

Charles
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Region
9450 Koger Boulevard
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

November 8, 1982

Brigadier General D.J. Fulham
United States Marine Corps
Marine Corps Base
Camp Lejeune, N.C. 28542

Dear General Fulham:

This responds to your November 4, 1982, letter (Ref. NREAD/JIW/th-11015) regarding consultation for use of the N-1 Impact Area and Browns Island Target and Bombing Area BT-3 at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

We have reviewed the biological assessment (BA) and as you requested, we are providing the following comments for your consideration.

Our concerns relate to use of the offshore areas of the firing range since sea turtles, while in the water, and whales come under the purview of the National Marine Fisheries Service. Specifically, it appears there is a potential for ordnance striking or otherwise impacting endangered/threatened species moving through the offshore impact areas. Critically endangered species such as the Atlantic (Kemp's) ridley sea turtle, the hawksbill sea turtle, and the right whale may occur in the impact area and subsequently be hit. Populations of these animals, to remain viable, cannot afford the avoidable loss of individuals. Accordingly, the BA should be expanded to incorporate measures the Marine Corps considered to avoid impacting endangered/threatened species.

You may consider methods such as aerial overflights of target areas prior to practice to check, where possible, for sea turtles and whales; halting ordnance delivery when sea turtles or whales are spotted within a target area (safe distance to be determined based on size of ordnance); monitoring activities to insure that endangered/threatened species are not affected; seasonal restrictions on use of the practice range; or other measures you feel may be practical and appropriate. These measures could be used in connection with existing range regulations that prohibit firing at wildlife species at all times.

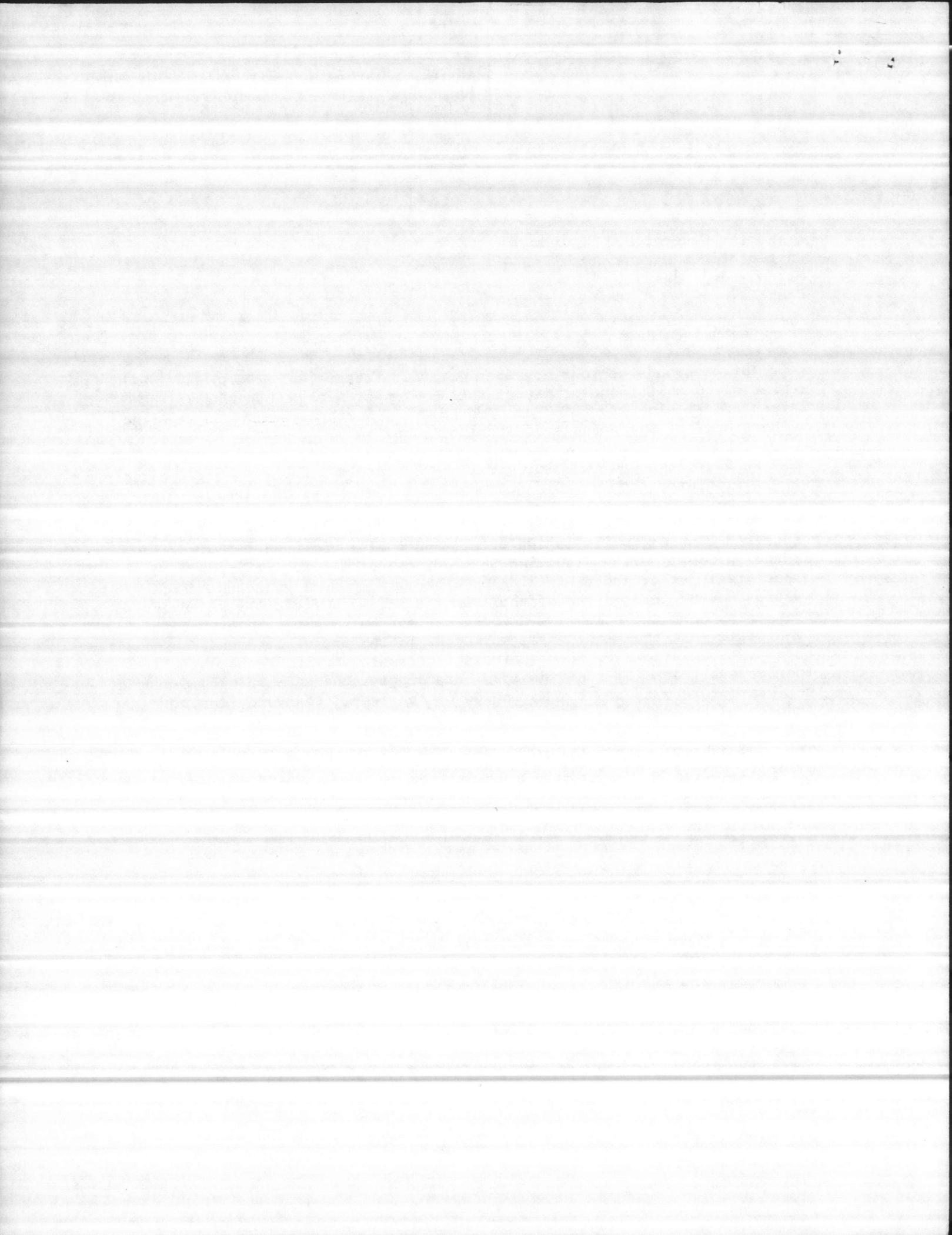
We would be pleased to discuss the subject proposal with your staff, clarify any information in this letter, or provide more detailed information. In this regard, please contact Andreas Mager, Jr. at FTS 826-3366 or 813-893-3366.

Sincerely yours,

Charles A. Oravetz
Chief, Marine Mammals and
Endangered Species Branch

CC:FWS - Asheville, NC





NREAD/JIW/th
11015
4 NOV 1982

Mr. D. R. Ekberg, Chief
Environmental and Technical Services Branch
National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Region
9450 Koger Boulevard
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

Dear Mr. Ekberg:

This is in response to your letter of 23 November 1981 outlining the consultation process required by the Endangered Species Act for training activities conducted at Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The training that occurs and constitutes a major federal action primarily involves utilization of coastal waters as a buffer zone for explosive projectiles directed toward beach land and as an impact area for non-explosive projectiles directed toward waterborne targets. Secondly, the waters receive non-explosive debris resulting from detonation of airborne anti-aircraft missiles. The current training does not represent a new action as the range has been in continuous use since the 1940's and the offshore portion served as an impact area for explosive artillery and aircraft ordnance for more than twenty years. That activity has left a large, varied quantity of debris and duds in the offshore waters.

A biological assessment of the possible effects on threatened and endangered species was conducted in accordance with your guidance. Because of safety considerations in the area, physical inspection and survey work was restricted. However, the observations and discussions with outside consultants are sufficient to conclude that continuation of military training is not likely to affect any endangered or threatened species.

The biological assessment is attached for your review. Any questions or comments would be welcomed. As evidenced by close and continuing management activities in conjunction with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Base is desirous of meeting requirements for species under your jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

D. J. FULHAM
Brigadier General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

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