

Lower/Middle Fraser White Sturgeon Provincial Conservation and Management - Five-Year Strategic Action Plan – 24 Feb. 2016

Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives from the provincial Fraser River White Sturgeon Conservation Plan (2005) are a suitable starting point for the review and status update associated with the development of this strategic action plan. Therefore, we present them here as the overarching conservation objectives, keeping in mind that the subsequent sections may update the planning/actions required under each of these broad objectives. With some updating for the purpose of this plan, these objectives are:

- 1. Reach and maintain a natural population age structure and reach biological targets throughout the species' natural distribution in the Fraser River.***
- 2. Improve both the scientific and social basis for population targets for each of the major stocks of Fraser River White Sturgeon. Refine these targets and identify appropriate time frames for achieving targets, through appropriate consultative processes.***
- 3. Identify and quantify White Sturgeon habitat availability and condition; make recommendations for designation of important limiting habitats¹.***
- 4. Track the status of White Sturgeon populations and their response to management actions by developing and implementing scientifically-defensible monitoring programs for White Sturgeon throughout the Fraser River.***
- 5. Address basic biology data gaps (life history, habitat use, etc.) required to support conservation management approaches for this species.***
- 6. Address specific data gaps to support improved assessment and prioritization of threats, and develop recommendations for specific management actions as required.***
- 7. If consistent with conservation objectives, define the biological and social conditions that would allow for less stringent conservation and recreational fishery management of Fraser River White Sturgeon.***

¹ The original term 'critical' has been removed as 'critical habitat' is a legally defined term under the Species at Risk Act. These populations are not currently listed under SARA. Important habitats would include, but not be limited to spawning, incubation, early rearing, juvenile rearing, overwintering and key feeding habitats.