U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service budgets in support of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan

FWS first received funds for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan in FY 2006, when Congress appropriated $1 million ($0.985 million after rescissions) to the Fisheries Program "*to implement on-the-ground, cost-shared habitat restoration projects, identified in the Fisheries Operational Needs System and in direct support of fish habitat partnerships … and … to support continued development of the National Fish Habitat Plan*" (House Report 109-080). FWS reported on how the funds were used at the inaugural meeting of the National Fish Habitat Board in September 2006, and has continued to apprise the Board on the allocation and use of NFHAP funds each year.

FWS' NFHAP funding for 2006-2012 is shown below. The Administration first requested funds for NFHAP in FY 2007, and Congress has appropriated the Administration's request each year through FY 2011. Each year since 2008, $246,100 has been earmarked for the Green River Basin in Wyoming through the Healthy Lands Initiative. Each year since 2010, $2 million has been earmarked for projects that address adaptation to climate change.

Fiscal Year	President's Request	Appropriated
2006	--	985,000
2007	2,985,000	2,985,000
2008	5,153,000	5,153,000
2009	5,153,000	5,153,000
2010	7,153,000	7,153,000
2011	7,153,000	7,153,000
2012	7,153,000	--

Allocation for 2006-2011 is shown below. "Deferred allocation" funds (generally 0.05%) are withheld by the FWS Director for contingencies. In 2010 and 2011, deferred allocation was included within each individual element, but it is shown separately here to simplify the table.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
NFHB priorities	172,375	125,000	156,900	156,900	380,000	300,000
WO base	0	300,000	350,000	350,000	420,000	420,000
FHP ops & dev	0	200,000	400,000	900,000	1,000,000	0
Regions base	0	600,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,750,000	2,750,000*
Projects	812,625	1,760,000	3,246,100	2,746,100	3,556,100	3,638,700
Deferred allocation					46,900	44,300
TOTAL	985,000	2,985,000	5,153,000	5,153,000	7,153,000	7,153,000

* Includes $1M for FHP operations & development

Project funds from the table above are shown in more detail below. The Healthy Lands Initiative funds were available for WNTI projects in 2008-09, and for WNTI or DFHP projects in 2010-11.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
HLI – Green River basin, WY			246,100	246,100	246,100	246,100
Demo projects - Candidate FHPs			600,000			
Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership	221,625	440,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture	197,000	440,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Western Native Trout Initiative	197,000	440,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000

Driftless Area Restoration Effort	98,500	220,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership	98,500	220,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership				100,000	100,000	100,000
Desert FHP					90,000	90,000
Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership					90,000	90,000
Hawaii FHP					90,000	90,000
Atlantic Coastal FHP					90,000	90,000
Ohio River Basin FHP					90,000	90,000
Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership					90,000	90,000
Great Lakes Basin FHP					90,000	90,000
Great Plains FHP					90,000	90,000
Kenai Peninsula FHP					90,000	90,000
California Fish Passage Forum						41,300
Fishers & Farmers Partnership						41,300
TOTAL	812,625	1,760,000	3,246,100	2,746,100	3,556,100	3,638,700

With input from the Board and State partners, FWS developed policy to guide the use of FWS funds to implement projects and provide Federal assistance for NFHAP. The policy (717 FW 1) says that each year in October, the Director "allocates the available project funding among Fish Habitat Partnerships consistent with the goals and strategies of the National Fish Habitat Board" and "issues guidance for project selection".

In February 2008, the Board approved the document "Board Involvement in USFWS Budgeting, Funds Allocation and Project Selection Process". The document was developed in collaboration with FWS, with a goal to "develop a process that reflected the needs of all the parties".

Future budget outlook

The President's budget request for FY 2012 includes level funding of $7.153 million for NFHAP in the FWS Fisheries Program. These funds are well down in the hierarchy of the budget structure, so they are not visible in public documents from the Administration.

The House appropriations bill for 2012 (H.R. 363) would provide level funding. The accompanying House Report 112-151 states on page 25, "*The National Fish Habitat Action Plan program's climate change initiative is funded at $2,000,000, which is equal to the fiscal year 2010 enacted level. The Committee has included language below directing the Service to combine landscape conservation cooperatives, bird joint ventures, and national fish habitat partnerships.*" The Senate has yet to release an Interior appropriations bill, and FWS is under a Continuing Resolution until November 18 with a 1.503% reduction from FY 2011 levels.

The President's budget request for FY 2013 will be released in early February 2012, and is likely to propose significant reductions in funding for many programs to reduce deficit spending.