

Sturgeon Recovery Plan Working

By 250 News

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Vanderhoof, B.C. – A recovery plan to help save the endangered Nechako White Sturgeon is finding success.

It represents a partnership between the Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative (NWSRI) and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) and is being aided in its implementation by seven First Nations (Saik'uz, Nak'azdli, Tl'azt'en, Takla, Nadleh Whut'en, Stelat'en and Lheidli T'enneh).

“Yes, we're absolutely excited about it. The results are even better than we expected,” says NWSRI recovery coordinator Lana Ciarniello.

She says the program started in 2011 as a pilot after they had heard from some of their catch monitors that some sturgeon were accidentally being caught and they just didn't know how to release them.

“Their nets were being really damaged so the NWSRI along with the CSTC brought funding to put together a boat kit – a little emergency sturgeon release boat kit – small enough to stay in the boat at all times, containing everything needed to live release a sturgeon from a gill net.

Last year Ciarniello says it led to the live release of 12 sturgeon, adding 49 have been saved since the program first started.

“It's absolutely significant. Especially if you consider the population estimate is at about 600. That's a high percentage of sturgeon being live released, particularly because the gill nets tend to target the larger sturgeon.”

She says the boat kits have been such a success that they hope to keep the program going and asks anyone interested in participating in this program to contact them at info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org

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