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

SEP 10 2013

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 Issuing Incidental Take Permit No. 16230 to the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries for the Incidental Take of Sea Turtles Associated with the Otherwise Lawful Commercial Inshore Gillnet Fishery in North Carolina Inshore State Waters.

LOCATION: North Carolina Inshore Waters

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue an incidental take permit (ITP) to the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF), under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), and the regulations governing the incidental taking of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222.307). The ITP would authorize the incidental capture, with some mortality, of five species of endangered and threatened sea turtles including green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) and loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) sea turtles, in the North Carolina inshore gillnet fishery and would be valid for ten years. This action is necessary to reduce the level of sea turtle incidental take and resulting mortalities that occur through the operation of the North Carolina inshore gillnet fishery. This action will not result in any significant impacts on the human environment.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:

Donna S. Wieting
Director
Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 427-8402

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,

for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure