

Sturgeon Vignette - Sturgeon for Tomorrow

In 1977 a group of sturgeon enthusiasts from the Lake Winnebago region founded Sturgeon for Tomorrow to help preserve, protect and enhance the sturgeon resource of the Winnebago System. That group quickly grew into the largest citizen advocacy group for sturgeon in the world, and currently consists of five chapters and over 3,000 members. Through tremendous dedication and hard work, Sturgeon for Tomorrow (SFT) has raised and donated over \$900,000 for sturgeon research, management, and education since its inception. SFT has funded a wide variety of projects over the years including the sturgeon guard program, the sturgeon history project, purchase of sampling equipment, spawning and nursery habitat construction, sturgeon population assessments, sturgeon propagation, and the Upper Fox River sturgeon rehabilitation project. SFT also provided the support necessary to ensure the enactment of the \$1,500 fine for possession of an illegal sturgeon, and actively participates in the Winnebago Citizens Sturgeon Advisory Committee. I have immensely enjoyed my increased involvement with SFT since being appointed the Winnebago Sturgeon Biologist, and I look forward to collaborating with the organization on many projects in the future!



Electrofishing boat purchased by SFT



Bamboo Bend spawning site funded in part by SFT



Sturgeon Guard program partially funded by SFT



Sturgeon History Project funded in part by SFT



Sturgeon for Tomorrow funds the rearing of 500 sturgeon fingerlings at the UW Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences. These fish are annually released (since 2002) into the Upper Fox River.

Stocked fingerlings will hopefully help rebuild the upper Fox River spawning stock and will also allow us to estimate natural recruitment within the population.

Right – Bill Casper, one of the founders of Sturgeon for Tomorrow, holds a fingerling lake sturgeon prior to its release into the upper Fox River at Princeton.



If you are interested in further information about Sturgeon for Tomorrow or interested in attending one of their five annual fundraising banquets, please call:

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| Pat Braasch | SFT West Central Chapter
(Oshkosh-West Shore)
Banquet March 19, 2016 in Oshkosh | 920-231-4708 |
| Matt Woods | SFT Upper Lakes Chapter President
Banquet September 9, 2016 in Orihula | 920-582-0113 |
| Jim Patt | SFT Southwest Chapter President
(Fond du Lac)
Banquet January 7, 2017 in Fond du Lac | 920-922-7136 |
| Dan Groeschel | SFT Main Chapter President
(East Shore)
Banquet January 21, 2017 in Kiel | 920-923-1077 |
| Wayne Hoelzel | SFT Northern Half Chapter President
(North Shore)
Banquet February 4, 201 in Darboy | 920-725-1206 |

I Hope to see you there!

Ryan Koenigs, Winnebago System Sturgeon Biologist, February 17, 2016