



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

*National Marine Fisheries Service*

*P.O. Box 21668*

*Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

April 30, 2008

John Goll  
Regional Director  
Minerals Management Service  
3801 Centerpoint Drive, Suite 500  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-5823

Dear Mr. Goll:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) become a cooperating agency for the North Aleutian Basin Outer Continental Shelf Lease Sale Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Unfortunately, staffing and resource limitations preclude us from serving as a full cooperating agency. NMFS will serve as a cooperating agency solely with respect to the Marine Mammal Protection Act permitting authorities administered by our headquarters Office of Protected Resources. We appreciate your offer to work with that office to ensure that the EIS includes the analysis necessary to support a decision by NMFS on authorizing incidental harassment of marine mammals. Although our Alaska Region is not able to serve as a cooperating agency with respect to the other living marine resource issues related to the proposed lease sale, we will provide input at relevant points in the process to assist you with scoping and to provide comments on your draft analysis of effects to NMFS trust resources.

For further coordination regarding the MMPA permitting issues and related information to include in the EIS, please contact Ken Hollingshead at 301-713-2289 or [ken.hollingshead@noaa.gov](mailto:ken.hollingshead@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,

Robert D. Mecum  
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: Ken Hollingshead, Brad Smith, Jeanne Hanson

