



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

*National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

December 31, 2002

Van Sundberg
Project Environmental Coordinator
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Southeast Region
6860 Glacier Highway
Juneau, Alaska 99801-7999

RE: Sitka and Auke Bay Ferry Terminal Improvements Project
#67931

Dear Mr. Sundberg:

Thank you for your letter describing the status of the referenced projects and requesting our review. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has considered the information you provided and offers the following comments.

Auke Bay Ferry Terminal:

The addition of the new dolphin to the project plan should not adversely impact resources under our jurisdiction, provided the mitigation measures for in-water work windows and marine mammal monitoring are followed as described in your letter. Results of marine mammal monitoring should be reported to NMFS.

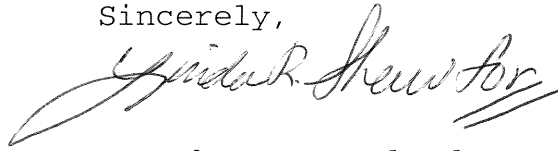
Sitka Ferry Terminal:

The design revisions for this project will reduce intertidal fill by 94 percent, dredging by 100 percent, and direct impact of eelgrass by 100 percent. Consequently, we anticipate no adverse impact to NMFS jurisdictional resources as a result of the project. Essential fish habitat and Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultations are concluded, provided the mitigation measures for in-water windows and marine mammal monitoring are followed as described in your letter. Results of marine mammal monitoring should be reported to NMFS.



Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Shaw of my staff at 586-7510.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jonathan M. Kurland". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Jonathan M. Kurland
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Habitat Conservation

cc: ADF&G (Mooney), USFWS (Enriquez), Juneau
Jan Straley, Sitka