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Dunedin, 16 September 2004

Mr. Mark Zaslavsky
Sturgeon Aqua Farm
687 NE 79th Street
Miami, Fl. 33138, USA

Dear Mark:

I was so sorry to hear about the loss of some 200 sevruga sturgeon on your Pierson Farm as a result of Hurricane Frances. I am glad, however, that most of your sturgeon and famous beluga managed to survive. I would assume that it is because they are so well taken care of.

During my recent visit to your farm, I was impressed by the devotion and commitment that you and Gene Evans have put in the conservation of this important fish. It is unfortunate that efforts such as those undertaken on your farm are not well known to the public at large. Your activities constitute what I would not hesitate to call the "a most significant conservation activity for sturgeon fish".

The criticisms you are subjected to by some animal-rights and fund-raising organizations such as Caviar Emptor are totally unjustified and hopefully will fail in their strain to destroy trade in caviar and farming in sturgeon fish. I wish that your activities will raise worldwide interest and will serve as a model to other institutions committed to the "genuine" conservation of sturgeon stocks.

Best regards and thanks for a memorable day on the farm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Lapointe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small flourish at the end.

Eugene Lapointe
IWMC President
Former Secretary-General of CITES (1982-1990)