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

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

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

TITLE: Environmental Assessment (EA), Regulatory Impact Review and Regulatory Flexibility Act Analysis of Bottlenose Dolphin Conservation Measures to Amend the Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Plan and Sea Turtle Conservation Regulations

LOCATION: Southern Virginia waters of the mainstem Chesapeake and state coastal waters

SUMMARY: The NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office has submitted the subject final amendment for review and implementation by the Secretary of Commerce. The final amendment requires the year-round use of modified pound net leaders on offshore nets fished in southern Virginia waters of the mainstem Chesapeake and state coastal waters. It also requires fishermen to attend a one-time compliance training before setting modified pound net leaders. The amendment is necessary to ensure conservation of strategic stocks of bottlenose dolphins by reducing serious injuries and deaths in the Virginia pound net fishery.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701
727-824-5301

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

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/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,

TRONVIG.KRISTEN.A.1365886012

Digitally signed by TRONVIG.KRISTEN.A.1365886012
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Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator
for

Enclosure

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