



RT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC.

Your Solution-Oriented Environmental Services Firm

ATLANTIC STURGEON - CRITICAL HABITAT DESIGNATION IN THE DELAWARE ESTUARY

On February 6, 2012, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) listed the Atlantic sturgeon as an endangered species in several areas including the New York Bight. The New York Bight includes the Delaware River at the crossing of the Trenton- Morrisville Route 1 Toll Bridge, downstream for 137 river kilometers to where the main stem river discharges at its mouth into Delaware Bay. Section 4(a) (3) of the Endangered Species Act requires that the NMFS designate critical habitat for threatened and endangered species under their jurisdiction, with public notice and an opportunity to comment. Critical habitat is based on the physical or biological features essential to the conservation of the listed entity, which may require special management or protection.

A proposed Atlantic Sturgeon Critical Habitat Designation was announced in the Federal Register on Friday, June 3, 2016. Public information meetings on the proposal were held in Annapolis, Maryland on Wednesday, July 13, in Portland, Maine on Monday, July 18, and public hearings were held in Gloucester, Massachusetts on Thursday, July 21. Comments on this proposal must be received by September 1, 2016.

Few people in the Delaware River watershed are aware of the National Marine Fisheries Service's plans to designate critical habitat for the Atlantic sturgeon and what this designation will mean for users of the Delaware River. To help get the information on this proposal, the NMFS will host a webinar specifically tailored for those in the Delaware Watershed. The webinar will be on AUGUST 17, 2016 beginning at 10 a.m.

Topic: Presentation on Proposed Atlantic Sturgeon Critical Habitat to the Water Resources Association

Date and Time:

Wednesday, August 17, 2016 10:00 am, Eastern Daylight Time (New York, GMT-04:00)

Event number: 668 139 696

Event password: Meeting123

Conference Line: 866-647-1746

Participant Code: 6042534

Event address for attendees:

<https://noaaevents.webex.com/noaaevents/onstage/g.php?MTID=e88e0246e45f15b0910dbac0695e7be7c>

To ensure that we have enough lines for all those who are interested in participating, **please RSVP at wradrb@comcast.net if you plan to join us by no later than Friday, August 12, 2016.**

Additional information about the proposed designation can be found on the NOAA website at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/atlsturgeon/index.html>.

The Atlantic Sturgeon has surprised many fisherman due to their size. They can grow to 16 feet in length. Atlantic Sturgeon are expected to be released if caught. Information is available to commercial fishermen for resuscitating Atlantic Sturgeon if caught, on the NOAA website. We at RT are proud that

NOAA continues to provide important information and services in the Greater Atlantic Region so that critical habitat for specific species is identified and focused on, helping to restore our environment as water quality becomes cleaner as a result of the Clean Water Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

- Gary Brown



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