Liz,

Hope our below responses (in blue) to your request (in white) are helpful.

> JST request: USFWS DNWR has no objection to the gear surveillance and retrieval plan submitted and approved as part of the Sect 7 consultation; and that USFWS DNWR intends to conduct a compatibility assessment and determination for any off-lease activity related to the gear plan after the USACE 404 permit is signed. This compatibility determination would appropriately limit and permit (via special permit authorization) off-lease gear retrieval. This is the same plan that we coordinated and provided a copy to you with submittal to Ryan McReynolds for in August of last year (see below) – attached again here for your convenience.
>
> *FWS Response: The gear plan you provided appears to provide a good basis for a compatible approach, ensuring disturbance caused by gear retrieval does not outweigh impacts from the accumulation of gear within the Refuge. We will complete a Compatibility Determination process for gear retreival, including public comment, after a permit is issued.*
>
> JST Request: USFWS DNWR has no objection to Jamestown Tribe conducting on-lease wildlife monitoring in tandem with already scheduled and permitted shellfish farm operations.
>
> *FWS Response: It is not within our authority to permit or deny aquaculture use within the lease area. Therefore, it is not our place to decide if monitoring actions taken within the lease boundary (related to the proposed aquaculture farm) meet USACE permit conditions. We do remain concerned that activities within the lease will impact wildlife using adjacent refuge lands and waters. We do not believe that conducting on-lease only monitoring will provide the information necessary to understand wildlife and habitat impacts and inform adaptive management of farm activities to reduce impacts.*

Hope your week is going well.

-jennifer