

# Response Statement - White Sturgeon, Upper Kootenay River population

*December 18, 2013*

**Common Name:** White Sturgeon, Upper Kootenay River population

**Scientific Name:** *Acipenser transmontanus*

**Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC):** Endangered

**How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment:** The above assessment confirms the classification of the White Sturgeon, Upper Kootenay River population, which is already on Schedule 1, the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk*. This species will thus remain on the List as Endangered and activities will continue to be undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes of, and according to the timelines identified in, the *Species at Risk Act*.

**Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC:** This large-bodied fish occurs at only one or two locations in the upper Kootenay River. The species has declined considerably over the last century, to fewer than 1,000 adults, owing to habitat fragmentation and degradation, and recruitment failure. Modeling predicts an 80% chance of extinction of the population within the next two generations.

**Occurrence:** British Columbia

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

**Other applicable legislation:** Fisheries are managed and fish habitat is protected under the *Fisheries Act*.

**Conservation activities underway:** DFO and the Province of British Columbia, together with partners, have developed a SARA Recovery Strategy for White Sturgeon, which identifies threats to the species, population and distribution objectives, critical habitat, and approaches to achieving recovery objectives. DFO is engaged in White Sturgeon recovery activities aimed at ensuring that all populations are sustainable throughout their natural range, are self-sustaining through natural reproduction, and that opportunities for beneficial use are increased or restored, if and when feasible.