



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**

Southeast Regional Office

263 13th Avenue South

St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

F/SER31:KS

Mr. Fritz Rohde  
Habitat Conservation Division  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
101 Pivers Island Road  
Beaufort, NC 28516

Dear Mr. Rohde:

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a peer reviewer of the Draft Biological Assessment for Alabama shad (*Alosa alabamae*). Peer review is an important process to science and its application in our administration of the Endangered Species Act. We appreciate your dedication to both the process and the species. All comments must be submitted to us by October 23, 2015. Comments can be submitted electronically (e.g., Word document).

Peer review of the biological assessment is an important step in preparing the 12-month listing determination as required under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act. There are specific requirements for completion of peer review including that peer reviewers must have the requisite expertise, experience, and skills. We are, therefore, requesting your expertise to peer review the biological information provided as background.

Your peer review comments should focus on the following topics:

1. The accuracy, quality, completeness, and relevance of the scientific information and data considered, particularly whether any additional data exist that were not considered.
2. Whether scientific uncertainties are reasonably identified and characterized.
3. Whether justification is lacking or specific information was applied incorrectly in reaching conclusions.

*Other Requirements*

Peer review, required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), is subject to additional requirements regarding public disclosure, conflict of interest, and restrictions on pre-dissemination of confidential information. To ensure that we have a transparent process for public disclosure, we are required to make publically available the names and affiliations of each peer reviewer. We are also required to post comments received, though we do not associate names with individual comments when posting those comments online. However, if we receive a Freedom of Information Act Request, we cannot guarantee anonymity of peer reviewers or comments. Previously submitted Peer Reviews are available at:

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The OMB Peer Review Bulletin further requires that non-federal peer reviewers (1) provide a CV, (2) complete a "Confidential Conflict of Interest Disclosure" form (enclosed), and (3) submit both



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Please submit your comments, CV, and conflict of interest disclosure form (if non-federal) to Kelly Shotts at [kelly.shotts@noaa.gov](mailto:kelly.shotts@noaa.gov) by October 23, 2015. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Kelly Shotts at (727) 551-5603 or by email.

Sincerely,

David Bernhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator for  
Protected Resources

Enclosures

File: 1514-12.1.n



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Dr. Paul Mickle  
Biological Coordinator  
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
1141 Bayview Avenue  
Biloxi, MS 39530

Dear Dr. Mickle:

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Sincerely,

David Bernhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator for  
Protected Resources

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F/SER31:KS

Dr. Steve Herrington  
Missouri Director of Freshwater Conservation  
The Nature Conservancy  
2800 S. Brentwood Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63144

Dear Dr. Herrington:

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