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

DEC 8 2010

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: Environmental Assessment for Issuance of Permit No. 14400 for Takes of Wild Black Abalone during Black Abalone Monitoring and Research Activities in California

LOCATION: The Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINe) monitoring sites occur within the Redwood National Park, Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Channel Islands National Park, and Cabrillo National Monument, as well as within the Gulf of the Farallones, Monterey, and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries and various state parks.

SUMMARY: The proposed action would authorize scientific research on Black Abalone (*Haliotis cracherodii*). The research would involve monitoring of this species in the wild to identify population trends through population counts and size distribution measurements. Monitoring would consist of only non-lethal take to measure abalone, and at selected sites, tag some individuals to determine survivorship and growth. This information will be used to follow recovery in wild abalone, track disease spread, and to further understand habitat preferences and changes associated with competition and reduced population size following disease mortality that may apply to recovery. Activities would be conducted year-round off the coast of California.

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

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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 environmental assessment (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,

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

Enclosure