

Highly Migratory Species Management Division (F/SF1), Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; 301-713-2347.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Under the provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), NOAA is responsible for management of the Nation's marine fisheries. In addition, NOAA must comply with the United States' obligations under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975 (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) collects information via angler landings reports to monitor the U.S. recreational catch of bluefin tuna in relation to the quota, thereby ensuring that the United States complies with its international obligations to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Provisions of the domestic regulations are also monitored through this collection of information, such as compliance with area closures, fishing seasons, and regional subquotas. This information provides the catch data necessary to assess the status of bluefin tuna resources. Assessments are conducted and presented to ICCAT annually. The data provide, in part, the basis for ICCAT management recommendations which become binding on member nations. In addition, angler landings reports provide essential information for domestic management policy and rulemaking.

II. Method of Collection

Recreational anglers who land any size class Atlantic bluefin tuna are required to report those landings to NMFS via an automated landings reporting system (ALRS) accessible toll-free by touch-tone telephone. The ALRS collects certain information for each Atlantic bluefin tuna that is landed. NMFS' regulations allow for cooperative efforts with the states and

in recent years, North Carolina and Maryland have implemented a catch card and landing tag system to census landings of bluefin tuna. In such cases of an equivalent state program, anglers are exempted from the requirement to use the ALRS.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0648-0328.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals (recreational fishermen), business and other for-profit (charter boat operators).

Estimated Number of Respondents: 3,000.

Estimated Time Per Response: 5 minutes for automated telephone reports, 10 minutes for landing cards.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 850.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and /or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 10, 2000.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-3721 Filed 2-15-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 012100D]

Endangered Species; Permits

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

ACTION: Receipt of an application for a scientific research permit (#1234).

SUMMARY: NMFS has received a scientific research permit application from Mr. Joseph Hightower, of North Carolina Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, North Carolina State University at Raleigh, NC.

DATES: Comments or requests for a public hearing on this application must

be received no later than 5:00pm eastern standard time on March 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the application should be sent to Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, F/PR3, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Comments may also be sent via fax to 301-713-0376. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the internet. The applications and related documents are available for review by appointment in the Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Division, F/PR3, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (ph: 301-713-1401).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Terri Jordan, Silver Spring, MD (ph: 301-713-1401, fax: 301-713-0376, e-mail: Terri.Jordan@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority

Issuance of permits and permit modifications, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (ESA), is based on a finding that such permits/modifications: (1) Are applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permits; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits. Permits and modifications are issued in accordance with and are subject to the ESA and NMFS regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Those individuals requesting a hearing on the application listed in this notice should set out the specific reasons why a hearing on the application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). The holding of such hearings is at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA. All statements and opinions contained in the permit action summary are those of the applicant and do not necessarily reflect the views of NMFS.

New Application Received

NCCFWRU (#1234) has requested a 5-month permit to capture, sample, tag and release up to 10 shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) in the Roanoke River, North Carolina. The purpose of the project is to answer questions regarding impacts of the Roanoke and Gaston dams on anadromous fishes, information which is required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing process. No shortnose sturgeon have been recorded as being

taken from the Roanoke River; however, sampling effort has been low. The Final Recovery Plan for shortnose sturgeon mandates that surveys be conducted to identify and determine the status of extant populations of shortnose sturgeon.

Dated: February 10, 2000.

Wanda L. Cain,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 00-3723 Filed 2-15-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 020700D]

Endangered Species; Permits

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

ACTION: Receipt of application for ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) enhancement permit #1237.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received a permit application from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District at Walla Walla, WA (Corps).

DATES: Comments or requests for a public hearing on this application request must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5:00pm pacific standard time on March 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on this application should be sent to the Protected Resources Division (PRD), F/NWO3, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97232-2737. Comments may also be sent via fax to 503-230-5435. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the internet. The application and related documents are available for review by appointment in the Protected Resources Division, F/NWO3, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97232-2737 (ph: 503-230-5400, fax: 503-230-5435).

Documents may also be reviewed by appointment in the Office of Protected Resources, F/PR3, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226 (301-713-1401).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Koch, Portland, OR (ph: 503-230-5424, fax: 503-230-5435, e-mail: Robert.Koch@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority

Issuance of permits and permit modifications, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (ESA), is based on a finding that such permits/modifications: (1) Are applied for in good faith; (2) would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species which are the subject of the permits; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits. Permits and modifications are issued in accordance with and are subject to the ESA and NMFS regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Those individuals requesting a hearing on the application listed in this notice should set out the specific reasons why a hearing on the application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). The holding of such hearing is at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA. All statements and opinions contained in the permit action summary are those of the applicant and do not necessarily reflect the views of NMFS.

Species Covered in this Notice

The following species and evolutionarily significant units (ESU's) are covered in this notice:

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*): threatened, naturally produced and artificially propagated Snake River (SnR) spring/summer; threatened SnR fall; endangered, naturally produced and artificially propagated upper Columbia River (UCR) spring.

Sockeye salmon (*O. nerka*): endangered, naturally produced and artificially propagated SnR.

Steelhead (*O. mykiss*): threatened SnR; endangered naturally produced and artificially propagated UCR; threatened middle Columbia River (MCR).

To date, protective regulations for threatened SnR and MCR steelhead under section 4(d) of the ESA have not been promulgated by NMFS. This notice of receipt of an application requesting takes of these species is issued as a precaution in the event that NMFS issues protective regulations that prohibit takes of threatened SnR and MCR steelhead. The initiation of a 30-day public comment period on the application, including its proposed takes of threatened SnR and MCR steelhead does not presuppose the contents of the eventual protective regulations.

Application Received

The Corps requests a 5-year ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) enhancement permit to replace permit #895, which is due to expire on December 31, 2000. The permit is requested for annual takes of ESA-listed SnR salmon/steelhead for the purposes of enhancement, and incidental takes of ESA-listed UCR and MCR salmon/steelhead, associated with the transportation of juvenile anadromous fish around the mainstem dams and reservoirs on the Snake and Columbia Rivers in the Pacific Northwest. The purpose of the Corps' Juvenile Fish Transportation Program (JFTP) is to increase juvenile fish survival over the alternative of in-river passage, given current in-river migratory conditions. The collection and transportation of juvenile salmonids is projected to occur March 25 through October 31 each year at Lower Granite, Little Goose, and Lower Monumental Dams, and March 25 through December 15 each year at McNary Dam. The Corps proposes to load the juvenile fish into trucks or barges at the hydropower facilities for transportation to below Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River. Further handling of the ESA-listed fish does not occur except when salmonids are handled for smolt monitoring and research purposes by researchers holding separate permits. Indirect mortalities of ESA-listed juvenile fish associated with the JFTP are requested by the Corps. The Corps also requests annual incidental takes, including incidental mortalities, of ESA-listed adult fish associated with fallbacks at the juvenile fish transportation facilities.

The Corps' JFTP is a mitigation measure recommended by NMFS' *Reinitiation of Consultation on 1994-1998 Operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) and Juvenile Transportation Program in 1995 and Future Years* biological opinion issued on March 2, 1995 and the 1998 supplement to that opinion. However, NMFS is in the process of consulting with the Federal action agencies, including the Corps, on the long-term management strategy for the FCRPS, pursuant to section 7 of the ESA. Issuance of the proposed permit will depend on the completion of that consultation process and the requirements of any biological opinion resulting from the consultation.