

Emergency Sturgeon Release Boat Kit Program DATA FORM



Nechako white sturgeon are an endangered species that live in the large lakes and rivers of the Nechako River watershed. Sturgeon caught in a gill net during the FSC fishery can cause death to the fish, as well as damage gill nets. The Emergency Sturgeon Release Boat Kit Program provides tools and training to fishers on how to release a sturgeon safely to increase its chance of survival and to reduce net damage. Participation by fisher families throughout the watershed is a key step to sturgeon recovery and success during the fishery. This project is supported through funding from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Carrier Sekani Tribal Council. Learn more at www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org.

www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org | Facebook @NWSRI

BEFORE YOU GO FISHING

ENSURE YOU HAVE A PIT TAG READER. Please bring a PIT Tag reader on the boat with you, or have one in a nearby boat in case you encounter a sturgeon. Ask your By-Catch Monitor for one.

WATCH THE EVERY STURGEON COUNTS VIDEO to get reacquainted with this program and how to use the kit.



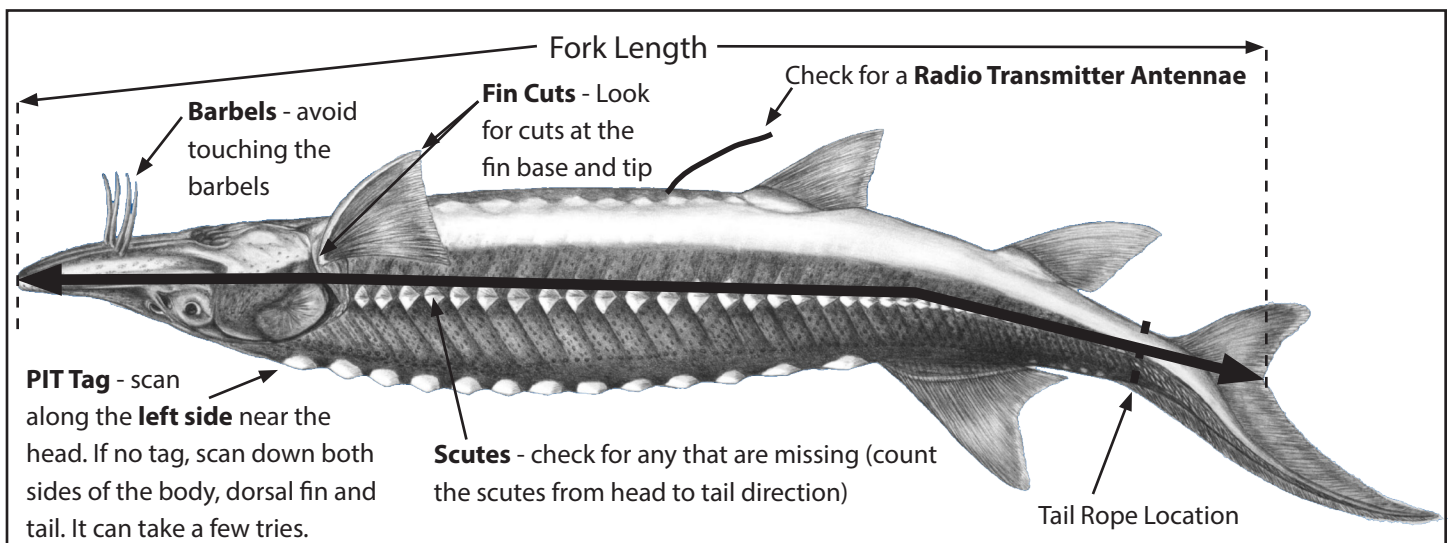
CHECK GILL NETS OFTEN. The longer a sturgeon is stuck in a gill net, the higher the chance the net will be damaged and the sturgeon will die.

CONTACT YOUR BY-CATCH MONITOR if you are unsure of how to fill out this form, if you need training to use the kit, need a PIT Tag reader, or if you need to replenish this kit or need more kits.

CONTACT THE NWSRI to submit your completed form(s) and photos, and if you have questions, at info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org.

IF A STURGEON IS IN YOUR GILL NET

1. Put on **gloves** - the scutes are sharp.
2. Gently **secure** the sturgeon, using the tail rope, to keep you and the sturgeon safe from further injury. **Turning the sturgeon on its back/ flipping it over helps to calm the sturgeon.**
3. Carefully **cut/untangle** the webbing off of the fish. Be careful to:
 - Avoid the sharp scutes, especially on smaller sturgeon.
 - Avoid touching the sturgeon's barbels and gills because they can be easily damaged.
 - Keep the sturgeon in the water if possible as this is critical for its survival.
4. Check the sturgeon for **PIT tag/missing scutes/fin cuts**. Measure the length. Take a **picture** of the sturgeon! Please email the photo to info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org.
5. Fill in page 2 of this **data form**.
6. Gently let the sturgeon go and **observe** how it swims away.



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PLEASE FILL OUT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE - OR AT LEAST THE FIELDS WITH AN *

Fisher (optional): _____ *By-Catch Monitor: _____

*Water Body: _____ *Date: _____

*Fork Length: _____ Units: Metre Feet *Photo: Yes No

Taken from the centre of the curvature of the snout, along the lateral line, to the fork of the tail.

Pull the fabric tape taut but not tight. The fish's body should not be altered by the tape when measuring.

*PIT Tag: Yes PIT tag # _____

No PIT tag No PIT Tag Reader

Radio Transmitter Antennae: Yes No Couldn't see

Missing Scute(s): Yes No Couldn't see

If yes SIDE: Right Left SCUTE # (counting from head to tail): _____

Fin Cuts: Yes No Couldn't see

If yes, where on the fin? _____

Gear: Gill Net Other _____

Caught as: Tangled in Net Rolled in Net Tangled and Rolled Other _____

Removal: Untangled fish Cut net Fish Escaped on its own Other _____

Damage to Net: None Minor Moderate Major Unreparable

*Injury to Sturgeon: None Minor (eg. net marks) Moderate Major (eg. open cuts) Dead

If the sturgeon is found dead, please report the fish to the by-catch monitor immediately.

Behaviour on Release: Swam away vigorously Slow to swim away Needed to be Revived

Other: _____

Comments: eg. cuts, red fins, etc. _____

***Submit:** Take a photo of this form and text it, along with any photos you took of the fish, to NWSRI (Michelle) at 250-570-8560 and/or email the form and photos to info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org. This is a fillable PDF form.

MISSING SCUTES
Check the sides of the sturgeon for any missing scutes. Record the side and scute number(s) (from head to tail).

FIN CUTS
Look for fin cuts on the **front fins**. Cuts can be at the **tip** or **base** of the fin.

HOW TO REVIVE A STURGEON

If the sturgeon is not active, hold the sturgeon in the water, right side up, and move it back and forth to move water across the gills.