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Fish and Game Commission



*Wildlife Heritage and Conservation
Since 1870*

Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
(916) 653-4899
fgc@fgc.ca.gov
www.fgc.ca.gov

California Fish and Game Commission Notice of Receipt of Petition

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the provisions of California Fish and Game Code Section 2073.3, that on November 29, 2023 the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) received a petition from Jonathan A. Rosenfield, Ph.D, Science Director of San Francisco Baykeeper, Gary Bobker, Program Director of the Bay Institute, Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, Executive Director of Restore the Delta, and Chris Shutes, Executive Director of California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, to list White Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act.

White sturgeon is the largest freshwater fish species in North America. Males generally mature between the age of 10 to 12 years, with females maturing between the ages of 12 and 16 years. A small portion of adults spawn in any given year. Successful reproduction occurs episodically, when spring-summer river flows are high enough to support incubation and early rearing success. Reproducing populations have been documented along the West Coast in the Sacramento and San Joaquin drainages of California, and the Columbia and Fraser River drainages, as well as land-locked populations in the Columbia River basin above major dams, in Washington and British Columbia.

White Sturgeon spawn exclusively in freshwater environments and spend most of their lives in saline habitats, returning to freshwater to spawn. Spawning requires deep water (greater than four meters deep) with swift currents and at temperatures from 8 to 19 degrees Celsius (44 to 66 degrees Fahrenheit). Data collected indicates a declining population productivity. Both abundance and population productivity are likely to have declined in response to massive fish kills caused by harmful algal blooms in 2022 and 2023, and range constriction caused by historic construction of impassable dams and their current operations.

On December 6, 2023, pursuant to Section 2073 of California Fish and Game Code, the Commission transmitted the petition to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) for review pursuant to Section 2073.5. The Commission publicly received the petition at its December 13-14, 2023 meeting. The Department's evaluation and recommendation relating to the petition is expected to be received by the Commission at its April 17-18, 2024 meeting.

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For information about the petition or to submit information to the Department relating to the petitioned species, interested parties may contact the Department Sturgeon Coordinator by mail at California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fisheries Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, California 94244-2090, or by email at Sturgeon@wildlife.ca.gov.

California Fish and Game Commission

December 20, 2023

Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director