

We, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), propose to designate critical habitat for the Gulf of Maine, New York Bight, and Chesapeake Bay Distinct Population Segments (DPSs) of Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*). The specific areas proposed for designation include approximately 244 kilometers (152 miles) of aquatic habitat in rivers in Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts for the Gulf of Maine DPS, approximately 547 kilometers (340 miles) of aquatic habitat in rivers in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware for the New York Bight DPS, and approximately 729 kilometers (453 miles) of aquatic habitat in rivers in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia for the Chesapeake Bay DPS of Atlantic sturgeon. We are soliciting comments from the public on all aspects of the proposal, including information on the economic, national security, and other relevant impacts of the proposed designations, as well as the benefits to the DPSs. Comments on this proposed rule must be received by September 1, 2016.

### How to submit comments

You may submit comments, identified by the NOAA-NMFS-2015-0107, by one of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submissions:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2015-0107](http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2015-0107), Click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- **Mail:** Kimberly B. Damon-Randall, Assistant Regional Administrator, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930
- **Public Hearing:** The July 21, 2016, public hearings will be held at the NMFS, Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

### Instructions

Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by us. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. We will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).