

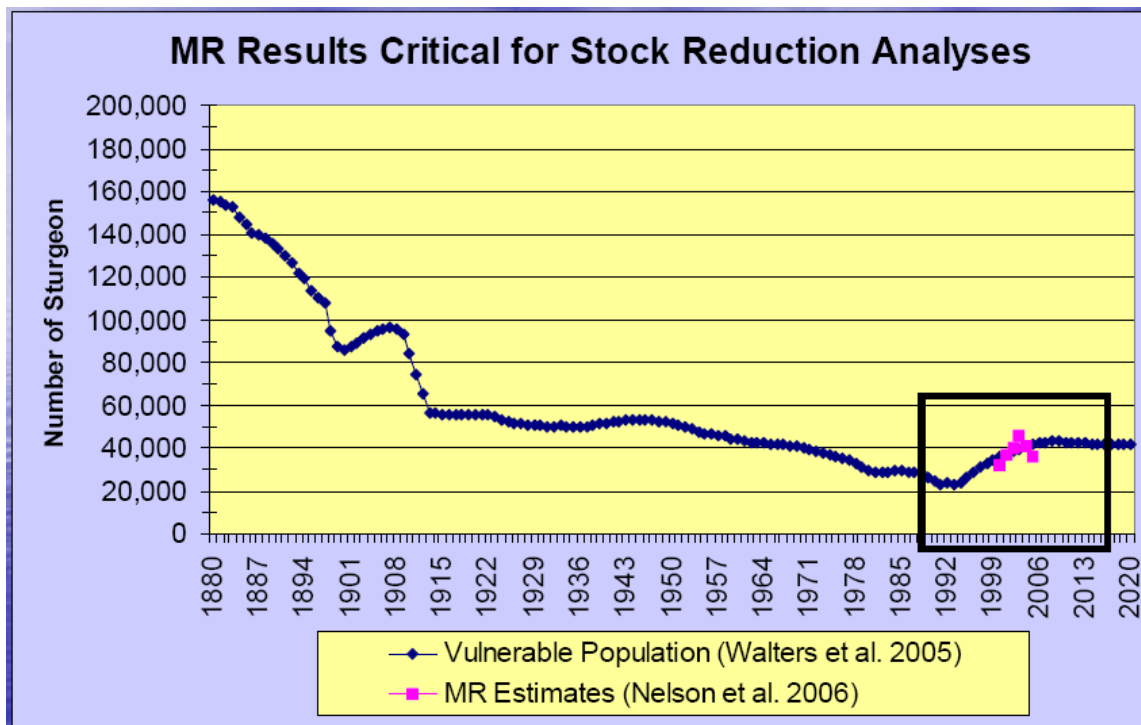
White Sturgeon Backgrounder

Interesting Facts

- The white sturgeon is the largest freshwater fish in North America and can attain lengths of 6 meters, weights in excess of 620 kgs, and can live for over 150 years

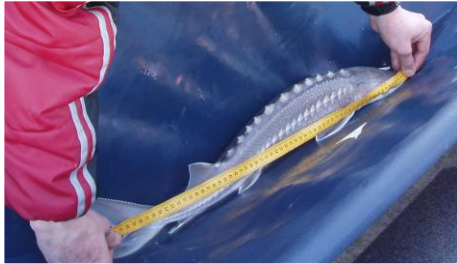


- The population of white sturgeon in the lower Fraser River plummeted to near-extinction levels in the early 1900's as a result of intensive, directed commercial fisheries.



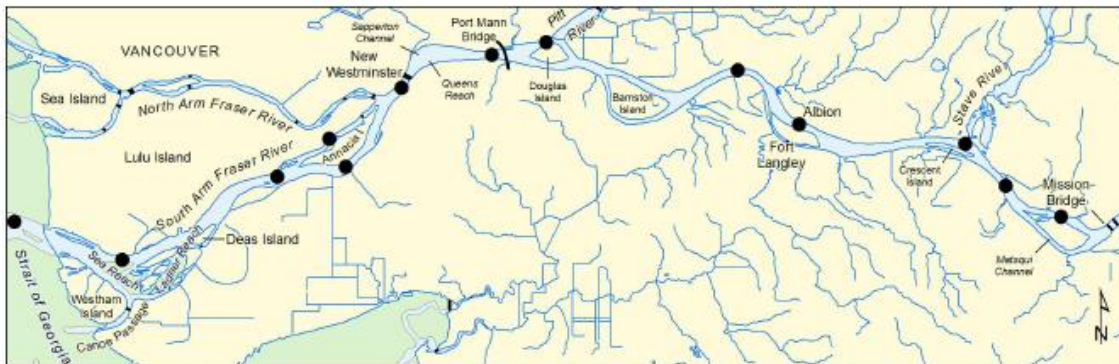
- This chart shows the decline of the white sturgeon populations based on a mathematical model that estimates fish populations in the past based on current data. (MR stands for Mark Recapture)
- Sturgeon are slow to reproduce: they do not reach sexual maturity until 25-35 years of age
- Females may only spawn once every 6-11 years

- It is estimated that only 9.8% of the current Fraser River White Sturgeon are sexually mature
- Fish over 200 cm in length likely represent less than 2% of the population



Sturgeon being measured

- White Sturgeon require large rivers with intact ecosystems that can provide the required habitats and food abundance for survival. The Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society focus area is shown in the map below:



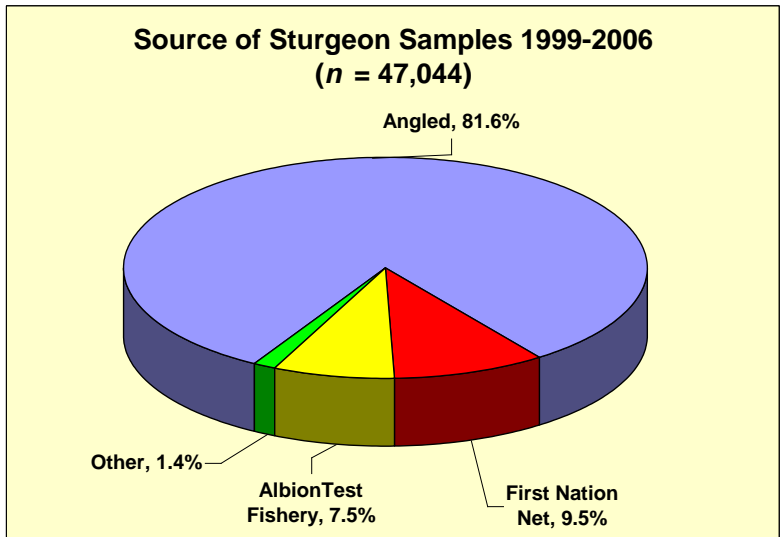
Map of the Lower Fraser River – Circles indicate areas where water is greater than 15 meters deep

- Based on current studies, there are roughly 46,000 White Sturgeon in the Lower Fraser River study area.



Sturgeon being tagged with radio transmitter

- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) listed White Sturgeon as a species of special concern in 2003 and with the passage of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) the committee designated this fish as endangered.



Number of Recaptures	
1	5838
2	1698
3	538
4	153
5	58
6	15
7	8
8	1

- The Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society plays a key role in helping to monitor, tag, sample, measure and release sturgeon providing important data collection
- The recapture rate of sturgeon is quite high