UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

MEMORANDUM FOR: FILE

FROM: Christy Fellas, DWH Environmental Compliance Coordinator
NOAA Restoration Center

DATE: August 27, 2021

SUBJECT: Regionwide TIG Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment #1: Phased ESA Compliance with NMFS: Restore and Enhance Sea Turtle Nest Productivity on Gulf of Mexico Beaches

Based on my review of project materials including the Biological Evaluation forms (Summer 2021), and in coordination with representatives from NOAA's Protected Resource Division (PRD) and in the Southeast Regional Office, the NOAA Restoration Center (RC) determined that the project described below may need additional review once the methodologies and locations are determined in early phase planning activities.

Once this planning step is complete by the project team, the Regionwide TIG will evaluate potential effects that may require ESA compliance for species or habitats listed under the Endangered Species Act under the jurisdiction of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). These details will be captured in updated BE forms and/or compliance memos documenting outcomes of the review and will identify any consultations, permits or reviews needed.

Restore and Enhance Sea Turtle Nest Productivity on Gulf of Mexico Beaches
The goal of the project proposes is to implement restoration actions to improve hatchling production for loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, and green sea turtles on Gulf of Mexico beaches. Project managers will first identify the highest priority threats to key nesting beaches in northern Mexico, TX, MS, AL, and FL and then implement appropriate restoration actions to enhance nesting.

It is possible, that after the priority threats to key nesting beaches are identified, high priority restoration methods identified will require work in or near the water using equipment or other methods similar to construction that could have effects on ESA-listed species or habitats. As these methods and locations are identified, additional BE forms will be completed and the Regionwide TIG will evaluate the need for additional ESA compliance.