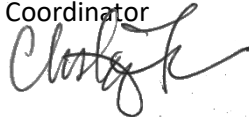




MEMORANDUM FOR: FILE

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

DATE: October 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Open Ocean TIG Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment #4 – Fish and Water Column Invertebrates Restoration Projects: MMPA No Further Evaluation Needed

Based on my review of project materials including the Biological Evaluation forms (Fall 2024), the NOAA Restoration Center (RC) determined that the projects listed below will not affect marine mammals and require further evaluation for animals protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) under the jurisdiction of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Appropriate measures and best management practices were included in the BE form where appropriate and will be implemented to avoid effects on marine mammals. No further authorizations under MMPA are necessary at this time.

- Return 'Em Right: Species and Area Expansion (Reduction of Postrelease Mortality from Barotrauma in Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Recreational Fisheries)
- Communication Networks and Mapping Tools to Reduce Fish Mortality
- Communication, Adaptive Management, Planning, and Integration

If a project is modified in a way that could change this determination it will be reevaluated as appropriate.