

Response Statement - White Sturgeon, Upper Fraser River population

December 18, 2013

Common Name: White Sturgeon, Upper Fraser River population

Scientific Name: *Acipenser transmontanus*

Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC): Endangered

How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment: The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans will undertake consultations with the government of British Columbia, Aboriginal peoples, stakeholders, and the public on whether or not the White Sturgeon, Upper Fraser River population, should be added to the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk* (Schedule 1) under the *Species at Risk Act* as Endangered. The Minister of the Environment will forward the COSEWIC assessment of the White Sturgeon, Upper Fraser River population, to the Governor in Council upon completion of consultations.

Once a species has been assessed by COSEWIC, further steps must be undertaken before it is added to Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*. For more information on this process, please view [The Species Listing Process Under SARA](#).

Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC: This large-bodied fish occurs at a small number of locations in the upper Fraser River. The species has declined considerably over the last century (to about 1,300 adults) and will likely continue to decline owing to localized habitat degradation and recruitment failure.

Occurrence: British Columbia

Competent Minister(s):

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Province(s) and territory (territories) to be consulted:

British Columbia

Applicable federal legislation: Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

Conservation activities underway: DFO and the Province of British Columbia, together with partners, have developed a SARA Recovery Strategy for White Sturgeon, which identifies threats to the species, population and distribution objectives, critical habitat, and approaches to achieving recovery objectives. DFO is engaged in white sturgeon recovery activities aimed at ensuring that all populations are sustainable throughout their natural range, are self-sustaining through natural reproduction, and that opportunities for beneficial use are increased or restored, if and when feasible. DFO has also provided support to several stewardship projects that benefit white sturgeon through the Habitat Stewardship and Aboriginal Funds for Species at Risk programs.