



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

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

June 2, 2006

Mark Anderson
Project Environmental Coordinator
State of Alaska
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Design and Engineering Services – Southeast Region
6860 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK 99801-7999

Re: Haines and Petersburg Ferry Terminal Mooring Improvements, Project Numbers 75249 and 68733

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed your May 4, 2006, letter regarding the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessments for the Haines Ferry Terminal Mooring Improvements, Phase B Project 7524-9 and the Petersburg Ferry Terminal Mooring Improvements Project 68733. At the Haines ferry terminal the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) proposes to remove and replace two damaged existing timber mooring structures (creosote-treated pilings) and add a new mooring structure. A total of twelve new steel piles will be driven at the Haines Ferry Terminal. At the Petersburg ferry terminal DOT&PF proposes to construct two new dolphins and four new catwalks. Construction of these dolphins requires driving eight thirty inch diameter steel pilings.

Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS when any activity proposed to be permitted, funded, or undertaken by a federal agency may adversely affect designated EFH. Your May 4, 2006, letter included EFH Assessments for the Haines and Petersburg mooring improvement projects. The proposed EFH conservation measures are in Section III of these assessments. NMFS offers no additional EFH Conservation Recommendations for the Petersburg project. For the Haines project NMFS recommends one additional EFH Conservation Recommendation pursuant to Section 305(b)(4)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act:

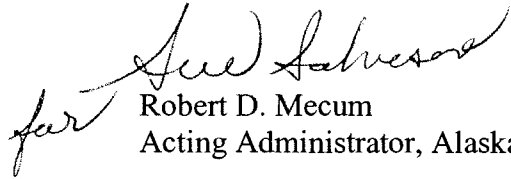
- The creosote pilings should be disposed of in an approved upland site.



NMFS offers information on anadromous fish streams in the vicinity of the Haines and Petersburg ferry terminals in addition to what is in the EFH Assessment. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) anadromous waters catalogue lists several catalogued anadromous fish streams relatively near the Haines ferry terminal. These streams are: stream number 115-33-10200 (Chilkoot River) with coho, pink, chum, and sockeye salmon; streams 115-33-10600 (Little Ferebee River) and 115-33-10650 (Ferebee River) with coho salmon. Catalogued anadromous fish streams within a mile of the Petersburg ferry terminal include: stream number 106-44-10010 (Hammer Slough) with coho and pink salmon; and streams 106-44-10012 and 106-44-10015 both catalogued for coho rearing and within a half mile of the ferry. In addition, two larger stream systems across the narrows from the Petersburg ferry terminal contribute significant numbers of out migrating fry into the Narrows. These streams are: Coho Creek, catalogue number 106-44-10600, with coho salmon; and Peterburg Creek, catalogue number 106-44-10600, with sockeye, coho, pink, and chum salmon. Nearshore habitats are particularly important to juvenile salmon migrating as fry or smolts from fresh water to salt water in the spring and summer. Juvenile salmon use nearshore marine habitats in spring and early summer for feeding and predator avoidance prior to migration out to sea.

If you have questions regarding our comments for this project, please contact Cindy Hartmann at 907-586-7585.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rob D. Mecum". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert D. Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: Cindy Hartmann, NMFS HCD, Juneau
Linda Shaw, NMFS, HCD, Juneau

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Improvements NMFS comments on EFH Assessment June 06 CAH

Cindy Hartmann
June 1, 2006