



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
646 Cajundome Blvd.
Suite 400
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506

July 1, 2014

Mr. Debora McClain
Deputy DOI DH NRDAR Case Manager
Deepwater Horizon NRDAR
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228

Dear Mr. McClain:

Thank you for your May 29, 2014, electronic mail, regarding the proposed Deepwater Horizon (DWH) Early Restoration project, Chenier Ronquille Barrier Island, Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana. Your e-mail requested the Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) concurrence with your determination that the proposed project is exempt from the Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) of 1982 (96 Stat. 1653, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). The purposes of the CBRA are "to minimize the loss of human life, wasteful expenditures of Federal revenues, and the damage to fish, wildlife, and other natural resources associated with the coastal barriers along the Atlantic and Gulf Coast..." 16 U.S.C. § 3501(b). Section 3505 of CBRA provides exceptions to the prohibition of Federal expenditures that would have the effect of supporting coastal barrier development. The CBRA generally prohibits the expenditure of Federal funds that would encourage development on coastal barriers.

The proposed restoration project occurs entirely within System Unit S01. Section 3505 (a)(6)(A) provides that such expenditures are exempt for "Projects for the study, management, protection, and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources and habitats, including acquisition of fish and wildlife habitats, and related lands, stabilization projects for fish and wildlife habitats, and recreational projects." Section 206.344 (c) states that there would be Federal financial limitations to carry out "... any project to prevent erosion of, or to otherwise stabilize, and inlet, shoreline, or inshore area, except that such assistance and expenditures may be made available on units designated pursuant to Section 4 on the maps numbered S01 through S08 for purposes other than encouraging development and, in all units in cases where an emergency threatens life, land, and property immediately adjacent to that unit."

Because the proposed project is designed to restore natural resource damages incurred by the DWH oil spill via barrier island restoration for habitat protection and longevity, you have made the determination that the project is consistent with CBRA and falls within a CBRA exemption. Accordingly, the Service concurs with your determination that the proposed project is consistent with the CBRA and falls within a CBRA exemption.



We appreciate the opportunity to provide this comment on the proposed action. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Amy Trahan of this office (337/291-3126).

Sincerely,



Jeffrey D. Weller
Field Supervisor
Louisiana Ecological Services Office