



## **Lesson # 4-6 Overview Stakeholders Symposium**

### **Guiding Critical Challenge:**

**How can we balance the need to protect the white sturgeon while supporting our social, economic, environmental and political interests?**

These lessons ask students to research and role play the various stakeholders who are currently engaged in a variety of economic activities and/or management roles along the banks of the Lower Fraser River watershed. It is designed to simulate the management challenges faced by the various groups having the greatest impact on the white sturgeon and their habitat. Students will be expected to design a sustainable conservation plan that balances the competing needs of these groups. This activity is intended to help students recognize the challenges of finding common ground between groups whose interests sometimes conflict and to develop consensus building skills.

The stakeholders include:

**Recreational Anglers, Guide Companies and Resorts  
Commercial Salmon Fishers  
First Nations Fishers  
Gravel Extraction Companies  
The Forestry Industry and Lumber Mills  
Urban Planners  
Ministry of the Environment (MOE)  
The Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society**

1. Place the guiding critical challenge on the overhead or blackboard. Remind students that the goal of this symposium simulation is to have students create meaningful proposals that will work towards protecting the endangered white sturgeon while balancing the various needs of each of the groups they represent. Divide your class into 8 groups representing each of the stakeholders. If you have a small class, a teacher could choose to assign five or six of the stakeholder groups and still be able to simulate a meaningful symposium experience. Print copies of the Stakeholder backgrounders and distribute them to the students in their groups. Each group member will need a copy of the backgrounder and of the Stakeholder Profile.
2. Ask students to read their assigned stakeholder background document. This document is intended to be a starting point for each stakeholder group and jumpstart the research that needs to be done. Distribute the stakeholder profile organizer to each group member. Have the students complete this profile based on the information found in the backgrounder. Ask students to highlight the social, economic, environmental and political interests of their group. They

should discuss which two of the six topics listed in the issues box they think are most relevant to their group. This will narrow the focus for the symposium presentations each group will complete when the class convenes and shares their research and give their position paper focus.

3. Each group should be given the responsibility of preparing a stakeholder position paper which they will present at the class symposium. An organizer is provided to help students narrow their focus to the two or three topics to which their group is most connected. For instance, the Forest Industry and Lumber Mill operators would be expected to address topics A and E(see topics listed below), habitat restoration and spawning ground protection, along with point and non-point pollution mitigation.
4. Provide time for each group to conduct their research. Access to a computer lab would facilitate this process. At least one and perhaps two full classes of research is needed to facilitate this process. The appendix file folder has many articles and reports that teachers may want to print off for student access or they could be loaded onto a computer network for electronic access. These cover a wide range of topics related to the assignment. (I would urge teachers to provide two classes of preparation time allowing students to come back and report what their research has uncovered and allowing them to create a cohesive response and their stakeholder position paper)
5. Each stakeholder group must come to the symposium with a prepared position on at least two of the six points listed on the White Sturgeon Conservation Plan Response Form. Teachers may choose to assign which of the six topics each of the eight stakeholder groups will address to ensure that all these issues are discussed. Groups must be ready to share their positions regarding the following issues:

**A) Habitat restoration and spawning ground protection**

**B) Tightened fishery regulations**

**C) Flood management mitigation**

**D) Gravel extraction mitigation**

**E) Point and non-point source pollution mitigation**

**F) Conservation Monitoring**

6. On the day of the symposium, organize the desks in your classroom into a large circle or square. Have students create their own folded cardboard desk signs for each stakeholder group. Students will participate in the symposium and then later participate in a jig-saw activity and attempt to build consensus and create a working document that reflects the various viewpoints of the stakeholder groups and addresses each of the points listed above. Each group will present their findings and share the information they have gathered during research. Ask students to keep their presentations to no more than five minutes, to describe only the important and relevant concerns and to speak at a reasonable pace to allow others to record the important information. An organizer is included to help

students take notes on the presentations being given by each group. (Each student will need two copies of this organizer) Following the presentations allow time for discussion and questions between the various stakeholder groups.

7. Once classes have heard the stakeholder presentations and completed their note-taking organizers jig-saw the class and ask them to create a group working paper that outlines their resource management proposals for sturgeon conservation. At this point the students should build consensus regarding the recommendations they feel are most important to preserve this endangered species while balancing our social, economic, environmental and political needs. Have students record their proposals on large pieces of poster paper and place them up on the walls of the classroom. Alternatively, this final stage could be done as a class, guided by the teacher. These student designed proposals can be sent to the Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society and the Ministry of the Environment – agencies responsible for the protection of this species.

Send your sturgeon resource conservation plans to:

Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society  
#300-3820 Cessna Drive, Richmond, BC V7B 0A2  
Sarah Sugiyama 778-322-7345

Ministry of Environment  
Honourable Barry Penner  
PO Box 9047  
Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

Giving students agency to bring about meaningful change empowers them to see that they can be the change they want to see in the world. As groups of students engage in this learning process and put forward their own recommendations perhaps more political, economic and social pressure can be brought to bear on this important issue – saving the sturgeon species from extinction.