



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

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

January 10, 2007

Colonel Kevin J. Wilson
District Engineer, Alaska District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 898
Anchorage, Alaska 99506-6898

Re: POA-1997-210-M
Passage Canal

Attn: Serena Sweet

Dear Colonel Wilson:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the above referenced public notice regarding a proposal by the City of Whittier to renovate the Whittier Small Boat Harbor. These improvements include: removing and replacing the harbor's floats and float piles; reducing the number of gangways from two to one; removing the West Harbor Launch Ramp; and reconfiguring the East Harbor Launch Ramp to increase capacity.

The proposed project involves dredging within Whittier Small Boat Harbor. The sediments within the harbor are known to be contaminated with petroleum and have the potential, if disturbed, to cause adverse effects to living marine resources including Essential Fish Habitat.

In order for NMFS to complete our assessment of the potential impacts of this project, we require additional information from the applicant, including a dredge plan and blasting plan. As of yet, the Corps of Engineers has not received final construction plans from PND Engineering. This information is important for us to make meaningful conservation recommendations. Accordingly, we request that the public notice comment period be extended for thirty days. Should you be unable to grant this request, we must recommend denial of the permit pursuant to Part IV, Paragraph 3(b) of the 1992 404(q) Memorandum of Agreement between our agencies.

We look forward to working with you to address the issues discussed above and are willing to meet with the applicant to discuss our concerns. Questions regarding this time extension request should be directed to LTJG Jonathan Taylor at our Anchorage field office, telephone (907) 271-5006.

Sincerely,

Doug Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region



cc: OHMP: Stewart Seaberg: stewart_seaberg@dnr.state.ak.us
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