



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

March 17, 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 improvements to the existing Lafayette Creek boat dock in Walton County, Florida.

In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Strategic Boat Access project would improve the existing Lafayette Creek boat dock in Walton County. The boat dock would be extended by 400 feet at the boat ramp to accommodate larger vessels and additional vessels. 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 February 26, 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 the project is not likely to adversely affect EFH and any impacts would be minor and brief. 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/OHC-Schubert  
F/SER4-Dale  
F/SER46-Thompson

