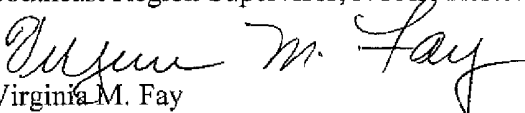




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
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January 13, 2016 F/SER46:MS/RS

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

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

SUBJECT: Essential fish habitat review of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
Phase V Florida Recreational Access Project

In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, NOAA and the other Trustee agencies propose to fund the construction of the Florida Coastal Access Project including the acquisition and enhancement of four coastal park projects using Phase V Early Restoration funds. The proposed locations include: (1) Innerarity Point in Escambia County, (2) a parcel in the City of Destin, (3) a parcel in the City of Lynn Haven, and (4) Island View Park in Franklin County. The project activities described in the essential fish habitat (EFH) assessment would result in minimal temporary impacts to estuarine water column and underlying submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) habitats categorized 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 impact EFH. The NOAA's Restoration Center prepared an EFH assessment for this project and provided the document for our review by electronic mail dated January 4, 2016. The Southeast Region's Habitat Conservation Division (SER HCD) has reviewed the EFH assessment and finds the document adequately evaluates proposed project impacts to EFH supportive of a number of federally managed fishery species. Project implementation would result in minimal temporary EFH impacts to construct public docks within SAV habitat. Best management practices to minimize both short-term construction impacts and long-term impacts to sensitive habitats have been developed and were included in the EFH assessment. 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/HC3 – Jennings, Schubert
F/SER – Giordano
F/SER4 – Dale
F/SER46 – Sramek

