

USGS Presents Sturgeon Research at Big Muddy Wildlife Canoe Float Saturday, September 29, 2007

Over 80 canoeists battled strong southern winds on the Missouri River, September 29, 2007 to learn about its fish and wildlife. USGS biologist Mandy Annis and ecologist Aaron DeLonay teamed up with Andy Plauck and Emily Kunz from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to explain current research on the Missouri River's endangered pallid sturgeon. The event was sponsored by the non-profit Missouri River Communities Network in Columbia, Missouri.

Using a shovelnose sturgeon as a surrogate for the rare pallid sturgeon, Aaron fascinated the audience with his examination of the fish and an explanation of why the pallid is endangered. He told how USGS researchers track the sturgeons using telemetry equipment and map the river's depth, velocity, and substrate to identify the most used habitats.

Mandy explained the reproductive physiology studies underway at the USGS to answer the questions related to the "inner" workings of the sturgeon: are they spawning, are their eggs contaminated, and what other reasons might interfere with their reproductive abilities? The two approaches help identify the factors contributing to the pallid sturgeon's decline, and eventually will help resource managers make informed decisions about how to recover the endangered pallid sturgeon.

For information, http://www.cerc.usgs.gov/Research/missouri_river.htm

