



# Protected Resources Program Update

*Department of Environmental Quality*

Marine Fisheries | Fisheries Management Section | Protected Resources Program

Barbie Byrd | February 2023



# *Observer Program Updates*

- **Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 10 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) application**
- **Fisherman Call-in System - Observer Trip Scheduling System (OTSS)**



# ESA Section 10 Incidental Take Permits (ITP)

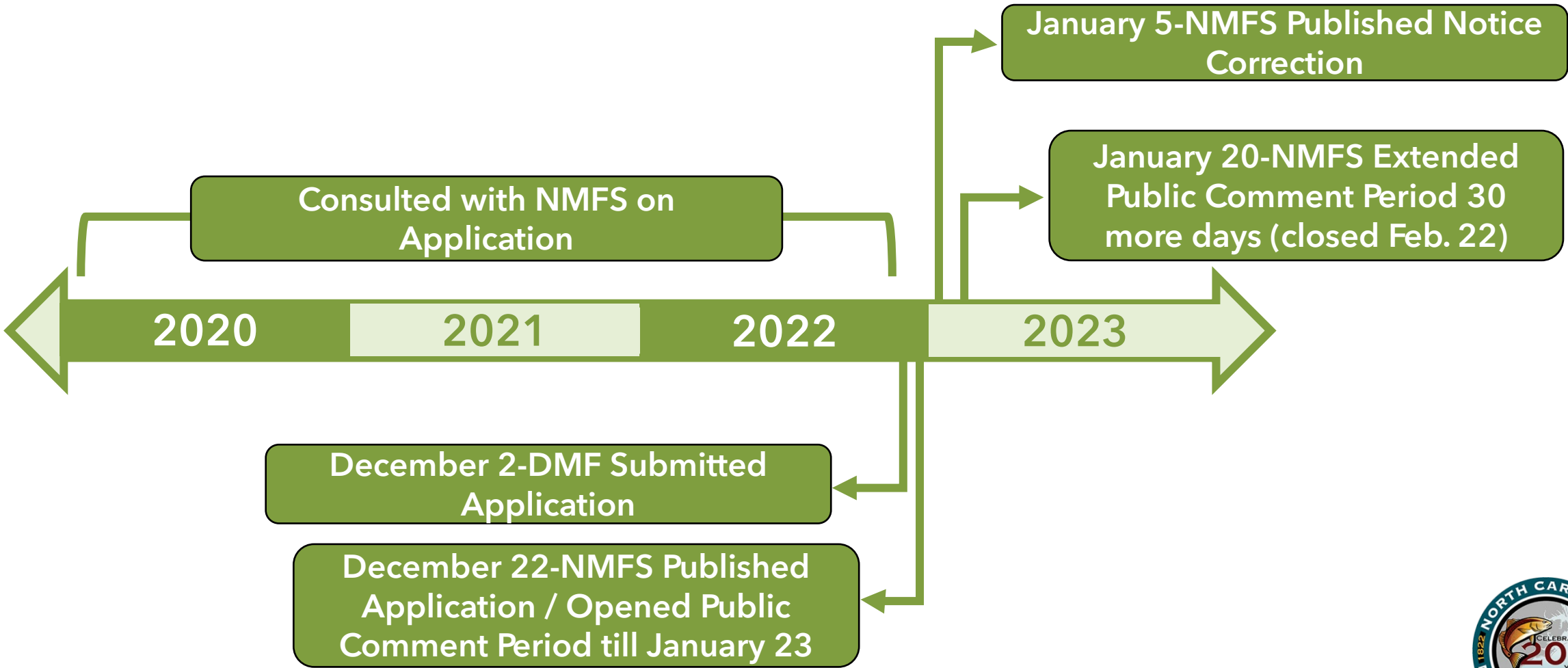
Sea turtles (5 species) ITP 2013-2023



Atlantic sturgeon ITP 2014-2024



# ITP Application-Previous Steps



# ITP Application-Next Steps

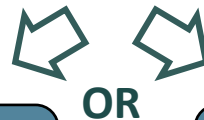
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 CFR§ 1508.27),  
NMFS develops Environmental Assessment (EA)



NMFS publishes draft EA with 30-day public comment  
period (may include changes to ITP application)



NMFS initiates ESA Section 7 consultation



OR

NMFS issues ITP, publishes final EA &  
Section 7 Biological Opinion

NMFS does not issue ITP - next steps  
TBD



# Observer Trip Scheduling System (OTSS)

## Need based on:

- Address observer coverage issues
  - Scheduling trips
- Coverage representative across fishermen
- Industry requested
- NMFS encouraged as tool to meet observer coverage requirements

Sept 2021-Aug 2022

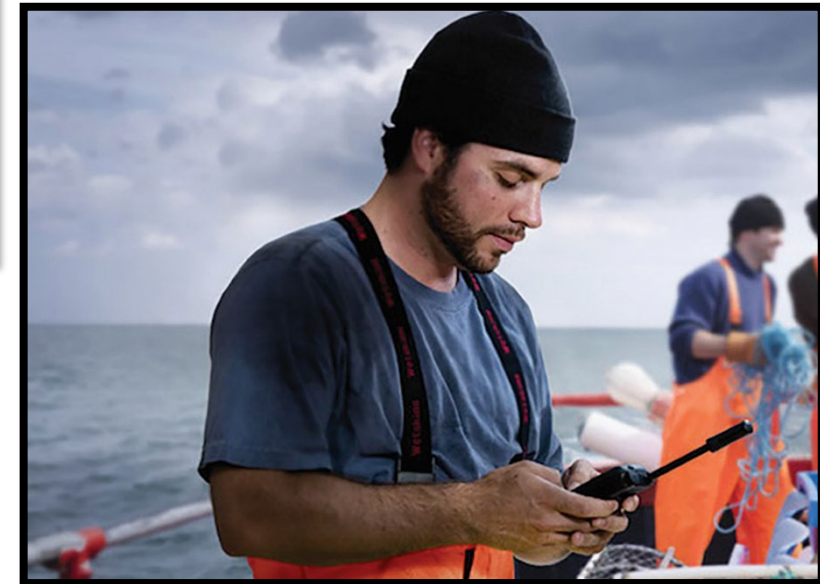
- 1,178 calls
- 36% talked to fisherman (n=426)
- 3.6% booked trip (n=42)



# Observer Trip Scheduling System (OTSS) -Initial Steps



# Observer Trip Scheduling System (OTSS)-Next Steps





# Observer Trip Scheduling System

## Benefits

Compliance  
with ITP

Equal across  
fishermen

Efficient  
Observer  
Program

## Growing Pains

Familiarity  
with process

Ad hoc trips  
still needed

System - Tech  
glitches

# *Protected Resources Program Update*

*Thank you.*

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