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June 21, 2006

Andrew Rosenberg, University of New Hampshire scientist, former Northeast Regional Administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service, and commissioner on the presidentially appointed U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, is available to discuss yesterday's unanimous passage of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2005 (MSA) by the U.S. Senate.

The Senate adopted the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy as the basis for much of its work on ocean policy. In February 2006, a year after publication of its comprehensive, historic report "An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century" – the first major government assessment of the state of the oceans in 35 years – the commission gave the nation a D+ on ocean policy reform. Passage of the MSA is seen as a good step forward toward improving that grade.

The bill reauthorizes the MSA from Fiscal Year 2006 through Fiscal Year 2012 and contains provisions that would help improve international fishery management and conservation compliance, with an emphasis on strengthening controls on illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and ensuring other nations provide comparable protections to populations of living marine resources at risk from high seas fishing activities.

Rosenberg, professor of natural resources at the UNH Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space, can be reached by cell phone at 603-767-9501.