

In Reply Refer To:

2023-0133459

September 26, 2023

Memorandum

To: Compliance Supervisor, Deepwater Horizon Gulf Restoration Office, Fairhope, AL

From: Field Supervisor, James Austin

Subject: Informal Consultation for the Proposed Evaluating the Cumulative Impacts of Multiple Stressors on Cetaceans - Phase 2 field work located in U.S. Federal waters within the Gulf of Mexico.

This memorandum acknowledges our receipt of your memorandum on September 14, 2023. This response is in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (ESA). We have reviewed your proposed project and concur with your June 02, 2023, determinations for endangered and threatened species, their critical habitat, and at-risk species (should they become listed). We based our concurrence on the justification below. Where more than one justification was applicable, multiple boxes are checked and additional comments are added.

Appropriate avoidance and minimization measures have been included within the project description to ensure that any effects to listed species (or at-risk species should they become listed) are insignificant or discountable.

- This memo provides a concurrence determination for the effects of research vessels transitioning to and from the Pascagoula, MS port.
- USFWS Standard Manatee In-Water Conditions will be followed.

Critical habitat is not present on site and does not occur within the vicinity of the proposed project.

Unless the project description changes, or new information reveals that the effects of the proposed action may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not considered, or a new species or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the proposed action, no further action pursuant to the ESA is necessary.

If you have questions, please contact Paul Necaïse, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at paul_necaïse@fws.gov or 228-493-6631.