

Pew Supports Endangered Species Petition for River Herring

Contact: Nancy Civetta, 617-901-7193, ncivetta@pewtrusts.org

Harwich, Mass. (Aug. 1, 2011)—Peter Baker, director of the Pew Environment Group's Northeast Fisheries Program and the Herring Alliance, issued the following statement today in support of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) petition urging the federal government to list both species of East Coast river herring (alewives and blueback herring) as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act.

NRDC and the Pew Environment Group are among the 11 founding members of the Herring Alliance, a coalition of environmental organizations that now includes more than 40 groups dedicated to restoring ocean wildlife and marine ecosystems from North Carolina to Maine by reforming the management of important fish species such as river herring.

“Listing river herring under the Endangered Species Act is strongly warranted, because their populations have declined by more than 95 percent on the East Coast. Contrary to their name, these fish spend most of their lives in the open ocean, where they are caught accidentally and in large numbers by industrial vessels fishing for other species, thereby threatening their survival.

“River herring are a keystone fish that provide food for many top predators, such as striped bass, ospreys and river otters both at sea and in freshwater. The federal government must take vigorous steps to protect these fish in their ocean environment in order to prevent the possibility of their extinction.”

Read the NRDC blog:

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/bsewell/its_time_to_save_our_threatene.html

See the full NRDC petition with executive summary:

<http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/bsewell/NRDC%20Petition%20to%20List%20Alewife%20and%20BB%20Herring%208-1-11.pdf>

The Pew Environment Group is the conservation arm of The Pew Charitable Trusts, a nongovernmental organization that works globally to establish pragmatic, science-based policies that protect our oceans, preserve our wild lands and promote clean energy.

www.PewEnvironment.org/herring

www.HerringAlliance.org

###