

Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina on January 11–13, 2012.

Invited participants will discuss topics as outlined below.

Members of the public are invited to attend the forum and are required to RSVP to Brooke.Stewart@noaa.gov by 5 p.m. EST, Wednesday, December 28, 2011 if they wish to attend. The forum is to be held in a federal facility; building security restrictions preclude attendance by members of the public who do not RSVP by the deadline. Space is also limited and public attendees will be admitted based on the order in which RSVPs are received.

Members of the public will be invited to offer their comments during a 30-minute period to be held from 9:30 to 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 11, 2012. Each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of five minutes. Please indicate your intention to participate in the public comment period when submitting your RSVP. Time for public comments will be allotted based on the order in which RSVPs are received. Written comments may be submitted via email or in hardcopy and must be received by December 28, 2011. For information on how to submit written comments, please see addresses below.

Special Accommodations: These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Brooke Stewart (828) 257–3020, Brooke.Stewart@noaa.gov by December 28, 2011.

DATES:

Forum Date and Time: The forum will be held on January 11–13, 2012 at the following times: January 11, 2012 from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. EST; January 12, 2012 from 8:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST; and January 13, 2012 from 8:15 a.m. to 2 p.m. EST.

RSVP Deadline: Any member of the public wishing to attend the forum must RSVP no later than 5 p.m. EST, Wednesday, December 28, 2011.

Deadline for Written Comments: Written comments must be received by 5 p.m. EST, Wednesday, December 28, 2011.

ADDRESSES: The forum will be held at the Veatch-Baley Federal Complex, located at 151 Patton Avenue, Asheville, North Carolina 28801.

Written comments may be submitted to Brooke.Stewart@noaa.gov or in hard copy to Brooke Stewart, 151 Patton Avenue, Room 563, Asheville, North Carolina 28801. For changes in the schedule, agenda, and updated information, please check the forum

Web site at <https://sites.google.com/a/noaa.gov/extreme-winds-waves-extratropical-storms/home>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brooke Stewart, National Climatic Data Center, 151 Patton Avenue, Room 563, Asheville, North Carolina 28801. (Phone: (828) 257–3020, Email: brooke.stewart@noaa.gov.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This forum will provide an update to the climate science surrounding extreme events. The intent is to make key input available to the National Climate Assessment (NCA) for consideration. Further information regarding the NCA is available at <http://www.globalchange.gov/what-we-do/assessment>. NOAA is sponsoring this forum in support of the National Climate Assessment process.

As materials for this forum become available, they may be found at <https://sites.google.com/a/noaa.gov/extreme-winds-waves-extratropical-storms/home>.

Topics To Be Addressed

This forum will address observed changes and their causes with regard to specific types of extreme weather and climate events, including extreme winds, waves, and extratropical storms along the coasts.

Participants Will Consider

- Observed changes and degree of confidence in those changes for extreme winds, waves, and extratropical storms along the coasts.
- Current state of mechanistic understanding of the above-mentioned extreme events.
- Potential causes of observed changes in extreme events.

This forum will feature invited speakers and discussions. The forum is designed to produce a detailed draft outline of an article for submission to a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Mary E. Kicza,

Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services.

[FR Doc. 2011–30889 Filed 11–30–11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Protected Areas Center External Review

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Request for public comment.

SUMMARY: On May 26, 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order (EO) 13158, directing federal agencies (led by NOAA and DOI) to establish a comprehensive national system of MPAs serving multiple conservation and management goals. To this end, the EO directs NOAA to establish a National Marine Protected Area Center (“MPA Center”) within NOAA (Sec. 4(e)) to carry out several provisions in cooperation with the Department of the Interior. Over the past decade, the MPA Center has conducted a variety of efforts to establish and support the growing national system through targeted science, information resources, coordination and policy development.

An external review of the MPA Center is needed to maximize its effectiveness and transparency and to ensure that the MPA Center is conducting high quality work of significant value to NOAA and the nation. To this end, the MPA Center is seeking external feedback, including public comment on the program’s approach to balancing competing priorities.

All comments received in response to this request will be summarized and provided to an expert review panel scheduled to convene in late January, 2012.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before January 10, 2012.

ADDRESSES: This announcement contains guidance on how to provide feedback, including some of the questions for which the MPA Center is seeking comment. The questions are also available for download via the Internet on the MPA Center Web site at: <http://www.mpa.gov/aboutmpas/mpacenter/>. You may submit comments electronically via email to mpa.comments@noaa.gov. You may also submit comments in writing to: National Marine Protected Areas Center, c/o Denise Ellis-Hibbett, 1305 East-West Highway, Rm. 11401, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Denise Ellis-Hibbett by mail at 1305 East-West Highway, Rm. 11401, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 or phone: (301) 563–1195 or email: denise.ellis-hibbett@noaa.gov or visit the MPA Center Web site at <http://www.mpa.gov>

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The MPA Center’s external review will encompass program activities between 2000 and 2011. An independent, external panel of four experts in subject matter of the MPA Center’s program focus will convene for a three day meeting in late January, 2012 to review materials and

information about the MPA Center, develop findings and make recommendations. The program is seeking input on the questions listed below. Please note that you do not need to address all questions, and the MPA Center welcomes additional input on topics not covered in the questions listed.

Although the MPA Center is most interested in obtaining feedback based on the public's interaction and experience with the Center, background information concerning the MPA Center and its activities is available from the MPA Center Web site at <http://mpa.gov>.

The MPA Center is seeking input on the following questions:

- Is the MPA Center focusing on the most important activities to fulfill its goals and objectives (Build and maintain the national system of MPAs; Improve MPA stewardship and effectiveness; Facilitate international, national and regional coordination of MPAs activities)?
- How successfully has the MPA Center addressed the requirements of Executive Order 13158?
- Is the MPA Center providing the necessary leadership to strengthen and expand the national system of MPAs?
- Are resources (human and financial) allocated appropriately to effectively address the goals and objectives of the MPA Center?
- How effective has the MPA Center been in solidifying public/private partnerships and engaging stakeholders to support efficient management of MPAs and MPA networks?
- Should the MPA Center change its priorities or activities to more effectively meet the requirements of Executive Order 13158? If so, how?

An electronic version of these questions is available at: <http://www.mpa.gov/aboutmpas/mpacenter/>. (Optional) When you submit your comments, you are welcome to provide background information about yourself, such as your organization(s), area(s) of expertise, and experience with the MPA Center. This information will be compiled and summarized with the comments.

Dated: November 18, 2011.

Donna Wieting,

Director, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2011-30700 Filed 11-30-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA850

[File No. 16439]

Endangered Species

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

ACTION: Issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 21 South Putt Corners Rd., New Paltz, NY 12561 [Responsible Party: Kathryn Hattala], has been issued a permit to take shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

- Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376; and
- Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978) 281-9328; fax (978) 281-9394.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Malcolm Mohead or Colette Cairns, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 9, 2011, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 33703) that a request for a scientific research permit to take shortnose sturgeon had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

The Permit Holder is issued a five-year permit to study shortnose sturgeon in the Hudson River Estuary from New York Harbor (RKM 0) to Troy Dam (RKM 245). Gill nets, trammel nets and trawls will be used to capture up to 240 and 2,340 shortnose sturgeon in years one through three and years four and five, respectively. Research activities include: capture; measure, weigh; tag with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags and Floy tags, if untagged; and

sample genetic fin clips. Subsets of fish will also be anesthetized and tagged with acoustic transmitters; have fin rays sampled for age and growth analysis; have gastric contents lavaged for diet analysis; as well as blood samples taken for contaminants. A total of four (4) unintended mortalities are authorized over the life of the permit.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered or threatened species, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: November 28, 2011.

Tammy C. Adams,

Acting Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2011-30959 Filed 11-30-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meetings

The following notice of scheduled meetings is published pursuant to the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act, Public Law 94-409, 5 U.S.C. 552b.

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETINGS:

Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

TIMES AND DATES: The Commission has scheduled meetings for the following dates:

December 5, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.
December 20, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.
January 5, 2012 at 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: Three Lafayette Center, 1155 21st St. NW., Washington, DC, Conference Center (Room 1300).

STATUS: Open.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED: The Commission has scheduled these meetings to consider various rulemaking matters, including the issuance of proposed rules and the approval of final rules. The Commission may also consider and vote on dates and times for future meetings. The agenda for the December 5, 2011 meeting was posted on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.cftc.gov> seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The agenda for the December 20, 2011 meeting will be made available to the public and posted on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.cftc.gov> at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. In the event that the times or dates of the meetings