



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services Anchorage
605 West 4th Avenue, Room 61
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2249

In reply refer to:
WAES

January 10, 2001

Mr. James W. Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

Re: Endangered Species Act Formal Consultation for the 2001-2004 Total Allowable Catch Specifications for the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish Fisheries.
FWS Log No. WAES-01016

Dear Mr. Balsiger:

This letter acknowledges our receipt of your January 4, 2001 letter via facsimile on January 5, 2001. In that letter, you request that our March 19, 1999 Biological Opinion and its accompanying Incidental Take Statement be extended as of January 1, 2001 and for the duration of your emergency regulations to implement measures to avoid jeopardy to Steller sea lions or adverse modification of their critical habitat (a 180-day period beginning January 20, 2001).

By receipt of this letter, the period of coverage of our March 19, 1999 Biological Opinion and accompanying Incidental Take Statement will be extended as of January 1, 2001 until it is superseded by our Biological Opinion for the 2001-2004 Total Allowable Catch Specifications for the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea/Aleutian Island Groundfish Fisheries. This letter does not extend our March 19, 1999 Biological Opinion and accompanying Incidental Take Statement for the 180-day period beginning January 20, 2001.

If you have any questions regarding this consultation, I can be reached at (907) 271-2787, or you may contact Greg Balogh at (907) 271-2778, or Lori Duncan at (907) 271-2781. Thank you for your cooperation in meeting our joint responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act.

Sincerely yours,

Ann G. Rappoport
Field Supervisor