



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

*National Marine Fisheries Service*

*P.O. Box 21668*

*Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*

February 2, 2009

Cindi Godsey  
Alaska Mining Coordinator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Alaska Operations Office  
222 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., #19  
Anchorage, AK 99513

Re: Draft Supplemental Environmental  
Impact Statement Red Dog Mine

Dear Ms. Godsey:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) prepared by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Red Dog Mine. The Red Dog Mine is an operating zinc-lead mine located in northwestern Alaska, approximately 82 miles north of Kotzebue. The mine is operated by Teck Cominco Alaska, Inc. (Teck).

The Red Dog Mine consists of an open pit mine (Red Dog main deposit), a mill for processing ore, a tailings impoundment, waste rock storage areas, and support facilities. Zinc and lead concentrates are produced at the mill and trucked 52 miles to a port site on the Chukchi Sea for shipping to smelters outside of Alaska. The Red Dog main deposit will be depleted between 2011 and 2012. Teck proposes to begin mining a second deposit (the Aqqaluk deposit) to ensure continued mining operations until approximately 2031. The DSEIS serves to support EPA's proposed decision to reissue the Clean Water Act, Section 402, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit for the Red Dog Mine, including mining of the Aqqaluk Deposit.

Under Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), federal agencies are required to consult with the Secretary of Commerce on all actions, or proposed actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). In the DSEIS, the EPA identifies four alternatives ('A' through 'D') for the mine expansion. The EPA has determined that all four alternatives would not adversely affect EFH in the area.

Based on the information in the DSEIS, NMFS concurs with your determination. Therefore, additional EFH consultation is not necessary. Should significant changes develop during the final design stages of the project, the EPA should notify NMFS as soon as possible to allow an ample review opportunity regarding EFH resource issues.



We hope this information is useful in fulfilling your requirements under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Please visit our web site at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/habitat/default.htm> for additional information on habitat and EFH information. Should you have any questions, please contact LT Jonathan Taylor at (907) 271-2373, or [jonathan.e.taylor@noaa.gov](mailto:jonathan.e.taylor@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,



Robert D. Mecum  
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

cc: [cristi.reid@noaa.gov](mailto:cristi.reid@noaa.gov) – NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration (PPI)