



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
1208-B Main Street
Daphne, Alabama 36526

JAN 14 2020

IN REPLY REFER TO:
2019-I-1341

Mr. Ben Frater
Assistant Gulf Restoration Manager
Deepwater Horizon Gulf Restoration Office
341 N. Greeno Road, Suite A
Fairhope, AL 36532

Dear Mr. Frater:

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Restore Act funding proposal titled "Gulf State Park Pier Renovation", submitted by the Service. Our comments are provided in accordance with provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

The proposed project would provide funding to renovate the Gulf State Park Pier. This project would replace the existing pier deck with material that has more longevity and is removable in the event of a hurricane. The project would also update the pier and parking lot lighting to wildlife friendly in order to reduce the light pollution near important sea turtle nesting beaches. The project also replaces the fish cleaning station that will improve water quality near the pier by eliminating the disposal of fish carcasses by anglers into the water.

Based on the information provided in your biological evaluation, we concur with your determination that the proposed project "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's Ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), and Alabama beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus ammobates*). This project will improve water quality in the vicinity of the pier and improve sea turtle nesting habitat, therefore, the proposed action should result in beneficial effects to these species.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter, please contact Shannon Holbrook in this office at (251) 441-5871.

Sincerely,

William J. Pearson
Field Supervisor
Alabama Ecological Services Field Office