



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

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

August 21, 2006

Colonel Kevin J. Wilson
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 898
Anchorage, Alaska 99506-0898

Re: POA-2006-52-M
Tongass Narrows

Attn: Ms. Mary Leykom

Dear Colonel Wilson:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed the August 18, 2006, proposed modification for the previously issued referenced permit by Mr. Robert Furney. The applicant proposes to place a the 35- year old Casey Moran float, which he has recently purchased from the City of Ketchikan in connection to his previously permitted catwalk and ramp. The Casey Moran float is 148-foot by 10-foot with a 46-foot by 12-foot center section and would include seven 5-foot by 20-foot finger floats and is constructed of treated wood and foam floatation logs. This would replace the originally permitted structure.

Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires Federal agencies to consult with NMFS on all actions that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). NMFS is required to make conservation recommendations, which may include measures to avoid, minimize, mitigate or otherwise offset adverse effects.

Several anadromous fish streams occur in Tongass Narrows that collectively support runs of pink, chum, coho and king salmon, and steelhead trout (see Alaska Department of Fish and Game catalog #s 101-47-10250 and -10300 on USGS Quad Ketchikan B-5). Salmon fry and herring use nearshore areas in the spring and summer. Nearshore habitats are particularly important to juvenile salmon migrating as fry or smolts from fresh water to salt water. Juvenile salmon use near shore habitats for feeding and predator avoidance prior to migration out to sea. Additionally, the inshore area of the project location provides habitat for several marine species including Atka mackerel, Pacific cod, arrowtooth flounder, walleye pollock, dusky rockfish, shortraker/ rougheye rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, Dover sole, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rex sole, rock sole, yellowfin sole, sablefish, eulachon, sand lance, skates, and sculpins. Tongass Narrows also provides habitat for spawning populations of Pacific herring.



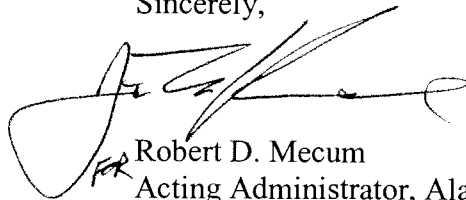
It is unclear whether the area proposed for dredging supports eelgrass, however eelgrass does occur in areas around Ketchikan. Vegetated shallows (areas with rooted vegetation such as eelgrass) are considered special aquatic sites under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. In a conversation with Ms. Mary Leykom of the Corps, she indicated that steps were being taken to determine if the area to be dredged includes the presence of eelgrass and that the applicant would consider modifying the dredging proposal should there be objections raised.

NMFS offers the following EFH Conservation Recommendations pursuant to Section 305(b)(4)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act:

1. No in-water work should occur from March 15 to June 15 of any year to protect spawning herring and out-migrating salmonids.
2. The presence of eelgrass in the potential dredge area should be determined. If eelgrass is present the dredging component of the project should be modified or removed to avoid dredging of an eelgrass bed.

Linda Shaw is the contact for this project and can be reached at 907-586-7585.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Mecum', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Robert D. Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: *Mark Minnillo, ADNR-OHMP, Craig
*Richard Enriquez, Bill Hanson, Steve Brockmann, USFWS, Juneau
*Chris Meade, EPA, Juneau
*Tom Schumacher, ADF&G, Juneau
*Mary Leykom, ACOE, Anchorage

*e-mail