

HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION OF PALLID STURGEON IN THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER: AN ORAL RETROSPECTIVE

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Historical distributions and abundances of pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) in the Yellowstone River were unknown; sampling efforts targeting pallid sturgeon did

not occur until the species was listed as endangered in 1990 although factors believed to cause population declines (mainstem diversion dams, impoundment and flow alteration of tributaries) occurred as early as 1905. Recovery efforts are focused on restoring pallid sturgeon to reaches where they historically occurred; however, the only existing information on historical distributions and abundances was in the form of the experiences and photographs of anglers. An accurate account of historical distributions and subsequent declines was needed to better understand restoration potential. Therefore, a timeline of pallid sturgeon encounters was developed by interviewing anglers that captured and photographed pallid sturgeon in the Yellowstone River.