

§ 37.31

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implement a revision of its plan of operation, provided that such revision is consistent with the exploration plan to which the plan of operation pertains and this part. The Regional Director may require the permittee to defer, modify, or rescind such revision whenever he determines that such action is necessary and appropriate to ensure such consistency.

(c) Reconsideration of the Regional Director's actions under this section may be obtained by employing the procedures described in § 37.22(c). A request for reconsideration shall not operate to stay the Regional Director's actions unless such stay is granted in writing by the Director.

Subpart D—Environmental Protection

§ 37.31 Environmental protection.

(a) The permittee shall conduct operations in a manner which avoids significant adverse effects on the refuge's wildlife, its habitat, and environment. The Regional Director may impose stipulations to supplement the permittee's special use permit and issue other orders as needed to ensure that the permittee's activities are conducted in a manner consistent with this part. If, after 30 days, or in emergencies such shorter periods as shall not be unreasonable, following a demand by the Regional Director, the permittee shall fail or refuse to perform any action required by this part, its exploration plan, plan of operation, special use permit, or a stipulation or order of the Refuge Manager, the department shall have the right, but not the obligation, to perform any or all such actions at the sole expense of the permittee. Prior to making such demand, the Regional Director shall confer with the permittee, if practicable to do so, regarding the required action or actions included in the demand. Reconsideration of the Regional Director's demands under this section may be obtained by employing the procedures described in § 37.22(c). A request for reconsideration shall not operate to stay the Regional Director's demands or the Department's performance pursuant to this section unless such stay is granted in writing by the Director.

(b) *Terrestrial environment.* (1) Vehicles shall be operated in a manner such that the vegetative mat or soil is not significantly damaged or displaced. Blading of snow on trails or campsites shall be limited so as to maintain an adequate protective cover.

(2) Ground vehicles shall be of the type causing the least practicable harm to the surface, such as Nodwell FN-110 or FN-60 or Bombardier track vehicles, mobile camps on flexible tracks or skids, vibrator units on flexible tracks or wheels, D-7 Caterpillar tractors, or their equivalent. They shall be operated only in the winter and where there is adequate protective cover. Vehicle operation shall cease in the spring when the Regional Director determines that the protective cover is no longer adequate. Operation of ground vehicles in the summer is prohibited.

(3) Movement of equipment through riparian willow stands shall be avoided, except when approved by the Regional Director.

(4) Above ground explosive charges shall be utilized in a manner to minimize damage to the vegetative mat.

(5) Campsites may be located on lakes which are frozen throughout, including bottom sediments, on durable ground, and on lagoons which are frozen to sufficient depth to ensure safety of personnel, but shall not be located on river ice. Durable ground can include gravel or sand bars or vegetated ground with adequate protective cover.

(6) Campsites and trails shall be kept clean of waste.

(7) Gray water may be discharged to the surface provided it is filtered, disinfected, and not discharged directly into lakes and rivers.

(8) The permittee shall take all precautionary measures necessary to prevent and suppress man-caused tundra fires and shall notify the Regional Director of the occurrence of any tundra fires immediately or as soon as communication can be established.

(9) Rehabilitation of disturbed surface areas shall be accomplished by the permittee in accordance with schedules and a plan required and approved by the Regional Director. Revegetation shall be accomplished exclusively with endemic species.

(10) The permittee shall not harass wildlife in any manner, including, but not limited to, close approach by surface vehicles or aircraft. Aircraft should maintain an altitude of at least 1500 feet above ground level whenever practicable.

(11) No explosives shall be detonated within ½ miles of any known denning brown or polar bear or any muskoxen or caribou herd.

(12) The permittee shall operate in such a manner as not to impede or restrict the free passage and movement of large mammals, including caribou, muskoxen, moose, polar bear, and brown bear.

(13) Feeding of wildlife is prohibited. This includes the leaving of garbage or edibles in a place which would attract wildlife. Garbage shall be kept in covered animal-proof containers while awaiting incineration.

(14) Hunting, fishing, and trapping by the permittee within the refuge are prohibited during the conduct of exploratory activities. Employing firearms in defense of life and property is allowed.

(c) *Aquatic environment.* (1) The permittee shall not significantly alter the banks of streams, rivers, or lakes while conducting exploratory activities. Crossings of stream, river, or lake banks shall utilize a low angle approach or, if appropriate, snow bridges. If snow bridges are utilized for bank protection they shall be free of dirt and debris and shall be removed after use or prior to breakup each year, whichever occurs first.

(2) No water shall be removed from any subsurface source. Removal of water or snow cover from or compaction of snow cover on streams, rivers or lakes identified by the Regional Director as inhabited by fish shall be prohibited during the winter.

(3) To protect fish and other aquatic fauna, high explosives shall not be detonated within, beneath, on or in close proximity to fish-bearing waters unless prior drilling indicates that the water body, including its substrate, is solidly frozen. The minimum acceptable offset from fishing-bearing waters for various size charges is:

- 1 pound charge—50 feet
- 2 pound charge—75 feet

- 5 pound charge—125 feet
- 10 pound charge—150 feet
- 25 pound charge—250 feet
- 100 pound charge—500 feet

Use of a charge in excess of 100 pounds shall be approved by the Regional Director and shall be in a manner prescribed or approved by him.

(4) All operations shall be conducted in a manner that will not impede the passage of fish, disrupt fish spawning, overwintering or nursery areas identified by the Regional Director or block or change the character or course of, or cause significant siltation or pollution of any stream, river, pond, pothole, lake, lagoon, or drainage system.

(5) Ground vehicles shall not cross active spring areas.

(d) *Cultural resources.* (1) Prior to implementing any plan of operation, the permittee shall obtain from the Regional Director copies of the cultural resource reconnaissance reports, maps and other available documents which identify all known cultural resource sites and areas of predicted high probability of containing cultural resources. The Regional Director may reasonably restrict or prohibit exploratory activities in these areas and, in accordance with 36 CFR part 800, thereby mitigate, minimize or avoid any adverse effects thereon.

(2) Unless otherwise specified by the Regional Director, the following prohibitions shall be in effect:

(i) No vehicle of any type shall pass over or through a known cultural resource site with standing structures; and

(ii) No seismic train shall camp on a known cultural resource site.

(3) If any exploratory activities require entry into areas known to contain historic or archeological resources, high probability areas, or areas previously unsurveyed for cultural resources, prior to the initiation of such activities, the permittee shall, if ordered by the Regional Director, locate, identify and evaluate properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, recover for the Department historic and archeological data contained in such properties, and take other measures, as directed by the Regional Director, designed to mitigate, minimize or avoid to the extent

practicable any significant adverse effects on them. Such efforts shall be done in a manner prescribed or approved by the Regional Director in accordance with a programmatic memorandum of agreement among the Service, the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and without expense or liability to the Department.

(e) *General.* (1) All spills or leakages of any hazardous substances, fires, fatalities, and any other conditions which threaten the refuge's resources, the environment, or human safety, shall be reported by the permittee to the Regional Director immediately or as soon as communication can be established. Other notifications shall be made by the permittee as required by applicable laws.

(2) All combustible solid waste shall be incinerated or returned to the permittee's base of operations for disposal in accordance with applicable federal, state and local standards. All non-combustible solid waste, including, but not limited to, fuel drums and shot wire, shall be returned to the permittee's base of operations for disposal in accordance with applicable federal, state and local standards.

(3) No discharge of petroleum, petroleum products, or toxic materials shall be made within the refuge. All hazardous substances utilized and/or generated in conducting exploratory activities shall be contained, controlled, and cleaned up in accordance with the permittee's approved hazardous substances control and contingency plan. Such measures shall take precedence over all other matters except human safety.

(4) Unless exigencies warrant, in any field operations employing surface geological exploration, the equipment, facilities, and personnel used within the coastal plain shall not exceed that necessary to support a maximum of 6 simultaneously operating surface geological survey crews, and in any field operations employing seismic exploration methods, the equipment, facilities, and personnel used within the coastal plain shall not exceed that necessary to support a maximum of 6 simultaneously operating seismic survey crews.

(5) No fuel storage facilities shall be placed within the annual floodplain of fish-bearing watercourses or within 100 feet of any other water body, and no vehicle refueling shall occur within such areas except when approved by the Regional Director. All fuel storage sites shall be approved by the Regional Director. Fuel containers shall be properly stored and marked with the permittee's name, type of fuel, and last date of filling. All fuel containers with a storage capacity greater than 55 gallons shall be of double-wall construction. All fuel containers, including those emptied, shall be capped when not in actual use. All fuel containers placed within the annual floodplain of fish-bearing watercourses shall be removed prior to breakup.

(6) The permittee shall not disturb or damage any geodetic land survey monuments. If any monument is disturbed or damaged, the permittee shall reestablish it in a manner acceptable to the Regional Director.

(7) The timing and location of the detonation of explosives shall be approved in advance by the Regional Director.

(8) No permanent structures or facilities will be erected within the coastal plain. The type and location of temporary structures and facilities including, but not limited to, ice airstrips, for use in support of exploratory activities must be approved by the Regional Director.

§ 37.32 Special areas.

(a) *Caribou calving and post-calving special areas.* The Regional Director shall designate within the coastal plain specific caribou calving and post-calving special areas which shall be closed to all exploratory activities for such periods between May 10 and July 15 of each year as those areas are determined by the Regional Director to be used for caribou calving and post-calving or both so as to ensure that exploratory activities do not significantly adversely affect calving and post-calving caribou. No exploratory activities shall be conducted in such designated areas during such periods.

(b) *Muskoxen calving special areas.* Whenever he deems it necessary or appropriate to ensure that exploratory