

Interest rate term ends in (year)	RUS rate (0.000 percent)
2000	3.250
1999	3.125

Dated: December 10, 1998.

Christopher A. McLean,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 98-33433 Filed 12-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee; Meeting

AGENCY: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) has established an advisory committee to assist it in developing a proposed rule on accessibility standards for electronic and information technology covered by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. This document gives notice of the dates, times, and location of the next meeting of the Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee (Committee).

DATES: The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for January 5 and 6, 1999, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. each day.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at 1331 F Street, NW., Washington, DC, in the third floor training room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Doug Wakefield, Office of Technical and Information Services, Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, 1331 F Street, NW., suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004-1111. Telephone number (202) 272-5434 extension 39 (Voice); (202) 272-5449 (TTY). E-mail address: wakefield@access-board.gov. This document is available in alternate formats (cassette tape, Braille, large print, or computer disk) upon request. This document is also available on the Board's Internet Site at <http://www.access-board.gov/notices/eitaacmtg.htm>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 29, 1998, the Access Board published a notice appointing 23 members to its Electronic and Information Technology Access Advisory Committee (Committee). 63 FR

51891 (September 29, 1998). The Committee will make recommendations to the Access Board on accessibility standards for electronic and information technology covered by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. The Committee is composed of Federal agencies and Federal contractors; the electronic and information technology industry; organizations representing the access needs of individuals with disabilities; and other persons affected by accessibility standards for electronic and information technology. At its first meeting on October 15 and 16, 1998, the Committee took the following actions:

Added Compaq Computers, Pitney Bowes, Sun Microsystems, and the Information Technology Industry Council to the Committee;

Formed three subcommittees. One subcommittee will examine the definitions needed for the recommended standards. Another subcommittee will examine the various functions that are performed by electronic and information technology. These functions include creating, processing, transmitting, and interacting with information and the technology involved. A third subcommittee will begin the process of classifying the variety of products covered by the standards into product families;

Created a listserv to facilitate communications between meetings. To subscribe to the listserv send an e-mail message to: listproc@trace.wisc.edu; and

Established a schedule of meeting dates. The Committee will meet again on February 8-9, 1999; March 29-30, 1999; and, May 11-12, 1999.

At its second meeting on December 1 and 2, 1998, the Committee addressed the scope of the standards it will be recommending to the Access Board. This included defining the term "electronic and information technology." A three person group was appointed to develop a recommended definition and present it to the Committee at its January meeting.

Additionally, four subcommittees were formed. These include: installation and setup, information display, control and operation, and user information. The subcommittees will examine these specific areas and identify access barriers in each area, and recommend standards that could lower or eliminate these barriers. The subcommittees will continue their work on the listserv.

The meetings are open to the public. There will be a public comment period each day for persons interested in presenting their views to the Committee. The facility is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening systems

and real-time transcription will be available.

Lawrence W. Roffee,

Executive Director.

[FR Doc. 98-33445 Filed 12-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8150-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[C-423-806]

Cut-to-Length Carbon Steel Plate from Belgium; Extension of Time Limit for Countervailing Duty Administrative Review

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Extension of Time Limit for Countervailing Duty Administrative Review.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (the Department) is extending the time limit for the final results of the first administrative review of the countervailing duty order on cut-to-length carbon steel plate from Belgium. The review covers one manufacturer/exporter and the period January 1, 1996 through December 31, 1996.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 17, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Cassel or Gayle Longest, Office of CVD/AD Enforcement VI, Import Administration, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: (202) 482-2786.

APPLICABLE STATUTE: Unless otherwise indicated, all citations to the Tariff Act of 1920, as amended (the Act) are to the provisions effective January 1, 1995, the effective date of the amendments made to the Act by the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA). In addition, unless otherwise indicated, all citations to the Department's regulations are to 19 CFR part 351 (1998).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Because it is not practicable to complete this review within the initial time limits established by section 751(a)(3)(A) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended (the Act), the Department is extending the time limits for completion of the final results until no later than March 8, 1999. This extension is necessary due, in part, to the existence of complex, novel issues. (See Memorandum from Holly A. Kuga, dated December 9, 1998, to Robert S. LaRussa "Cut-to-Length Carbon Steel Plate from Belgium: Extension of the Deadline for the Final

Results of the 1996 Administrative Review", which is a public document on file in the Central Records Unit.)

This extension is in accordance with section 751(a)(3)(A) of the Act (19 U.S.C. 1675(a)(3)(A)).

Dated: December 9, 1998.

Holly A. Kuga,

*Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for AD/
CVD Enforcement, Group II.*

[FR Doc. 98-33469 Filed 12-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 040795A]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Notice of Availability for the Final Recovery Plan for Shortnose Sturgeon

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the availability of the final recovery plan for the shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*), as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA).

ADDRESSES: Requests for a copy of the final recovery plan should be addressed to: Nancy Haley, NMFS, 212 Rogers Avenue, Milford, Connecticut 06460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Haley, (203) 783-4264, Marta Nammack, (301) 713-1401, or David Bernhart, (727) 570-5312.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The shortnose sturgeon is an endangered fish species that occurs in large coastal rivers of eastern North America. Nineteen distinct population segments of shortnose sturgeon inhabit rivers ranging from the Saint John River in New Brunswick, Canada, to the St. Johns River, Florida. In addition, a captive broodstock from the Savannah River distinct population segment and its cultured progeny are housed at three hatcheries operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, shortnose sturgeon were commonly taken in a commercial fishery for the closely related, and commercially valuable, Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*). Shortnose sturgeon were originally listed as an endangered species by FWS

in March 1967 (32 FR 4001), under the Endangered Species Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*). Pollution and overfishing, including bycatch in the shad fishery, were listed as principal reasons for the species' decline. Shortnose sturgeon remained on the endangered species list when Congress passed the ESA in 1973 (ESA) (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). NMFS assumed jurisdiction for shortnose sturgeon under a 1974 government reorganization plan (39 FR 41370).

Section 4(f)(1) of the ESA directs NMFS and FWS, the Federal agencies responsible for implementing the ESA, to develop and implement recovery plans to promote conservation and survival of endangered and threatened species, unless a recovery plan would not help to promote species conservation. Highest priority is given to those species that are or may be in conflict with development projects or other commercial activities. Shortnose sturgeon spend their entire life in waters that are heavily impacted by various construction and industrial activities. Hence, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries determined that a recovery plan, which comprehensively addresses these factors and describes ways to mitigate or minimize harm to shortnose sturgeon, was necessary to promote rangewide recovery of the species. The recovery plan for the shortnose sturgeon, prepared for NMFS by a seven-member recovery team, provides a framework for addressing a multitude of biological concerns and outlines Federal agency responsibilities under the ESA with the sole purpose of insuring long-term survival of the shortnose sturgeon. NMFS published a notice of availability of the draft recovery plan for shortnose sturgeon in the **Federal Register** on August 4, 1997 (62 FR 41951). Comments were received from eight parties during the 30-day comment period. Most comments were editorial and were incorporated as received. Some comments indicated that the readers were confused by the wording in certain sections, and NMFS tried to clarify these parts of the plan. More substantive comments from the reviewers and the NMFS' responses to these comments are listed here.

Comments and Responses

Comment 1: Several reviewers noted that much of the plan relies on data that are not available in peer-reviewed publications and that some sections are based on speculation and conjecture.

Response: NMFS used the best available information to develop this recovery plan. Unfortunately, even though there has been a relatively great

amount of research interest in shortnose sturgeon, not all aspects of its biology or factors affecting its recovery have been well documented in the scientific literature. Moreover, while detailed information on the fish exists in some parts of its range, little published data are available for other shortnose sturgeon populations. Therefore, in some cases, NMFS reported, and identified as such, recent information that has not yet been peer reviewed. Certain recovery tasks were identified to fill gaps in our knowledge of this species and factors affecting its recovery. NMFS determined that it was necessary to outline all possible impacts to this species. If future research indicates that some perceived threats are not significantly affecting shortnose sturgeon recovery, they will be omitted from future versions of the recovery plan.

NMFS has updated some sections and added additional references to support sections where reviewers noted a lack of substantiation. In addition, the References section has been amended to reflect the recent publication of information that was originally cited as unpublished data or personal communications.

Comment 2: Reviewers expressed conflicting views regarding the importance of poaching as a threat to shortnose sturgeon populations and argued from both sides that statements in the recovery plan regarding poaching are based on little hard evidence.

Response: The impact of poaching on shortnose sturgeon populations is unknown and likely varies across the range of this species. NMFS recognizes that poaching is likely to be a significant source of mortality in some population segments (e.g., southern populations). Consequently, NMFS identified poaching in the Factors Affecting Recovery Section and listed increased enforcement of the ESA section 9 prohibition to further discourage this illegal activity as a recovery task (task 2.2C). As suggested, the importance of genetic data as a forensic enforcement tool was added to the Recovery section.

Comment 3: One reviewer suggested that the potential importance of diseases should be emphasized more in the recovery plan, and another reviewer said that a greater consideration of potential threats from Atlantic sturgeon stocking was needed.

Response: Stocking of Atlantic sturgeon has been a very recent development, and there is no conclusive information concerning the impacts of this action on shortnose sturgeon. The potential for increased incidence of disease resulting from this activity is