



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office

263 13th Avenue South

St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

October 30, 2015

F/SER47:FR/pw

(Sent via Electronic Mail)

Colonel Kevin P. Landers, Sr., Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District
69 Darlington Avenue
Wilmington, North Carolina 28403-1398

Attention: Tyler Crumbley

Dear Colonel Landers:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed *Major CAMA Permit for SDI-5 Maintenance Dredging, Essential Fish Habitat Summary* (EFH Summary), dated February 2015 and associated with Action ID SAW-2014-02009 dated June 24, 2015. The applicant, Town of Ocean Isle Beach, proposes to maintenance dredge the navigation channel in Shallotte Inlet and to place the material along 19,900 feet of beach west of the inlet. While the Shallotte Inlet navigation channel is not maintained by the Wilmington District, the inlet includes a borrow area used for the approved Federal Coastal Storm Damage Reduction (CSDR) project. Both the proposed dredging and fill placement would be within the templates of the CSDR. The Wilmington District's initial determination is the proposed dredging (53 acres) and sand placement (34 acres) may adversely affect EFH or associated fisheries managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), or NMFS. As the nation's federal trustee for the conservation and management of marine, estuarine, and diadromous fishery resources, the NMFS provides the following comments and recommendations pursuant to the authorities of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

EFH Summary Table 1 describes the EFH and Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs) present at the inlet, based on available mapping information and EFH studies, including maps of submerged aquatic vegetation areas, benthic habitat in the inlet, and nearby Primary Nursery Areas. The applicant expects impacts to EFH and HAPCs to be minor, temporary, and/or localized. Based on previous EFH evaluations, the applicant proposes two conservation measures:

- To the extent practicable, dredging will be from November 16 to April 30.
- To avoid hardbottom identified at Shallotte Inlet.

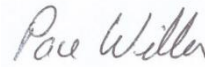
The EFH Summary adequately describes EFH and federally-managed fishery species in the area of the inlet, and the EFH conservation recommendations the NMFS typically provides for a



project of this nature are already included in the project design. No additional EFH conservation recommendations are provided at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please direct related correspondence to the attention of Mr. Fritz Rohde at our Beaufort Field Office, 101 Pivers Island Road, Beaufort, North Carolina 28516-9722, or at (252) 838-0828

Sincerely,



/ for

Virginia M. Fay
Assistant Regional Administrator
Habitat Conservation Division

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