



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

July 9, 2004

Howard C. Holtan, Municipal Engineer
Municipality of Anchorage
Project Management and Engineering Department
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

Re: Agency Scoping Comments
Girdwood Streets and Drainage Improvements

Attn: Jacques Boutet

Dear Mr. Holtan:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed your request for Agency information regarding street and drainage improvements in the town of Girdwood. The proposed project will improve approximately 3,000 feet of roadway along Hightower Road from its intersection with the Alyeska Highway to the Girdwood Alaska Subdivision.

Based on the map and conceptual description provided, NMFS offers the following information under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA directs interagency cooperation "to insure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by such agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered species or threatened species" or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. NMFS Alaska Region is responsible for the administration of the ESA as it applies to certain cetaceans, pinnipeds, and marine fish. These include species of whales, Pacific salmon, and Steller sea lion.

The information you provided indicates that work would occur inland. Due to the inland location of your project, threatened and endangered species under our jurisdiction will not occur in the vicinity of the project site, and critical habitat for those listed species would not be affected. Additional information regarding the ESA is available on our website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/default.htm>.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

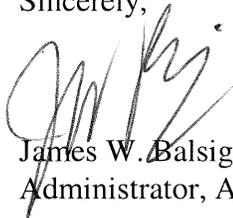
Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires interagency consultation for any federal action that may adversely affect EFH. As you mentioned in the conceptual plan, Glacier Creek (Alaska Department of Fish and Game anadromous stream #247-60-10250) runs perpendicular to



the Alyeska Highway and is important for the rearing of coho and spawning of Chinook and chum salmon. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities should consult with NMFS, as necessary, when detailed project information becomes available. Additional information regarding EFH is available on our website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/habitat/efh.htm>.

If you have questions concerning endangered species issues please contact Mr. Brad Smith at (907) 271-5006. Questions regarding EFH should be addressed to Ms. Jeanne Hanson at the same number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Balsiger', is written over the typed name.

James W. Balsiger
Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: ADOT&PF - Jerry Ruehle, Anchorage
Corps of Engineers, Anchorage
ADNR - OHMP, Anchorage