



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

*National Marine Fisheries Service*

*P.O. Box 21668*

*Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

January 20, 2004

Col. Timothy J. Gallagher  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Alaska District  
P. O. Box 898  
Anchorage, Alaska 99506

Re: 2-2003-0294  
Sweeper Cove 1

Attn: Mr. Daniel Smith

Dear Col. Gallagher:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the above referenced public notice for proposed work by the City of Adak in Sweeper Cove on the island of Adak in the Aleutian Islands. This project is a revision of a project NMFS reviewed in March 2003.

Background

The original project reviewed by NMFS consisted of (1) enlarging the existing small boat harbor in Sweeper Cove by excavating approximately 250,000 cubic yards of fill from a 6-acre area, which was formerly a natural lagoon, (2) constructing two new breakwaters at the harbor entrance with excavated material from the small boat harbor enlargement and rock material from local quarries, (3) constructing a new boat haul-out inside the harbor, (4) constructing an approximately 315 ft-long perimeter sheet pile retaining wall/dock inside the harbor, and (5) relocating existing floats within the harbor and installing a new pre-cast concrete and/or timber float.

As a result of a site visit and analysis by the City of Adak's engineering consultant, Peratrovich, Nottingham & Drage (PND), the project has now been revised and will be divided into two phases. Phase 1 consists of removing a portion of a retaining wall and the creosote treated timber piles, and constructing an approximately 220 ft-long sheet pile dock along the southwest shore of the existing harbor. Phase 2 will consist of extending the sheet pile dock an additional 390 ft to the northwest after the excavation of that upland area. Phase 2 will also entail the construction of two new breakwaters at the harbor entrance, a 630 ft north breakwater and a 375 ft south breakwater. Approximately 45,000 cubic yards of fill will be discharged below the high tide line for the breakwaters.

EFH and Living Marine Resources

The Corps of Engineers (Corps) has determined that the proposed activity may result in adverse effects to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for arrowtooth flounder, Atka mackerel, dusky rockfish,



flathead sole, northern rockfish, Pacific cod, Pacific ocean perch, rock sole, sablefish, tanner crab, walleye pollock, weathervane scallop, pink and coho salmon, red king crab, golden king crab, and scarlet king crab. NMFS agrees with the determination that the proposed activity may adversely affect EFH for these species.

Comments

NMFS' response to the Corps' first public notice acknowledged that the proposed project design was not complete and we requested additional information prior to providing EFH Conservation Recommendations. We did, however, suggest alternatives based on information provided by PND including an aerial photograph of the harbor which showed a pier or groin located southeast of the existing fuel pier. NMFS did not intend for the applicant to use the existing fuel pier as a breakwater, but we suggested using the structure at the northern shore of the small boat harbor entrance. PND's site visit determined that this structure no longer exists.

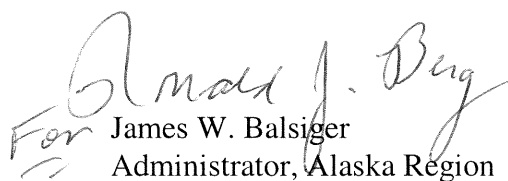
well as reduce the amount of sediment sloughing off the pile during removal.

- C. Place piles on a barge equipped with a basin to contain all attached sediment and runoff water after removal. Creosote-treated timber piles should be cut into short lengths to prevent reuse, and all debris, including contaminated sediments, should be disposed of in an approved upland facility.
4. Should blasting be necessary for dredging or pile placement activities, a detailed blasting and monitoring plan should be completed and reviewed by state and federal resource agencies, including NMFS, prior to project approval.
  5. Other than the proposed sheet pile dock on the southwest shore, the new harbor perimeter should remain as sloped-faced contours. The slope-faced contour allows smaller fish to avoid larger predators in the inner harbor and may allow some growth of intertidal marine vegetation and algae.
  6. Incorporate the use and maintenance of a large diameter (4-6"), non-galvanized chain link curtain along the face of the sheet pile dock. The curtain should be anchored with a strong attachment point. Such structures are common on sheet pile piers and have been used in Unalaska, Seward, and Chignik. The chain link curtain will provide an attachment surface for marine organisms and serve as a stand-off area from the sheet pile face to allow escapement corridors for juvenile fish migrating along the dock face. (The attachment point must be strong to withstand vessel propeller wash and marine growth. Anchoring the curtain will ensure it does not become fouled in ship propellers.)

Please note that under section 305(b)(4)(B) 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, the Corps should provide NMFS with a letter to that effect, and indicate when a full response will be provided.

Lieutenant Mark Boland or Mr. Matt Eagleton are the NMFS contacts for this project. Both can be reached by telephone at, (907) 271-5006.

Sincerely,

  
For James W. Balsiger  
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: USFWS, ADFG, ADEC, ADGC, EPA - Anchorage, City of Adak, Applicant.