



APRIL 1, 2020

**NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD MEETING
(WEBINAR)**

<http://fishhabitat.org>



National Fish Habitat Board Webinar
Wednesday, April 1, 2020
1:00 – 3:35 PM ET

Webinar and dial in information:

<https://zoom.us/j/358276716>

Phone: 1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 358 276 716

Agenda: *Note: time are in ET

Time	Agenda Topic	Board Book Tab	Lead(s)
1:00 – 1:20	Attendance & Welcome <i>Desired outcomes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board action to approve the agenda and notes from the January Meeting via webinar. • Board awareness of future meeting schedule and locations. • Board welcome to Adam Ringia – new Tribal Board member representative 	Tab 1	Ed Schriever (<i>Board Chair, Director – Idaho Department of Fish and Game</i>) & Board Staff
1:20 – 1:30	USFWS Update <i>Desired outcomes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board awareness of the status of the USFWS FY20 FHP allocation process. 		David Hoskins (<i>US Fish and Wildlife Service</i>)
1:30 – 1:40	NOAA Fisheries Update <i>Desired outcomes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board awareness of the NOAA-funded FHP projects in FY20. 	Tab 2	Sam Rauch (<i>NOAA Fisheries</i>)
1:40 – 1:50	Waters to Watch Overview <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board awareness and endorsement of the nomination list for the 2020 Waters to Watch campaign. 	Tab 3	Ryan Roberts (<i>NFHP Board Staff, AFWA</i>)
1:50 – 2:05	NFHP Legislative Team Update <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board awareness of the status of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act. 	Tab 4	Christy Plumer or proxy (<i>NFHP Legislative Team, TRCP</i>)
2:05 – 2:20	Multistate Conservation Grant <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board awareness of planned changes to the Multistate Conservation Grant process. 		Ryan Roberts (<i>NFHP Board Staff, AFWA</i>)
2:20 – 2:50	NFHP Action Plan Revisions <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board discussion of the revised Action Plan. • Board review of timeline for the revised Action Plan. 	Tab 5	Gary Whelan (<i>NFHP Science and Data Committee Co-Chair, MI DNR</i>)

2:50 – 3:15 NFHP Work Plan Development

Desired outcome:

- **Board discussion** of potential items to include in a biennial work plan to accompany the revised NFHP Action Plan.

Tab 6

Alex Atkinson (NFHP
Board Staff, NOAA
Fisheries)

3:15 – 3:25 Beyond the Pond Discussion

Desired outcome:

- **Board discussion** of next steps on Beyond the Pond.

Ed Schriever (Board
Chair, Director – Idaho
Department of Fish and
Game)

3:25 – 3:35 NFHP MOU

Desired outcome:

- **Board awareness** of the status of the NFHP MOU.

Ed Schriever (Board
Chair, Director – Idaho
Department of Fish and
Game)

Draft National Fish Habitat Board Meeting Summary: January 15, 2020

Board Members Present:

Chair Ed Schriever (At-Large State Seat)	Doug Boyd (At-Large Sportfishing Seat)
Vice Chair Chris Moore (MAFMC)	Christy Plumer (TRCP)
Peter Aarrestad (NEAFWA)	Mike Leonard (ASA)
Stan Allen (PSMFC)	Doug Beard (USGS)
Alison Bowden (TNC)	Ron Regan (AFWA)
Chris Cantrell (WAFWA)	Susan Pultz <i>for</i> Sam Rauch (NOAA Fisheries)
David Hoskins <i>for</i> Aurelia Skipwith (USFWS)	Dan Shively <i>for</i> Rob Harper (USFS)
Kim Dibble (AFS)	Bobby Wilson (SEAFWA)
Bryan Moore <i>for</i> Chris Wood (Trout Unlimited)	John Goodin (EPA)
Doug Nygren (MAFWA)	

Board Members Absent: None

Other Meeting Attendees:

Daniel Wieferich (USGS, NFHP Staff, SDC)	Jennifer Graves (Desert FHP)
Ryan Roberts (AFWA, NFHP Staff)	Alicia Marrs (CA Fish Passage Forum & Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative)
Gary Whelan (Michigan DNR, NFHP Staff, SDC)	Steve Perry (Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture)
Alex Atkinson (NOAA Fisheries, NFHP Staff)	Richard Mitchell (EPA)
Eric MacMillan (USFWS NFHP Staff)	Callie McMunigal (USFWS – Region 5)
Therese Thompson (WNTI Coordinator)	Jeff Newton (USFWS)
Jessica Coakley <i>for</i> Lisa Havel (Atlantic Coastal FHP)	Bill Wright (USFWS)
Jeff Boxrucker (Reservoir FHP)	Wesley Daniel (USGS)
Joe Nohner (Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership)	
Debbie Hart (Southeast Alaska FHP)	

Future Board Meetings:

- April 1-2, 2020 Board Meeting – hosted by Trout Unlimited in Arlington, VA
- June 24, 2020 Board Webinar from 2-4 PM ET
- Week of October 19, 2020 Board Meeting and FHP Workshop – hosted by Idaho Fish & Game in Nampa, ID (exact dates for workshop and meeting TBD)

Approved by Motion:

- October Meeting Summary; motion by Chris Cantrell, seconded by Allison Bowden.
- Vote on electing Bobby Wilson as the next Board Vice Chair; motion by Pete Aarrestad, seconded by: Ron Regan.

Approved by Vote:

- Elect Bobby Wilson (SEAFWA) as the next Board Vice Chair (term to begin at conclusion of January 15, 2020 Board meeting); vote passes.

Notes and Discussion

Attendance, Welcome, & Tribal Board Member (*Ed Schriever, Board Chair*)

The Board voted to approve the October 2019 meeting summary and Board Chair, Ed Schriever, reminded members of the upcoming meeting schedule; April 1-2 in Arlington, VA at TU headquarters, June 24 via webinar, and week of October 19 for an FHP workshop and in-person Board meeting in Nampa, ID. The Board Chair informed the Board that the decision regarding a Tribal representative is currently with the ELT and will be announced soon.

NFHP Board Vice Chair (*Ed Schriever, Board Chair*)

Stan Allen spoke on behalf of the ad hoc committee (Mike Leonard, Alison Bowden, Bryan Moore, Stan Allen) that was charged with nominating a candidate from the state representatives of the Board for Board Vice Chair. Stan informed the Board that the committee spoke with each of the willing state representatives who are eligible for the Vice Chair Board seat and asked them all a series of questions. Ed Schriever announced that the committee recommends Bobby Wilson as the nominee for Board Vice Chair. After a motion by Pete Aarrestad and a second by Ron Regan, the Board voted in favor of electing Bobby Wilson as the next Vice Chair. His term will begin January 16, 2020 and be for 2 years (expiring January 15, 2022).

Legislative Team & Working Group Updates (*Christy Plumer – Legislative Team, Bryan Moore - Legislative Working Group*)

Christy Plumer updated the Board on the status of the NFHP legislation since October 2019. The National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act (NFHCTPA) has been approved by both the House and Senate by voice votes in slightly different forms as part of larger packages. The latest package is the Senate amended version of [H.R. 925 – America’s Conservation Enhancement Act](#) which was approved by the full Senate on January 9th, 2020, and currently awaits a House vote. The Senate version of the package contains potentially complicated or controversial elements that could slow the progress of NFHCTPA if House action is not taken soon (e.g. predation on livestock; predation by black vultures and ravens; and a waiver under the Toxic Substances Control Act for lead fishing tackle). The timing on a House vote is unclear. Christy reminded the Board that some technical changes can be made after the bill’s full passage. The legislative team will send around language and messaging for non-Federal Board members and FHPs to send to partners asking for their support to pass H.R. 925.

Bryan Moore presented a table of the required, time sensitive actions outlined in the NFHP legislation along with proposed leads of those actions. Updating the NFHP Charter and Bylaws would also be required if the legislation were to pass and was discussed. The legislative working group will continue to advance planning for the potential changes to NFHP as outlined in the legislation.

USFWS Update & FHP Reports (*Eric MacMillan, Board staff*)

Eric MacMillan announced that he recently accepted a new position as the Chief of the Branch of Aquatic Habitat and Species Conservation, and will remain involved with NFHP, but at a different level. The USFWS is looking to backfill Eric’s previous position. Eric informed the Board that four Board members volunteered to review the FY20 FHP reports (Kim Dibble, Chris Cantrell, Pete Aarrestad, and Richard Mitchell) and that review process is in progress.

Multistate Conservation Grant Update (*Ryan Roberts, Board staff*)

- Ryan Roberts provided a brief update to the Board about the Multistate Conservation Grants. There will not be a call for National Conservation Needs (initial step in former application process) this year from AFWA

committees. AFWA's President's Task Force is developing strategic priorities that applicants will use when submitting proposals for FY21 funds. The Executive Committee will approve the new set of priorities at the upcoming North American meeting in March and application timing is likely to be similar to years prior. Board staff will update FHPs on the changes to this process at the bi-monthly call following that North American meeting in March.

NFHP Action Plan Revision (*Gary Whelan, Science & Data Committee Co-Chair*)

Gary Whelan reported to the Board that a small team is in progress making revisions to the Action Plan. In addition to incorporating Board input from surveys and the October meeting, the team is focused on making the plan timeless, simpler, and more concise. The mission remains unchanged, minor changes are recommended to the goals to reduce redundancy, and a few changes are proposed to the objectives as they're written in the 2012 Action Plan. The revised Action Plan will still include the FHP vignettes and map and will reintroduce the concept of a Board-developed annual workplan. The Board members on the small team (Pete Arrestad and Doug Beard) will be looped into revisions soon and FHPs will be asked to provide vignettes and photos for inclusion in the revised plan. The Board will receive a full draft of the revised Action Plan in mid-March for discussion at the April 1-2, 2020 Board meeting.

AFS Western Division Film Festival (*Debbie Hart, SEAKFHP Coordinator*)

Debbie Hart outlined a request from the Southeast Alaska FHP for \$3,000 to support the coordination and development of a film and photo festival to highlight fish and their habitats at the upcoming meeting of the Western Division of the American Fisheries Society in April in Vancouver. Beyond the Pond has been asked to contribute to this effort (at the \$500 or \$1000 level) and NOAA Fisheries will contribute \$1000. FishPond has committed to provide promotional items to this event and AFS will cover the venue costs. Similarly to the film festival at AFS/TWS meeting in 2019 in Reno, a trailer and materials will be developed to promote the festival and there will also be an evening, public showing of some of the films. Kim Dibble will ask the AFS Habitat Section for ways they can assist with promotion of this event in funding or social media support. Ed Schriever asked that the Board members representing regional associations return to leadership and committees to ask for support on this effort as this is an excellent opportunity to spread the mission and successes of NFHP work.

Announcement (*Ryan Roberts, Board staff*)

Ryan Roberts announced that Beyond the Pond received a \$25,000 donation from Bass Pro Shops at the end of 2019 in support of on-the-ground projects in the FHPs. Beyond the Pond will set up a mechanism, likely similar to a small grants program, for FHPs to request those funds.

Title: NOAA Fisheries Update

Desired outcome: Board awareness of the NOAA-funded FHP projects in FY20.

Background: For the past two years NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation has collaborated with the Recreational Fishing Initiative to offer an informal funding opportunity to Coastal Fish Habitat Partnerships. The opportunity intends to fund projects with both a habitat restoration or conservation component as well as a recreational community engagement component.

Announcement: In FY20, NOAA received 11 proposals from 9 FHPs. After review, NOAA will be funding the following FHP projects:

1. Atlantic Coastal FHP - \$73k to construct an oyster reef with angler engagement throughout in the Lynnhaven River, VA
2. Pacific Marine and Estuarine Partnership - \$50k for eel grass restoration and angler engagement in Upper Newport Bay, CA
3. Southeast Alaska FHP - \$12k for stream bank plantings with angler engagement following 2 barrier removals in Haines, AK
4. Western Native Trout Initiative - \$33k for outreach, sampling, and restoration to benefit Coastal Cutthroat Trout with angler engagement in Hood River, WA

NOAA will release a web story about these projects and it will be featured in the HabitatNews newsletter.

2020 Waters to Watch Recommendations



2020 Waters to Watch Project Recommendations for Endorsement by the Board

Intro:

2020 Marks the 14th year the National Fish Habitat Partnership has featured FHP projects as part of the Waters to Watch campaign.

Goal of the Waters to Watch Campaign:

The Waters to Watch campaign, implemented in support of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, aims to demonstrate that science-based aquatic habitat conservation actions make a difference to benefit aquatic habitats, local communities, anglers, and economies. The Waters to Watch campaign raises the visibility of some of the best on-the-ground aquatic habitat conservation projects implemented by individual Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs). In doing so, the Waters to Watch campaign aims to raise the visibility and support for the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) program.

The campaign highlights 10 projects on an annual basis to:

- i) Focus attention on local efforts carried out by FHPs to implement the National Fish Habitat Partnership;
- ii) Garner local and national support for, and raise awareness of, the benefits to aquatic habitat, local communities, anglers, and economies from actions implemented through the National Fish Habitat Partnership; and
- iii) Strengthen existing, and develop new, partnerships with collaborators who share NFHP's mission and goals to protect, restore, and enhance fish and aquatic communities.

Since 2007, the Waters to Watch campaign has featured over 110 model aquatic conservation projects. These projects have received media recognition across the country, raising public awareness of the activities of the FHPs. The Waters to Watch campaign provides an excellent opportunity for FHPs to publicize the progress, accomplishments, and success within the geographic area of your FHP, and at a national level, strengthen existing partners, and garner national and local support for your FHP and the program.

New for 2020:

Criteria has been established to accept the nominations of up to (5) retrospective projects that would highlight older project that have been featured on the list previously.

Communicating Waters to Watch:

A communications strategy has been put in place for the 2020 Waters to Watch campaign that will be coordinated with the FHPs of selected projects and will include:

- A National press release and potentially individual press releases highlighting specific projects at a local level.
- Targeted social media promotion via Facebook and Twitter.
- Announcement via NFHP newsletter.
- Coordination with public relations contacts within state/federal agencies and conservation organizations to raise awareness of these projects. This could include website features on state/federal agency websites or news related articles.
- Coordination with other NFHP committees and FHPs to incorporate Waters to Watch announcement into other education and outreach efforts.
- Waters to Watch project fact sheet (new for 2020)

Social Media Tips for FHPs:

- Please provide multiple high-quality images of your projects.
- Please use the hashtags (#Fishhabitat #W2W20) for your social media posts (if you have an account for your FHP).
- Please try to obtain at least one minute of video of the project site, river, stream, lake, estuary, or conservation work being done on the site.

Project Recommendations:

The following 10 projects were nominated in 2020. These projects have been reviewed by the Waters to Watch Working Group and the Chairs of the Partnerships Committee.

Waters to Watch Nominations For 2020

- 1. Bear River Estuary, Washington (Retrospective) – Pacific Marine and Estuarine Partnership**
- 2. Boone River Watershed, Iowa (Retrospective) – Fishers and Farmers Partnership**
- 3. Chipola River, Florida (Retrospective) – Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership**
- 4. Deep Creek Town Diversion and Warner Basin - Oregon (Retrospective) – Western Native Trout Initiative**
- 5. Lake Minsi, Pennsylvania – Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership**
- 6. Manalua Bay, Hawaii – Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership**
- 7. San Juan and Santiago Watersheds, California – California Fish Passage Forum**
- 8. San Luis Obispo Creek, California – Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative**
- 9. Shoshone Springs, California (Retrospective) – Desert Fish Habitat Partnership**
- 10. Tularosa River, New Mexico – Desert Fish Habitat Partnership**

We have linked the full nomination packets for your reading pleasure at the below links for you to access. The nominations are the same in either (Dropbox and Google). If you have issues accessing, please email rroberts@fishwildlife.org.

Full nomination proposals (Dropbox):

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/e6mjnzsqux53cg5/AAC3MZLKKhyH_fx0sbJoMFYga?dl=0

Full Nomination Proposals (Google docs):

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NNli76yV7_Ay4b5tEJGutFXvcC66aUfE?usp=sharing

Title: Legislative Update

Desired outcome: Board Engagement on the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act

Background:

Since the inception of the National Fish Habitat Partnership, a NFHP legislative team has been working to craft a legislative proposal that would achieve the goals as laid out by the Board and establish an organic statute for the Partnership and the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The NFHP legislative team includes representatives from Trout Unlimited, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the American Sportfishing Association, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, American Fisheries Society, the Coastal Conservation Association and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. Since 2006, this team has worked closely together to advance this legislative proposal – now known as the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act (NFHCTPA).

Previous versions of NFHCTPA have enjoyed broad bipartisan support in Congress, including bipartisan approval by the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee (the Senate Committee of jurisdiction) and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee. Until this Congress, the legislation had not been introduced in the House of Representatives since 2009, and instead the legislative team had focused on the Senate as the most likely body in which to advance the bill. The legislative team made a decision in 2019 to refocus our efforts on the House as well as the Senate, and bipartisan companion bills were introduced in each respective body. The Senate bill, S. 754, is led by Senators Mike Crapo (R, ID) and Ben Cardin (D, MD). The House bill, H.R. 1474, is championed by Congressmen Rob Wittman (R, VA-1st) and Mark Veasey (D, TX-33rd).

For several reasons, Congressional approval of NFHCTPA has been complicated, with leadership shifts, initial concerns about the scope and extent of the program, a general distaste for new federal programs and the cost of the legislation among the primary obstacles. In recent years, smaller pieces of legislation such as NFHCTPA are often unsuccessful as stand-alone bills and must move forward on larger legislative packages such as comprehensive energy legislation or public lands packages. For several Congresses now, the legislative team has worked to ensure NFHCTPA language is an integral component of any sportsmen's or public lands package.

2020 Legislative Priority and Accomplishments:

Board Priority Task A: *Continue coordination with legislative affairs team in supporting developments of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act; (assign to eligible Board members and legislative team)*

Accomplishments:

The National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act (NFHCTPA) has been approved by both the House and Senate by voice votes in slightly different forms as part of

larger packages. The latest package is the Senate amended version of **H.R. 925 – America’s Conservation Enhancement Act**. H.R. 925 was approved by the full Senate on January 9th, 2020, and currently awaits a House vote. In addition to Senate-approved NFHCTPA language, this package includes a reauthorization of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act; reauthorization of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Act; a number of reauthorizations for Chesapeake Bay Programs; and language authorizing a commission and task force to address Chronic Wasting Disease in wild cervids. The Senate version of the package also contains potential elements that could slow the progress of NFHCTPA if House action is not taken soon (e.g. a waiver under the Toxic Substances Control Act for lead fishing tackle). The timing on a House vote remains unclear but the NFHP legislative team continues to ask our legislative champions to put pressure on House Leadership to move the package forward. Representative Cunningham (D,SC-1st) spearheaded a letter to Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer on March 6th that was signed by 36 House Democrats encouraging H.R. 925, as reported by the Senate, to be taken up expeditiously on the House floor under a suspension of the rules.

Approach:

Since the start of the 116th Congress, the NFHP legislative team has advanced as our top priority the education of key Congressional members on the importance of enacting NFHCTPA. In addition to encouraging Senate and House Members to cosponsor S. 754 and H.R. 1474, respectively, we are now pushing outreach campaigns in favor of the House approving H.R. 925 with Senate-enacted NFHCTPA language. These current efforts have focused on encouraging key NFHCTPA supporters in the House to approach their respective leadership and encourage the House to take up H.R. 925 for a floor vote as soon as possible.

Title: Revised Action Plan Revision Schedule

Desired Outcome:

- **Board understanding and approval** of the NFHP Action Plan revision schedule.

Current Status:

The Board staff has been working diligently to revise the 2012 Action Plan in accordance with previously received Board comments. Currently, the Draft Action Plan is in development by the Core Writing Group (Alex Atkinson, Ryan Roberts, and Gary Whelan). Suggested comments and edits from all Writing Team members (Alex Atkinson, Ryan Roberts, Eric MacMillan, Daniel Wieferich, Doug Beard, Peter Aarrestad, and Gary Whelan) along input from the Chair and Vice-Chair are being reviewed at this time. Completion of the draft document has been delayed due to unexpected events. A full draft document will be ready for Board review just after the April Board Conference Call and a revised completion schedule has been developed.

Revised Action Plan Completion Schedule:

Based on current progress and given larger-scale events all are facing, the writing team proposes implementing the following Action Plan completion schedule:

- April 1 – Board Meeting via Conference Call – Outline Draft Action Plan changes and highlight areas for Board comment and input.
- Early April – Full Draft Action Plan provided to Board for review and comment.
- May 15 – Board comments and suggested edits on the Draft Action Plan due back to the Core Writing Group.
- June 24 – Board Meeting via Conference Call – Review and discuss any remain concerns or unresolved issues on the revised Action Plan.
- August 14 – Completed revised Action Plan provided to the Board.
- October Board Meeting – Board acts on the revised Action Plan.

Title: NFHP Action Plan – Work Plan Development

Desired outcome: Board awareness and discussion of the biennial work plan to implement the Action Plan objectives.

Background:

The 2012 NFHP Action Plan outlined in the ‘*About the Plan*’ section on page 2 that the Board, “will also publish annual work plans that move us towards fulfilling our objectives. Those work plans will include specific tasks for the Board, FHPs, staff and committees, and other partners.” After finalization of the 2012 Action Plan, this work plan approach was roughly followed with each of the Board Committees setting annual work plans and reporting out on accomplishments during Board meetings. However, the Board never developed one, unified work plan to implement Action Plan objectives.

At the April 1st Board meeting, we hope to begin discussions to develop this Board work plan to accompany the Action Plan. This biennial work plan would include 1-2 **specific and actionable tasks** that aim to advance each of the *revised* four objectives in the Action Plan including:

1. **Achieve** measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships, consistent with the National Conservation Strategies established in 2013.
2. **Broaden** the community of support for fish habitat conservation.
3. **Complete** fish habitat assessments and other analyses that are necessary to strategically identify and prioritize implementation of fish habitat conservation actions and provide a data support system to ensure all partners have access to these data.
4. **Increase** public and private investments in fish habitat conservation.

We envision Board Committees continuing to develop their own work plans as they do now and incorporating those tasks into the overall plan.

Staff Recommendation:

The Core Writing Team reviewed and revised the 2012 Action Plan and suggests revisiting this work plan approach to advance the objectives outlined in the Plan. The staff recommends revising the approach slightly so the Board would develop a biennial work plan rather than an annual work plan. This would allow more time to advance the tasks identified in the work plan. Staff suggests forming a small Board working group to compile ideas and develop this work plan to present to the Board at the October Board meeting for approval.