



Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: Maintenance to Mitigate Geohazards Beyond the Road Prism at the Pretty Rocks (Mile 45.4) - Programmatic Approval 2019-2020

PEPC Project Number: 85968

Description of Action (Project Description):

This project will address annual changes on the Denali Park Road at the "Pretty Rocks" (Mile 45.4). Damage is occurring annually from a slow moving slump on an exposed talus slope. Required maintenance is expected to extend beyond the road prism.

Geologic hazards, or geohazards, (e.g. slumps, rockfall, mudflows) have affected the Denali Park Road throughout its history. However, geohazard frequency and magnitude have increased beyond documented historical norms. As a result related safety and road resiliency concerns require repairs that are beyond general Park Road Maintenance Standards, as programmatically approved under PEPC 10607.

Geohazard research, monitoring, and repairs now require different tools, technologies, and materials than historically used for maintenance of the road. Research now requires more invasive activities such as subsurface (e.g. drilling and instrumentation), surface (e.g. GPS monitoring, time-lapse cameras), and aerial (e.g. plane- and UAS (drone)-based photogrammetry) monitoring. Additionally, communication equipment (satellite, radio, phone), survey monuments (rebar with aluminum cap at ground level), rain gauges, thermometers, and movement monitoring system.

Current and expected maintenance needs include extensive physical repairs, including moving large volumes of material and installing engineered materials. We expect some of this work to extend beyond the road prism and, in limited circumstances, into designated wilderness. When occurring in Wilderness, an MRA must be completed on on file to cover the proposed activity.

The spirit of this CE and 106 (the Denali Park Road is a Cultural Landscape) review is to provide programmatic compliance for projects as described above that are necessary for health and safety and to keep the road functional. At times, this compliance may be used for emergency repairs. The intent of the maintenance and repairs is to prevent emergencies and protect health and safety through thoughtful monitoring and maintenance.

To illustrate an application of this programmatic compliance, approximately 100 yards of the full width of the road at Pretty Rocks slumps about 12 feet each year, as of 2018. The rate of slumping has been increasing rapidly each year, therefore requiring increasingly aggressive repairs.

Project Locations:

Location

County: Denali Borough **State:** AK

Mitigation(s):

- Will vary by specific project to include but not limited to communication with impacted stakeholders and IDT collaboration among park staff.

CE Citation: C.9 Repair, resurfacing, striping, installation of traffic control devices, repair/replacement of guardrails, etc., on existing roads.

CE Justification:

Repairs and monitoring necessary for both road functionality and public and staff safety.

Decision: I find that the action fits within the categorical exclusion above. Therefore, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No extraordinary circumstances apply.

Signature

Superintendent:


Don Striker

Date:

27 MAR 2019

Extraordinary Circumstances:

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Notes
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?	No	Not taking action could have impacts.
B. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?	No	
C. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?	No	
D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	No	
E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	No	
F. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?	No	
G. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by either the bureau or office?	No	
H. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?	No	
I. Violate a federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	No	
J. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898)?	No	
K. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)?	No	
L. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?	No	

