

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

TECHNICAL ADDENDUM #1

to

Amendment 1 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Sturgeon



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Introduction

Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Sturgeon was approved in July 1998. The goal of Amendment 1 is to restore Atlantic sturgeon spawning stocks to population levels which will provide for sustainable fisheries, and ensure viable spawning populations. In order to achieve this goal the plan sets forth the following objectives:

- Establish 20 protected year classes of females in each spawning stock
- Close the fishery for a sufficient time period to reestablish spawning stocks and increase numbers in current spawning stocks
- Reduce or eliminate bycatch mortality
- Determine the spawning sites and provide protection of spawning habitats for each spawning stock
- Where feasible, reestablish access to historical spawning habitats for Atlantic sturgeon and;
- Conduct appropriate research as needed

A moratorium on the possession and harvest of Atlantic sturgeon (whole or parts) currently exists throughout the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's member states and jurisdictions of the U.S. East Coast.

During the summer of 2000, an oversight in the final draft of Amendment 1 was brought to the attention of Commission staff. Specifically, Amendment 1 stipulates numerous recommendations in support of scientific research, however, the Amendment contains no provisions to exempt such activity from the mandated moratorium on possession and harvest. Review of the June 1998 Sturgeon Management Board minutes, revealed that a request for insertion of this exemption was made prior to adoption of Amendment 1 by the full Commission. To resolve this oversight the Sturgeon Management Board directed that a technical addendum be developed to address moratorium exemptions for the purposes of scientific research or educational display.

As described in detail below, Technical Addendum 1 to Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Sturgeon addresses the following:

- Exemptions for possession/harvest of Atlantic Sturgeon for scientific or educational purposes

Technical Addendum Terms

For the purposes of this exemption the term:

(A) **Scientific research** means an activity conducted in the field or in the laboratory in a humane manner to investigate abundance, distribution, or biology (physiology, genetics, life history, tolerance levels) of a species. Human consumption is not considered a research activity.

(B) **Educational display** means maintaining a species in an aquarium or confined setting for the sole purpose of educating the public about the biology, status, and threats to the species, with appropriate steps taken to ensure that any individuals do not breed with each other.

Technical Addendum Corrections

Upon adoption of this Technical Addendum, the following language will become a compliance element and will be inserted into Section 5.1.1 in Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Sturgeon.

APossession/Harvest of Atlantic Sturgeon (whole or parts thereof) for scientific research and/or educational display is exempt from the moratorium identified in this fishery management plan, provided such activities are conducted in accordance with the respective state=s scientific or educational permitting protocol. Established research protocol are required to be followed, including restrictions on the disposal of fish (whole or parts thereof) so that such disposal is environmentally and ecologically safe, and that these fish (whole or parts thereof) not be used for commerce (e.g. barter, trade, cash transactions). This exemption does not exempt research or the researchers from having to obtain other licenses/permits as required for interstate or international transport of Atlantic Sturgeon (whole or parts thereof).