



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
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St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505
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April 4, 2014

MEMORANDUM TO: Leslie Craig
Southeast Region Supervisor, NOAA Restoration Center

FROM: *Virginia M. Fay*
Virginia M. Fay
Assistant Regional Administrator, Habitat Conservation Division

SUBJECT: Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment review for shoreline clean-up/enhancement over the Fort Pickens, Santa Rosa Island, and Perdido Key areas of the Florida District of Gulf Islands National Seashore (GINS), Escambia County, Florida

In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the GINS proposes to perform shoreline and upland restoration activities by removing fragments of asphalt and road-base material that have been widely scattered over the Fort Pickens, Santa Rosa Island, and Perdido Key areas of the GINS. These materials originated from roads damaged during several storms and hurricanes since 1995 and were spread onto hundreds of acres over a 14 mile length of barrier island habitat. Estuarine mud, sand, and shell substrates and water column would be impacted and are identified and described as EFH under provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

As specified in the Magnuson-Stevens Act, EFH consultation is required for federal actions which may adversely affect EFH. As the federal action agency for this matter, NOAA's Restoration Center prepared an EFH assessment and provided that document for our review by electronic mail dated March 19, 2014. The Southeast Region's Habitat Conservation Division (SER HCD) has reviewed the EFH assessment and finds the Restoration Center adequately evaluated potential project impacts to the federally managed species occurring within the influence of the project. We concur with the EFH assessment that adverse impacts to EFH will be short-term and minor. The SER HCD has no EFH conservation recommendations to provide pursuant to Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act at this time. Further consultation on this matter is not necessary unless future modifications are proposed and such actions may result in adverse impacts to EFH.

cc:
F/SER-Giordano
F/HC3-Schubert
F/SER4-Dale
F/SER46-Thompson

