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

MAR 12 2012

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 on the Effects of the Issuance of a Scientific Research Permit File No. 15672 to Molly Lutcavage to Conduct Leatherback Sea Turtle Research

LOCATION: Atlantic waters off of Massachusetts, New York, and New England

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue scientific research permit No. 15672 to Dr. Molly Lutcavage (University of Massachusetts, Amherst). The purpose of the research is to characterize the dive behavior, movements and spatial distribution of leatherback sea turtles. This research would create a better understanding of leatherback turtle habitat utilization, foraging behavior, and threats posed by entanglement risk. The effects to leatherback sea turtles would be short-term and minimal and would allow the collection of valuable information that could help NMFS' efforts to recover sea turtles.

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) 427-8400

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.

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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,

Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure