



**Fishermen and Researchers Invited  
to Discuss Marine Habitat Research Ideas  
*Program to fund \$1 Million in New Cooperative Studies***

**WHAT:** NOAA Fisheries' Cooperative Research Partners Initiative (CRPI) is developing priorities for a new program in marine habitat research. Approximately \$1 million will be available for one- to two-year cooperative projects. Fishermen and scientists are invited to scoping meetings during May in Portland, Maine and New Bedford, Massachusetts to discuss ideas about the direction and uses for this new program.

The CRPI is administered by NOAA Fisheries, the federal agency charged with managing the nation's living marine resources, in partnership with the New England Fishery Management Council's research steering committee.

**WHERE:** The northern meeting will be held in **Portland** from 10AM until 4PM, Monday, May 12 at the Casco Bay Lines Ferry Terminal Conference Room, 56 Commercial Street.

The southern meeting will be held in **New Bedford** on Friday, May 16, from 10AM until 4PM at the UMASS-Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST), 706 South Rodney French Boulevard.

The meetings are open to the public and will be moderated by the Consensus Building Institute.

**MORE INFORMATION:** For more information on CRPI or the scoping meetings, contact Patricia Fiorelli at the Council Office, 978.465.0492; or Earl Meredith at NOAA Fisheries, 978.281.9276. Additional information will also be posted here:  
<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/doc/da.htm>

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Once a better picture of research priorities is developed, the NOAA Fisheries will issue a call for proposals, and expects to fund research by September 2003.

Since 2000, CRPI has funded 25 short-term research projects through annual competition totaling \$5 million, and three long- term research projects at over \$5 million. More than 300 fishermen have participated in the program either through scoping meetings or as partners in field research.