

December 15, 2017

Final Report to BC Nature Foundation – Sturgeon Project, Lillooet Naturalist Society

Thanks to the BC Nature Foundation for their generous grant of \$2,000 to the Lillooet Naturalist Society for our Sturgeon Monitoring project in 2017. We partnered with the conservation officer, local fishers and the community on this project. We quickly put the Foundation money to use to purchase 500 tags and a scanner, which cost most of the budget provided, and were able to leverage a further \$1,000 from the Lillooet Community Foundation to add to the contributions from the Lillooet Naturalists (\$250) and the Chamber of Commerce (\$250) so we were able to contribute to purchasing cradles (used for gentle handling of large Sturgeon) and we completed an educational outreach and presentation in December of 2017.



Two of our young Sturgeon fisher guides Nick McCabe and Dylan Harder holding a Sturgeon correctly. This is one of the fish that were tagged as part of our project. The Guides volunteered their time to participate.

This enumeration project builds on previous work and is a great step towards getting a baseline population of our Sturgeon as well as information about their behaviour. Four well attended community meetings were held and there is now an established Sturgeon committee in Lillooet, which includes representation from the St'at'imc, local citizens and Sturgeon fishers and guides, as well as the Naturalist Society.



We were invited to meet with the Foundation when they were in Lillooet in May and the CO brought some of the tagging equipment along to show the committee.

The local sports store, Winners Edge, is a gathering place for all the local and visiting fishers. The store donated the use of equipment to stream an educational video on correct handling procedures over the season. The local newspaper covered the story extensively which added to the educational outreach component of the project.

Our Invasive Species Society partnered in the project and provided educational materials on aquatic invasives for all the boaters. We also partnered with Splitrock Environmental to do further study and they have brought a First Nation's voice into our learning and knowledge about this iconic fish.

This project was highlighted during the annual Sturgeon Derby in July in Lillooet. We also were very pleased with the turn out for our Sturgeon presentation December 14th. Erin Stoddard is a fisheries biologist with MFLNO and Chair of the Fraser River Sturgeon steering committee and his presentation was informative and engaging. He was very impressed with the work we have been doing in Lillooet and has offered to be an ongoing expert resource for us in future.



From left, Conservation Officer Jeff Clancy, Biologist Erin Stoddard, Splitrock Biologist Corrie Allen, Conservation Officer Bob Butcher and Vivian Birch-Jones.

Thank you to the Foundation for supporting this project,

Vivian Birch-Jones, Lillooet
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