

**Potential Impacts to Pallid Sturgeon – Implications for the Least Tern/Piping Plover
Structured Decision-making Process
March 8-9, 2016 Governance Committee Meeting**

The following discussion about effects to pallid sturgeon is specific to those actions described in the structured decision-making (SDM) process being implemented by the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) for least terns and piping plovers. Any land management action described in the SDM alternatives would not impact pallid sturgeon; therefore, actions described in stay the course (STC) and Alternatives A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, and B3 would not impact pallid sturgeon. Alternatives A4 and B4 include flow-related components and could potentially impact pallid sturgeon, either positively or negatively.

The Service acknowledges the uncertainty related to pallid sturgeon impacts and we are committed to discussing this topic in detail at the Governance Committee meeting in June 2016. We do believe it is important to highlight, at a broad scale, the suite of potential impacts to pallid sturgeon associated with the SDM alternatives. Included below are two potential impacts to pallid sturgeon and we acknowledge that further investigation may be necessary. Water use during the tern and plover nesting time period could reduce the amount of water for releases that may be capable of benefiting pallid sturgeon. Additionally, research from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln may indicate that flow releases similar to those under Alternatives A4 and B4 could, at certain times, reduce species occurrence in the lower Platte River.