



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

*National Marine Fisheries Service*

*P.O. Box 21668*

*Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

August 23, 2002

Colonel Steven T. Perrenot  
District Engineer, Alaska District  
Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 898  
Anchorage, AK 99506-0898

RE: Chilkat River 19  
4-2002-0678

Attn: Mr. John C. Leeds

Dear Colonel Perrenot:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposal by Lynn Canal Professional Services to re-route an existing stream through a culvert into an emergent wetland, creating a loop of the stream channel through the wetlands and back into the stream's original channel. The proposed project is located in Haines, Alaska. The overall intent of the project is to create approximately 300 feet of spawning and/or rearing habitat for unspecified species of anadromous fish.

The proposed stream or wetland enhancement includes Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) cataloged anadromous fish stream Skagway Quad B-2, #115-32-10250, tributary 3002 that provides chum and pink salmon spawning habitat, coho salmon rearing habitat, and Dolly Varden char rearing habitat. This stream is considered Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) under Provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act (MSFCMA) as amended in 1996. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is required to make conservation recommendations to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regarding permit issuance if we believe the project could adversely affect EFH.

This project is intended to increase the amount of spawning and rearing habitat available to the anadromous fish species listed above. The Corps has determined that the described project would benefit EFH for anadromous fish and other federally managed species.

The proposal does not specify the scientific names of grasses and other plants to be used in vegetating the created uplands, only common names are listed. NMFS is concerned that the proposal may involve introduction of non-native grass and shrub species. The introduction of non-native species into the existing sedge meadow could have a detrimental effect on wetland functions and serve as

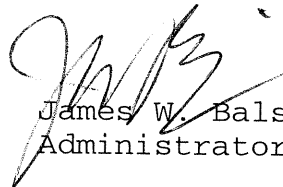


a source of introducing invasive species to the general area. We recommend that the Corps permit specify use of native grass and shrub species that are approved by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources' Plant Materials Center. The Plant Materials Center has conducted extensive research on suitable native, non-invasive plants and provides information on species and approved seed or plant sources through its website at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/aq/section1.htm>. NMFS believes the current proposal with the additional condition of using approved native grass seed will not have more than a minimal effect on the use of the area by anadromous species and is likely to result in an increased amount of available spawning and rearing habitat.

This letter serves as NMFS' comments pursuant to provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and Clean Water Act 404(b)(1) guideline compliance as well as our EFH conservation response pursuant to the MSFMCA.

Please contact Sue Walker, NMFS Marine Resource Specialist with any questions regarding this project at 907-586-7646 or [Susan.walker@noaa.gov](mailto:Susan.walker@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,



James W. Balsiger  
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc:

ADEC, AADGC, ADNR, USFWS Juneau  
ADF&G, Juneau