



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

December 6, 2002

Suzanne Cunningham
Hart Crowser, Inc.
2550 Denali Street
Suite 705
Anchorage, AK 99503-2737

RE: Environmental Assessment (EA) for Coffman Cove Road, Dog
Creek Bridge to Ferry Terminal, Scoping Comments

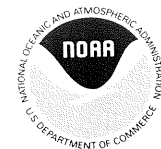
Dear Ms. Cunningham,

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the public notice requesting scoping comments for the referenced road project. Although, not directly part of the Coffman Cove road project, the ferry terminal planned by the Inter-Island Ferry Authority will also be considered in the EA as a connected action, and within the context of cumulative impacts.

Impacts of the planned road and ferry terminal to essential fish habitat (EFH) will need to be addressed in an EFH Assessment (which may be included in the EA) as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) implementing regulations (50 CFR 600.920, 67 FR 2380). The assessment of impacts on the proposed action on EFH should be titled "Essential Fish Habitat", and include the following:

- 1) a description of the action;
- 2) an analysis of the potential adverse effects of the action on EFH and the managed species;
- 3) the lead Federal agency's conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH and
- 4) proposed mitigation, if applicable.

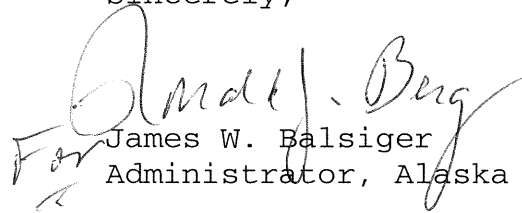
Upon receipt of the EFH Assessment, NMFS will provide you with EFH conservation recommendations, as appropriate, if we believe the project would adversely affect EFH. Upon receipt of NMFS EFH Conservation Recommendations, the MSFCMA requires you to respond in writing to NMFS within 30 days.



The EFH Assessment should consider any impacts of the project to anadromous fish streams and marine habitats and fish species. To assist you in developing an EFH Assessment, please visit our EFH GIS interactive website located at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/maps/>. Anadromous fish stream locations may be found by consulting the Alaska Department of Fish and Game anadromous waters catalog. Please contact us if you need assistance in accessing this information

Thank you for your continued coordination on this project. If you have any questions please contact Linda Shaw at (907) 586-7510.

Sincerely,


For James W. Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: EPA Anchorage (Mark Jen)
ADEC, AADGC, ADNR, USFWS Juneau
ADF&G, Juneau