

# Big Horn Lake, WY

## 2015 Fishery Update



Joe Skorupski

WGFD

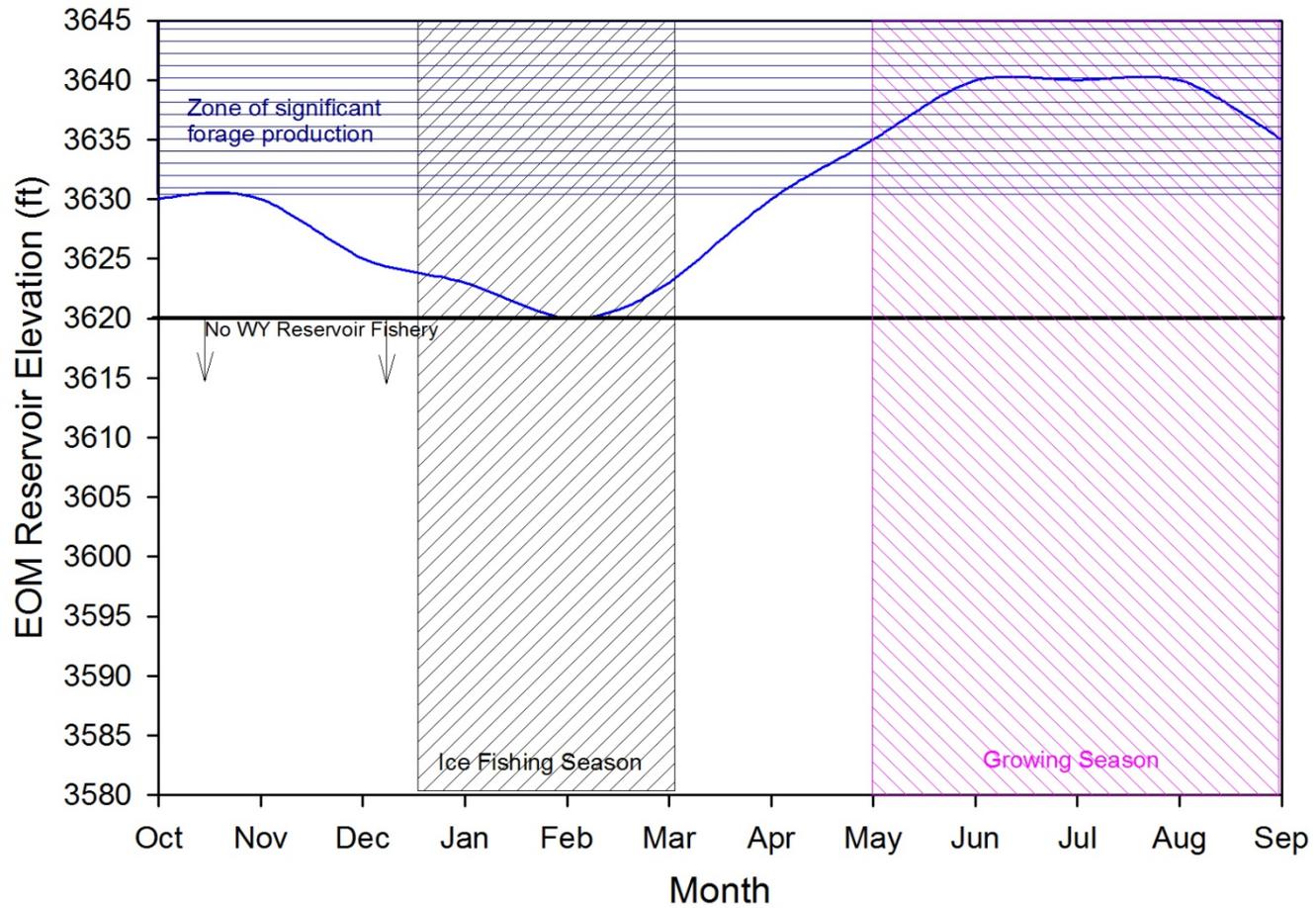
# Overview

- Overview of sauger fishery
- Sturgeon research project

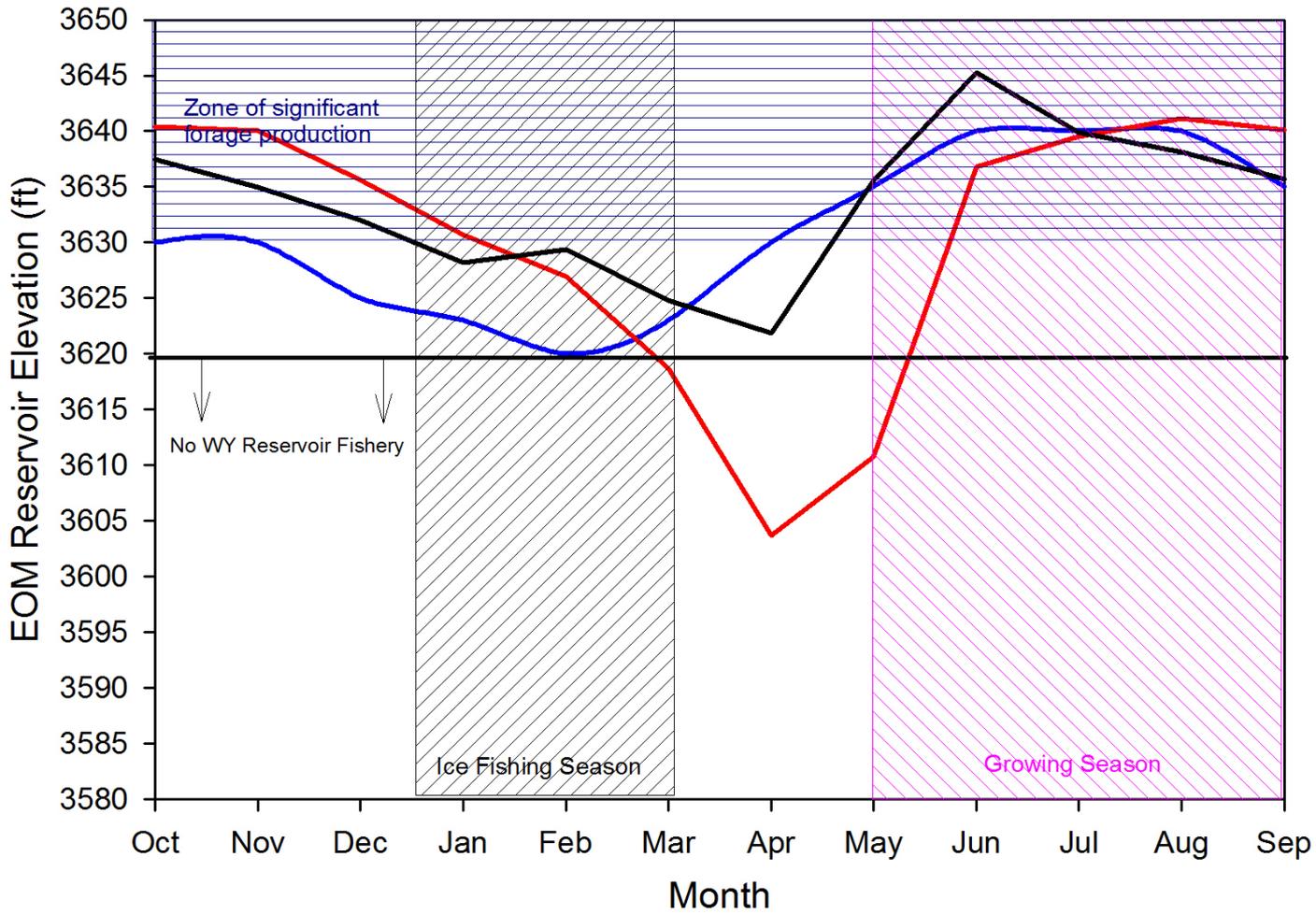




# Model



# 2014 and 2015



# Monitoring

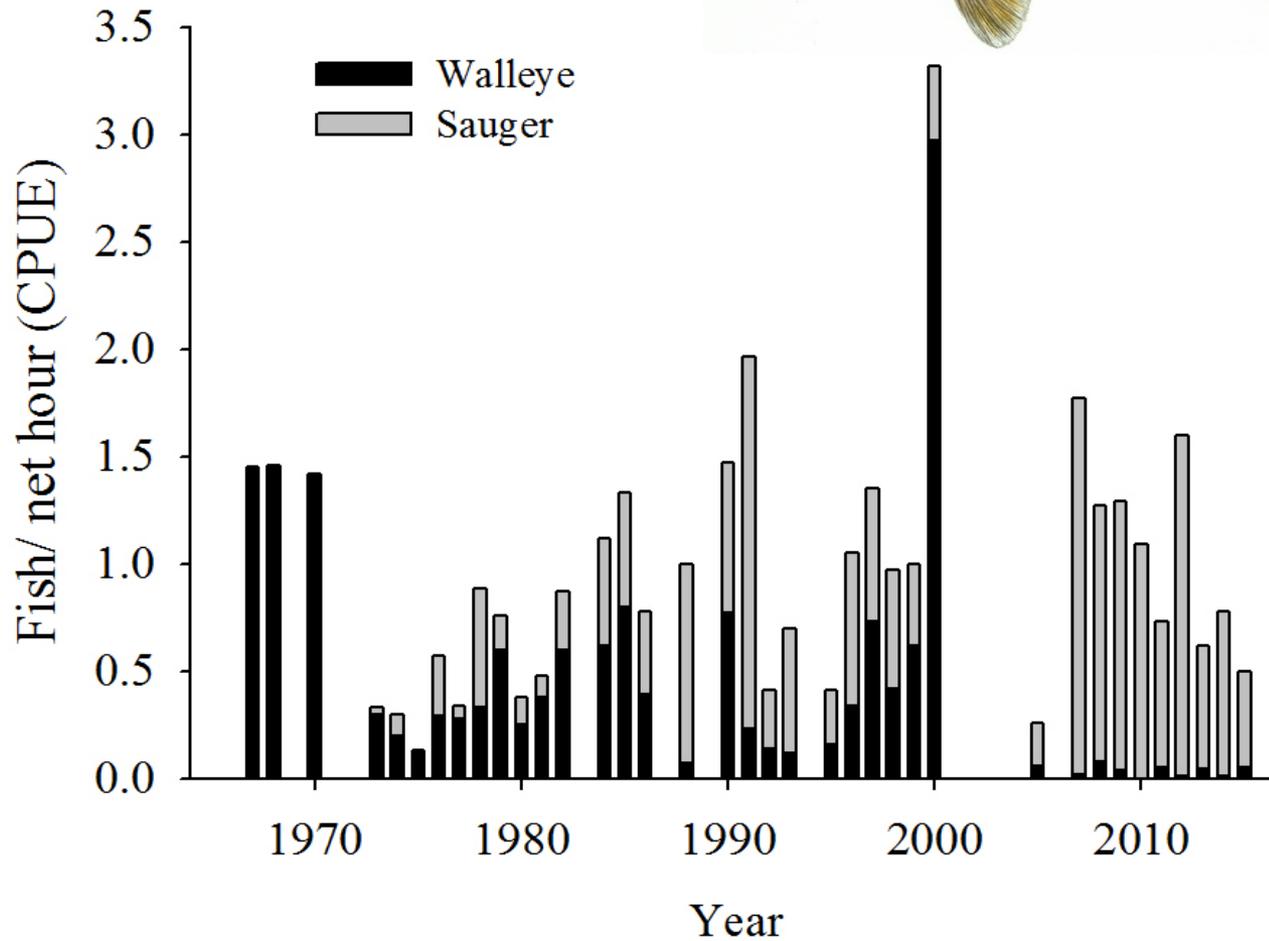


# Sauger & Walleye

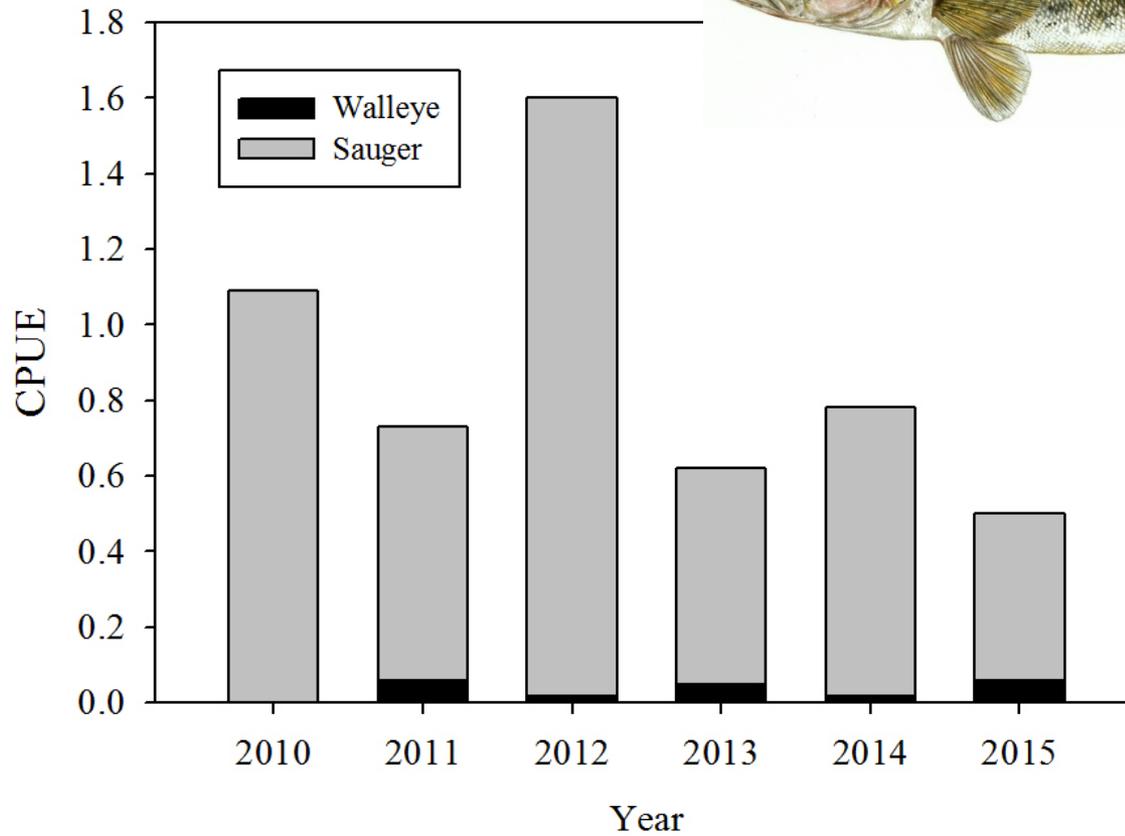
- Gill Nets
  - Fall
- Tagging
  - Encourage returns
- Shoreline electrofishing
  - YOY



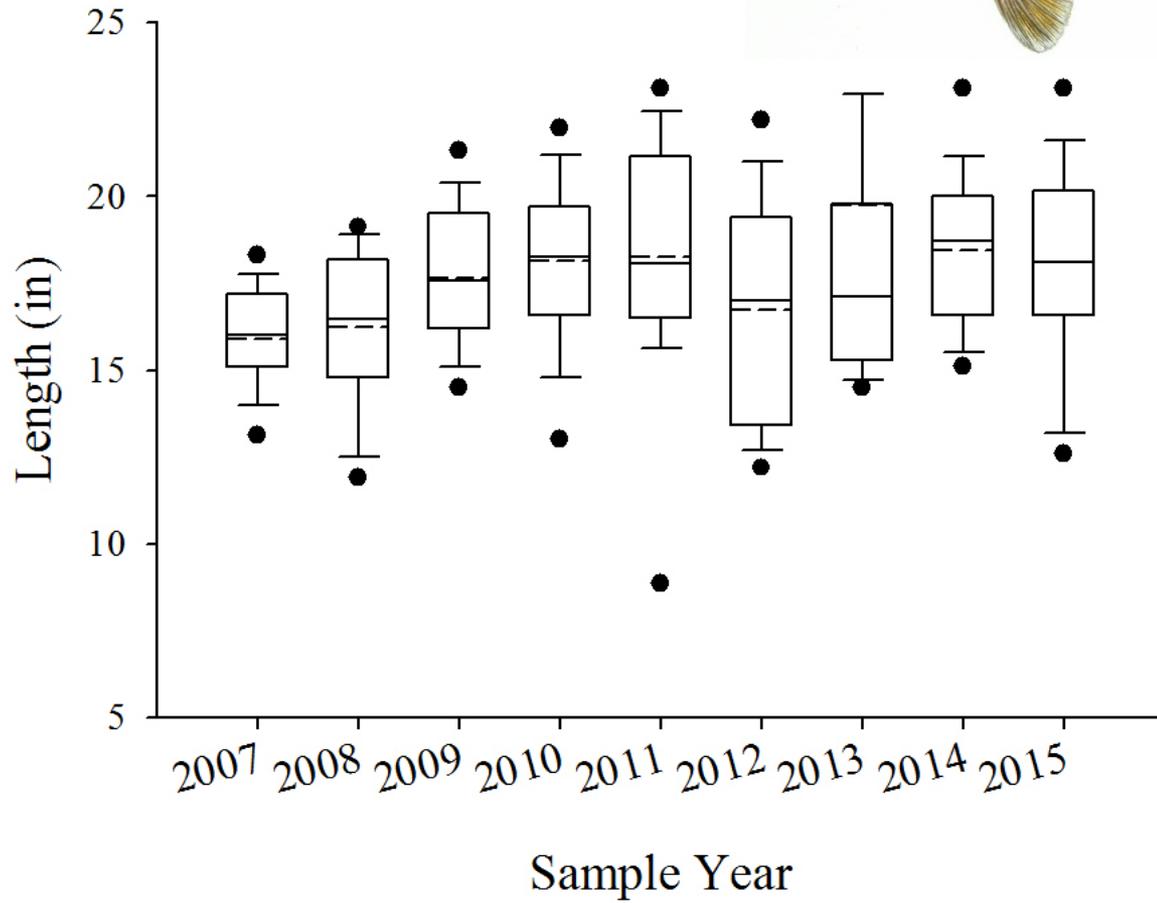
# Sauger & Walleye



# Sauger & Walleye



# Sauger



# The Plus Side of Big Water Years

River flows and temperature patterns more optimal for recruitment



# Evaluation of the reintroduction of shovelnose sturgeon into the Bighorn River system, Wyoming.

Sam Hochhalter



# Sturgeon in the Bighorn River

Sturgeon migrated out of lower Yellowstone River to spawn in Bighorn and its tributaries

Completion of Yellowtail Dam in 1965 blocked spawning run



# Sturgeon Reintroduction in the Bighorn River

## Objectives

- 1) Establish a self-sustaining population of sturgeon
- 2) Provide a unique sport fishing opportunity
- 3) Increase biodiversity of Bighorn River



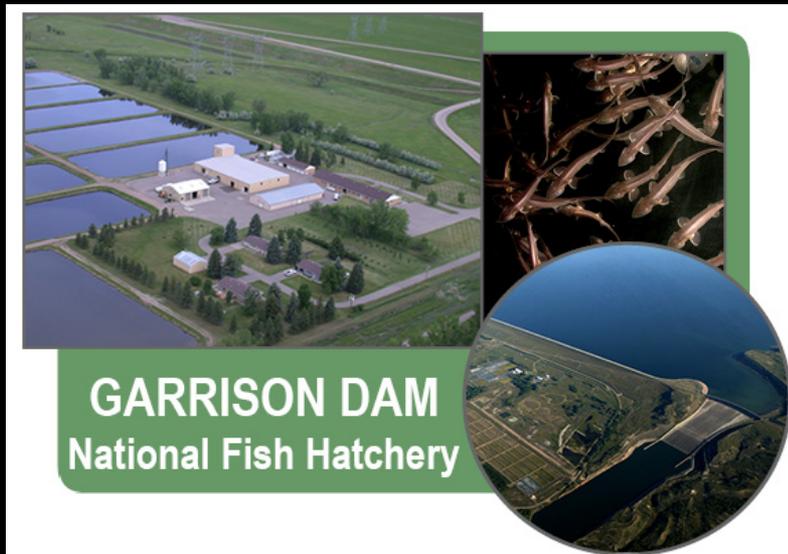
# Sturgeon Reintroduction in the Bighorn River

Two Key Project Partners: MTFWP and Garrison National Fish Hatchery

Eggs and milt collected from fish in the Powder River, MT

Fertilized eggs sent to Garrison

Fingerlings and fry sent to WGFD



# Sturgeon Reintroduction in the Bighorn River

1995 – EA outlining reintroduction

1996 – First fry and fingerlings stocked

Since 1996, > 600,000 sturgeon stocked in Bighorn and tribs



# Sturgeon Reintroduction in the Bighorn River

## Objectives

- 1) Establish a self-sustaining population of sturgeon
- 2) Provide a unique sport fishing opportunity
- 3) Increase biodiversity of Bighorn River

?????



# Research Project

## Objectives:

- 1) Identify spawning sites
- 2) Model embryo drift distances
- 3) Validate drift distance estimates with larval drift sampling



# Research Project

## Objectives:

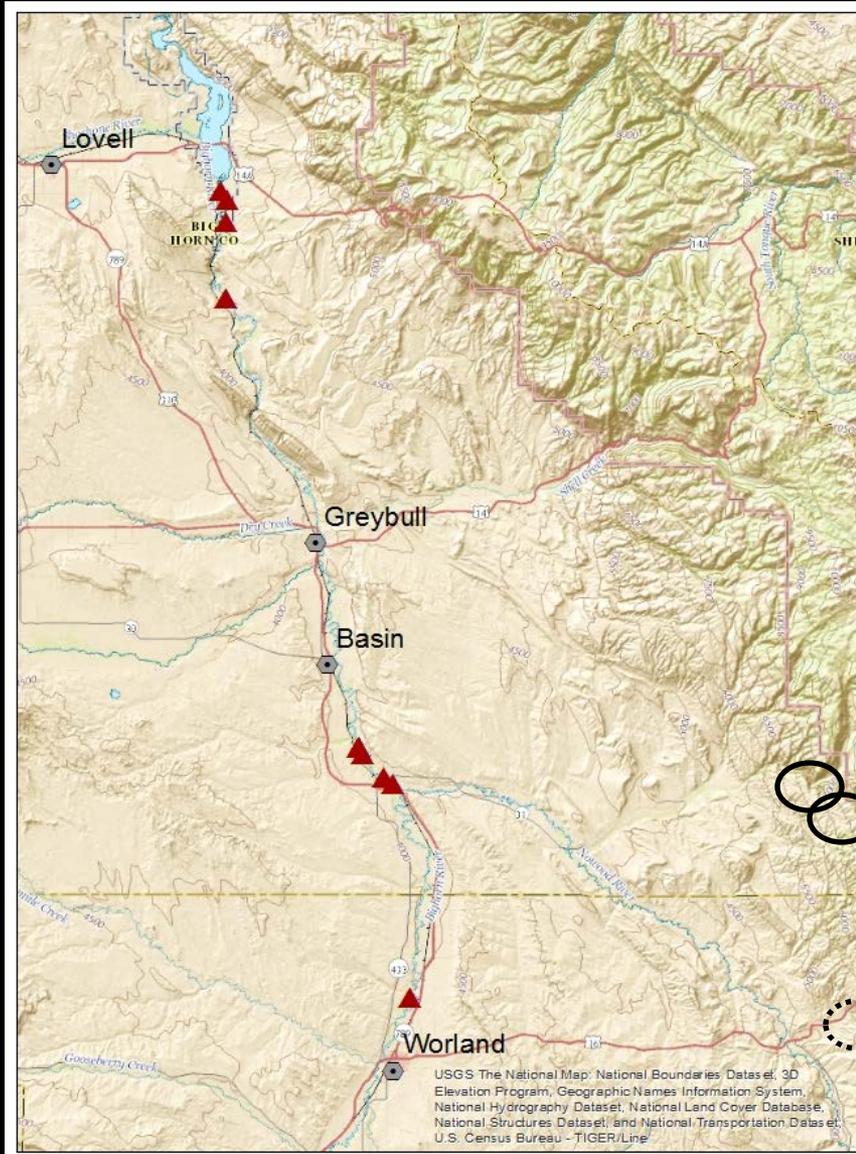
### 1) Identify spawning sites

Trotlines and trammel nets to catch sturgeon

50 radio transmitters, 26 implanted this spring/summer



# Research Project



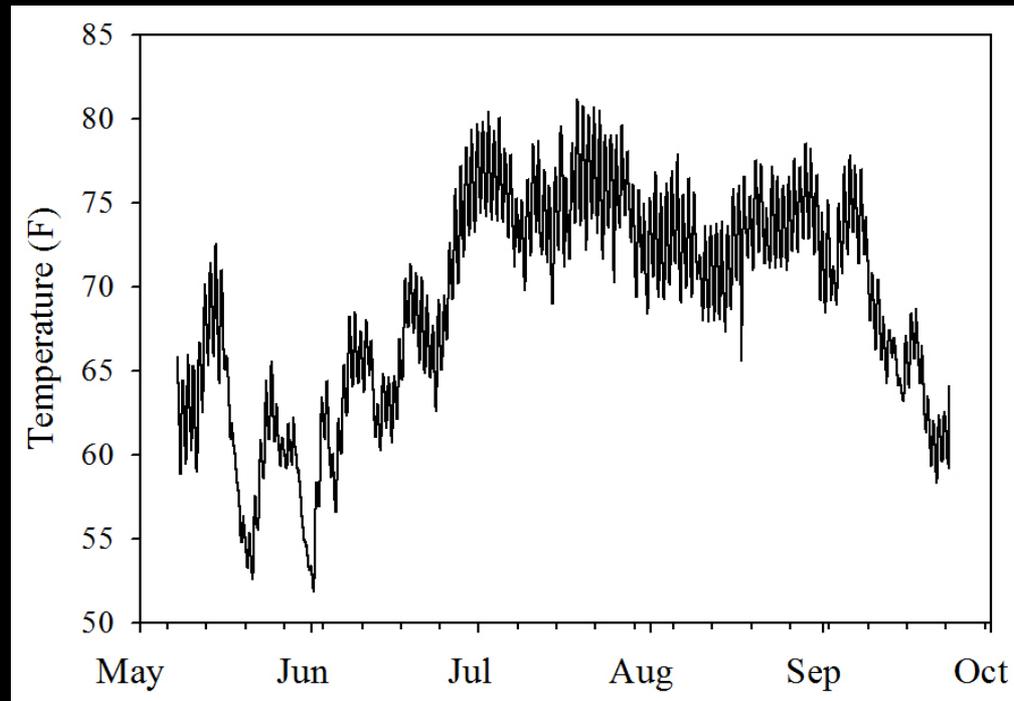
# Research Project

## Objectives:

2) Model embryo drift distances

5 temperature loggers deployed from Worland to ML Ramp

Near bottom velocity measured at transects



# Research Project

## Objectives:

- 3) Validate drift distance estimates  
Larval driftnet sampling



# Expected Outcomes

- To stock or not to stock?
- Seasonal movement patterns will be used to develop monitoring protocol
- Identification of potential migration barriers



# Questions?



## Redirect Notice

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