

Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*)

Summary of Biological Information and Economic Analysis Prepared for Consideration of Critical Habitat Designation for the Carolina and South Atlantic Distinct Population Segments of Atlantic Sturgeon – Peer Review Report

1. The accuracy, quality, completeness, and relevance of the scientific information and data considered; particularly whether any additional data exist that were not considered. Comments were received on the following information:

- Clinal variation in maximum age.
- Spawning periodicity inter-annually and annually.
- Migration timing and cues.
- Three additional rivers were identified as critical habitat.
- Three rivers thought to be critical habitat were removed because there is no scientific evidence of Atlantic sturgeon use.
- Offshore, marine habitat usage.
- Additional references for consideration.
- Documented additional spawning locations.
- Spawning habitat identification.
- Methods for identifying various important habitats.

2. Whether scientific uncertainties are reasonably identified and characterized.

- Comments received addressed and clarified the scientific uncertainties that were identified by peer-reviewers.

3. Whether the document provides a well-reasoned rationale in identifying the physical and biological features of a critical habitat designation for each DPS based on the best available data.

- Comments were received that questioned the methodology of identifying the features and new methodologies were provided.
- Rationale was provided for the inclusion of three additional rivers and the removal of three that were identified as critical habitat in the report.
- Conservation basis for designation and feature identification was found to be well-reasoned, but updated material was provided as the best available.