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

SEP 0 2 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: Adoption of the U.S. Marine Corps' Environmental Assessment on *MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina*

LOCATION: Pamlico Sound, North Carolina

SUMMARY: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association's Office of Protected Resources (OPR) proposes to issue an Incidental Harassment Authorization, to the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC), authorizing the take of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) incidental to Air Station Cherry Point range operations within Pamlico Sound, NC. The USMC has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) entitled "*MCAS Cherry Point Range Operations at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina*," dated January 2009, describing the environmental impacts of their proposed military training activities. The OPR has reviewed this EA and has determined that it is adequate for adoption. The adverse effects of the proposed action are not expected to be significant. The USMC's EA adequately analyzes all environmental impacts of OPR's proposed action to issue an IHA. Among all other impacts analyzed in the EA, OPR looked in particular at the impacts to marine mammals from air-to-surface and surface-to-surface training activities, including injury and mortality risk from live fire explosions, direct hit risk from both inert and live fire, and acoustic disturbances.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: James H. Lecky,
Director, Office of Protected Resources
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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), prepared by the USMC, 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 Paul Doremus
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure