

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 13BON92 MFR – White sturgeon mortalities at Bonneville’s Adult Fish Facility (AFF).

On 04 November 2013, Project Fisheries discovered two White sturgeon mortalities in the AFF. The lab was partially dewatered on 28 October, to the point of equalization with the WA Shore ladder, leaving a pool in the entrance area of the AFF. The upper AFF ladder, the lab proper, and the lower ladder down to the WA Shore ladder influence was cleared of fish and drained. One entrance bulkhead was left open for fish to freely re-enter the WA Shore ladder. The lab was dewatered this way in anticipation of being watered back up for velocity measurements in association with efforts to improve lab conditions. This method of dewatering was also helpful for moving approximately 20 sturgeon back into the main ladder instead of bagging them and transporting downstream in a truck.

Sometime between 29 October and 03 November, an unknown individual closed the entrance bulkhead that allowed fish to re-enter the WA Shore ladder. The valve that drains the AFF entrance area appears to be out of calibration, because although the gauge indicates 0% open, water did drain from the area through the valve. With the entrance bulkhead closed, and no other water source available, fish were stranded on dry concrete. Approximately 60 American shad and 10 Peamouth were also observed in the vicinity.

Information is collected below:

- A. Species – White sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*).
- B. Origin – Unknown.
- C. Length – Both fish were between 3-4 feet in length.
- D. Marks and tags – Not scanned. No tags visible.
- E. Marks and Injuries found on carcass – No obvious marks or injuries.
- F. Cause and Time of Death – Cause: Stranding/suffocation
- G. Future and Preventative Measures – In the future, either the lab will be dewatered completely or cards will be applied to all drains and bulkheads even if left in passive positions to prevent any changes.



Sincerely,
Bonneville Fisheries