

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Re: Atlantic sturgeon research protocol - peer review

**Date:**Wed, 18 Nov 2009 19:35:08 -0500

**From:**David Secor <[secor@umces.edu](mailto:secor@umces.edu)>

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Hello Kim,

In attached I provide comments as sticky notes - sorry if that's cumbersome....Also, I am afraid I sent you on a bit of a treasure hunt looking for references. If you can't find some that I allude to (I just can't seem to find time in office to track these down), let me know and I will dig them up.

I thought document was quite good on detail and annotation, figures, and presenting state of the art science. A couple weaknesses that could be remedied in this or future versions,

1. Ease of use - a novice really has to dig in this document and when there are multiple approaches or uncertainty presented, very little guidance is given as to what an investigator should do. The best guidelines/manuals provide this perspective - with caveats of course that every situation is different. In several instances such as taxonomic identification and collection procedures I was disappointed that there was not greater clarity that some procedure was preferred (for now). Your group might think about Tables that bullet preferred protocols across classes of procedures. I have seen this in manuals and it is very helpful - readers would still dig into text but tables would provide guidance on what procedures were deemed better and where more info could be found in text of document.

2. Having said all this, I like the fact that the document was not prescriptive (for now). I think as we move towards more rigorous science in assessment and recovery, we will need to further standardize procedures in the future - I think its worth to start thinking about this for important issues such as demographic assessment, tagging, genetic sampling. For instance, if one comes across a sturgeon as a bycatch observer, what is minimum data that should be collected and how should it be collected? Protocols have been very standardized for pallids - a species for which I've served on review panels - see

<http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/WildlifePlans/PallidFprotocols.pdf>

This may be where our Atlantic and shortnose could go in the future with improved state coordination of assessment.

Cheers,

Dave

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