

Exhibit E
Public Correspondence

**Public Correspondence received as of
December 21, 2011**

Amanda Mckenzie

From: Stephen Williams
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2011 2:46 PM
To: Amanda Mckenzie
Subject: FW: Sturgeon Harvest Reform in Columbia River
Attachments: Sturgeon Decline 2011.ppt; ATT259183.htm; MPA small original logo no line.jpg; ATT259184.htm; ATT259183.htm

From: Shawn L. Miller [<mailto:Shawn@MillerPublicAffairs.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 8:55 AM
To: Richard Whitman
Cc: Roy Elicker; Curt Melcher
Subject: Sturgeon Harvest Reform in Columbia River

Richard,

On behalf of the Coastal Conservation Association, I want to offer the attached Power Point presentation for your consideration. Specifically we are asking the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to eliminate the Winter Directed Sturgeon Gillnet Fishery.

It is no secret that Columbia River Sturgeon are in decline and have not reversed that trend.

This is an unneeded fishery, where more by-catch (Spring Chinook) are actually sold than targeted catch (sturgeon).

Very few commercial fishers participate in this fishery, except for the end when they expect to catch salmon during this sturgeon fishery.

There is serious threat to ESA listed stocks of salmon and steelhead with no conservation measures in place (tangle-nets, soak time restrictions, recovery boxes) for this fishery, and unknown damage to ESA listed fish.

More than enough sturgeon are caught as by-catch during the summer salmon seasons to fill the commercial quota causing undue handling of these fish, and additional by-catch mortality.

The data we use in the presentation was derived from ODFW/WDFW sources.

Again, CCA is asking the ODFW Commission to direct staff at their January 6th Commission meeting to eliminate this fishery, and carry that message to the Columbia River Compact.

Call me if you have any questions.

Columbia River Sturgeon in Decline

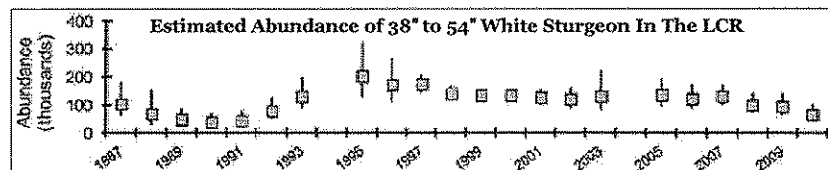


Recommendation for Harvest Reform



Significant Recent Declines

- The lower Columbia River (LCR) white sturgeon population has declined significantly in recent years.



Source: ODFW & WDFW 2011

- The 38" to 54" fork length age class in particular has decreased continuously since the mid-1990's.

All Age Classes Decreasing

- Abundance for all class sizes has fallen in the past four years.

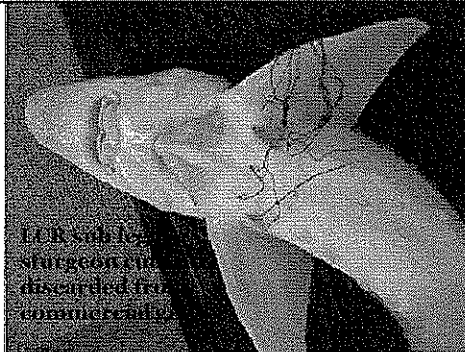
Tag year	42-48	48-60	42-60	Lower CI
2007	101,800	29,900	131,700	103,100
2008	69,800	31,400	101,200	74,100
2009	65,000	30,000	95,000	67,000
2010	42,100	24,300	66,400	45,100

- Overharvest is the most probable cause for these declines.

Initial Management Actions

- Alarmed over these recent sturgeon population declines of up to 60%, conservation organizations such as CCA have urged the ODFW/WDFW Commissions to reduce both recreational and commercial harvest.
- Managers have reduced sturgeon harvest guidelines by 40% in 2010 and 30% in 2011. However, the harvest rate has remained at 22.5% under the maximum sustainable yield model.
- Despite these reductions, poor sturgeon harvest results indicate the problem is still very serious. Further action is needed to recover populations.

Reduce Sturgeon Damage in Gillnet Fisheries



All age classes of sturgeon are negatively impacted by repeated handle and discard in gillnet fisheries

- Oversized sturgeon (broodstock) are discarded in all commercial fisheries;
- Sub-legals are discarded in all commercial fisheries;
- Legals are discarded when weekly boat limits are reached.

Gillnet Effects on Sturgeon

- Biological impacts of handle uncertain;
- States have not conducted minimal long term mortality studies;
- Stress from struggle in gillnets raises hormone levels leading to egg absorption;
- Following an intensive gillnet fishery in 2010, the 'young of the year' was the lowest on record.

Winter Season Not Needed

- As shown in the following chart, the current winter directed sturgeon season is unnecessary because gillnetters can harvest sufficient sturgeon during salmon seasons throughout the year to fulfill their allocation.
- Gillnetters argue the sturgeon gets a far better price in winter. This is not true. The sturgeon price per pound in the winter season is approximately \$2.52 per pound, compared to an average of \$2.46 in all other seasons.
(Source: ODFW & WFDW commercial fishing division.)

An Unnecessary Season

2011 Non-Indian Commercial White Sturgeon Landings	
Annual Limit: 3,400	
W. Sturgeon	Catch
Winter	55
Spring	136
Summer	470
Select Areas	193
Early Fall (Proj.)	1,600
Late Fall (Proj.)	700
Total	3,154

Source - ODFW Columbia River commercial fact sheets 2011

The winter directed sturgeon season produced the least amount of sturgeon of all gillnet seasons in 2011.

Sturgeon are harvested during directed salmon seasons throughout the year.

ODFW projects 73% of the sturgeon harvest will be realized during the early and late fall coho seasons.

2011 NON-INDIAN WINTER STURGEON GILLNET FISHERY

Preliminary - Phone Survey
02/10/11

Allowable rates for white sturgeon (45" - 54" TL) and adippe fin-clipped salmon.

DATE	CHINOOK (No.) (Avg Wt.)	WHITE STURGEON (No.) (Avg Wt.)	Approximate Number of Deliveries
January 18 - 19 (24 hrs. Tues. 6pm - Wed. 6pm) Zones 1 - 5 (9-inch min. & 9-3/4 inch max. mesh)	- 0.0	21 30.6	5
WEEK 4 TOTALS (24 hrs./week/mt)	-	21	
CUMUL. TO DATE		21	
January 25 - 26 (24 hrs. Tues. 6pm - Wed. 6pm) Zones 1 - 5 (9-inch min. & 9-3/4 inch max. mesh)	4 15.7	19 36.2	9
WEEK 5 TOTALS (24 hrs./week/mt)	4	13	
CUMUL. TO DATE	4	34	
February 1 - 2 (24 hrs. Tues. 6pm - Wed. 6pm) Zones 1 - 5 (9-inch min. & 9-3/4 inch max. mesh)	9 19.5	6 34.7	10
WEEK 6 TOTALS (24 hrs./week/mt)	9	6	
CUMUL. TO DATE	13	40	
February 8 - 9 (24 hrs. Tues. 6pm - Wed. 6pm) Zones 1 - 5 (9-inch min. & 9-3/4 inch max. mesh)	62 23.1	15 29.7	33
WEEK 7 TOTALS (24 hrs./week/mt)	62	15	
CUMUL. TO DATE	75	55	
SEASON TOTAL	75	55	

Source: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/QSCBP/GRM/landings/11/DISTR_Zone1-5_Winter1_2011.pdf

Disturbing Facts

Results are reported by phone survey.

Majority of fishers (30) work on final night to target spring Chinook.

2% of allocation (55) came from the winter commercial season.

In 2011, gillnetters kept more salmon than targeted sturgeon.

Impacts on Spring Salmon

In 2011 three times as many spring Chinook were landed during the winter sturgeon fishery than sturgeon, yet they used none of the protections for ESA listed fish that are often required in directed salmon seasons.

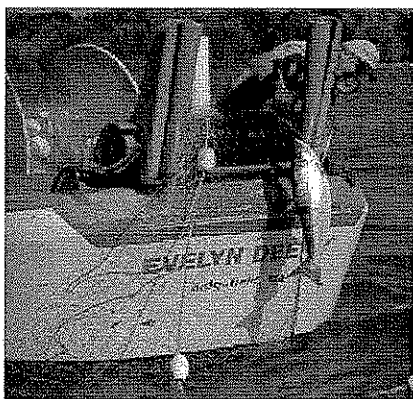


Wild Chinook discarded from a gillnet boat

- This is becoming salmon harvest season in the guise of a sturgeon season.
- Because there are no observers, it is unclear how many ESA protected Chinook and steelhead are discarded from the gillnets.

More Disturbing Facts

Despite the presence of ESA listed wild fish in the river at the same time, the winter gillnet fishery DOES NOT....



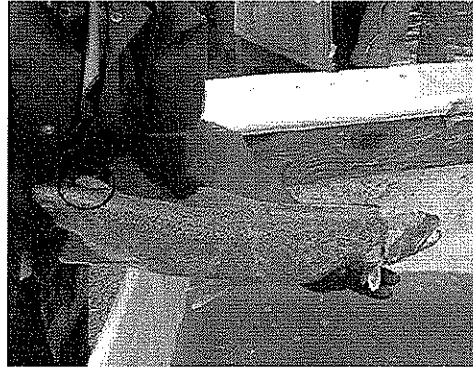
A wild Columbia River Chinook captured by a gillnet.

- Have onboard observers.
- Does not mandate maximum soak times.
- Does not require salmon and steelhead recovery equipment.
- Does not produce studied results of long and short term mortality.

Winter Gillnets Threaten Fragile Wild Steelhead Runs

- Upstream of the Cowlitz River all Columbia tributary steelhead are ESA listed.
- The winter gillnet season coincides with the migration of upper Willamette basin steelhead and spring Chinook which received ESA designation in 1999.
- The upper Willamette basin wild steelhead including No. and So. Santiam, McKenzie and Middle Fork Willamette rivers are some of the most vulnerable of all ESA listed steelhead.

- In 2011, Oregon's Upper Willamette Recovery Plan was enacted to help recover ESA protected fish.
- NOAA estimates the recovery of upper Willamette Chinook and steelhead will take **25 years** at the minimum, with a cost of at least **\$265 million**, assuming the plan is fully implemented.



Winter native steelhead intercepted by a gillnet

Is the winter sturgeon gillnet fishery compatible with state and federal recovery plans for and investments in fragile Willamette steelhead recovery?

End Winter Sturgeon Gillnetting

The winter directed sturgeon gillnet fishery makes no sense in light of the current poor health of LCR sturgeon and risk to ESA listed salmon and steelhead. It should be terminated.

Benefits of ending the winter sturgeon gillnet season:

- ✓ End needless bycatch of ESA wild steelhead and spring salmon
- ✓ Reduce handle of depressed classes of sublegal and broodstock sturgeon.
- ✓ Minimal effect on total sturgeon harvest (2%).
- ✓ Allocation easy to obtain during salmon seasons throughout the year. (Example: 98% in 2011)
- ✓ Price of sturgeon remains high throughout year.
- ✓ Errs on the side of conservation and reduces additional stress to dwindling white sturgeon populations in the Columbia River.

For more information visit www.ccapnw.org