



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Fisheries Seeks Comments on Smalltooth Sawfish Recovery Plan

NOAA Fisheries Service announced the release of the Draft Smalltooth Sawfish Recovery Plan (Plan) for public review and comment in a notice published in the Federal Register on August 23, 2006.

A federal Recovery Plan is required whenever a species is listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of the species. The U.S. population of smalltooth sawfish has been designated as endangered under the ESA since April 1, 2003. The goal of the Plan is to promote actions necessary to eventually take the species off the endangered list. The public comment period ends October 23, 2006.

The Plan's strategy addresses rebuilding and monitoring the species population. The recovery strategy has three main objectives: (1) Minimize human interactions, and injury and mortality associated with human interactions; (2) protect and/or restore smalltooth sawfish habitats; and (3) ensure that smalltooth sawfish abundance increases substantially and that they reoccupy areas from which they had been previously eliminated.

Smalltooth sawfish are one of seven sawfish species that occur worldwide in tropical and subtropical rivers, lakes, and coastal areas. They are long-lived, slow growing, slow to reach sexual maturity, and bear few young. Smalltooth sawfish are extremely vulnerable to overfishing and are slow to recover from depletion.

Comments may be sent by fax, e-mail, or mail.

- E-mail: send to smalltoothsawfish.recoveryplan@noaa.gov, include in the subject line the following document identifier: Smalltooth Sawfish Recovery Plan. E-mail comments, with or without attachments, are limited to five megabytes
- Mail: send to Smalltooth Sawfish Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Protected Resources Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701
- Fax: (727) 824-5309

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NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our Nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management, and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the Nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers, and recreational opportunities for the American public. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries Service, please visit: www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

In 2007 NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. Starting with the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA. The agency is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts, and protects.

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Media Note

2 Images Attached:

- [Credit color image to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#)
- [Credit black and white image to Mote Marine Laboratory](#)

On the Web

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA Fisheries Service: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

Smalltooth Sawfish Recovery Plan: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/>

Federal Register Smalltooth Sawfish Notice: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/fr/fr71-49418.pdf>

Smalltooth Sawfish Information:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/fish/smalltoothsawfish.htm>