DRAFT SCIENCE AND DATA COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPERATION

NATIONAL SCIENCE AND DATA COMMITTEE PURPOSE:

Provide scientific and data management expertise and oversight to advance the goals and objectives of the National Fish Habitat Board (Board) in a scientifically sound and strategic manner.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DUTIES AND ROLES

1. Provide advice to the Board on setting future science and data priorities.
2. Develop strategies for executing and implementing Board science and data priorities
3. Oversee, coordinate, and review the development of the national fish habitat assessment including, but not limited to, assisting the assessment teams with relevant contacts, data acquisition, and expertise as needed.
4. Provide expert advice and support on habitat and data issues to the Board, National Assessment Teams, and Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHP). Duties may include development and review of:
    a. Scientific and data analysis methods
    b. Data transfer methods, standards, and policies
5. Review FHP strategic plans along with their associated science and data work plans as requested by and for the Board
    a. Examine FHP science and data work for the 5 year FHP Board review
    b. Review new FHP applications (specifically the strategic plan) concerning proposed science and data efforts for the Board
6. Each member will have liaison opportunities between the National Science and Data Committee and FHPs to facilitate information exchange and communication of science and data efforts between groups
7. Chair ad hoc workgroups of committee members and non-members to address specific tasks as needed.
8. Assist the Committee's co-chairs in developing needed materials for annual updates to the Board on accomplishments and progress towards meeting significant science and data objectives.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

1. Total committee size will be 20 individuals
    a. 10 members having greater science expertise
    b. 10 members having greater data management expertise
2. Committee appointments will be for two years. Terms of individual committee members will be reviewed every 2 years by the Committee co-chairs to ensure member's expertise aligns with the National Science and Data Committee's tasks assigned by the Board to implement the Science and Data Strategy. Members may be reappointed if the committee member has the desire, expertise, and ability to continue participation in the Committee's work.

3. The committee will have representatives with expertise in varied habitats and diverse science and data experience/backgrounds to ensure expert opinion is available for diverse areas of the United States from the mountains to the continental shelf.
4. The committee will make every effort to have 8 representatives from the FHPs to include two from each Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' regional associations.

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

1. The committee will be co-chaired by two individuals. One chair will have more of an emphasis on science and the other chair will have more of an emphasis on data. At minimum, one of the co-chairs will be from a state fisheries agency.
2. Committee co-chair appointments will be selected by the Board Chair. Co-chair appointments will be evaluated by the Board Chair every four years. Terms between two co-chairs will be staggered to ensure continuity.
3. Co-chairs are a part of the Board staff and are expected to attend all Board and Board staff meetings.
4. Both co-chairs will share in all of the tasks required to properly operate the Science and Data Committee including providing, at minimum, annual updates to the Board on accomplishments and progress towards meeting significant science and data objectives.

MEETINGS AND DECISIONS

1. The Science and Data Committee will strive to meet face-to-face at least annually as a group.
2. The committee will conduct at minimum bi-monthly conference calls to conduct business.
3. The committee will routinely hold a conference call or meeting scheduled at minimum 1 month prior to each Board meeting. Timing and frequency will provide the committee opportunity to assist with development and review of informational and decisional materials presented to the Board.
4. For effective transparency and communication, items requiring Science and Data Committee review, comment, and decision will be documented.
    a. Documentation will include: background on the issue; decision options; decision-making process; and final decision.