

# Rocy Reach Fish Forum

## Statement of Agreement

### Juvenile stocking under the White Sturgeon Management Plan

*Draft for Approval April 3, 2013*

---

#### **Statement**

The Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF) agrees to maintain current white sturgeon stocking levels (up to 6,500 yearlings as determined by availability) in the Rocky Reach Reservoir for an additional year (2014).

#### **Background**

The Rocky Reach White Sturgeon Management Plan (WSMP) states that *“Chelan PUD shall begin releasing up to 6,500 yearling white sturgeon in the [Rocky Reach] Reservoir annually for three years.”* The WSMP further states that, *“The number of yearlings released in subsequent years (after the initial three year stocking period) will range from 0 – 6,500, based on the results of the indexing program and/or the evaluation of spawning potential and could be adjusted after the evaluation period, in consultation with the RRFF.”*

The three-year stocking period required by the WSMP was initiated in 2011, when over 6,000 juveniles were released into the reservoir. Fish health concerns arose during the second year (2012) when white sturgeon iridiovirus was identified in hatchery juveniles. The RRFF therefore decided to not stock these fish (less than 200 juveniles were released). The third year of stocking (2013) will include yearlings produced from two egg takes of wild-origin brood collected in the Columbia River and is expected to meet or exceed the targeted 6,500 level. Stocking in 2014 would represent a fourth year.

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program in the WSMP was implemented in 2012. Since the 2012 stocking was negligible and only one year of monitoring had elapsed since the 2011 stocking, the ability to make inferences from M&E results is limited as of today. An additional year (2014) of supplementation of up to 6,500 yearlings in combination with continued M&E will strengthen the ability to make informed decisions on future stocking efforts.