

Shortnose Sturgeon Listing History

Shortnose sturgeon were originally listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on March 11, 1967 under the Endangered Species Preservation Act (ESA, 32 FR 4001). Shortnose sturgeon continued to meet the listing criteria as “endangered” under subsequent definitions specified in the 1969 Endangered Species Conservation Act. NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) assumed jurisdiction for shortnose sturgeon from the USFWS under a 1970 government reorganization plan.

The Endangered Species Act was enacted in 1973 and all species that were listed as “endangered species threatened with extinction” in the 1969 Endangered Species Conservation Act were deemed endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (39 FR 41370).

Shortnose sturgeon currently remain listed as an endangered species throughout all of its range along the east coast of the United States. Although the original listing notice did not cite reasons for listing the species, a 1973 Resource Publication issued by the U.S. Department of Interior (USDOI), stated that shortnose sturgeon were “in peril ... gone in most of the rivers of its former range [but] probably not as yet extinct” (USDOI 1973). Pollution and overfishing, including bycatch in the shad fishery, were listed as principal reasons for the species' decline.

NOAA Fisheries is presently conducting a status review for shortnose sturgeon to ensure that the original classification of the species as endangered remains appropriate.

