

## **Developing an Information Infrastructure for North American Sturgeon**

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During the last two decades concerns about the decline of fisheries resources has transitioned from a primarily academic concern to a mainstream policy issue. At the core of the issue is the need to maintain and publish knowledge about species, their distributions, and relative abundances. This type of endeavor entails a need for sharing information across state, political, and research boundaries, however, difficulties arise because of data availability and standardization. In order to address this problem, we are developing a nationwide status and trends information system for North American fisheries and aquatic resources, using lake sturgeon as a pilot species. Objectives include: 1) identify available sturgeon information, 2) identify obstacles to information sharing and suggest options for overcoming political and/or technical barriers and 3) build a prototype information system that displays sturgeon status, trends, and availability of biological information at multiple spatial scales. Methods include surveying the federal, state, and university sturgeon researchers to collect detailed information on sturgeon data. Specifically we will collect information on the type, quality, amount, availability, and cost of data, as well as perceptions or concerns with data sharing.