



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

*National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

November 1, 2002

Steven H. Heppner
Regional Fire Program Manager
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Region
P.O. Box 25520
Juneau, Alaska 99802

RE: Environmental Assessment (EA) for Native Allotment Fire
Management Plan Revisions

Dear Mr. Heppner,

Thank you for providing The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) with revised standard operating procedures (SOPS) to address essential fish habitat (EFH) consultation regarding the Native Allotment Fire Management Plan (FMP) draft EA. The revisions to the SOPS will eliminate surface activity, including the use of mechanical/chemical treatments within 100 feet of a riparian or wetland zone and prohibit the use of non-native plant species for rehabilitation of burned land. Based on the incorporation of these SOPS, NMFS agrees that the project is unlikely to adversely affect EFH.

Thank you for your continued coordination on this project. If you have any questions please contact Linda Shaw at (907) 586-7510.

Sincerely,

Jonathan M. Kurland
Assistant Regional
Administrator
for Habitat Conservation

