



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

May 28, 2008 F/SER46/JH:jk
225/389-0508

Mr. Gib Owen
Environmental Planning and Compliance Branch
Planning, Programs, and Management Division
New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267

Dear Mr. Owen:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received the draft **Individual Environmental Report (IER) #15** provided by letter from Ms. Elizabeth Wiggins dated April 28, 2008. The draft IER evaluates and quantifies the impacts associated with providing 100-year level of hurricane protection to the section of levee adjacent to Lake Cataouache in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana.

NMFS has reviewed the draft IER and finds that the disclosure and assessment of impacts associated with the levee improvements are adequately addressed. It appears that all reasonable avoidance and minimization efforts have been taken to reduce the impacts of the project. It is NMFS' understanding that details regarding compensatory mitigation will be disclosed and analyzed in a forthcoming Mitigation IER. As such, we have no comments to provide on the draft IER #15.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the draft IER.

Sincerely,

for Miles M. Croom
Assistant Regional Administrator
Habitat Conservation Division

c:
FWS, Lafayette
EPA, Dallas
LA DNR, Consistency
F/SER46, Swafford
Files

