UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

NOV 19 2009

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Supplemental Environmental Assessment on Issuance of a Modification to Scientific Research Permit No. 1556-01 held by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), For Sea Turtle Studies [Permit File No. 1556-02]

LOCATION: Waters of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue a scientific research permit modification for takes under the authority of the Endangered Species Act. Research authorized under Permit No. 1556-02 would further the understanding of sea turtles to better manage and recover the species. The preferred alternative would not be expected to have more than short-term effects on sea turtles and will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:
James H. Lecky
Director, Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East-West Highway, Room 13821
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 713-2332

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) including the supporting supplemental environmental assessment (SEA) is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed SEA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the responsible official named above.

Sincerely,

for Paul N. Doremus, Ph.D.
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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