

Virginia

Fisheries Coordinator

Represented by Members of Congress:

Senator John W. Warner (R)
Senator James Webb (D)
Rep. Robert C. Scott (D-3rd)

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The Virginia Fisheries Coordinator is co-located with the Harrison Lake National Fish Hatchery.

Purpose

The purpose of the Virginia Fisheries Coordinator is to work with partners to protect and restore declining and depleted nationally significant interjurisdictional fish, native finfish and shellfish and their habitats in Virginia, Maryland and along the Atlantic coast. Species of concern include American shad, river herring, Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon, Atlantic coast striped bass and American eel.

Management Activities

- Evaluates hatchery stocking programs to determine their effectiveness
- Provides presentations and tours in support of education and outreach
- Works with state, federal and private partners to restore important fisheries habitat, e.g., fish passage, dam removal, submerged aquatic vegetation
- Works with others on fish restoration projects, including for striped bass, American shad and Atlantic sturgeon

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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Atlantic sturgeon

USFWS

Highlights

A Cooperative Conservation Initiative funded project (\$63,400) to restore submerged aquatic vegetation in the Potomac River drainage was completed at Point Lookout in Prince Georges County, Maryland.

The James River Association continued toward completing a CCI-funded (\$100,000) habitat protection and restoration project at Ducking Stool Point on the James River in Charles City County. The association is seeking additional funding to complete the project in 2007.

Confirmed the presence of spawning stock of Atlantic sturgeon in the James River -- possibly one of only two remaining spawning populations in Chesapeake Bay. A determination to list the species as endangered is pending. Partners include Virginia Sea Grant, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Virginia Marine Resource Commission and others.

Provided \$50,000 for and worked with partners to remove the Power Dam from the Pigg River.

Issues

Many miles of Virginia's rivers and streams are currently obstructed by dams, culverts and pipelines, blocking the migration of interjurisdictional as well as native species.

Little current information exists on Atlantic sturgeon populations and habitat in the Chesapeake Bay. This species may currently only spawn in Virginia Rivers in Chesapeake Bay, and is being reviewed for endangered species listing.

Hatchery-released American shad make up more than 60 percent of juveniles and 40 to 70 percent of adults in the James River, while few shad have been observed in the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg. This indicates that the restoration programs are very important in restoring shad stocks.

