CENWW-OD-WI **Sept. 23, 2016**
Updated Sept. 28, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD 16-IH-xx

SUBJECT: Adult white sturgeon mortality on September 23, 2016 at the Ice Harbor south shore fish ladder picketed leads.

A. Species – Acipenser transmontanus.
B. Origin – Unknown.
C. Length – 87" total length
D. Marks and tags – None
E. Marks and injuries found on carcass – vertical compression mark on the body from bottom of picketed lead. The carcass was removed from the water at the south shore count station on September 26 and was observed to be in the mid-stages of decomposition. The carcass was put back in the river downstream of the dam.
F. Location – At the south shore fish ladder picketed leads.
G. Cause and time of death – The picketed leads for the south fish count slot were being routinely cleaned of filamentous algae. One of the upstream leads was raised up and being sprayed off. This lead was then lowered slowly down with the hoist to the floor of the count station. The picketed lead was not sitting level on the floor, so the lead was partially raised, and a rake was used to push what appeared to be a large dead fish out from under the lead. The dead sturgeon was then seen through the fish viewing window. It is not certain that the fish was killed by the force of the picketed lead being placed on it. The fish may have already been dead, as the carcass appeared to show signs of bloating, although there was not clear visibility of the fish through the window. Also the picketed lead was lowered very slowly as it approached the floor to avoid striking or smashing fish.
H. Future and preventative measures – Air bubbles and a water spray jet are always used to scare fish away from the leads when they are being cleaned. Personnel will continue to be very careful when lowering the picketed leads in the cleaning process, so as not to harm fish. The frequency of cleaning is currently about every two or three days to keep the head differential across the picketed leads within criteria. As the water temperature continues to cool, the algae accumulation on the leads will continue to lessen, and the leads will require less frequent cleaning.
I. Pictures included – see below.

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