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Dear Southeast Aquatic Resource Biologists,

The Southeast Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cordially invites you to attend a Fish and Aquatic Species Barrier Assessment Workshop on November 15 and 16, 2006, at the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville, North Carolina. The purpose of this workshop is to provide a forum for regional fisheries and aquatic species experts to discuss, and hopefully begin to develop, a set of standard metrics that can be used to evaluate suspected passage barriers of non-game fish and other aquatic species. Data gaps will also be identified and tentative plans will be made to acquire this additional data. Design standards for crossings will also be explored. Fish of interest include declining, rare and protected species, as well as, other species that may be intermediate hosts for freshwater mussels.

While much information exists regarding swimming performance for and passage of anadromous fish, particularly anadromous salmonids, very little is known about maximum jump heights, swimming speeds, or behavioral responses to dark passageways for other native fishes. This lack of data is problematic because numerous fish barrier surveys and assessments are taking place within the Southeast, and the methods and criteria used to determine what constitutes a barrier are not widely known or standardized. This workshop is designed to address these needs by improving the efficiency of barrier assessments, and addressing design standards which will ultimately decrease the number of aquatic species passage barriers.

A tentative agenda and specific workshop logistical information will be transmitted to you under a separate cover. We look forward to your participation in this important workshop. Please **RSVP on or before October 15, 2006** your interest in attending this workshop to Anita Goetz via email ([anita\\_goetz@fws.gov](mailto:anita_goetz@fws.gov)). If you have any questions, please contact Tom Sinclair at (404) 679-7324, or Anita Goetz at (828) 258-3939 ext. 228.

Sincerely,

<original signed>

Linda H. Kelsey  
Assistant Regional Director-Fisheries

<original signed>

Noreen Walsh  
Assistant Regional Director-Ecological  
Services