

Abstract: A microwave frequency standard is provided which allows for miniaturization down to length scales of order one micron, comprising a modulated light field originating from a laser that illuminates a collection of quantum absorbers contained in a micro-machined cell. The frequency standard of the present invention can be based on all-optical excitation techniques such as coherent population trapping (CPT) and stimulated Raman scattering or on conventional microwave-excited designs. In a CPT-based embodiment, a photodetector detects a change in transmitted power through the cell and that is used to stabilize an external oscillator to correspond to the absorber's transition frequency by locking the laser modulation frequency to the transition frequency. In a stimulated Raman scattering (SRS) embodiment, a high-speed photodetector detects a laser field transmitted through the cell beating with a second field originating in the cell. Both the locked laser modulation frequency and the beat frequency are very stable as they are referenced directly to the atomic transition.

Dated: May 18, 2006.

Hratch G. Semerjian,

Deputy Director.

[FR Doc. E6-8154 Filed 5-25-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 051806C]

Endangered Species; Permit No. 1298

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit modification.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Riverbanks Zoo and Garden [Principal Investigator, Mr. Charles Scott Pfaff], P.O. Box 1060, Columbia, SC 29202, has been issued an amendment to Permit No. 1298 to extend the expiration date of the permit through May 31, 2007.

ADDRESSES:

The modification and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office:

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room

13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 713-2289, fax (301) 427-2521.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore and Kate Swails (301) 713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 21, 2001, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 27940) that Permit No. 1298 had been issued to the Riverbanks Zoo and Garden for the continued maintenance of eleven adult shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) received from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in 1996 for education purposes. This permit amendment extends the duration of the permit from May 31, 2006, to May 31, 2007. The requested modification have been granted under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the provisions of § 222.306 of the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened fish and wildlife (50 CFR 222-226).

Issuance of this modification, 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 any endangered or threatened species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: May 19, 2006.

P. Michael Payne,

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

[FR Doc. E6-8179 Filed 5-26-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 051906C]

Endangered Species; File No. 1579

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

ACTION: Notice; Receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Alden Research Laboratory, Inc. (Edward P. Taft, Responsible Party), 30 Shrewsbury Street, Holden, MA, 01520, has applied in due form for a permit to take shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) for purposes of scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before June 26, 2006.

The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)427-2521; and Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; phone (978)281-9328; fax (978)281-9394.

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this application should be mailed to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by email. The mailbox address for providing email comments is NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the email comment the following document identifier: File No. 1579.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kate Swails or Jennifer Skidmore (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested 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 222-226).

The applicant proposes to conduct research on entrainment and impingement rates for selected bar rack and bypass configurations in attempt to identify design criteria for a downstream passage facility at the Hadley Falls Hydroelectric Project on the Connecticut River. The applicant would use captive-bred sturgeon and all testing would take place in the Alden Lab testing flume. Annually, up to 200 sturgeon would be transported from hatcheries, measured, handled, Passive Integrated Transponder tagged, and participate in the flume testing. At the end of the five-year study the sturgeon would be sacrificed.

Dated: May 19, 2006.

P. Michael Payne,

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

[FR Doc. E6-8181 Filed 5-26-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 041806D]

Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act; Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery

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

ACTION: Notice of scoping process; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: In a document published in the **Federal Register** on April 24, 2006, NMFS announced its intention to re-open the scoping process and accept further comments on the recommendations contained in Amendment 6 to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass (Amendment 6). NMFS originally conducted scoping on the matter in 2003, but decided to re-open the scoping process and accept further comments due to the passage of significant time and the availability of new information. The intent of this document is to announce the extension of the public comment period from May 26, 2006, to June 26, 2006.

DATES: Comments on this action must be received (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on or before June 26, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and requests for copies of the draft document should be sent to: Tom Meyer, State-Federal Fisheries Division, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, 1315 East West Highway, Room 13248, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Mark the outside of the envelope "Striped Bass Scoping." An electronic copy of the draft document and supporting documents (ANPR and a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS (NOI)) may also be obtained on the State-Federal Fisheries Division's Web site under *Regulatory Activities* at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/state_federal/state_federal.htm. Comments may also be sent via fax to (301) 713-0596, or via e-mail to: Striped-Bass.Comments@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the fax or e-mail the

following document identifier: *Striped Bass Scoping*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Meyer, telephone (301) 713-2334, x173.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As announced in the **Federal Register** on July 21, 2003 (68 FR 43074), NMFS requested comments on potential revisions to the Federal Atlantic striped bass regulations for the U.S. EEZ in response to recommendations from the Commission to the Secretary. The comment period was subsequently reopened on August 26, 2003 (68 FR 51232), for an additional 30-days. A "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Notice of Scoping Process" (NOI) was published in the **Federal Register** on October 20, 2003 (68 FR 59906) and public meetings were held in nine Atlantic coast states between November 5 - December 10, 2003, and the public comment period closed on December 22, 2003.

Significant time has passed since the nine initial scoping hearings. Accordingly, NMFS thought it prudent to seek additional scoping on its preliminary draft analyses of Federal management options to open the EEZ to the harvest of Atlantic Striped Bass. NMFS, therefore, re-opened the scoping process in a **Federal Register** Notice on April 24, 2006 (71 FR 20984) and established a 30 day public comment period. NMFS believes that extending the comment period an additional 30 days would provide the public a more appropriate opportunity to provide meaningful commentary on the agency's list of potential alternatives and other management measures. See **ADDRESSES** for information on how to obtain a copy of the draft document and where to send comments.

Background

Atlantic striped bass management is based on ASMFC's Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan (ISFMP), first adopted in 1981. From 1981 - 1994, four ISFMP Amendments were developed that provided a series of management measures that led to the rebuilding of the stocks. In 1995, ASMFC declared the Atlantic striped bass population fully restored and implemented Amendment 5 to the ISFMP to perpetuate the stock so as to allow a commercial and recreational harvest consistent with the long-term maintenance of the striped bass stock. Since then the population has expanded to record levels of abundance. To maintain this recovered population, ASMFC approved Amendment 6 in February 2003 (copies of Amendment 6

are available via ASMFC's website under *Interstate Fisheries Management- striped bass* at <http://www.asmfc.org>). ASMFC believes that the measures contained in Amendment 6 are necessary to prevent the overfishing of the Atlantic striped bass resource while allowing growth in both the commercial and recreational fishery. Development of Amendment 6 took almost 4 years and involved extensive input from technical and industry advisors, and provided numerous opportunities for the public to comment on the future management of the species.

Amendment 6 incorporates results of the 2001 Atlantic striped bass stock assessment, developed by the Atlantic Coast States, ASMFC, NMFS, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see section 1.2.2 of Amendment 6 for summary). Amendment 6 also included recommendations to the Secretary on the development of complementary measures in the EEZ. Management of Atlantic striped bass in the EEZ was one of the issues that was considered throughout development of Amendment 6.

Recommendation to the Secretary

In addition to the recommendations to the Secretary in Amendment 6, the Secretary also received a letter on April 24, 2003, from ASMFC with the following three recommendations for implementation of regulations in the EEZ: (1) Remove the moratorium on the harvest of Atlantic striped bass in the EEZ; (2) implement a 28-inch (71.1-cm) minimum size limit for recreational and commercial Atlantic striped bass fisheries in the EEZ; and (3) allow states the ability to adopt more restrictive rules for fishermen and vessels licensed in their jurisdictions.

In support of its request, ASMFC cited a number of reasons, including: ASMFC declared the striped bass stock restored in 1995; commercial harvest is controlled by individual state quotas; with the EEZ closed striped bass caught there are required to be discarded, and are often dead when thrown back - Opening the EEZ will convert some of the discarded bycatch of striped bass to landings; and Amendment 6 incorporates measures that would address future concerns about the stock status. See **ADDRESSES** for information on how to obtain a copy of the NOI, which has a complete list of ASMFC's cited reasons.

ASMFC also stated that its Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee would monitor annually the Atlantic striped bass population, and, if at some point in the future ASMFC determines that the Atlantic striped bass population