

Appendix for Chapter 4

4.1 Threatened and Endangered Species Correspondence

7300

MAR 10 1999

Dr. William T. Hogarth
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southwest Regional Office
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, CA 90802-4213

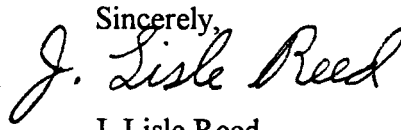
Dear Dr. Hogarth:

The Minerals Management Service's Pacific OCS Region has 83 active oil and gas leases located primarily in the Santa Barbara Channel and Santa Maria Basin. Forty of these active leases are not developed and have been held under directed suspension since 1992 due to the California Offshore Oil and Gas Energy Resources (COOGER) study (maps are attached depicting current Pacific OCS Operations and Sale Data for the 40 leases). The directed suspension on these leases will expire on June 30, 1999. Operators have been informed that activity after that date on these leases will be required to hold the leases. Operators have indicated to me that they could submit revised exploration plans for a variety of activities on these leases, including drilling exploration/delineation wells and, possibly, conducting additional seismic surveys over the next several years.

In November 1998, we met with Irma Lagomarsino and Tina Fahy of your staff to discuss this process. Previous Section 7 consultations on lease sales included exploratory activities on the currently suspended leases. One of the active leases resulted from a sale conducted prior to the Endangered Species Act (Sale P4, 1968), the remainder from four subsequent sales: Sale 48 (1979), Sale 53 (1981, including the blocks leased through RS 2, 1982), Sale 68 (1982) and Sale 80 (1984). The Biological Opinions written by NMFS for each of these sales are attached.

We request that you review these Opinions to determine whether they are still valid for OCS exploratory activities on the subject leases. If not, we would like to know what further level of Section 7 consultation would be necessary for any proposed exploration activities on these leases in the future. Clearly, if exploratory activities were to lead to the submission of development and production plans, formal Section 7 consultation would be initiated for specific development projects.

We would appreciate receiving your initial response by April 2, 1999. We would be happy to meet with you again to provide further information. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Mark Pierson (805-389-7863) or Maurice Hill (805-389-7815) of my staff.

Sincerely,

J. Lisle Reed
Regional Director

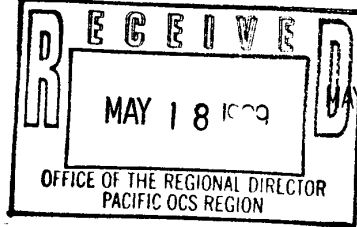
Attachments

bcc: File: 202-12 MOU (Cooperation with/NMFS)
RD
RS/OEE
RS/OFO
RS/ORE
C/EAS
TBell
MHill
MElse
CHoffman
COgawa
MPierson
GShackell
CF
RF

OEE:PIERSON:mgb\:\f:\home\bishopm\Hdata\Pierson\NMFSLET(3-8-99)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 Southwest Region
 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
 Long Beach, California 90802-4213



14 1998

Mr. J. Lisle Reed
 Regional Director
 Minerals Management Service
 Pacific Outer Continental Shelf Region
 770 Paseo Camarillo
 Camarillo, California 93010-6064

Dear Mr. Reed:

This letter responds to your March 10, 1999, request for National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to review Biological Opinions issued by NMFS from 1968 to 1984 for five undeveloped lease sales to determine whether they are still valid for outer continental shelf exploratory activities that could occur in California.

Extensive research has been conducted since 1984 to determine the immediate and cumulative effects of oil and gas exploration on marine species. Moreover, a few listed species under NMFS jurisdiction have either been removed or added to the list of endangered and threatened species, and the status of several have changed. For these reasons, the Biological Opinions issued are not currently valid and need to be revised by NMFS before any exploration activities occur that may affect listed species under our jurisdiction.

Before NMFS can revise its Opinions, it needs a biological assessment, or analogous environmental assessment document (e.g. environmental impact statement), on the effects of oil and gas exploration activities on listed species under our jurisdiction. I have enclosed an updated list of species under our jurisdiction that may be in the project areas. The biological assessment should also include a description of the proposed action for each lease sale to accurately reflect the equipment and methods currently used in oil and gas exploration. Assessments of potential impacts to marine mammals and sea turtles should include the best available information to determine the short-term and long-term effects of noise and oil on these species.

Thank you for coordinating with our office. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Christina Fahy at (562) 980-4023.

Sincerely,

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.
 Regional Administrator

Enclosure



Printed on Recycled Paper



Enclosure

The following federally listed species under the Endangered Species Act may occur in the project areas:

Endangered

blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)
sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*)
fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)
northern right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*)
sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*)
humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)
leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

Threatened

Steller sea lion
Guadalupe fur seal
green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)
olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*)
loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*)



IN REPLY REFER TO: 7300

United States Department of the Interior

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Pacific OCS Region
770 Paseo Camarillo
Camarillo, California 93010-6064



Dr. Rodney R. McInnis
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southwest Regional Office
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, CA.90802-4213

NOV 24 1999

Dear Dr. McInnis:

This letter is a follow-up to our March 10, 1999, letter regarding the undeveloped oil and gas leases in the Minerals Management Service's Pacific OCS Region offshore southern California. At that time, 40 leases were under a directed suspension that was due to end on June 30, 1999. Since March 10, we have issued two additional directed suspensions for these leases; 4 of the 40 leases did not receive further suspensions and have expired.

On November 12, 1999, we granted suspensions on the remaining 36 leases. These suspensions will allow the lessees time to prepare and submit Exploration Plans and Development and Production Plans that will describe their proposed activities in compliance with 30 CFR Part 250, Subpart B.

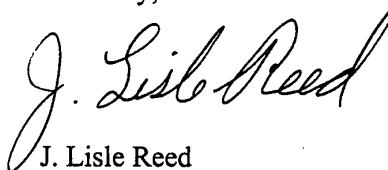
To fulfill our obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, we will prepare an area-wide Environmental Impact Statement to analyze all potential impacts associated with 6 proposed delineation wells in units in the Santa Maria Basin and Santa Barbara Channel. We will conduct separate environmental analyses of the proposed drilling activities at the Cavern Point and Rocky Point Units.

In accordance with Section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, we will be consulting with your agency on these activities. In response to the request made in your May 14 letter, we will prepare a biological assessment on the effects of oil and gas activities on listed species under your jurisdiction that may be affected by the proposed activities. The biological assessment will serve as the primary source document for the consultation. We expect to submit this document to you in May 2000 and initiate formal consultation at that time.

In your May 14 letter, you enclosed a list of species under your jurisdiction that may be present in the project areas. A copy of this list is enclosed. Please review this list for scope and accuracy and notify this office of any necessary changes.

We would appreciate receiving your response by December 1, 1999. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Mark Pierson (805-389-7863) or Maurice Hill (805-389-7815) of my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Lisle Reed". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

J. Lisle Reed
Regional Director

Enclosure

Enclosure

The following federally listed species under the Endangered Species Act may occur in the project areas:

Endangered

blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)

sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*)

fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)

northern right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*)

sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*)

humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)

leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*)

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loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*)



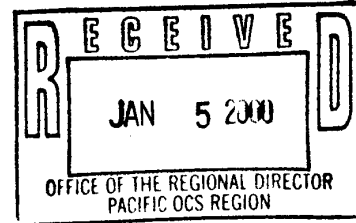
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

JAN 3 2000

F/SW3:CCF

Mr. J. Lisle Reed
Regional Director
Minerals Management Service
Pacific Outer Continental Shelf Region
770 Paseo Camarillo
Camarillo, California 93010-6064

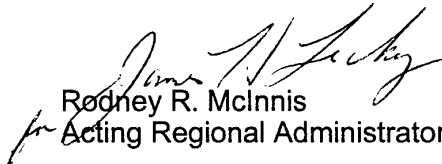


Dear Mr. Reed:

This letter responds to your November 24, 1999, request for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to review a list of endangered and threatened species under NMFS jurisdiction that may be found in the project area. The list of species contained in our May 14, 1999, letter to you is still accurate.

Thank you for coordinating with our office. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Christina Fahy at (562) 980-4023.

Sincerely,


Rodney R. McInnis
Acting Regional Administrator

7300

MAR 10 1999

Ms. Diane K. Noda
Field Supervisor
U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Ventura Field Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

Dear Ms. Noda:

The Minerals Management Service's Pacific OCS Region has 83 active oil and gas leases located primarily in the Santa Barbara Channel and Santa Maria Basin. Forty of these active leases are not developed and have been held under directed suspension since 1992 due to the California Offshore Oil and Gas Energy Resources (COOGER) study (maps are attached depicting current Pacific OCS Operations and Sale Data for the 40 leases). The directed suspension on these leases will expire on June 30, 1999. Operators have been informed that activity after that date on these leases will be required to hold the leases. Operators have indicated to me that they could submit revised exploration plans for a variety of activities on these leases, including drilling exploration/delineation wells and, possibly, conducting additional seismic surveys over the next several years.

Previous Section 7 consultations on lease sales included exploratory activities on the currently suspended leases. One of the active leases resulted from a sale conducted prior to the Endangered Species Act (Sale P4, 1968), the remainder from four subsequent sales: Sale 48 (1979), Sale 53 (1981, including the blocks leased through RS 2, 1982), Sale 68 (1982) and Sale 80 (1984). The Biological Opinions written by the Fish and Wildlife Service for each of these sales are attached.

We request that you review these Opinions to determine whether they are still valid for OCS exploratory activities on the subject leases. If not, we would like to know what further level of Section 7 consultation would be necessary for any proposed exploration activities on these leases in the future. Clearly, if exploratory activities were to lead to the submission of development and production plans, formal Section 7 consultation would be initiated for specific development projects.

We would appreciate receiving your initial response by April 2, 1999. We would be happy to meet with you again to provide further information. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Mark Pierson (805-389-7863) or Maurice Hill (805-389-7815) of my staff.

Sincerely,

J. Lisle Reed
Regional Director

Attachments

bcc: File: 202-12 MOU (Cooperation with/NMFS)
RD
RS/OEE
RS/OFO
RS/ORE
C/EAS
TBell
MHill
MElse
CHoffman
COgawa
MPierson
GShackell
CF
RF

OEE:PIERSON:mgb\f\home\bishopm\Hdata\Pierson\FWSLET(3-9-99)



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003

May 11, 1999

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Pacific OCS Region, Minerals Management Service,
Camarillo, California

From: *Diane K. York*
Field Supervisor, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, Fish and Wildlife Service,
Ventura, California

Subject: Reinitiation of Formal Consultation on Exploratory Activities on Offshore Oil and
Gas Leases, Santa Barbara Channel and Santa Maria Basin

This document is in response your request, dated March 10, 1999 regarding the lease sale numbers P4 (1968), 48 (1979), 53 (1981), 68 (1982), and 80 (1984). Specifically, you requested our determination on the validity of the biological opinions for these sales, and if determined no longer valid, what further level of section 7 consultation would be necessary for any proposed exploration activities on these leases in the future. We have reviewed your request and have determined that reinitiation of consultation is necessary. This determination is based on changes that have occurred since the original biological opinions were issued, including the release and migration of southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) into the project area and the listing of the California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), the western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*) and tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*).

Minerals Management Service should be aware that, although the Service is able to authorize take in incremental stages, our regulations require an analysis of the entire project: "When the action is authorized by a statute that allows the agency to take incremental steps toward the completion of the action, the Service shall, if requested by the Federal agency, issue a biological opinion on the incremental step being considered, including its views on the entire action (51 CFR 402.14)." With this in mind, we request that the following information be included in your request for consultation, in order to expedite the process:

1. The biological assessment should include the effects of the project on species that have been listed since the original consultation (specifically, the California red-legged frog, the tidewater goby, and the western snowy plover). The assessment should also include an updated analysis of the effects to the southern sea otter, keeping in mind the changes in the distribution of the species that has occurred since the original biological opinion was issued.

2. A new oil spill risk assessment, focusing on the likelihood of a spill to affect southern sea otters and the sensitive pelican rookery on Anacapa Island, would assist in analysis of the effects of the project. Probabilities of oil spills during all stages from exploration to development and transport should be included.
3. The biological assessment should include the number of wells that are likely to be drilled during exploration activities and an estimate of the increased boat traffic and noise levels expected during exploration activities
4. Spill rates in the current literature are expressed as the number of spills per 10⁹ barrels of oil handled. These probabilities should be related to the number of barrels of oil that are expected to be handled as a result of the project during both exploratory and development activities (using a likely development scenario).
5. The biological assessment should include a summary of spills that have occurred in the project area. A table which includes the size, date, type, reason, and impacts to biological resources, and the likelihood of that type of spill occurring in the future for each spill would be helpful.
6. The biological assessment should include information on how oil, if discovered, will be transported. This information should include estimates of the volume of oil likely to be transported in pipelines vs. tankers, and the estimated number of tanker trips per unit time through the Santa Barbara Channel and Santa Maria Basin.
7. MMS should supply the Service with information on the development of onshore facilities needed as a result of the project, and the threatened or endangered species that could be affected by this development.
8. The biological assessment should explore the effect of oil and gas exploration and development, along with associated spills, on the pelican prey base (e.g., anchovies).
9. The biological assessment should discuss changes or advancements in combating oil spills since the original biological opinions were issued.
10. The biological assessment should discuss how additional offshore platforms (if any) as a result of development would affect the oil spill risk from vessel/platform collisions.

We hope that these comments will assist you in the consultation process. If you have any questions on this matter, please call Bridget Fahey of my staff at (805) 644-1766.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

7300

United States Department of the Interior

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Pacific OCS Region
770 Paseo Camarillo
Camarillo, California 93010-6064



NOV 24 1999

Diane K. Noda
Field Supervisor
U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Ventura Field Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

Dear Ms. Noda:

This letter is a follow-up to our March 10, 1999, letter regarding the undeveloped oil and gas leases in the Minerals Management Service's Pacific OCS Region offshore southern California. At that time, 40 leases were under a directed suspension that was due to end on June 30, 1999. Since March 10, we have issued two additional directed suspensions for these leases; 4 of the 40 leases did not receive further suspensions and have expired.

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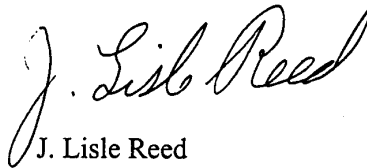
In accordance with Section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, we will be consulting with your agency on these activities. In response to the request made in your May 11 letter, we will prepare a biological assessment on the effects of oil and gas activities on listed species under your jurisdiction that may be affected by the proposed activities. The biological assessment will serve as the primary source document for the consultation. We expect to submit this document to you in May 2000 and initiate formal consultation at that time.

In your May 11 letter, you identified several species under your jurisdiction that may be present in the project areas and requested that certain information be included in the biological

assessment. A copy of that letter is enclosed. Please review your species list and information request for scope and accuracy and notify this office of any necessary changes.

We would appreciate receiving your response by December 1, 1999. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Mark Pierson (805-389-7863) or Maurice Hill (805-389-7815) of my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Lisle Reed". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

J. Lisle Reed
Regional Director

Enclosure



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003

January 21, 2000

Regional Director
Pacific OCS Region,
Minerals Management Service,
770 Paseo Camarillo
Camarillo, California 93010-6064

Dear Mr. Reed:

This is in response to your letter dated November 24, 1999 regarding the undeveloped oil and gas leases in the Minerals Management Service OCS Region offshore southern California. You requested that we review our species list and request for information sent to you by memorandum dated May 11, 1999. In that memorandum we outlined some of the principal concerns we have for the development of additional offshore leases and impacts to federally threatened and endangered species. Our principal concerns remain the same, and again, we must strongly reiterate our concerns with potential impacts to the southern sea otter, a threatened species suffering a decline in numbers along the California coastline.

Attached is a complete list of all the threatened and endangered species that should be addressed in the Biological Assessment for the lease area. These species should be taken into consideration in the biological assessment. We look forward to working with MMS staff in the future. If you have any questions please contact Lisa Roberts of my staff at (805) 644-1766.

Sincerely,

/s/ Diane Noda

Diane K. Noda
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

FEDERALLY THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND CANDIDATE SPECIES WHICH MAY OCCUR IN COASTAL VENTURA, SANTA BARBARA, AND SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTIES

Mammals

Southern sea otter	<i>Enhydra lutris nereis</i>	T
Morro Bay kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys ingens</i>	E

Birds

California least tern	<i>Sterna antillarum browni</i>	E
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T
Brown pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	E
Western snowy plover	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus</i>	T, CH
Light-footed clapper rail	<i>Rallus longirostris levipes</i>	E
California coastal gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	T

Reptiles

Island night lizard	<i>Xantusia riversiana</i>	T
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Amphibians

California red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	T
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Fish

Tidewater goby	<i>Eucyclogobius newberryi</i>	E
Unarmored threespine stickleback	<i>Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni</i>	E
Steelhead trout	<i>Onchorynchus mykiss</i>	*T or E

Invertebrates

Morro shoulderband snail (=banded dune snail)	<i>Helminthoglypta walkeriana</i>	E
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Plants

Salt marsh bird's-beak	<i>Cordylanthus maritimus ssp. maritimus</i>	E
La Graciosa thistle	<i>Cirsium loncholepis</i>	E
Hoffmann's rock-cress	<i>Arabis hoffmannii</i>	E
Santa Rosa Island manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos confertiflora</i>	E
Island barberry	<i>Berberis pinnata ssp. insularis</i>	E
Soft-leaved paintbrush	<i>Castilleja mollis</i>	E
Santa Cruz Island dudleya	<i>Dudleya nesiotica</i>	T

Island bedstraw	<i>Galium buxifolium</i>	E
Hoffmann's slender-flowered gilia	<i>Gilia tenuiflora</i> ssp. <i>hoffmannii</i>	E
Island rush-rose	<i>Helianthemum greenei</i>	T
Santa Cruz Island bushmallow	<i>Malacothamnus fasciculatus</i> ssp. <i>nesioticus</i>	E
Santa Cruz Island malacothrix	<i>Malacothrix indecora</i>	E
Island malacothrix	<i>Malacothrix squalida</i>	E
Island phacelia	<i>Phacelia insularis</i> ssp. <i>insularis</i>	E
Santa Cruz Island fringedpod	<i>Thysanocarpus conchuliferus</i>	E
Santa Barbara Island liveforever	<i>Dudleya traskiae</i>	E
Morro manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos morroensis</i>	T
California sea-blite	<i>Suaeda californica</i>	E
Marsh sandwort	<i>Arenaria paludicola</i>	E
Nipomo Mesa lupine	<i>Lupinus nipomensis</i>	E
Pismo clarkia	<i>Clarkia speciosa</i> ssp. <i>immaculata</i>	E

Key:

E - Endangered T - Threatened CH - Critical Habitat

* The National Marine Fisheries Service is the responsible agency for the steelhead.

