

Speedy surgery puts transmitters into Hudson fish

May 29 2014, by Jim Fitzgerald



Biologists search nets for endangered sturgeon north of the Tappan Zee bridge in the Hudson River north of Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014. Working under the auspices of the New York State Thruway Authority, the scientists are nearly halfway through the tagging of 120 sturgeon and implanting them with electronic transmitters. They hope information gleaned from the transmitters can help scientists determine the effect of the Tappan Zee bridge construction on the federally endangered sturgeon. In the Hudson River, sturgeon spawn from April through May. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

Biologists are performing surgery on scores of endangered fish in New York's Hudson River.

Shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon are being caught in nets, anesthetized and subjected to small incisions so transmitters can be inserted into their [body cavities](#).

The idea is to track the fishes' movements and see how they are affected by the construction of a huge bridge spanning the river. In addition, it's hoped the information can boost the species' long-term prospects.

On Wednesday a biologist on a rocking boat performed one such operation, cutting and stitching in just minutes before releasing the fish.

If all goes well, its movements will be tracked for months by underwater receivers, relaying its travels and feeding habits.



A boat makes its way up the Hudson River north of the Tappan Zee bridge,

under construction in Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014. As part of a condition of constructing the new bridge, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has required the state Thruway Authority to track and study federally endangered sturgeon that live in the river near the bridge. Scientists are tagging and tracking sturgeon using surgically implanted electronic tracking devices to study whether the bridge construction affects their behavior or reproductive life cycles. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Biologist Chris Burnett throws a sturgeon back into the Hudson River north of the Tappan Zee bridge in Tarrytown, N.Y. Wednesday, May 28, 2014, after surgically implanting an electronic transmitter in the fish's belly. Scientists hope the tracking devices will allow them to track and study the federally endangered species to detect behavioral or adverse affects during construction of the new Tappan Zee bridge. While the sturgeon's life and reproductive cycle is complex, the fish spawns in the Hudson River in April and May. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



A biologist sutures up the incision in the belly of a shortnose sturgeon_ placed on it's back on a wooden support for the surgical procedure_ after implanting an electronic tracking device in the fish's belly aboard a boat in the Hudson River above Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014. New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation has required the New York State Thruway Authority to track and study the federally endangered sturgeon during construction of the new Tappan Zee bridge, which spans the Hudson River in the suburbs north of New York City. The implanted tracking devices will allow scientists to determine whether construction of the new bridge is affecting the fish's behavior and reproductive cycles. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Biologist Chris Burnett places a shortnosed sturgeon on a board containing a ruler for measuring before implanting an electronic an electronic tracking device in the fish's belly near the Tappan Zee Bridge north of Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014. The tagging is part of The shortnose sturgeon and its much larger cousin, the Atlantic sturgeon, are on the federal endangered species list. Both types of sturgeon will be tracked and studied as the state of New York complies with safety measures that were conditions of the New York Thruway Authority's permit to build the new Tappan Zee bridge, scheduled for completion in 2018. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Biologist John O'Herron prepares a shortnose sturgeon for minor surgery while aboard a boat in the Hudson River in Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014, after O'Herron and his partner hauled it in from a fishing net. Protecting endangered shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon from harm during the construction of the new Tappan Zee bridge spanning the Hudson in New York city's Northern suburbs was a prerequisite required of the New York State Thruway Authority during the bridge construction. The biologists are implanting electronic tracking devices in sturgeon to allow scientists to track and study the fish. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



Biologists Chris Burnett, left, and John O'Herron pull a shortnose sturgeon from a fishing net as they search the in the Hudson River for endangered sturgeon north of the Tappan Zee Bridge in Tarrytown, N.Y., Wednesday, May 28, 2014. The shortnose sturgeon and its much larger cousin, the Atlantic sturgeon, are on the federal endangered species list. Protecting endangered fish by tagging and tracking them was among a number of safety measures enforced as conditions of the New York State Thruway Authority's permit to build a new Tappan Zee bridge across the Hudson River in the northern suburbs of New York. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

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