



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Northeast Region

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SUBJECT: Evidence of sturgeon natural reproduction observed at Keshena Falls

KESHENA, Wis. – For the first time in more than a century, there is evidence that sturgeon are naturally-reproducing at Keshena Falls.

In a survey conducted last night, fisheries staff with the Menominee Indian Tribe, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service captured 10 larval sturgeon. The larvae are the result of a joint project to restore spawning lake sturgeon to their ancestral spawning grounds at Keshena Falls and the upper Wolf River within the Menominee Indian Reservation. This objective is being met through the capture and upstream transfer of 100 sturgeon per year for 10 years, with the second year recently being completed.

“The capture of sturgeon larvae at Keshena Falls is a historic event and shows that the joint efforts between the Wisconsin DNR and the Menominee Indian Tribe are yielding successful results,” explained DNR sturgeon biologist Ryan Koenigs. “Sturgeon have not only spawned at Keshena Falls the last two years, but we have now been able to document successful natural reproduction as well.”

Annual spawning runs of sturgeon below the falls ended in the late 1800s with the construction of two dams downstream. Sturgeon are culturally important to the Menominee Tribe and current efforts are aimed at reconnecting tribal membership with their native culture Tribe.

“This is a historic day for the Menominee Nation. Once again, history has repeated itself with the return of the Sturgeon to Keshena Falls. The Menominee people are grateful to the Creator for this day,” said Tribal Chairman Craig Corn. “The dedication of a few tribal members and members of the federal government and state government helped form the model of collaboration, and today we get to see the benefits of those efforts. So today, be thankful and joyful for the sturgeon that they found their way home.”