

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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September 2, 2005

In Reply Refer To: NOAA050527A

Holly Price
Resource Protection Coordinator
United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

SEP 14 2005

Dear Ms. Price:

Re: Monterey Accelerated Research System Cabled Observatory, Moss Landing, Monterey County, California.

You are initiating consultation with me, regarding the above noted project, pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800 (as amended 8-05-04) regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is lead federal agency for the above noted undertaking, which consists of the construction of the Monterey Accelerated Research System (MARS) Cabled Observatory. As this is a joint National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) project, the co-lead agency for CEQA compliance is the California State Lands Commission.

The majority of the proposed cable observatory will be buried under sediment on the floor of Monterey Bay, using a hydraulically operated plow that will be towed by a cable installation vessel. The portion of the MARS Cabled Observatory on land will consist of a short section that runs from the MBARI Building D near the southern portion of the Moss Landing Harbor peninsula to the Directional Drill Site near the Moss Landing Harbor entrance at the northern end of the peninsula. This section will be strung on existing utility poles. From the Direction Drill site, the cable will be installed under the Moss Landing Peninsula and the harbor entrance a distance of 0.89 mile using horizontal directional drilling (to install a 5 inch diameter conduit), to a point in the Monterey Bay where the cable installation vessel will continue the project. The undersea section of the cable will extend approximately 31.7 miles to a science node to be installed on the seabed at Smooth Ridge.

In Addition to your letter of May 24, 2005, requesting consultation, you have submitted the following items in support of this undertaking:

- 1) *Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Monterey Accelerated Research System Cabled Observatory* (California State Lands Commission and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: March 2005).
- 2) *Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Monterey Accelerated Research System Cabled Observatory* (California State Lands Commission and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: July 2005).

3) *Monterey Accelerated Research System Cabled Observatory Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement Public Meeting Transcript of Proceedings Session 1 and Session 2.*

4) Letter dated July 8, 2005, submitted in support of this undertaking by the California State Lands Commission (CEQA lead agency) signed by Dwight E. Sanders, Chief, Division of Environmental Planning and Management.

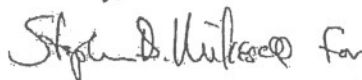
Upon my review of your letter requesting consultation and the documentation submitted in support of this undertaking, I concur that a finding of No Historic Properties Affected is appropriate with the provision that NOAA implements the following condition as stated in the Draft EIR/EIS (page 4.3-8) as Mitigation Measure MM CR-1, but not included in the Administrative Final EIR/EIS. This finding and condition were confirmed in a phone conversation between Deirdre Hall of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and William Soule of my staff on 8/30/05.

- The existing sub-bottom profile data shall be re-examined by a qualified marine archaeologist and a geologist to determine whether deposits of sand and gravel, or relic channel, river, or stream features can be identified along that portion of the cable route (about 24.5 [39.4 km] to 29 miles [46.7 km] out) in which the cable would be laid on the exposed substrate, or in which plowing would affect areas with less than 3.3 feet (1 m) of sediment cover. If archaeologically sensitive features or areas are identified, the locations of any features that are not covered with sediment should be re-investigated with a ROV-mounted video camera to determine whether there is any artifactual evidence of prehistoric activity in those areas. If present, those areas should be avoided.

The CEQA lead agency, the California State Lands Commission, has agreed in their letter to me dated July 8, 2005, to the implementation of this condition.

Thank you for seeking my comments and for considering historic properties in planning your project. If you require further information, please contact William Soule at phone 916-654-4614 or email wsoule@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

cc:

Dwight E. Sanders, Chief
Division of Environmental Planning and Management
California State Lands Commission
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