



Introduction: Fish for the King – by Terry Slack

My name is Terry Slack and my family came to British Columbia to homestead on Iona Island in the mouth of the Fraser River. We fished for many years. I fished for 55 years on the Fraser River. I have caught sturgeon in my gill nets numerous times, and treated them with respect, removed them from the net and put them back to the river. In the early years, in the 1950's, why would I have done that? There were no regulations, you could kill these fish or you could sell these fish to a fish company. In that time my grandfather and my uncle said "No, these are fish that belong to the King". That is what they understood in England. Atlantic sturgeon coming up into the English Rivers in the 16th and 17th century belonged to the King of England, and they should not be consumed by the fisherman or the common people of England. So we had to catch them and release them during those days, and that came back with us to Canada. When we were fishing for sturgeon we respected the fish and returned them unharmed to the Fraser River and we never ate sturgeon. My Dad said we would like to eat sturgeon but they are the King's fish.