



# **A Fishy Future: An Update on the National Fish Habitat Partnership**

Gary Whelan  
NFHP Science and Data Co-Chair  
Midwest Associate of Fish and Wildlife  
Agencies Meeting  
June 2012



# The National Fish Habitat Partnership is....

- Action oriented
- Science based
- Collaborative effort

## The Partnership works to:

- Identify priorities and knowledge gaps
- Identify and achieve measurable outcomes
- Focuses resources and funding
- Encourage public-private partnerships
- Monitor and disseminate results







## Mission:

Protect, restore and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people

- ***Partner Coalition*** of 450+ agencies and organizations
- ***Implements voluntary and non-regulatory*** landscape-scale improvements
- ***Leverages*** federal, state, and private funds to build regional partnerships



# Progress to Date

- **National Fish Habitat Action Plan (signed in 2006)**
- **Cornerstone Objectives Reached**
  - Established 18 Partnerships
  - Release of the Status of Fish Habitats





Prepare a “Status of Fish Habitats in the United States” report in 2010 and every five years thereafter.

*“Through A Fish’s Eye: The Status of Fish Habitats In the United States 2010”*  
completed in April, 2011

Next Status Report expected in 2015





# National Fish Habitat Action Plan

## Revised Objectives

- Achieve measurable results through strategic actions of FHP that:
  - ✓ improve ecological condition
  - ✓ restore natural processes
  - ✓ prevent the decline of intact and healthy systems
  - ✓ leading to better fish habitat conditions and increased fishing opportunities
- Establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies.



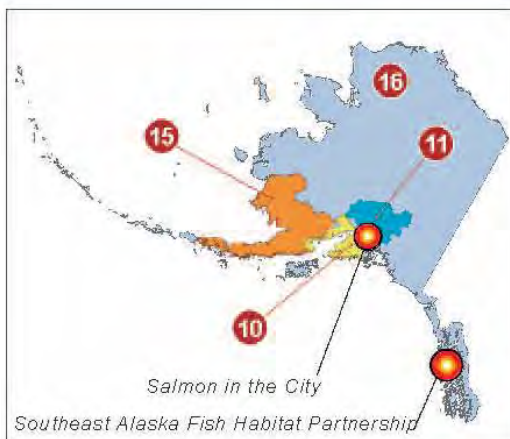
# National Fish Habitat Action Plan Revised Objectives

- Broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by increasing fishing opportunities, fostering the participation of local communities – especially young people.
- Improve National Fish Habitat Assessment and integrate socio-economic data in the analysis.
- Communicate the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Partnerships.



# Fish Habitat Partnerships

## January 2012



North American Salmon  
Stronghold Partnership

### Geographic/Species Based Partnerships

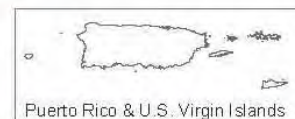
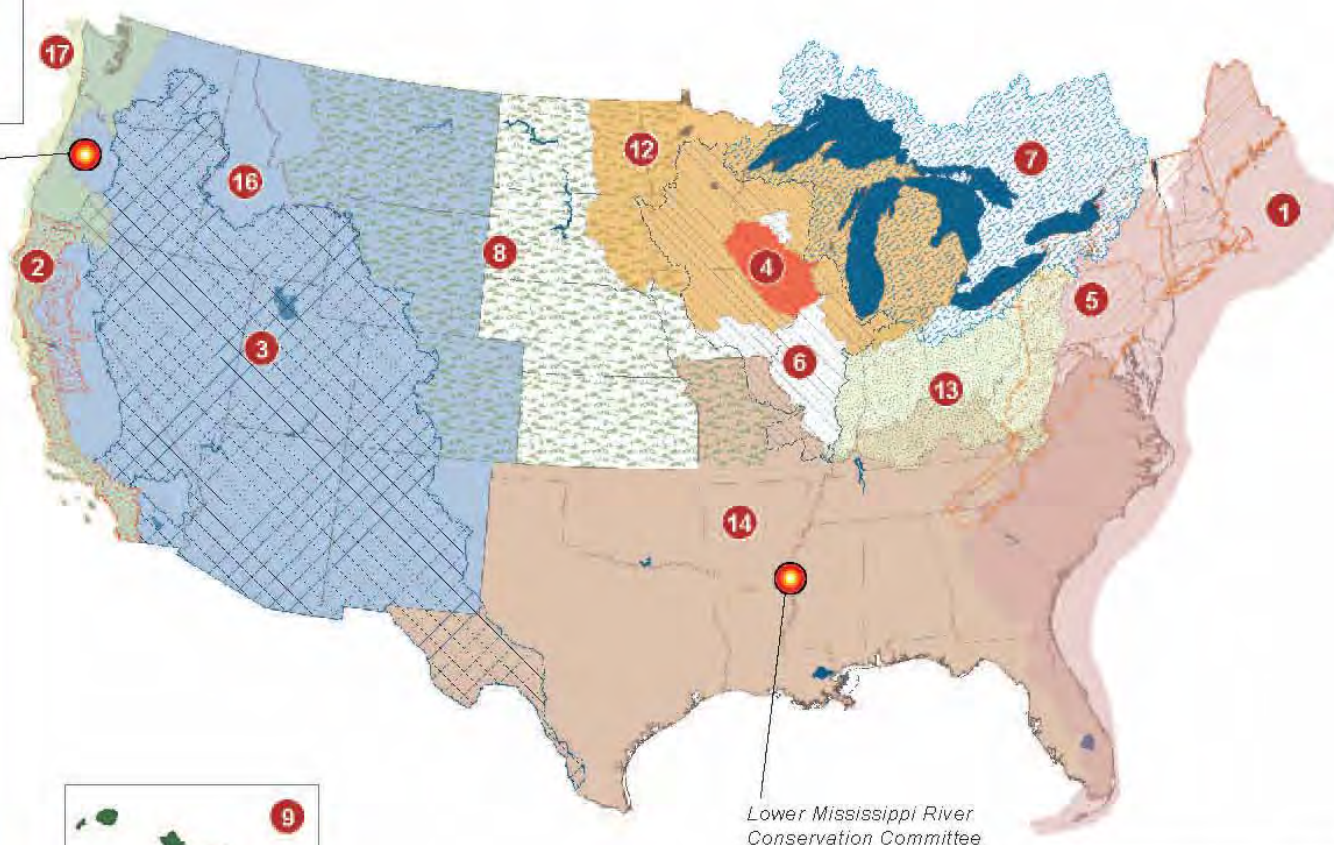
1. Atlantic Coastal FHP
2. California Fish Passage Forum
3. Desert FHP
4. Driftless Area Restoration Effort
5. Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture
6. Fishers and Farmers Partnership
7. Great Lakes Basin FHP
8. Great Plains FHP
9. Hawaii FHP
10. Kenai Peninsula FHP
11. Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership
12. Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership
13. Ohio River Basin FHP
14. Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership
15. Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership
16. Western Native Trout Initiative
17. Pacific Marine and Estuarine FHP

### System Based Partnership

Reservoir FHP



Denotes "Candidate"  
Fish Habitat Partnership







# Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP) Performance Measures

- The long-range purpose is aimed at evaluating FHP performance levels for core operational functions
- Collectively, the FHPs scored well:
  - ✓ in the areas of addressing strategic priorities
  - ✓ focusing conservation actions towards the causes of fish habitat decline
  - ✓ leveraging NFHP funds and prioritizing projects for funding
  - ✓ working cooperatively with each other



# Fish Habitat Partnership Performance Measures

- FHP operational functions that would benefit from added attention.
- Include use of resource condition assessments and project effectiveness measures and outreach.
- Collaboration with the NFHP Science & Data Committee, and tracking progress towards moving the needle.





# Fish Habitat Partnership Performance Evaluation

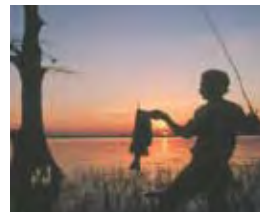
- 41% (7 of 17) of FHP received  $\geq 70\%$  of the total number of performance rating points available
  - $> 80\%$  of the available points – 2 of 7 highest
- Generally, the number of years a FHP has been recognized was linked to their level of performance.



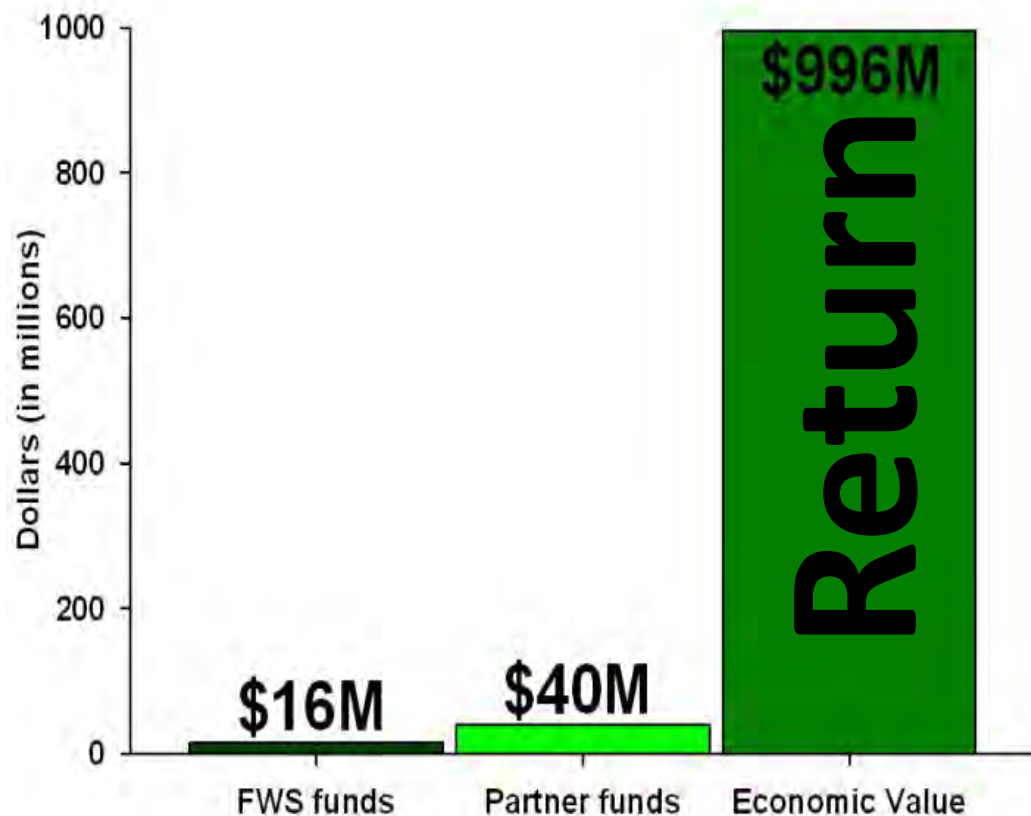
# Science & Data Assessment Priorities

- Future vision developed for the National Fish Habitat Assessment to 2020
  - Board approval in July
- Current Assessment Work – Focused on addressing identified gaps and improving analytical techniques
  - Inland Assessment – Michigan State University
  - Coastal Assessment – NOAA-NMFS and NOS
  - Hawaii and Alaska





# NFHP Return on Investment



Partnerships leverages federal dollars with contributions from partners to address the strategic priorities unique to each FHP.

Partners consist of:

- State and local governments
- Tribes
- NGO's
- Private citizens



# NFHP Return on Investment

- 342 projects in 45 states
- Restored nearly 27,000 acres and 1,560 miles of river
- Direct economic impacts (wages and materials) totals \$145 million and 1,100 jobs
- The long-term value estimated at \$851 million, generating 19,259 jobs
- Return on investment totals nearly 18:1





# Current Board Priorities

1. Support passage of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act and the adoption of the Secretarial Order between Interior, Commerce and Agriculture.
2. Enhance the leadership, managerial, and conservation delivery capacity of Partnerships.
3. Adopt strategies focused on obtaining new funding sources.



## Board Priorities for 2012 (Continued)

4. Develop standard effectiveness measures for conservation actions used to address nationwide fish habitat focus areas.
5. Facilitate stronger communications and interactions with and among Partnerships as detailed in the 2012 Communications Strategy and Action Plan.
6. Develop and initiate implementation of a strategy to refine the 2010 National Fish Habitat Assessment for 2015 and beyond.





# Legislation – 112<sup>th</sup> Congress

- Introduced June 15, 2011 in Senate, S.1201
- 10 bill sponsors
- Legislation 110<sup>th</sup> and 111<sup>th</sup> Congress



# Secretarial Agreement

- The Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture and Commerce signed MOU to carry out the NFHP.
- Agreement to promote collaborative, science-based conservation of the nation's waterways and fisheries supporting the NFHP.
- Agreement ensures that Federal resources are effectively focused on locally supported conservation strategies developed by Partnerships.



# Secretarial Agreement

- Implementation - This MOU shall be implemented by all agencies, bureaus, and offices of the Departments, as applicable.
- Reporting - Within 180 days from the date of this order, and at two-year intervals thereafter, all agencies implementing this order will report on progress in support of state-led efforts to achieve the goals of the Action Plan.



# Questions?

More information see

[www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org)

