UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MAY 6 2010

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment on the Effects of the Issuance of a Protected Species Cooperative Conservation Grant to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Award No. NA10NMF4720037) to Conduct Research on Green Sturgeon on the West Coast of the United States.

LOCATION: Research would take place in waters of Oregon and Washington.

SUMMARY: The current EA analyzed the effects of the proposed green sturgeon research, which will be conducted in Oregon and Washington. Specifically, the funded work would be used to: establish a cooperative coast-wide biotelemetry, tag, and biological data interchange system; characterize important habitats with potential threats by studying fine scale spatial distribution and movement patterns of sturgeon; design, evaluate and implement an approach to estimate coast-wide abundance and survival of Southern and Northern DPS green sturgeon; and develop a Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan for Washington coastal fisheries not covered by an ESA Section 7(a)(2) Biological Opinion that meets NMFS criteria for exemptions from take in the ESA 4(d) rule. Data gathered in this project will be critical for recovery planning by providing a reference from which recovery and impacts can be measured.

The proposed action analyzed in the EA would not have significant environmental effects on the target or non-target species; public health and safety would not affected; no unique geographic area would be affected; and the effects of this study would not be highly uncertain, nor would they involve unique or unknown risks. Issuance of this award would not set a precedent for future actions with significant effects, nor would it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. There would not be individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts associated with the proposed action, and there would not be adverse effects on historic resources. The award would contain mitigating measures to avoid unnecessary stress to the subject animals.

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RESPONSIBLE
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Director, Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
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The environmental review process led us to conclude this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) including the supporting EA is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI, we will consider any comments submitted assisting us to prepare future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the responsible official named above.

Sincerely,

for Paul N. Doremus, Ph.D.
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure