

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Malcolm Mohead or Brandy Belmas, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On February 21, 2008, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (73 FR 9525) that a request for a scientific research permit to take shortnose sturgeon had been submitted by the above-named individual. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Dr. Douglas Peterson is authorized to conduct a five-year scientific research (presence/absence) study of shortnose sturgeon in the Saint Marys and Satilla Rivers, Georgia and Florida. The purpose of the proposed research is to assess the current status of shortnose sturgeon in these rivers, as well as evaluate the current habitat availability in each river. If shortnose sturgeon are found, another objective of the research will be to quantify the genetic discreteness and effective population size of the extant stock.

Specifically, Dr. Peterson is authorized to capture (by gill or trammel nets), handle, measure, weigh, PIT tag, and genetic fin clip up to 85 shortnose sturgeon annually from each river for the duration of the permit, or five years. To document spawning in the rivers, up to 20 eggs or larvae may be lethally collected in each river with artificial substrates. No unintentional mortality for either river is authorized.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered or threatened species, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: August 25, 2008.

P. Michael Payne,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XK09

Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council will hold scoping meetings to obtain input from fishers, the general public, and the local agencies representatives on the Regulatory Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Fishery of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands Concerning Bajo de Sico Seasonal Closure including a Regulatory Impact Review and an Environmental Assessment.

DATES: The scoping meetings will be held on the following dates and locations:

- September 18, 2008, Mayaguez Resort and Casino, Rd. 104, Km. 0.3, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
- September 19, 2008, Pierre Hotel at Gallery Plaza, De Diego Avenue, Santurce, Puerto Rico
- September 22, 2008, Frenchman's Reef and Morning Star Hotel, 5 Estate Bakkeroe, St. Thomas, USVI
- September 23, 2008, Buccaneer Hotel, Estate Shoys, Christiansted, St. Croix, USVI.

All meetings will be held from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-2577, telephone: (787) 766-5926.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council will hold Scoping meetings to receive public input on the Regulatory Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Fishery of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands Concerning Bajo de Sico Seasonal Closure including a Regulatory Impact Review and an Environmental Assessment.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before these groups for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions will

be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305 (c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. For more information or request for sign language interpretation and other auxiliary aids, please contact Mr. Miguel A. Rolon, Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-2577, telephone: (787) 766-5926, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 26, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XK08

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Groundfish Advisory Panel and Recreational Advisory Panel will hold two meetings to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meetings will be held on September 16 and 17, 2008. For specific dates and times, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, Route 1, Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill #2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.