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Subject: FishNews - May 14, 2014 - Sturgeon Tweet Chat, Revised ESA Implementation, New NOAA Chief Scientist, Recreational Fishing Survey, Swordfish Specs, and More

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May 14, 2014

HIGHLIGHTS

EVENTS

May 15

Sturgeon Tweet Chat
2-3 pm ET,
[@NOAAFisheries](#)

May 16

Workshop on **Alaska fisheries at-sea scales requirements**, held in Seattle, Washington.

May 16

3rd Annual NOAA Open House at NOAA's Western Regional Center in Seattle, Washington.

June 2-10

North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Nome, Alaska.



Questions about Sturgeon? Ask a NOAA Scientist.

As we prepare to celebrate Endangered Species Day on May 16, we turn to a strange-looking creature that has been around for approximately 200 million years: the mighty Atlantic sturgeon. Join us tomorrow, May 15, for a **STURGEON TWEET CHAT** with NOAA Fisheries Scientist Jason Kahn (pictured above), 2-3 p.m. ET [@NOAAFisheries](#), #ESDaychat.

Proposed Revisions to Implementation of the Endangered Species Act

NOAA Fisheries and the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), the two federal agencies responsible for administering the Endangered Species Act, proposed two rules and a policy to improve the [process of designating areas](#) of "critical habitat" and [consulting on the effects of federal actions](#) on critical habitat.

New Fishery Ecosystem Task Force

June 4-5

Public meetings of the **Scientific Advisory Subcommittee** and the **General Advisory Committee** to the **U.S. section of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission** (IATTC).

June 10-12

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting in Freehold, New Jersey.

ANNOUNCEMENTS**May 30**

Nominations due for **Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee**.

July 7

Nominations due for **U.S. Delegation** to the September 2014 **International Whaling Commission meeting**.

FEDERAL REGISTER ACTIONS

[Click here](#) for a list of only those actions open for public comment. Scroll search for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For a list of all daily actions, check the Federal Register [online](#).

Managing marine fisheries from an ecosystem perspective is a unique challenge. A new task force, co-chaired by researchers from NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center and the University of Washington, will create a practical "blueprint" managers can use to make ecosystem-based fisheries management a reality.

Dr. Richard Spinrad Named NOAA's Chief Scientist

The Obama Administration named Dr. Richard W. Spinrad as NOAA's Chief Scientist. An internationally recognized scientist, Dr. Spinrad previously served as the head of NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and of NOAA's National Ocean Service.

2014 Marine Recreational Fishing Expenditure Survey

This year, NOAA Fisheries will initiate the next round of the National Marine Recreational Fishing Expenditure Survey, conducted every 3 to 5 years to estimate the amount of money spent by anglers on saltwater fishing trips and fishing-related equipment. Starting in May, NOAA Fisheries will mail paper surveys to randomly selected license-holding saltwater anglers in coastal states across the nation.

Commercial Atlantic Swordfish Quotas - Open for Public Comment

By **June 5**, submit your comments on a proposed adjustment to the 2014 fishing season quotas for North and South Atlantic swordfish based upon 2013 commercial quota under-harvests and international quota transfers. The proposed rule would also modify regulations to comply with the changes to North Atlantic swordfish under-harvest carryover limits that will go into effect next year.

Alaska**Groundfish Amendments to Add Grenadiers - Open for Public Comment**

By **June 13**, submit your comments on proposed regulations to implement Amendment 100 to the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands and Amendment 91 to the Groundfish FMP for the Gulf of Alaska. The amendments add grenadiers to the ecosystem component of each FMP, and the proposed regulations would limit and monitor the incidental catch of grenadiers in the groundfish fisheries.

Fur Seals Subsistence Harvest Estimates - Open for Public Comment

By **June 13**, submit your comments on proposed annual estimates for the 2014-2016 subsistence harvests of northern fur seals on the Pribilof Islands. Summaries of the annual

harvests for 2011-2013 are now available.

Research Report: Northern Fur Seals on the Pribilofs

In response to the recent decline of northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) on the Pribilof Islands, the Alaska Ecosystems Program began a long-term demographics research program in 2007. So far, tagging and observing of the seals indicate high annual reproductive rates, suggesting that low adult reproduction is not the cause of the decline.

What's New at Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute

NOAA Fisheries' Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute, located north of Juneau, Alaska, is now offering free tours each weekday at 1pm (through September). The institute is the headquarters of Alaska Fisheries Science Center's Auke Bay Laboratories.

West Coast

Food for Thought: Coho Growth Linked to Stream Productivity

A recent study suggests that availability of food, perhaps more than in-stream habitat, is a major driver of juvenile coho salmon production. The availability of nutrients is in turn impacted by the number of adult salmon returning to the stream, spawning, and decaying in place.

Great Lakes

Thunder Bay Boundary Expansion Amendments - Open for Public Comment

By **June 9**, submit your comments on amendments to a previous proposed rule to expand the boundary of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. These amendments focus on modifying the proposed expanded boundary, addressing concerns on ballasting operations within, and clarifying the correlation between the sanctuary's regulations and Indian tribal fishing activities.

Greater Atlantic

Investigating Invasive Catfish in the Chesapeake Bay

NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office has funded several recent studies to take a closer look at blue and flathead catfish populations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Introduced in the 1960s-1980s for sportfishing, they are now considered invasive, and researchers are working to understand their impact on Chesapeake ecosystems.

Regional Office Rolls Out New Geographic Information for Public Use

Government agencies, academic institutions, and other interested stakeholders increasingly work with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data to understand complex resource management issues. NOAA Fisheries recently released GIS "shapefiles" containing data for 80 regulated areas in New England and Mid-Atlantic waters for the public to download.

Scallop Framework 25 - Open for Public Comment

By **May 27**, submit your comments on a proposed framework adjustment to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan. Framework Adjustment 25 would set specifications for the 2014 Atlantic sea scallop fishery, as well as precautionary default specifications for the 2015 fishing year.

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Management Measures - Open for Public Comment

By **May 27**, submit your comments on proposed management measures for the 2014 summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries.

Spiny Dogfish Specifications - Open for Public Comment

By **June 12**, submit your comments on proposed catch limits, commercial quotas, and possession limits for the spiny dogfish fishery for the 2014 and 2015 fishing years.

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