



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

July 8, 2003

Colonel Timothy J. Gallagher
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Alaska District
P.O. Box 898
Anchorage, Alaska 99506-0898

Re: 2-2003-0451
Tongass Narrows 558

Attn: Steve Duncan

Dear Colonel Gallagher:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the above referenced proposal by Mr. Jim Taro. The proposed project involves discharge of approximately 1900 cubic yards of fill into approximately .31 acres of tidelands; installation of a 300 foot long schedule 40 PVC sewer outfall; and installation of a pile supported wood and galvanized steel grate, floating dock and access ramp. The purpose of these activities is to stabilize eroding property and provide a site for construction of a residence and visitors' center.

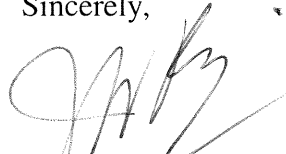
The proposed project would add to intertidal fill already on the site, some of which has apparently eroded. NMFS is concerned that additional fill placed in this area would also be susceptible to erosion. The adjacent waters provide habitat for a variety of marine fish species, including arrowtooth flounder, Pacific cod, Pacific ocean perch, shortraker/rougheye rockfish, sablefish, sculpins, skates and walleye pollock. Several Alaska Department of Fish and Game anadromous streams are located within 1-3 miles of the project site. These streams support runs of coho and pink salmon. Thus placement of fill in the intertidal area will affect Essential Fish Habitat as defined under the Magnuson- Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act.

NMFS guidelines direct us to consider the need and water dependency of a proposed action during our project review. The proposed project is neither water dependent nor water related. Therefore, we recommend that the applicant consider construction alternatives having less impact on intertidal areas. This could include consideration of upland sites for the proposed construction, or alternative construction methods integrating the use of pilings instead of fill for developing the foundation.



Please note that under section 305(b)(4) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Corps is required to respond in writing within 30 days to NMFS EFH Conservation recommendations. If the Corps does not make a decision within 30 days of receiving NMFS Recommendations, the Corps should provide NMFS with a letter to that effect, and indicate when a full response will be provided. Katharine Miller is the NMFS contact for this project, and can be reached by telephone at (907) 586-7643.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Balsiger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James W. Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: USFWS, EPA, ADGC, ADFG, ADEC - Juneau