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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**



WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

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NATIONAL  
OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC  
ADMINISTRATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DRAFT RECOVERY PLAN ISSUED FOR MAINE ATLANTIC SALMON**  
***Agencies Seek Public Comment***

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Maine Atlantic Salmon Commission are seeking comments on a draft plan to recover endangered Atlantic salmon in eight Maine rivers. The plan complements current conservation efforts, particularly those described in Maine's Atlantic Salmon Conservation Plan. NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

All comments received from the public during the 90-day comment period will be considered by the agencies during preparation of the final Atlantic salmon recovery plan. The agencies will hold two public meetings in Maine to discuss the plan with the public and to accept comments. A panel of independent experts will also review the plan.

Wild Atlantic salmon in the Sheepscot, Dennys, Machias, East Machias, Narraguagus, Ducktrap and Pleasant rivers, and Cove Brook were identified as an endangered distinct population segment and were afforded protection in 2000 under the federal Endangered Species Act. The population has continued to decline, with fewer than 100 adult fish returning to the eight rivers to spawn in 2003.

The primary objective of the recovery plan is to halt the decline of endangered Atlantic salmon. Initial recovery efforts will focus on reducing the most severe threats to the population's continued survival. These include acidified water, mixing of wild and farmed fish, take of adults and juvenile fish by anglers, predation and competition, and excessive or unregulated water withdrawals that may affect salmon habitat.

For full recovery, according to the plan, actions also include protecting and restoring freshwater and estuarine habitat, supplementing naturally spawning fish with hatchery-reared salmon from the same rivers, conserving the population's genetic integrity, assessing the fish during key stages in their lives, promoting salmon recovery through outreach and education, and assessing and revising the recovery program over time.

The ESA requires the federal agencies to develop a recovery plan to identify specific management actions necessary for the conservation and survival of the species, as well as measurable criteria for determining when recovery is achieved. The plan must also provide time and cost estimates for recovery activities.

A notice announcing the availability of the draft recovery plan and requesting comments published today in the Federal Register. Comments must be received by September 16. Comments can be submitted by e-mail to [salmonrecovery@noaa.gov](mailto:salmonrecovery@noaa.gov), or by regular mail to: Attn: Mark Minton, Atlantic Salmon Recovery Plan Coordinator, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. For further information, contact Mark Minton at NOAA Fisheries, phone 978-281-9328 x6534 or Martin Miller at USFWS, phone 413-253-8615.

NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries 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.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the Web:

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

NOAA Fisheries: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

Information about Atlantic salmon and the Endangered Species Act is available online at the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region Web site: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/atsalmon>

The recovery plan is available online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr>