

# Rocky Reach License Implementation: Sturgeon Program Update

**May 3, 2021**

**Lance Keller and Bill Towey**



# Why We're Here Today

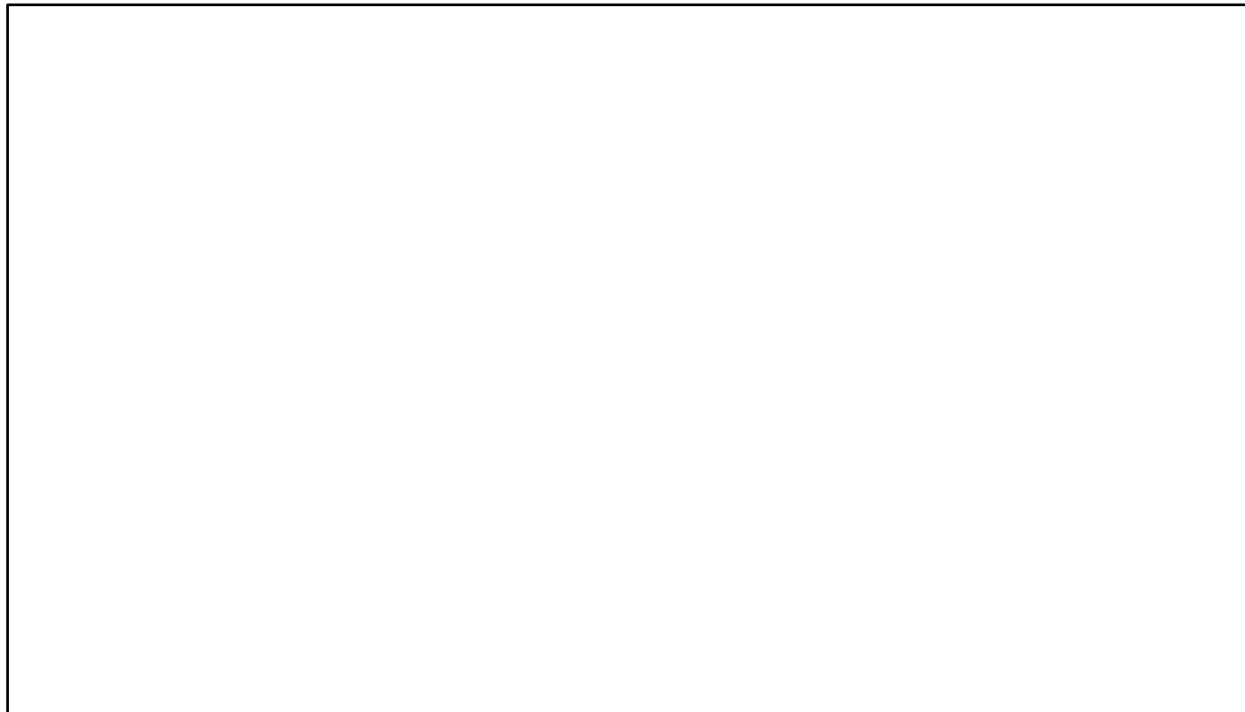
- Status of Rocky Reach White Sturgeon Management Plan Implementation
- Juvenile sourcing
  - Historic brood collection
  - Proposed wild larvae collection

# Background

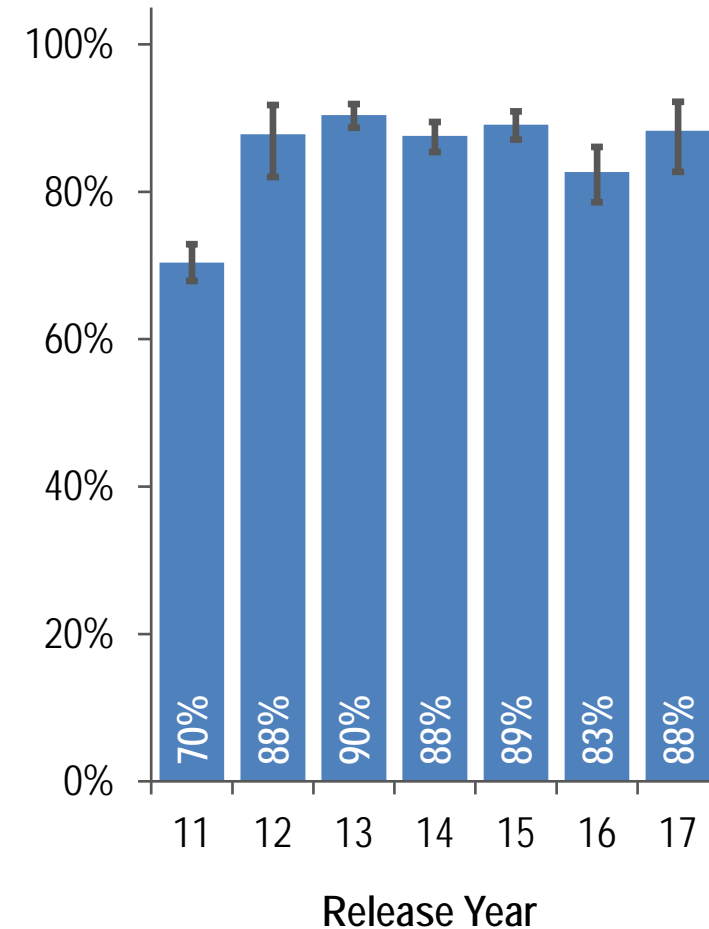
- Lack of natural recruitment in the Rocky Reach reservoir
- Hatchery supplementation programs introduced by fisheries managers
- RR License (2008) includes White Sturgeon Management Plan to supplement and monitor fish

# RR White Sturgeon Management Plan

- 33,714 sturgeon releases since 2011
- 8 years of M&E activities



Long-term Survival  
(after first year)



# Conventional Broodstock Collection

- Adult broodstock are collected below McNary Dam
- Ripe fish are transported to a Yakama Nation Hatchery
- Gametes are extracted and eggs are fertilized
- Adults are returned to the river post-spawn
- Juveniles are reared in a hatchery for one year and released into the Rocky Reach Reservoir

# Conventional Broodstock Collection



# Risks with Conventional Broodstock Approach

- Collecting, transporting, and spawning large fish introduces stress and risks
- Yields a relatively small number of adult crosses due to logistics
- Requires artificial mate selection
- Removes all in year natural recruitment potential for hatchery spawned adults

# Larval Collection

- Colville Tribe has collected larvae in the Upper Columbia/Lake Roosevelt since 2013
- Multiple benefits to larval collection:
  - Increased genetic diversity representation in juvenile fish
  - Allows for natural processes such as mate selection, incubation, hatching, and early rearing to occur
  - Reduces risks/impacts associated with handling/ transporting/ spawning adults

**\*Rocky Reach Fish Forum (RRFF) Policy Committee encouraged a transition to larval collection when possible (2015), and the RRFF unanimously approved a transition to wild-caught larvae in late 2020.**



# Larval Collection



# Completing the Transition

- Colville tribe to collect wild larvae in Lake Roosevelt and provide genetic testing for CPUD from 2021 through 2025
  - *5-year NTE \$492,500*
- Douglas PUD to provide hatchery capacity and rearing to release into the RR Reservoir from 2021-2026
  - *5-year NTE \$630,000*

**All included in current and 5-year budget forecasts**

# Next Steps

- Request approval to execute individual Service Agreements with CCT and Douglas PUD on May 17, 2021
- Larval collection begins June 2021

# Questions?

