

Meeting Date: July 27, 2023

Agenda Item No. 7

Agenda Item: Draft - Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan **Bureau Chief**

Approval: LH (ACTION)

Prepared by: Brett Bowersox, Fisheries Coordinator

Background:

Staff will present an overview of the Draft - Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan and seek Commission approval to release the draft for public comment. This is an update to the 2008 Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan. The updated plan utilizes current information to guide and prioritize efforts of the Department and partners in implementing conservation and management efforts for White Sturgeon found within the Snake River, Idaho. In addition, the plan describes major factors affecting Snake River White Sturgeon. This plan will guide the Department in annual work plan development, program prioritization, and development of regulatory recommendations. This plan does not include Kootenai River White Sturgeon which are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act and managed under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Plan for the Kootenai River Distinct Population Segment of White Sturgeon.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission administers state wildlife policy through supervision and management of the Department (Idaho Code 36-104). Species management plans are guiding documents to manage wildlife and are a direct reflection of the Department's Strategic Plan. The Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan will function as the action plan for White Sturgeon within the Snake River, Idaho.

Public Involvement Process:

After the Draft - Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan is approved for release, the Department will seek further input from the public, interested groups, and affected agencies. Public input will be sought during August 2023 and a final plan will be developed with consideration of input.

Justification:

This agenda item is for Commission information on the current status of the update of the Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan. The Commission sets policy and provides direction, considers input from the public, and has the authority to adopt, amend, or reject Department-recommended plans.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff seeks Commission concurrence to release the Draft - Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan to the public, agency partners, and interested organizations for further comments. Staff will revise the draft based on input received with intent to complete a final plan to present to the Commission for approval and adoption in November 2023.

Suggested Motion: That the Commission approve the Draft - Snake River White Sturgeon Management Plan for release to the public for review and input.