



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER NAVY REGION SOUTHEAST
BOX 102, NAVAL AIR STATION
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32212-0102

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VIEQUES EAST

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Ser N46E/0707

June 19, 2002

Andreas Mager, Jr.
Assistant Regional Administrator
United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service, SE Regional Office
Habitat Conservation Division
9721 Executive Center Drive North
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

Lisamarie Carrubba, Ph.D.
Ecologist
United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Wildlife Refuge
Carr 301, km. 5.1
Boqueron, PR 00622-0510

Dear Mr. Mager and Dr. Carrubba:

In accordance with Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA), the Navy is requesting abbreviated Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation for a proposed combined Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX)/multiple Unit Level Training (ULT) exercise at the Vieques Inner Range. The exercise is scheduled for intermittent use for approximately three weeks starting in early September 2002. The enclosed EFH Assessment, as required by 50 CFR 600.920(g), provides information on the potential effects from this exercise on the EFH.

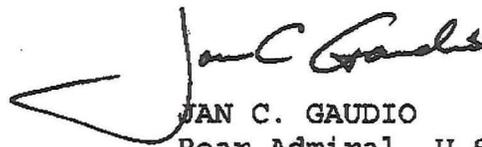
Based on the information contained in the enclosed EFH Assessment, we have concluded that this COMPTUEX/multiple ULT exercise planned for September 2002 will not have a significant adverse affect on the EFH or the managed species within the Vieques Inner Range. We are requesting your expedited concurrence with our finding and would appreciate your response in accordance with Section 305(b)(4)(A) of the MSFCMA, no later than July 19, 2002.

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If you have any questions on the enclosed package or need further information, Navy Region Southeast point of contact is Mr. Bruce Toth, N46EC, contract support, (904) 542-4873.

Thank you for your continued efforts in assisting us with our EFH responsibilities.

Sincerely,



JAN C. GAUDIO
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander

Enclosure: 1. EFH Consultation Package