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National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Protected Resources

Approach to ESA Section 7(a)(1) Interagency Cooperation

Presented at the US Army Corps of Engineers
Threatened and Endangered Species Team
Workshop on ESA Section 7(a)(1)
Conservation Planning

Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, CA
December 6-7, 2016

ESA-Listed Species Under NMFS Jurisdiction

- **150 listed species** (95 with U.S. range; 55 entirely foreign)
 - 65 fish (salmon, sturgeon, others)
 - 31 marine mammals (dolphins, whales, sea lions, seals)
 - 27 invertebrates (25 coral; 2 abalone)
 - 26 reptiles (25 sea turtles; 1 sea snake)
 - 1 plant
- **10 proposed species & 11 candidate species**
- **Critical Habitat designated for 50 species (4 more proposed)**
- **Species Recovery Plans: 45 final, 8 draft, 18 in progress**

NMFS Species in the Spotlight Initiative

“Survive to Thrive”

Targeted agency-wide effort to stabilize populations of ESA-listed species that are most at risk of extinction in the near-term with the goal that they will become candidates for recovery

- Atlantic Salmon Gulf of Maine DPS
- Central California Coast Coho ESU
- Cook Inlet Beluga Whale DPS
- Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle
- Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook ESU
- Southern Resident Killer Whale DPS
- White Abalone

NMFS OPR Proposed Approach to Section 7(a)(1) Implementation

1. Provide Guidance

- Develop internal and external Section 7(a)(1) guidance documents

2. Create Incentives

- Explore options to reduce the Section 7 consultation burden including creating efficiencies and programmatic consultations for qualified conservation actions

3. Cultivate Collaborators

- Coordinate with federal agencies on the development of (or expansion of existing) programs and targeted actions for the conservation of ESA-listed species and designated critical habitat

4. Track Progress

5. Reward Success

- Give agencies recognition for successful conservation programs and targeted actions



Cultivating Collaborators in Sec. 7(a)(1) Work

some examples

- NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries
 - Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Program
- NMFS Office of Habitat Conservation, Restoration Center
 - Community-based Restoration Program
- National Ocean Service, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
 - Partnerships for Transboundary Protection
- Department of Defense
 - Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans
- Army Corps of Engineers
 - Engineering with Nature Program

ACOE Engineering With Nature Program

EWN is the intentional alignment of natural and engineering processes to efficiently and sustainably deliver economic, environmental and social benefits through collaborative processes

- **Navigation**
 - Strategic placement of dredged material supporting habitat development
 - Habitat integrated into structures
 - Enhanced natural recovery
- **Flood Risk Management**
 - Natural and Nature-Based Features to support coastal resilience
 - Levee setbacks
- **Ecosystem Restoration**
 - Ecosystem services supporting engineering function
 - “Natural” development of designed features
- **Water Operations**
 - Shoreline stabilization using native plants
 - Environmental flows and connectivity

EWN Program 7(a)(1) Consultation

Anticipated Outcomes

- Increase ability to identify project designs that benefit NMFS species/habitat earlier in the development process
- Sustainable projects in the face of climate change
- More collaboration/cooperation; less unproductive conflict
- Regulatory processes move faster, with greater certainty and efficiency
- EWN will become an integral part of the Army Corps of Engineers project development repertoire

For More Information

NMFS Office of Protected Resources:

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/

Species in the Spotlight: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2015/05/05_14_15species_in_the_spotlight.html

ACOE-NMFS Engineering with Nature Workshop:

<https://ewn.el.erdc.dren.mil/news-ewn-usace-nmfs-collab-workshop.html>

NMFS West Coast Regional Office:

<http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov>

