

APPENDIX F;

MITIGATION MEASURES FOR STELLER'S EIDERS IN COOK INLET

- 1. If Seismic surveys occur within the timing window for Stellers' eiders wintering in the Cook Inlet (15 November – 15 April), then you shall have a qualified, experienced biologist remain aboard the source vessel and monitor the behavior and record evidence of disturbance to Steller's eiders.**
- 2. The biologist must be qualified, experienced and approved by the USFWS. Protocols to monitor behavior and assess disturbance must be developed by the contractor and approved by the USFWS prior to commencing the seismic surveys. Monitoring on the vessel must occur during operation of the air gun array as well as outside of that time for comparison.**
- 3. If Steller's eiders are observed, their numbers shall be determined or estimated, locations shall be recorded using GPS coordinates, and data reported to Greg Balogh, Endangered Species Branch Chief, at the Anchorage USFWS office within 2 days (phone 271-2778, fax: 907-271-2786, email: greg_balogh@fws.gov.)**
- 4. If Steller's eiders are observed being disturbed by the airgun or boat activity, then operations will need to powerdown/shutdown immediately or the ships captain must alter the path of travel to avoid disturbance to the flocks. Operations may resume at another location or as soon as the Steller's eiders leave the area of their own volition.**
- 5. Alternative Option: Aerial monitoring shall be flown biweekly, until the first Steller's eiders observation is reported along the eastern shore of Lower Cook Inlet. Aerial monitoring surveys will be flown from Anchor Point to Clam Gulch in such a way that all birds within 2 Km of shore are detected. If Steller's eiders are known to be within the vicinity, then aerial monitoring shall occur one time per day of operation.**
- 6. If the Alternative Option is used, monitoring shall be conducted by a qualified US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, or a qualified contract biologist, experienced in identifying Steller's eiders from the air, using a monitoring protocol approved by the USFWS.**
- 7. A daily monitoring log will be maintained, recording results of the aerial monitoring and avoidance efforts.**
- 8. A report of the analysis and interpretation of the monitoring data, as well as the raw data, must be provided to the USFWS within 6 months after the seismic surveys are completed.**