



NEWS RELEASE

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Large Group of Sturgeon Released at Rufus Woods



(Nespelem, Wash. May 18, 2017) – Approximately 1,400 white sturgeon were released into Rufus Woods Lake on May 17, averaging about 10 inches in length. These alligator-like fish were collected as larvae from wild adult sturgeon from Lake Roosevelt and were raised at the Wells Fish Hatchery for about 10 months.

“White sturgeon are released in Wells Reservoir as one of the obligations of Douglas County Public Utility District’s FERC license for the Wells Hydroelectric Project,” said Jason McLellan, fisheries biologist for CTFW. “Due to good survival rates at Wells Hatchery, there were some surplus white sturgeon. Discussions took place around the fate of the surplus fish. Several options were considered; however, the resource managers agreed that an experimental release into Rufus Woods would be an appropriate use of these fish.”



the Rufus Woods Reservoir.

The overall objective for fisheries managers will be to evaluate the feasibility of further supplementation in

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The young sturgeon were PIT tagged and three of their scutes were removed to indicate that they had been reared in a hatchery. This marking method allows staff to monitor the fish and gather information as to whether future releases might be successful. They will be looking at entrainment rates, growth, condition, and survival rates. CTFW staff will complete field surveys over the next several years.

“The Rufus Woods experiment is something that our Resident Fish Division has wanted to pursue for some time, but funds had not been available. This just happened to be a great opportunity,” said McLellan.

This project was funded by Douglas County PUD. The Wells Fish Hatchery is operated by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. For the past couple of years, CTFW staff have been working with Douglas County PUD to capture white sturgeon larvae produced in the wild for stocking into Wells Reservoir and this year Rufus Woods has benefited from this work.

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