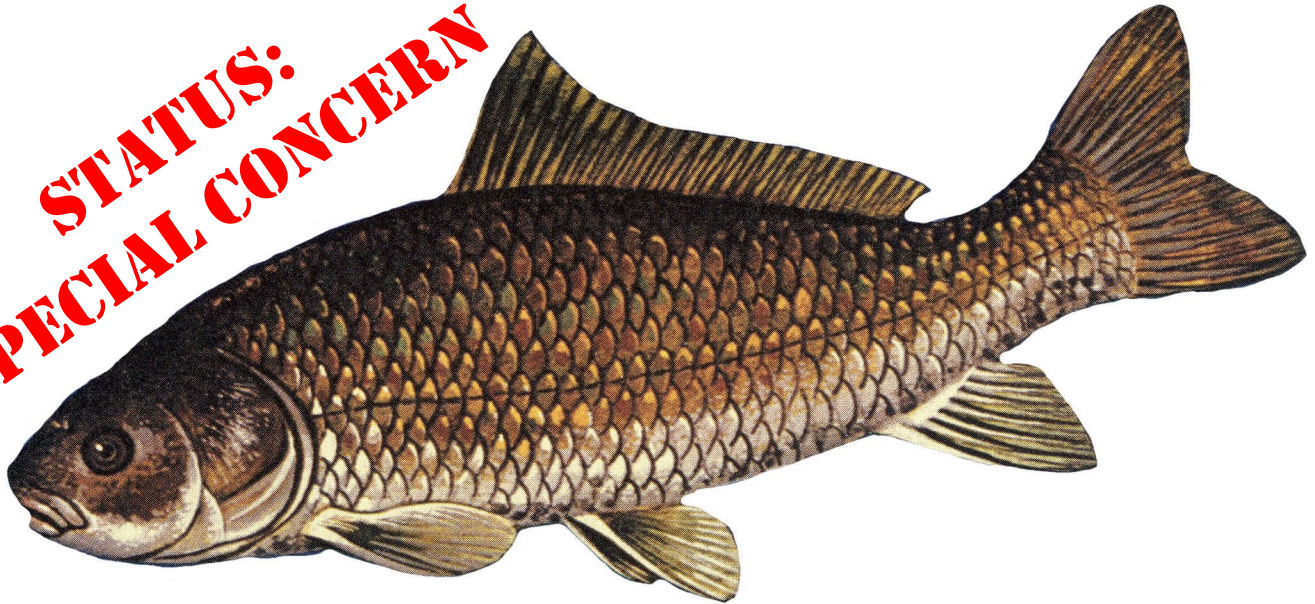




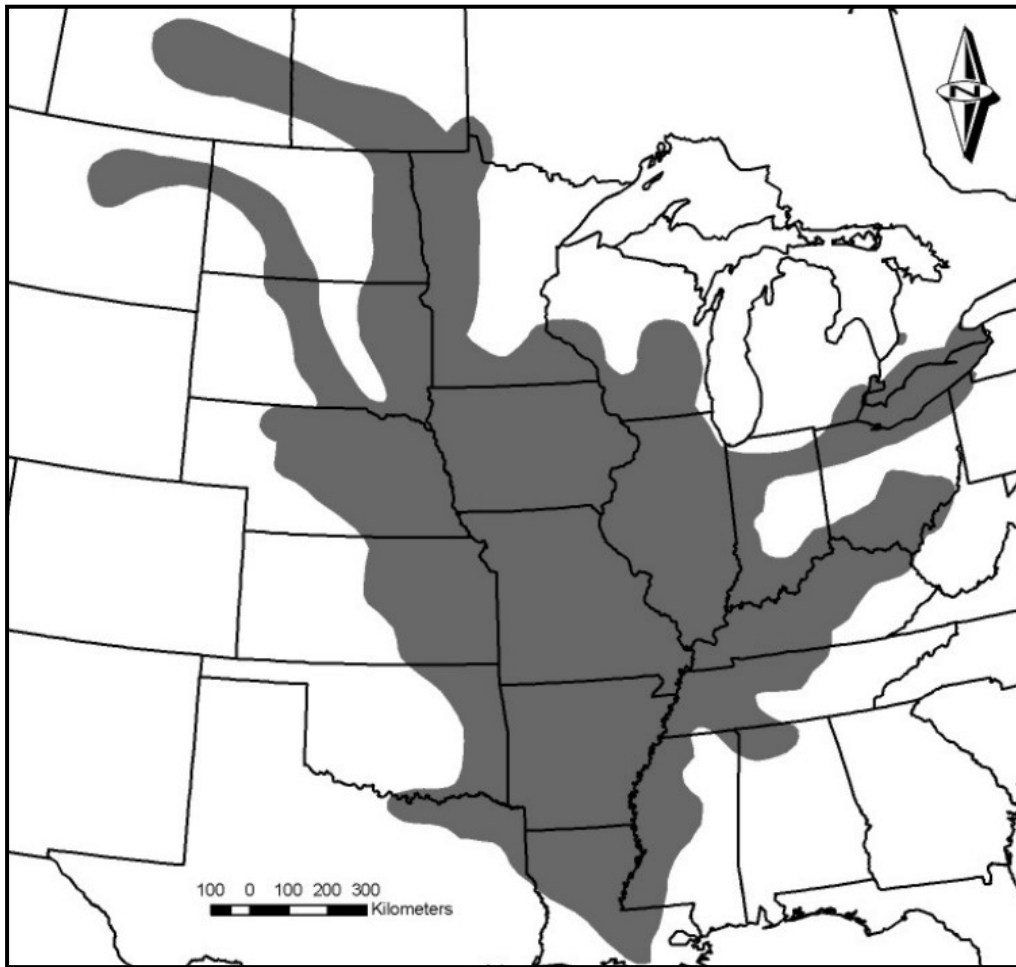
Species at Risk Profile Series: Bigmouth Buffalo

**STATUS:
SPECIAL CONCERN**



- Bigmouth Buffalo are a sucker fish, and resemble the more common but invasive Carp.
- Unlike Carp, Bigmouth Buffalo do not have barbels (fleshy filament) under their mouth.
- Bigmouth Buffalo also do not have a stiff spine leading the dorsal (top) and anal (bottom rear) fins, while Carp do.
- Their long, curved dorsal fin distinguishes Bigmouth Buffalo from most other suckers.
- Bigmouth Buffalo can grow nearly a meter long and can weigh as much as a Labrador retriever (36 kg).
- They live in lakes and slow-moving rivers and feed almost entirely on invertebrates.
- They feed both on the bottom and in the middle of the water column.
- Bigmouth Buffalo spawn in flooded shoreline vegetation.
- They may travel hundreds of kilometers, searching for a suitable spawning site.
- Adults are relatively free of predation, thanks to their size and body shape.
- Bigmouth Buffalo are tolerant of turbid conditions, and actually appear to prefer them.





Conservation

- Bigmouth Buffalo are listed as Special Concern in Canada.
- Changes in water management in the Qu'Appelle River basin have eliminated spawning grounds and led to drastic declines of Bigmouth Buffalo in the watershed.
- In some years, it's possible Bigmouth Buffalo may not be able to spawn at all in the Qu'Appelle system.

Get involved

- Read the assessment and status report for Bigmouth Buffalo [here](#).
- If accidentally captured while angling, release quickly. Minimize handling and exposure to the air.

Photo credit: Bigmouth Buffalo (*Ictiobus cyprinellus*) by NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory retrieved from https://www.flickr.com/photos/noaa_glerl/4046648552 licensed under CC-BY-SA 2.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/> (front)

Range map credit: COSEWIC. 2009. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Bigmouth Buffalo *Ictiobus cyprinellus*, Great Lakes - Upper St. Lawrence populations and Saskatchewan - Nelson River populations, in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vii + 40 pp. (www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status_e.cfm).