



MAY 18 2004

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), we enclose for your review the Final Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS).

This PSEIS has several purposes. First, it serves as the primary decision document for determining the future overarching management policies and directions of the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Gulf of Alaska and the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (FMPs). These FMPs were developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and approved and implemented by the Secretary of Commerce. In serving this decision making purpose and as a NEPA document, the PSEIS will provide the Council, NOAA Fisheries, and the public with critical information on the status of these fisheries' and environmental impacts necessary to determine preferred policies and approaches for the Alaska groundfish management program. Thus, the PSEIS will guide specific future fishery management actions.

The PSEIS also serves as the current primary environmental review document supporting the FMPs. It summarizes and analyzes the best scientific information about the natural and physical environment in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea and Aleutians Islands areas and the relationship of people with that environment. It assesses the environmental impacts resulting from past and present fishery management regimes and from the expected impacts of alternative future fishery management regimes. Significant environmental and fishery changes have occurred since the original Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for the FMPs were prepared approximately 25 years ago.

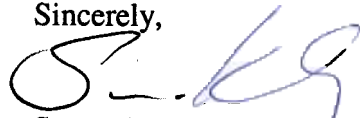
Additional copies of the Final PSEIS may be obtained from Steven K. Davis at NOAA Fisheries, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802, (907) 271-3523 or Anne Maki at (907) 261-9741. The document is also accessible electronically through the Alaska Region's website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/>.

Comments or questions on this document submitted during the agency's 30-day review period for the Final PSEIS must be received by July 3, 2004. Written comments on the Final PSEIS should be submitted by mail to James W. Balsiger, Alaska Regional Administrator, NOAA Fisheries, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802. Electronic comments may be submitted by e-mail to [groundfish.final\\_pseis@noaa.gov](mailto:groundfish.final_pseis@noaa.gov); include in the comment subject line the following Final PSEIS identifier: Final PSEIS Groundfish. A copy of your comments should be submitted to me by mail to the NOAA Strategic Planning Office (PPI/SP), SSMC3, Room 15603, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; by fax to 301-713-0585; or by e-mail to [nepa.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:nepa.comments@noaa.gov).



NOAA Fisheries is not required to respond to comments received as a result of the issuance of the Final PSEIS. Comments received will be reviewed and considered for their impact on the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD) and will be made part of our administrative record.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Kennedy

Acting NEPA Coordinator