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**For Immediate Release
February 2, 2009**

CCRIFC Seeking Sturgeon Information in the Kinbasket Reservoir

Columbia Basin – Sturgeon have been in the Columbia Basin for millions of years and there have been fossil records that date back to prehistoric times. Since the turn of the century and increased settlement in the region, the sturgeon has been pushed to near extinction through over-fishing, loss of habitat and other various factors.

Through funding provided by BC Hydro's Water Use Planning Monitoring Program, the Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission (CCRIFC) are excited to explore the possibility of the presence of these giants of the deep in the Kinbasket Reservoir.

"Today CCRIFC is making a call for the public to pass along all of their sightings of the sturgeon in the Kinbasket Reservoir," said Jaime Cristales of CCRIFC.

"Whether it was yesterday or 40 years ago, your local knowledge of current or historical sightings would assist us in locating sturgeons there. Any information you may have would be greatly appreciated."

The Kinbasket Reservoir is located north of Revelstoke and Golden, and flows into the Columbia River that winds its way to the Pacific Ocean. Historically, it has been reported that white sturgeon utilized the upper Columbia River, and the focus of this project is to determine if white sturgeons are currently living there.

This information that will be collected is vital to future planning in this area, especially if sturgeons are proven to be currently located there. The goal of this project is to work towards the preservation and rehabilitation of the fish and its habitat.

White sturgeons are the largest freshwater fish species in North America – capable of reaching lengths up to 20ft and weighing near 400lbs. Sturgeon are 200 million years old and have a very prehistoric look, they tend to be bottom feeders, feeding on organisms that they detect with their long, sensitive barbels.

"Public participation will certainly help our efforts," continued Cristales. "Once we determine where the sturgeon are, or have been, we can develop strategies to return it to a healthy population."

Information including current sightings or pre-dam sightings would aid this project immensely. If you have any information, please contact Jaime Cristales, Project Communications Manager, toll free to 1-877-837-2124.

Background

CCRIFC is a non-profit organization representing the interest of the Ktunaxa Nation and Shuswap Indian Band relating to fisheries and environmental issues.

BC Hydro is the third largest electric utility in Canada, BC Hydro serves customers in an area containing over 94% of British Columbia's population.

BC Hydro endeavours to provide energy solutions to its customers in an environmentally and socially responsible way by balancing British Columbians' energy needs with the concerns of the environment.

vigorously protect our interests,” concluded Teneese.

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For Further Information Contact:

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