



Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: Investigative drilling at Pretty Rocks slump

PEPC Project Number: 74031

Description of Action (Project Description):

The Pretty Rocks Slump at Mile 45.4 of the Denali Park Road dropped the road surface up to four feet between September 2016 and April 2017, an average of six inches per month. The park intends to drill, install instrumentation, conduct slope stability analyses, and develop conceptual designs to reduce or possibly stop movement of the Pretty Rocks Slump. To obtain adequate subsurface data for stability analyses, we intend to install five test borings - two on the roadway within the slump mass and three near the base of the embankment slope. These test borings will allow us to learn more about the substrate and slump displacement. For example, we need to know the location and physical characteristics of unconsolidated material, bedrock, permafrost, and massive ice.

The three boring locations at the base of the embankment will be within wilderness and a helicopter will be required to place drill equipment at these locations (see site map). The borings will include slope monitoring equipment that is capable of handling larger displacements before becoming inoperable and measurements will be automatically relayed via satellite. The slope monitoring equipment will measure ground displacement, temperature, and water level. Note that a solar panel will be needed to power the equipment. A similar setup has existed immediately north of the Savage River vehicular bridge since the fall of 2015. Once we have collected appropriate data from the slope monitoring equipment FHWA and NPS engineers and geologists will conduct slope stability analyses that will provide information required for conceptual plans to reduce the risk of the Pretty Rocks Slump.

This action is being undertaken as soon as logistically and technically feasible (Fall 2017) as new concerns about the safety of the park road for visitors and inholders is of emergent concern.

Project Locations:

Location

County:	Denali Borough	State:	AK
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Mitigation(s):

- Avoid nesting and lambing season with respect to golden eagles, gyrfalcon, and sheep known to reside in the area April-July.
- Minimize impacts to visitors and other park operations (timing & communication). Alert commercial operators, inholders, road permit coordinator, and public as needed.

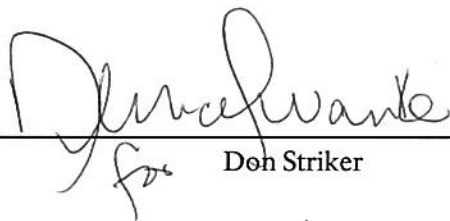
CE Citation: E.5 Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.

CE Justification:

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Provides critical information regarding safety hazard to park visitors and assets.

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:  Date: 21 Aug 2017
for Don Striker

Extraordinary Circumstances:

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Notes
A. Have significant impacts on public health or safety?	Yes	Data has potential to address most notable safety concern in Denali Park.
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 130007)?	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	

