations are subject to the

enclosed stipulations (see Attachment 2) and the approved Permit for Geophysical Exploration for Mineral Resources on the OCS (Attachment 3: Forms BOEM-0327 and BOEM-0328). In all cases, the specific mitigating measures identified in the relevant NMFS and USFWS ITRs, LOAs, and Biological Opinions will apply and shall supersede any conflicting BOEM requirements related to marine mammals, including protocols for monitoring programs. Information related to compliance with the provisions in the ITRs and of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act may be obtained from the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Alaska Region
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Telephone: (907) 786-3800

And from the

National Marine Fisheries Service
222 West 7th Avenue, Box 43
Anchorage, Alaska 99513
Telephone: (907) 271-5006

Additionally, 30 CFR §551.6(a)(1) requires that your G&G operations must not “Interfere with or endanger operations being conducted under any lease, right-of-way, easement, right-of-use, Notice, or permit issued or maintained under the [OCS Lands] Act.”

This permit is effective from May 1, 2020 until October 31, 2020, or the completion of the survey, whichever occurs earlier. Please be advised that this office requires a weekly report of daily operations (see Attachment 4). We also require a final completion report, as detailed in Form BOEM-0328, within 30 calendar days following cessation of field operations.

Appreciatively,



Dr. Megan Carr
Regional Supervisor
Office of Resource Evaluation

4 Enclosures

- Attachment 1 Letter of Non-Objection
- Attachment 2 Stipulations and Environmental Protective Provisions
- Attachment 3 Forms BOEM-0327 and BOEM-0328
- Attachment 4 Operations Reporting Guidance