



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

December 10, 2009 F/SER46/RH:jk
225/389-0508

Ms. Joan Exnicios, Chief
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 Ms. Exnicios:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received the draft **Individual Environmental Report (IER) #9** transmitted for our review by your letter dated November 25, 2009. The draft IER evaluates and quantifies the impacts associated with providing 100-year level of hurricane protection for the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity project on Caernarvon Canal in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana. The proposed action consists of realigning the Caernarvon Floodwall to the west of property owned by Shallow Draft Elevating Boats, Inc.

NMFS has reviewed the IER #9 document and finds it adequately describes and quantifies impacts to resources of concern. As is stated in the document, all unavoidable impacts to resources of concern (e.g., essential fish habitat and wetlands) would be mitigated. The actual identification and evaluation of mitigation activities to offset impacts related to this hurricane protection effort would be undertaken in a separate IER which will be provided to NMFS for our review.

Given the adequacy of the document in describing and quantifying impacts and the expectation that those impacts to resources of concern would be compensated through the implementation of appropriate mitigation, NMFS has no comments to provide on the draft IER #9 document.

Sincerely,

for Miles M. Croom
Assistant Regional Administrator
Habitat Conservation Division

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

