



## Categorical Exclusion Documentation Form (CE Form)

**Project:** Kantishna Airstrip Routine Maintenance and Minor Upgrades, Programmatic 2024-2028

**PEPC Project Number:** 121604

**Description of Action (Project Description):**

This programmatic compliance applies to routine maintenance, repairs, and minor upgrades on the Kantishna Airstrip, located at the western terminus of the Denali Park Road. New construction or other major modifications to the airstrip are not included.

To be eligible, the activities must meet all conditions and stipulations for streamline review as identified in an existing Programmatic Agreement (PA). A list of actions taken under this programmatic compliance must be reported to the compliance team on an annual basis. As per the 2008 Nationwide PA, this streamlined activity includes the following undertakings, as well as others that are comparable in scope, scale, and impact:

1. Preservation Maintenance and Repair of Historic Properties d. Removal of non-historic, exotic species according to Integrated Pest Management principles when the species threatens cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, or historic or prehistoric structures.
2. Rehabilitation and/or Minor Relocation of Existing Trails, Walks, Paths, and Sidewalks a. In-kind regrading, graveling, repaving, or other maintenance treatments of all existing trails, walks and paths within existing disturbed alignments. b. Minor realignment of trails, walks, and paths where the ground is previously disturbed as determined by a qualified archeologist. c. Changing the material or color of existing surfaces using materials that are recommended in an approved treatment plan or in keeping with the cultural landscape.
3. Repair/Resurfacing/Removal of Existing. Roads, Trails, and Parking Areas b. Existing roads, trails, parking areas, and associated features, that have been determined eligible for the National Register\* in consultation with the SHPO/THPO, may be repaired or resurfaced in-kind. The project, including staging areas, cannot exceed the area of the existing surface and cannot exceed the depth of existing disturbance. \*The Kantishna airstrip is considered eligible for the National Register.
4. Health and Safety Activities b. Limited activities to mitigate health and safety problems that can be handled without removal of historic fabric, surface treatments, or features that are character-defining elements, or features within previously disturbed areas or areas inventoried and found not to contain historic properties. c. Testing of soil and removal of soil adjacent to buried tanks, provided the project does not exceed the area of existing disturbance and does not exceed the depth of existing disturbance, as determined by a qualified archaeologist. i. Removal of both natural and anthropogenic surface debris following volcanic activity, tropical storms, hurricanes, tornados, or similar major weather events, provided removal methods do not include ground disturbance or otherwise cause damage to historic properties.
5. Routine Grounds Maintenance b. Woodland and woodlot management (including tree trimming, hazard tree removal, thinning, routine removal of exotic species that are not a significant component of a cultural landscape, stump grinding). c. Maintaining existing vegetation on earthworks, trimming trees adjacent to roadways and other historic roads and trails. f. Trimming of major specimen trees needed for tree health or to address critical health/safety conditions. g. Routine roadside and trail maintenance and cleanup with no ground disturbance. i. Removal of dead and downed vegetation using equipment and methods that do not introduce ground disturbance.

See mitigations for additional guidance.

**Project Location****County:** Denali Borough**State:** AK**Mitigations:**

- If other parties (e.g., inholders, State of Alaska, other agencies) request to perform routine maintenance on behalf of the NPS, park managers would issue a SUP or RWCA, which may be covered by this programmatic compliance.
- Only NPS approved herbicides shall be used. Application of herbicides shall be by licensed applicators. All proposed work must be reviewed by the Integrated Pest Management coordinator in the park.
- Any aggregate material used will be from an approved weed/seed free source. All vehicles, equipment, gear, and tools will be cleaned prior to entering the park to ensure that no soil, seeds, or other organic materials with the potential to introduce non-native species are transported into the park.
- No wetlands will be impacted. No actions will be taken that would result in dredging, filling, or otherwise impacting jurisdictional waters of the US, and would therefore be subject to Clean Water Act Section 404.
- Slash (including tree boles below natural break and limbs) resulting from maintenance activities will be removed, and/or lopped and scattered, chipped, piled and burned. Vegetation should only be burned under weather conditions that minimize the visibility of smoke and air quality effects for people nearby.
- Vegetation removal should occur before May 1st or after July 31st to avoid nesting season and must comply with Migratory Bird Treaty Act guidelines. As approved by FWS, annual vegetation brushing within 5 meters of maintained roads and airstrips is permitted any time of year. Removing vegetation when it poses a direct safety risk to humans can occur at any time.
- Any unexpected discoveries of cultural, native grave sites, or other resources halts project work and must be immediately communicated to the Cultural Resource Management (CMR) Team.

**CE Citation:** 3.3.C.4 Routine maintenance and repairs to cultural resource sites, structures, utilities and grounds under an approved Historic Structures Preservation Guide or Cyclic Maintenance Guide; or if the action would not adversely affect the cultural resource.

**CE Justification:**

The Kantishna airstrip is a cultural resource site, and this project only includes routine actions necessary to maintain its safety and function. The actions would have no adverse effect on cultural resources.

**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.

**Superintendent  
Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Extraordinary Circumstances:**

If implemented, would the proposal...	Yes/No	Explanation
<b>A.</b> Have significant impacts on public health or safety?	No	Maintaining a park airstrip used by the public would have a positive benefit to aviation safety.
<b>B.</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	Airstrip maintenance does would have a low, temporary impact on natural resources so there would not be a significant impact. The airstrip is not located in a wilderness area nor in a wetland. Mitigations included in the project would reduce the potential impacts to migratory birds, floodplains, and air quality.
<b>C.</b> Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA section 102(2)(E))?	No	This project is similar to the adjacent Park Road maintenance project, which does not have controversial environmental effects, so the effects or airstrip maintenance are not likely to be controversial or involve unresolved conflicts.
<b>D.</b> Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	No	This project is a continuation of airstrip maintenance ongoing for decades, so the effects and environmental risks are known to be not significant.
<b>E.</b> Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	No	This action would not have potentially significant environmental effects and therefore similar future actions would not have significant environmental effects.
<b>F.</b> Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?	No	Other directly related actions include the application of K35 as a binding agent on the airstrip or tree removal in the area for fire management purposes, which do not have significant effects. Airstrip maintenance would have a low, temporary impact and would not significantly add to the effects of those related projects.
<b>G.</b> 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	The airstrip is part of the Park Road Historic District (HD), which is listed on the National Register. Maintaining the function of the airstrip helps maintain the historic use of the site and does not have an adverse effect on the HD.
<b>H.</b> 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	There are no federally nor state-listed endangered or threatened species or Critical Habitat for endangered or threatened species in Denali NP.
<b>I.</b> Violate a federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?	No	Maintaining the airstrip would not violate any laws.
<b>J.</b> Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898)?	No	Maintaining the airstrip would not affect low income or minority populations.
<b>K.</b> 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	There are no Indian sacred sites in the vicinity of the Kantishna airstrip and the Kantishna airstrip does not provide access to Indian sacred sites.

<p><b>L.</b> 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)?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>This risk of introducing non-native invasive species would be mitigated by requiring vehicles and equipment to be cleaned prior to entering the park or after use in an area known to harbor non-native species.</p>
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