



*Kids searching for PIT tags in the gravel during release event (photo by Dr. Nikolaus Gantner).*

## Outreach Programs

The projects were done in collaboration with many groups including, but not limited to Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, School District 91 and the District of Vanderhoof:

- Annual Release Event in Vanderhoof during which school kids named and released approximately 500 sturgeon into the Nechako River.
- Created four mini-documentaries and three live-streams from the NWSCC to expand the existing school curriculum program.
- Provided kits and worked with First Nations fisher families to ensure that White Sturgeon caught as unintentional bycatch in fishing gear were released unharmed.
- Created interpretive signs for Prince George, Stuart Lake and the NWSCC.
- 2,287 people toured the NWSCC including Premier John Horgan.

## About the NWSRI

The Technical Working Group conducts research and provides strategies for the recovery of Nechako White Sturgeon.

The Community Working Group works to increase the awareness of Nechako White Sturgeon through outreach and education.

This brochure provides a brief overview of the work done by the Working Groups of the Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative in 2019-2020. The full report is available at:

<https://www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org/publications/annual-reports>

For more information about the Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative please contact us or follow us on Facebook @NWSRI:

[info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org](mailto:info@nechakowhitesturgeon.org)

[www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org](http://www.nechakowhitesturgeon.org)

The NWSRI would like to thank all our partners and supporters!

This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

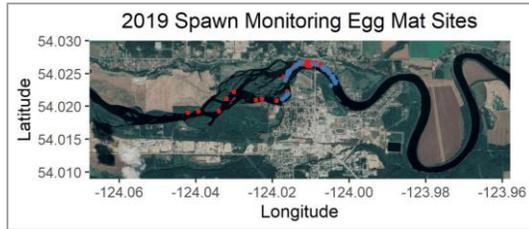
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.

Canada

# 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY



[nechakowhitesturgeon.org](http://nechakowhitesturgeon.org)



2019 Nechako River spawn monitoring egg mat sites.

## Technical Programs

The Technical Working Group partners with several agencies to carry out a number of ongoing research and monitoring programs in the watershed.

- **Adult spawn monitoring** including timing of spawning, incubation success, larval drift, and the physical parameters of the river that occur during spawning. The goal is to inform habitat restoration decisions. In 2019, spawning took place between approximately May 21<sup>st</sup> and June 6<sup>th</sup>. A total of 29 adults were detected in the spawning reach. 1,631 eggs and three larvae were detected in egg mats and fyke nets.
- The degree of **sturgeon predation by otters** was further explored in 2019, during which 405 PIT tags (523 to date) were retrieved from 27 otter latrine sites. The largest mortality was 69.8 cm long.

- **Juvenile White Sturgeon indexing** is done using set lines and angling to gain insight into hatchery-origin juvenile survival and growth rates, to monitor the presence of wild-origin juveniles, and to refine our knowledge of juvenile habitat use. In 2019, monitoring efforts were in core areas of the Nechako River as well as more peripheral areas of the Nechako River, Stuart River, Stuart Lake, and portions of the Fraser River.
- **Juvenile telemetry** provides information on distribution, movement, and habitat use. In 2019, 30 radio-tagged juveniles were released and monitored (total of 137 to date). All 30 tags were detected during the field season.
- **Sediment transport** dynamics were investigated in the spawning reach in 2019 using underwater cameras to better understand substrate condition and changes during spawning and early life stages.

---

*More exciting research is  
planned for 2020!*

---



2019 Broodstock capture (photo by Dr. Nikolaus Gantner).

## The Nechako White Sturgeon Conservation Centre

The NWSCC continues to aid the recovery of Nechako White Sturgeon by hatching sturgeon and rearing them to two years old. In 2019, seven females were spawned with nine males over two spawning events. Additional adults caught were not spawned and instead returned to the river with a radio tag.

Eggs hatched by mid-June and the first feeding was a week later. As of February 2020, there were 400 juvenile sturgeon in the hatchery (200 from each of brood year 2018 and 2019).

The NWSRI continues to recognize that the facility is a stop-gap for sturgeon recovery that will aid in providing more time for the TWG to continue to research, implement, and monitor the more permanent solutions required to achieve a self-sustaining sturgeon population.