

RIGHT WHALE NEWS

The Publication of the Southeast United States Right Whale Recovery Plan
Implementation Team and the Northeast Implementation Team

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Comment Period Extended on Advance Notice Of Proposed Rulemaking for Ship Strike Reduction

The National Marine Fisheries Service published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) for right whale ship strike reduction in the *Federal Register* June 1 (69 FR 30857). The notice seeks comments on the development and implementation of a strategy to reduce the likelihood and threat of ship strike mortalities among right whales on the east coast of the U.S. The strategy is a multi-faceted plan that includes potential routing changes, speed reductions and the use of dynamic management areas as proposed operational measures. Copies of the ANPR may be obtained at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/ under the “Recent news and hot topics” link.

In a July 9 notice in the *Federal Register* (69 FR 41446), the comment period on the ANPR was extended to September 15. Comments may be submitted by mail, fax or e-mail to: Chief, Marine Mammal Conservation Division, Attention Right Whale Ship Strike Strategy, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; fax: 301-427-2522 or e-mail: shipstrike.comments@noaa.gov

Ship Strike Reduction Stakeholder Meetings to be Held at Major East Coast Port Cities

The Northeast Implementation Team (NEIT) and the Southeast United States Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team (SEIT) are sponsoring a series of up to eleven meetings to gain further insight from the shipping industry, conservationists, scientists and others on the proposals raised in the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) for right whale ship strike reduction (see lead article). The dates and locations for the meetings are still being arranged at press time, but expect them to be held between now and the end of the comment period on the ANPR (Sept. 15) in most of the major east coast port cities between Portland and Jacksonville.

If you are interested in attending one or more of these meetings, contact NEIT co-chair Bruce Russell at 301-656-1751 or barussell@verizon.net

Summary notes, specific comments and any recommendations from interested parties and other results of the meetings will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service through the NEIT and SEIT immediately following the stakeholder meetings.

Ship Strike Reduction ANPR Public Meetings Begin in Boston

Editor's note: This summer the National Marine Fisheries Service held five public meetings on the agency's proposed right whale ship strike reduction strategy in Boston, Jersey City, Wilmington, Jacksonville and Silver Spring. The following report provides details of the first meeting.

As part of the public comment process for the Ship Strike Reduction Advance Notice of Public Rulemaking, a series of public meetings was scheduled by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The first of these was held July 20 at the Tip O'Neill Federal Building in Boston.

The meeting was chaired by Donna Wieting, Deputy Director of the NMFS Office of Protected Resources, accompanied by Aleria Jensen, Biologist-OPR, Pat Gerrior, Biologist-NER, and Barb Zoodsma, SE US Right Whale Coordinator. The goal of the meeting was to provide for a full public comment process and to identify items missed by NMFS in its 14-month development of the proposed strategic plan.

The objective is to develop a comprehensive, long-term, range-wide strategy to reduce ship strikes of right whales, while also minimizing adverse impacts to ports and the shipping industry. As proposed, the strategy is limited to vessels equal to or greater than 65 feet in length. It exempts federal and military vessels, and divides the U.S. East Coast into three regions: Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast. The strategy currently has five elements: (1) continue ongoing ship strike reduction measures (e.g., aerial surveys and mariner notifications); (2) education and outreach; (3) conservation agreement with Canada; (4) Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultations; and (5) operational measures for the commercial shipping industry. The operational measures are based on a package of options that include routing, speed reduction, and areas to be avoided. The goal of NMFS is to narrow both areas and times when measures are applied, in order to reduce impacts on the shipping industry.

The format of the meeting provided for input and comment. The views of the shipping industry were voiced by Ross Pope, Moran Shipping; Judith Harris, Port of Portland; Joseph Murphy, Massachusetts Maritime Academy; Greg Farmer, Boston Pilots Association; Michael Leone, Massachusetts Port Authority; and others. They expressed concerns about economic impacts to the industry as well as the effectiveness of the proposed measures. Mason Weinrich, Whale Center of New England; and Sharon Young, Humane Society of the U.S., expressed cautionary and conservation views; and Jim Hain, Associated Scientists at Woods Hole, suggested that aspects of scientific research be considered among the essential elements or "pillars" of the plan.

The genesis of the current activities can be traced back to the report "Recommended Measures to Reduce Ship Strikes of North Atlantic Right Whales," by Bruce A. Russell, of JS&A Environmental Services, submitted in August 2001. The report was supported by the Northeast Regional office of NMFS, and by the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The report was discussed by both the Northeast and Southeast Implementation

Teams and at a series of public meetings. Subsequently, a NOAA Fisheries Working Group was formed. Members of the group were Greg Silber and Aleria Jensen, NMFS Headquarters; Pat Gerrior, Northeast Region, NMFS; Phil Clapham, Northeast Fisheries Science Center; Kathy Wang, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS; Lance Garrison, Southeast Fisheries Science Center; Lindy Johnson and Pat Kraniotis, NOAA International Law Division; Dan Hytrek, NOAA/Coast Guard Fisheries Liaison; and Bruce Russell, contractor with JS&A Environmental Services.

The ANPR is the first of several steps. Next steps include stakeholder meetings scheduled for late August/early September, publication of a proposed rule, and, lastly, publication of a final rule. Additional information and documents can be found at www.nero.noaa.gov/shipstrike.

New England Aquarium Marks 25 Years Of Right Whale Research

On the weekend of June 18-20, the New England Aquarium celebrated 25 years of right whale science and discovery. The event at the Atlantic Oaks Conference Center in Bar Harbor, Maine, was also a gathering and reunion for many researchers both new and old—a joining of the diverse and sometimes widely scattered members of the right whale community.

Blankets of blue lupines lined the roadsides under gray and drizzly skies as some 100 attendees converged on Mt. Desert Island. Presentations summarizing scientific work were diverse. Central to the research is the right whale catalog. Philip Hamilton of the New England Aquarium described 25 years of identifying individual right whales, a collaborative effort involving 200 people and organizations. He noted that in some recent years, as many as 3,000 sightings were added, while in general, about 250 individual right whales are identified each year. Not all is pat and patterned, however, as a portion of the population appears to have different habitat-use and sighting patterns, and is less well known. Beginning in 2003, the right whale catalog and its images have all been digitized and computerized—a major change since its beginnings with file cabinets, manila folders, slides, and paper.

Moe Brown, also with the New England Aquarium, provided highlights of surveys and conservation efforts. The Bay of Fundy is the only area that has been monitored continuously since the 1980s. On a broader scale, and using several examples, she explained that right whales are difficult to manage, as “they don’t stay where we put the boxes.” At times, there appear to be aggregation areas on an annual and repetitive basis. On the other hand, there have been a number of substantial habitat shifts, perhaps food-source driven. Lastly, Moe described the collaborative and successful shift of shipping lanes in the Bay of Fundy to avoid areas of right whale concentration. This success, attributable in large measure to Moe’s efforts, was described at a later point in the meeting as perhaps the single most outstanding management success in the history of right whale protection.

Numbers and Recovery Plan Goals

Randy Reeves of Okapi Wildlife Associates began a discussion about numbers and recovery plan goals, a challenging topic on several counts. In the U.S., defining recovery has been linked, in part, to identifying a numerical target. However, analysis of the historical record is not always consistent with indications suggested by genetic analysis. One school of thought is that a pre-exploitation population estimated at 5,000-10,000 was depleted to a few tens of animals by the 17th century, with slow recovery since. Another view was presented by Brad White of Trent University. Genetic analyses suggests that there are 11-12 percent more males in the population than are currently accounted for. This finding changes the effective size of the census and breeding population—the population is larger than generally thought. Additionally, ongoing analysis of the DNA in skeletal material at the Red Bay, Labrador, whaling site, suggests that the take of right whales relative to bowheads may have been different than previously thought. If substantiated, the earlier population size based on catch evidence is not as previously calculated. The geneticists' view currently is that the right whale population can be characterized as smaller earlier, with less dramatic fluctuations, and slightly larger than generally thought at present. This topic will be of interest as it unfolds.

Scott Kraus of the New England Aquarium described the very challenging interactions of right whales and fisheries. While 70 percent of right whales are entangled at one time or another, only 1-2 percent of fishermen have ever seen a right whale. The efficacy of area closures, seasonal and dynamic management areas (SAMs and DAMs), and gear modifications is variable and uncertain. The search for effective measures is ongoing.

Along with the genetics analyses, another newer research direction is health assessment. Heather Pettis and Roz Rolland of the New England Aquarium described studies of body fat, skin lesions, sloughing, skin eruptions, nutritional condition, disease, biotoxins, reproductive hormones, and stress hormones—as related to reproductive success and population viability.

When right whales are not successful, they sometimes end up on the beach. As Bob Bonde of the U.S. Geological Survey once said, “the dead teach the living.” Michael Moore of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution described results obtained from examinations of 32 of the 56 dead right whales since 1970. “Good forensics provide good data and lead to better management,” Moore said. A publication describing these results is in press with the *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*.

Links to Food Sources

The link between right whales and their food has been well established. Bob Kenney of the University of Rhode Island took the long view, suggesting that the extremely dense patches of zooplankton on which right whales depend are linked primarily to physical parameters. A record of increasing carbon dioxide has resulted in atmospheric levels that are the highest in the last 150,000 years. Against a backdrop of a warmer planet and

rising sea level is an increase in extremes of climate—more droughts and more floods. In recent decades, analyses indicate that the calving rate has remained relatively stable, at an average of about 12-13 per year, but that annual variability has increased. There is, Bob suggested, evidence of an atmospheric signal in right whale calving, which may bode ill for right whales in a greenhouse future.

At the close of the session, Scott Kraus summarized aspects of research history. Addressing the future, he said that while there have been substantial advances, we are left with some of the same questions we started with. Where are the missing habitats? Why is reproduction in this population as low as it is? Kraus noted also that in addition to the continuation of strong research and collaboration, building and maintaining a constituency and public awareness is important.

Many awards and recognitions were given, followed by dinner during which a montage of images was shown. Kraus said that a book summarizing 25 years of right whale science is in preparation and will be published by Harvard University Press in 2005.

Earlier—at the end of the afternoon, as the rain ended—attendees had drifted outdoors for a group photo. A rainbow appeared over Frenchman’s Bay.

Tenth Anniversary of *Right Whale News*

As the New England Aquarium celebrates its 25th anniversary of right whale research, *Right Whale News* celebrates its tenth anniversary with the publication of this issue. As explained in the first issue of August 1994, the newsletter “is produced with the intent of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of recovery efforts for the world’s most endangered large whale, the Northern Right Whale.”

Over the ten-year period, *Right Whale News* has informed a worldwide readership about significant progress and occasional disappointments in management, scientific research, education and other matters related to right whales. At considerable risk, the editor will mention a few of the milestones in right whale recovery and management that have taken place in the last ten years. At even greater risk, the editor will identify a few individuals who should receive a significant share of the credit for these initiatives, recognizing that many other individuals deserve credit as well.

1994: On the recommendation of the Right Whale Recovery Team and others, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) designates two areas off Massachusetts and one off the Georgia/Florida coast as habitat critical for the survival and recovery of the right whale. Deserving special credit: **Scott Kraus**. (*Right Whale News* 1(1):1; see archives at: <http://www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov/rightwhalenews.html>).

1995: The U.S. Coast Guard initiates NAVTEX broadcasts to mariners that include real time right whale sighting information collected by the southeast’s Early Warning System team. Deserving special credit: **Mike Lieberum**. (*Right Whale News* 2(1-2):5).

1996: The NMFS establishes the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team to reduce entanglements of right whales in fishing gear. Deserving special credit: **Doug Beech**. (*Right Whale News* 3:4).

1997: The NMFS agrees to the petition of GreenWorld and the recommendations from the Right Whale Recovery Team and others and establishes the five hundred yard minimum approach rule for right whales. Deserving special credit: **Max Strahan**. (*Right Whale News* 4(2):1).

1998: The Northeast Implementation Team creates the ship strike committee to develop recommendations on how to reduce the greatest cause of right whale mortality. Deserving special credit: **Bruce Russell** and **Amy Knowlton**. (*Right Whale News* 5(4):5).

1999: The Mandatory Ship Reporting System starts. Deserving special credit: **Lindy Johnson** and **Greg Silber**. (*Right Whale News* 6(1):1)

2000: Canada adopts the Right Whale Recovery Plan. Deserving special credit: **Jerry Conway** and **Cathy Merriman**. (*Right Whale News* 7(2):6)

2001: The NMFS proposes seasonal and dynamic area management rules to reduce the risk of fishing gear entanglement. Deserving special credit for the concept: **Charles “Stormy” Mayo**. (*Right Whale News* 8(4):3)

2002: Supported by Canada, the International Maritime Organization adopts new vessel traffic separation lanes in the Bay of Fundy to avoid aggregations of right whales. Deserving special credit: **Moira “Moe” Brown**. (*Right Whale News* 10(1):4)

2003: The NMFS denies The Ocean Conservancy’s petition to expand “critical habitat” off Massachusetts and Georgia/Florida. Deserving special credit for the petition: **Nina Young** (*Right Whale News* 10(4):1)

2004: The NMFS publishes an advance notice of proposed rulemaking to reduce ship strikes of right whales. Deserving special credit: **Greg Silber**, **Bruce Russell**, and **Amy Knowlton**. (*Right Whale News* 11(2):1)

Yes, we are making progress!

Heroes of the Sea Memorial Funds First Project

The Wildlife Trust established the “Heroes of the Sea Memorial Fund” to honor **Emily Argo**, **Jackie Ciano**, **Michael Newcomer** and **Tom Hinds**, who were lost in January 2003 when their plane crashed while conducting North Atlantic right whale surveys off the coast of northern Florida (see *Right Whale News* 10(1):1). Wildlife Trust has now awarded the first “Heroes” grant to Wildlife Trust Project Leader **Carina Righi** for her work on behalf of the threatened Commerson’s dolphin in Argentina.

The Commerson's dolphin (*Cephalorynchus commersonii*) is a coastal marine mammal whose distribution is limited to the southern tip of South America, and the Kerguelen Islands in the southern Indian Ocean. Like the North Atlantic Right Whale, the Commerson's dolphin is a charismatic species at special risk from growing pressures on their breeding and feeding grounds due to increased shipping traffic. This project was chosen for its conservation urgency and the passionate devotion of the project's young scientist leader, Carina Righi.

The "Heroes of the Sea Memorial Fund" was established in February 2003 by Wildlife Trust's Board of Directors with an endowment of \$50,000. Thanks to the support of members, friends, and colleagues, Wildlife Trust was able to raise an additional \$31,000. With a total of \$81,000 now available in the endowment, Wildlife Trust will be able to make an annual award of approximately \$4,000 to support a marine conservation project that reflects the lives and aspirations of our lost colleagues.

For further information about donating, please contact: Susan Chevalier, Senior Development Officer, Wildlife Trust at (845) 365-8390 or chevalier@wildlifetrust.org. Contributions may be made payable to Wildlife Trust, and sent to the attention of: Heroes of the Sea Memorial Fund, Wildlife Trust, 1200 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 2, Prospect Park, PA 19076-2098.

Northeast Implementation Team Leadership

As reported in the previous issue of *Right Whale News*, the Northeast Implementation Team (NEIT) has reorganized. The leaders of the NEIT are:

Co-chair: **Amy Knowlton**, New England Aquarium; aknowlton@neaq.org
Co-chair: **Bruce Russell**, JS&A Environmental Services; barussell@verizon.net

Agency Coordinating Committee co-chair: **Katie Moore**, US Coast Guard;
KMoore@lantd5.uscg.mil

Agency Coordinating Committee co-chair: **Pat Gerrior**, NMFS,
pgerrior@whsun1.wh.who.edu

New Contact Information

The North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium has a new secretary: **Heather Pettis** of the New England Aquarium. She can be reached at 617-226-2144 or hpettis@neaq.org

The North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium also has a new e-mail address for data submission: Data Coordinator, Right Whale Research, New England Aquarium, Central Wharf, Boston, MA 02110; or rwdata@neaq.org. If you have questions, contact **Beth Pike** at 617-226-2143 or bpike@neaq.org

The Florida Marine Research Institute is in the process of reorganizing. The agency has changed its name to the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI), and has a new web site and new email addresses. Thus, please make a note of the changes for the chair of the Southeast United States Right Whale Recovery Implementation Team: **Jamison M. Smith**, Assistant Research Scientist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Jacksonville Field Laboratory, 6134 Authority Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32221. Office (904) 573-4910; fax (904) 573-4982; e-mail Jamison.Smith@myFWC.com Web: www.MyFWC.com FWRI's **Alicia Windham-Reid**'s e-mail has changed as well to alicia.windham-reid@MyFWC.com Her telephone number is 904-573-4916.

Cyndi Taylor, former chair of the Southeast Implementation Team, is Conservation Biologist with Wildlife Trust. Her new contact information is: Wildlife Trust, 15 Paradise Plaza #369, Sarasota, FL 34239-6905; tel. 941-232-4587; E-mail taylor@wildlifetrust.org

Wayward Whales Return

Amy Knowlton of the New England Aquarium reports that an exciting match of a right whale mother/calf pair was made on Monday, May 31. The Great South Channel, east of Cape Cod, is a productive spring feeding area for many species of marine animals and a critical habitat for North Atlantic right whales. Vessel-based research has been somewhat sporadic in this habitat area for the last few years, but surveys for right whales have been initiated once again by the New England Aquarium. Spring is a tough time to survey in the GSC because of persistent and seemingly never ending fog. We were finally able to get out on the water on Monday, May 31, and among the 30-plus right whales seen were two mother/calf pairs. Both pairs had been seen in the southeast US calving ground this past winter, but one of the pairs, #2360 and her calf, has a particularly interesting sighting history. This was the mother that was seen off Miami on January 30 and furthermore, we have now been able to confirm them to be the same mother/calf pair seen in the Gulf of Mexico on several occasions between March 14 and April 9, 2004 (see *Right Whale News* May 2004, page 8).

The calf photo taken April 8 off Panama City, FL and the ventral fluke pictures of the mother taken on April 9 off Navarre, FL were compared to the photos taken on May 31 and finally were able to be confirmed as #2360 and her calf. There is also a third sighting of a mother/calf pair in the Gulf of Mexico on March 14, that cannot be positively confirmed as #2360 and calf, but at this point, it seems likely. Most importantly, they have safely migrated to the feeding grounds in the Great South Channel.

This is not the first time a right whale has been seen in the Gulf of Mexico. The first evidence of this species ranging into the Gulf was two right whales reported by Joseph Curtis Moore and Eugenie Clark (in *Science*, 1963, 141:269) off Sarasota, Florida, 41 years ago on 10 March 1963. A calf stranded at Surfside Beach near Freeport, Texas, in February 1972 (*The Mammals of Texas – Online Edition*).

At this time, these are the only photos of right whales in the Gulf of Mexico during the spring of 2004 that have been submitted to the North Atlantic Right Whale Photographic Catalog. If anyone knows of or has any others, they can be sent to Beth Pike, Data Coordinator at the New England Aquarium right whale research project: rwdata@neaq.org

Register Early for Consortium Annual Meeting and Save

Mark your calendars!! The 2004 Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium will be held November 3 and 4 at the New Bedford Whaling Museum New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Pre-registration will run from now until October 27 (one week before the meeting). Due to the difficulty of processing late registrants, the Consortium has established a structured cost system that is designed to encourage early registration:

Pre-registration material post marked by October 15, \$45

Pre-registration material post marked October 16-October 27, \$65

Registration after October 27 (including at the door registration), \$85

An official registration form can be found at the end of this issue of *Right Whale News*. The form will also be attached to subsequent informational e-mails. When filling out the registration form, please be sure to include updated affiliation, address, and e-mail information.

For those working with or in contact with agencies that send representatives to the Annual Consortium meeting but who may not receive this publication or may not be on our consortium member list, please have those agencies provide contact information to the Consortium secretary: **Heather Pettis** at the New England Aquarium. She can be reached at 617-226-2144 or hpettis@neaq.org.

Additional information regarding hotel, parking, agenda, etc., will be passed on via e-mail, so please pass on updated e-mail information to Heather Pettis.

Call for Papers

This is also an official call for presentations. If you would like to make a presentation at the meeting, please contact Heather Pettis (see above). Please provide her with a title and summary for the working draft agenda. The Consortium must receive your intent to present by **October 1**.

North Atlantic Right Whale 2003 Stock Assessment Published

The National Marine Fisheries Service has published an assessment of the western stock of the North Atlantic Right Whale, *Eubalaena glacialis*, as part of its annual assessment of marine mammal stocks in the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf. The assessment was prepared by Phil Clapham and Timothy Cole of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, MA. For the complete citation and availability on line, see Waring et al. in Scientific Literature and Reports, page 11.

Sections of the stock assessment include: stock definition and geographic range, population size, current and maximum net productivity rates, potential biological removal (PBR), annual human-caused serious injury and mortality, and status of stock. This last section notes: “given that PBR has been set to zero, no mortality or serious injury for this stock can be considered insignificant.”

Under a recent Final Rule (*Federal Register*, July 20, p. 43338), the NMFS established a threshold level for mortality and serious injury to marine mammals incidental to commercial fisheries operations, commonly called the Zero Mortality Growth Rate (ZMRG). The ZMRG for marine mammal stocks is set at 10% of PBR. By setting the right whale’s PBR at zero, the NMFS has also established the stock’s ZMRG at zero as well.

Right Whale Bay of Fundy Research Coordination Meeting

The annual Canadian North Atlantic right whale research coordination meeting was held March 30-31 at the Hachey Conference Center of the St. Andrews Biological Station in St. Andrews, New Brunswick. The primary objectives of the meeting were (1) to summarize research plans for right whale research in Canadian waters for the 2004 field season, (2) to explore opportunities to coordinate research activities, especially in the Bay of Fundy, (3) to profile a few right whale projects in detail to improve awareness and understanding and (4) to provide an opportunity to discuss strategic research issues.

Research profiles were provided on acoustics by Francine Desharnais (Defense Research Development Canada Halifax), genetics by Tim Frasier (Trent University), habitat modeling by Jody Berry (World Wildlife Foundation) and knowledge gaps by Scott Kraus (New England Aquarium). Discussions followed on these topics and on field plans and coordination.

A number of recommendations were developed, including: (1) convene a meeting to address the capability for population growth in relation to the development of recovery targets to be addressed in the Canadian right whale recovery strategy and action plan; (2) work with representatives of the whale watch industry to arrange an information exchange meeting; (3) initiate a meeting to develop a communications strategy for right whale issues; (4) consider a workshop on right whale-fishing gear interactions; (5) consider a workshop on a coordinated approach on research and documentation of

ambient ocean noise and acoustics; (6) review the potential for a “one-stop” reporting of marine mammal beachings, mortalities and other emergencies, including a simple and efficient reporting protocol; (7) convene a workshop on the experimental design of behavioral studies addressing right whale-vessel interactions and (8) promote work on standardizing how a search effort is estimated and quantified.

Scientific Literature and Reports

Elwen, S.H. and P.B. Best. 2004. Environmental factors influencing the distribution of southern right whales (*Eubalaena australis*) on the south coast of South Africa I: Broad scale patterns. *Marine Mammal Science* 20(3):567- 582.

Elwen, S.H. and P.B. Best. 2004. Environmental factors influencing the distribution of southern right whales (*Eubalaena australis*) on the south coast of South Africa II: Within bay distribution. *Marine Mammal Science* 20 (3):583 -601.

Marine Mammal Commission. 2004. Marine Mammal Commission Annual Report to Congress 2003. Available from the Marine Mammal Commission, 4340 East-West Highway, Room 905, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Waring, G.T., R.M. Pace, J.M. Quintal, C.P. Fairfield and K. Maze-Foley, editors. 2004. U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Marine Mammal Stock Assessments – 2003. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-NE-182. Available on line at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/publications/tm/tm182>

Wiley, D.N., J.C. Moller and K.A. Zilinskas. 2003. The distribution and density of commercial fisheries and baleen whales within the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. *Marine Technology Society Journal* 37(1):35-53.

Calendar of Events

September 1: Deadline for submitting proposals for fishing gear mini-grants. For further information, contact Dr. Sal Testaverde at the National Marine Fisheries Service (978-281-9328, ext. 6502 or Salvatore.testaverde@noaa.gov) or Michelle Pico at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (202-857-0166 or pico@nfwf.org)

September 15: Deadline for comments on the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for right whale ship strike reduction; see article on page 1 for details.

October 1: Deadline for submitting intent to present a paper at the annual meeting of the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium. For information, see article on page 9 or contact Consortium Secretary, Heather Pettis at hpettis@neaq.org

October 13: Fall meeting of the Southeast U.S. Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team. Location to be determined. For further information, contact Jamison Smith, SEIT chair, Florida Wildlife Research Institute, 6134 Authority Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32221. Tel 904-573-4910. E-mail Jamison.Smith@myFWC.com

October 15: Post-mark deadline for early registration for the annual meeting of the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium. For information, see article on page 8 or contact Consortium Secretary, Heather Pettis at hpettis@neaq.org

October 26-28: Marine Mammal Commission annual meeting, Kona, Hawaii. A draft agenda will be available in mid-September. See www.mmc.gov

November 3-4: Annual meeting of the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts. See article on page 8. For further information, contact Heather Pettis, consortium secretary, at 617-226-2144 or hpettis@neaq.org

February 6, 2005: Super Bowl XXXIX, Jacksonville, Florida. Activities prior to, during and after the game, including cruise ship arrivals and departures and air shows, may impact right whale surveys in the critical habitat area offshore.

December 11-16, 2005: 16th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, San Diego, California. Sponsored by the Society for Marine Mammalogy. For more information, visit the Society's web site: <http://www.marinemammalogy.org/>

Right Whale News

Right Whale News is a publication of the Southeast U.S. Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team and the Northeast Implementation Team. The editor is Hans Neuhauser. The editorial board consists of Bill Brooks, Moe Brown, Phil Clapham, Jerry Conway, Jim Hain, Scott Kraus, Mike Payne, Sigrid Sanders and Jerry Wallmeyer.

The Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, the Massachusetts Environmental Trust (www.MassEnvironmentalTrust.org), the Southeast Regional Office of NOAA Fisheries and the Northeast Implementation Team underwrite the costs of *Right Whale News*. Thanks to their support, *Right Whale News* is published quarterly and is distributed free of charge.

Current and back issues of *Right Whale News* are available on line at a web site maintained by April Fendley of the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary:
<http://www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov/rightwhalenews.html>

An **index** of the first eight years of *Right Whale News* (1994-2001) is also available at the site.

To subscribe to *Right Whale News* or to submit news, articles or commentary for publication, contact the editor, Hans Neuhauser, at the Georgia Environmental Policy Institute, 380 Meigs Street, Athens, GA 30601, USA. Telephone 706-546-7507. Fax 706-613-7775. E-mail: gepi@ix.netcom.com

**Annual North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Meeting
New Bedford Whaling Museum
November 3-4, 2004
New Bedford, Massachusetts**

REGISTRATION FORM

(Complete one Registration Form for EACH Attendee)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

First Name (as to appear on badge): _____

Title: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Registration Fees:

Pre-Registration (postmarked by October 15 th)	\$45
Pre-Registration (October 16 th -27 th)	\$65
After October 27 th and Onsite	\$85

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

PLEASE:

- Make checks payable to: New England Aquarium
- Mail registration form and check to: Laura Lane Cooke
Right Whale Research
New England Aquarium
Central Wharf
Boston, MA 02110

If you have additional questions please call Consortium Secretary Heather Pettis at hpettis@neaq.org or 617.226.2144