

Santa Rosa Resident Honored as a NOAA Environmental Hero for 2008



NOAA has selected Brian Swedberg from Santa Rosa, Calif., as an Environmental Hero for his contributions in understanding the affect of dredging on marine fish species, especially those listed under the [Endangered Species Act](#).

NOAA's [Environmental Hero Awards](#) were established in 1995 to commemorate Earth Day by honoring volunteers who help NOAA carry out its [mission](#) — to understand and predict changes in Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our nation's economic, social, and environmental needs. The award program also raises awareness about [NOAA's volunteer programs](#).

"Thousands of people across the country join forces with NOAA each year and the Environmental Hero award is our way of saying 'thank you' to several of those individuals that have made a significant impact," said retired Navy

Vice Admiral [Conrad Lautenbacher](#), Ph.D., Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA administrator.

Swedberg is the harbormaster at the Port Sonoma Marina, located at the mouth of the Petaluma River, in Sonoma County, home to several ESA-listed species, such as steelhead, green sturgeon, clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mice.

As harbormaster, Swedberg is responsible for dredging 60,000 to 90,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Petaluma River each year and NOAA scientists were concerned how this operation might affect many of the fish species listed under the ESA. NOAA researchers and Swedberg worked together to design and implement a unique study to identify the type and number of fish caught up in the dredging operation.

The work conducted by Swedberg is one of the first studies documenting fish entrainment during dredging, and his data will facilitate [NOAA Fisheries' Service](#) analysis for other similar projects. Swedberg's enthusiasm while collaborating with NOAA Fisheries to determine the affect of dredging at the marina is an example of the cooperative spirit NOAA encourages among all environmental stakeholders.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems ([GEOSS](#)), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.