



APR 19 2007

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we enclose for your review the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (FPEIS) for Steller Sea Lion and Northern Fur Seal Research.

This FPEIS is prepared pursuant to NEPA to assess the environmental impacts associated with NOAA proceeding with implementing future grants and Endangered Species Act/Marine Mammal Protection Act permit programs related to research on northern fur seals and threatened and endangered Steller sea lions throughout their ranges in the United States. In the United States, Steller sea lions and northern fur seals range from California, along the western coast of the continental United States, to the Aleutian Islands in western Alaska. The purpose of the research program on these species is to promote their conservation and recovery.

NOAA is not required to respond to comments received as a result of issuance of the FPEIS. However, comments will be reviewed and considered for their impact on issuance of a record of decision (ROD). Please send comments to the responsible official identified below. The ROD will be made available publicly following final agency action on or after June 11, 2007.

Responsible Official:

P. Michael Payne, Chief  
Permits, Conservation and Education Division  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
Telephone number: (301) 713-2289  
Facsimile number: (301) 427-2583  
[ssleis.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:ssleis.comments@noaa.gov)

Sincerely,

Rodney F. Weiher, Ph.D.  
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

