



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98115

August 9, 2001

Lowell H. Johnson
Manager, Airport Division
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue
Renton, Washington 98055-4056

Re: Consultation on Salmon Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for Master Plan Update
Improvements at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (NMFS No. WSB-00-318).

Dear Mr. Johnson:

This correspondence is in response to your request for consultation under the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). Consultations were completed previously for Endangered Species Act and for Essential Fish Habitat for coastal pelagic and West Coast Groundfish. Consequently this consultation is only for Essential Fish Habitat for Pacific salmon.

Federal agencies are obligated, under Section 305(b)(2) of the MSA and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 600), to consult with NMFS regarding actions that are authorized, funded, or undertaken by that agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The MSA (§3) defines EFH as "those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity." Furthermore, NMFS is required to provide the Federal agency with conservation recommendations which minimize the adverse effects of the project and conserve EFH (MSA §305(b)(4)(A)). This consultation is based, in part, on information provided by the Federal agency and descriptions of EFH for Pacific salmon contained in the Fishery Management Plan produced by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

The proposed action and action area are described in the BA submitted to NMFS in June 2000 and the Essential Fish Habitat Consultation submitted in March 2001. The action area includes habitats which have been designated as EFH for various life stages of chinook, coho, and Puget Sound pink salmon. Information submitted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) in the BA, supplemental correspondence, and the EFH consultation is sufficient for NMFS to conclude that the effects of the proposed actions are transient, local, and of low intensity and are not likely to adversely affect EFH in the long-term. NMFS also believes that the conservation measures proposed as an integral part of the actions would avert, minimize, or otherwise offset potential adverse impacts to designated EFH.



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EFH Conservation Recommendations: The conservation measures that FAA and ACOE included as part of the proposed actions are adequate to minimize the adverse impacts from this project to designated EFH for salmon. NMFS understands that FAA and ACOE intend to implement the proposed activity with these built-in conservation measures that minimize potential adverse effect to the maximum extent practicable. Consequently, NMFS has no additional conservation recommendations to make at this time.

Please note that the MSA (§305(b)(4)(B)) and 50 CFR 600.920(j) require the Federal agency to provide a written response to NMFS' EFH conservation recommendations within 30 days of its receipt of this letter. However, since NMFS did not provide conservation recommendations for this action, a written response to this consultation is not necessary.

This concludes EFH consultation in accordance with the MSA and 50 CFR 600. The FAA or ACOE, as appropriate, must reinitiate EFH consultation with NMFS if the proposed action is substantially revised in a manner that may adversely affect EFH, or if new information becomes available that affects the basis for NMFS' EFH conservation recommendations (50 CFR 600.920(k)).

If you have any questions regarding NMFS consultation on conservation measures for EFH, please contact Tom Sibley at the Washington State Habitat Office (206) 526-4446.

Sincerely,



Donna Darm
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Colonel Ralph H. Graves, ACOE
Muffy Walker, ACOE

bc: F/NWR - Cunningham
F/PR3 - Chief of Endangered Species
F/NWR4 - Berwick
WSHB - File Copy
WSHB - Chron File
WSHB - Sibley
WSHB - Stadler
GCNW

cc: address:

Colonel Ralph H. Graves
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 3755
Seattle, WA 98124-3755

Muffy Walker, Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 3755
Seattle, WA 98124-3755