

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Ecological Services - Nebraska Field Office PRRIP Governance Committee Meeting June 8, 2015

#### **Summary:**

- The Service does not support two thumbs up for Big Question 9 because of lingering uncertainties
- The Service believes a Program workshop/symposium involving experts knowledgeable about pallid sturgeon biology is an essential step toward addressing these uncertainties

## Proposed Questions for the Pallid Sturgeon Workshop:

- 1. What is pallid sturgeon use of the Platte River?
- 2. What is the relationship between pallid sturgeon use and flow?
- 3. To what extent does Program water management affect flow?
- 4. What is an adverse impact for pallid sturgeon on the Platte River?

Big Question 9: Do Program flow management actions in the central Platte River avoid adverse impacts to pallid sturgeon in the lower Platte River?

- Big Question 9 concludes no adverse impact
- Did not specify type of impact(s)
- Service suggests a clear description of a criterion (or criteria) to define impact
- Then assess if Program water management has impacted the pallid sturgeon



#### **Program Water Effects to Habitat:**

- Program water management activities would be very small to undetectable
- Decreases in pallid sturgeon habitat is generally around 3 percent
- The maximum potential reduction in habitat is 9 percent

**Big Question 9** 



## Inability to detect Program water does not equal "no adverse impact":

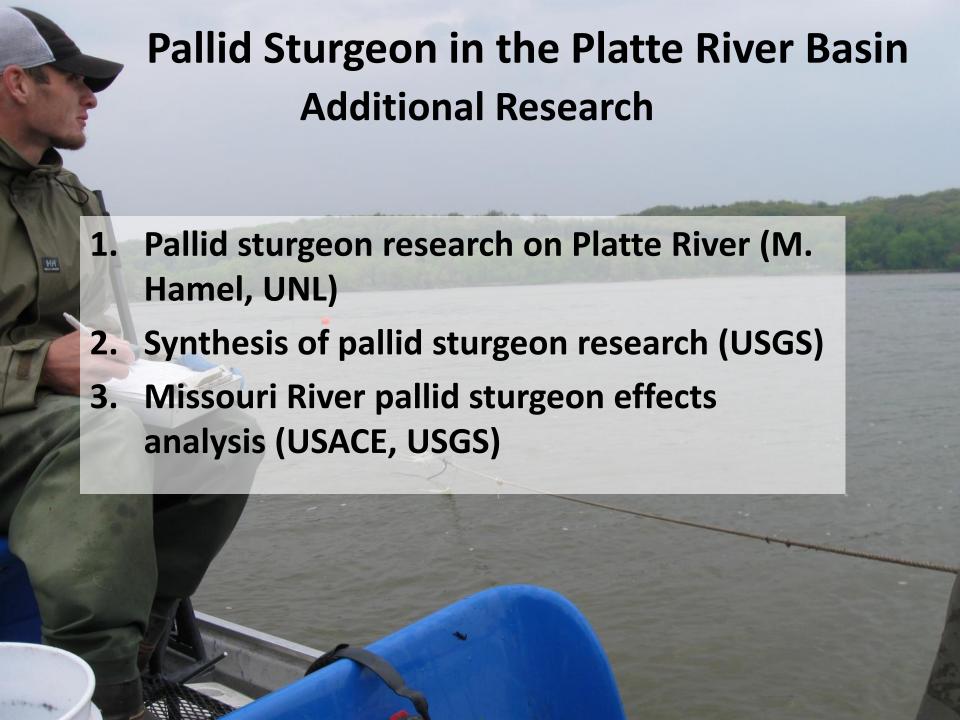
	Species Impact	
Flow Detection	Detect Flow, Impact	Detect Flow, Not
		Impact
	Not Detect Flow,	Not Detect Flow, Not
	Impact	Impact

Big Question 9 only addresses flow detection

**Big Question 9** 

#### **Program Water Effects to Habitat:**

- Downstream of the Elkhorn River confluence 3 to 9 percent habitat loss equates to 192 to 640 acre reduction in pallid sturgeon habitat
- Pallid sturgeon is documented upstream of the Elkhorn confluence
- Downstream of the Loup River confluence 3 to 9 percent habitat loss equates to 640 to 1,984 acre reduction



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