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

APR - 8 2013

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 Issuing a Permit (File No. 16549) for Scientific Research on Protected Wild and Captive Shortnose Sturgeon

LOCATION: Connecticut River beginning at Agawam, MA and extending to Turner Falls, MA. Additionally fertilized embryo would be collected from the Merrimack River (MA), Androscoggin River (ME) and the, Kennebec (ME) River. The captive research component of the action area is proposed for the Conte Anadromous Fisheries Research Center ("Conte Lab") located at Turner Falls, MA.

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue a scientific research permit for takes of shortnose sturgeon, a species listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. In addition to studying the fish in the wild, the applicant proposes captive animal research, which will take place at the Conte Anadromous Fisheries Research Center located at Turner Falls, MA, and will include studies on: (1) up and downstream fish passage; (2) swimming performance; (3) tagging; (4) anesthesiology; (5) behavior; (6) physiology; (7) contaminants; and (8) production of progeny for further larval research characterizing early life stage history in the Merrimack, Kennebec, and Androscoggin Rivers.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:

Helen M. Golde
Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East-West Highway, Room 13821
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 713-2332

Printed on Recycled Paper

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

The environmental review process led us to conclude that 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 environmental assessment (EA) is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the responsible official named above.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

Printed on Recycled Paper