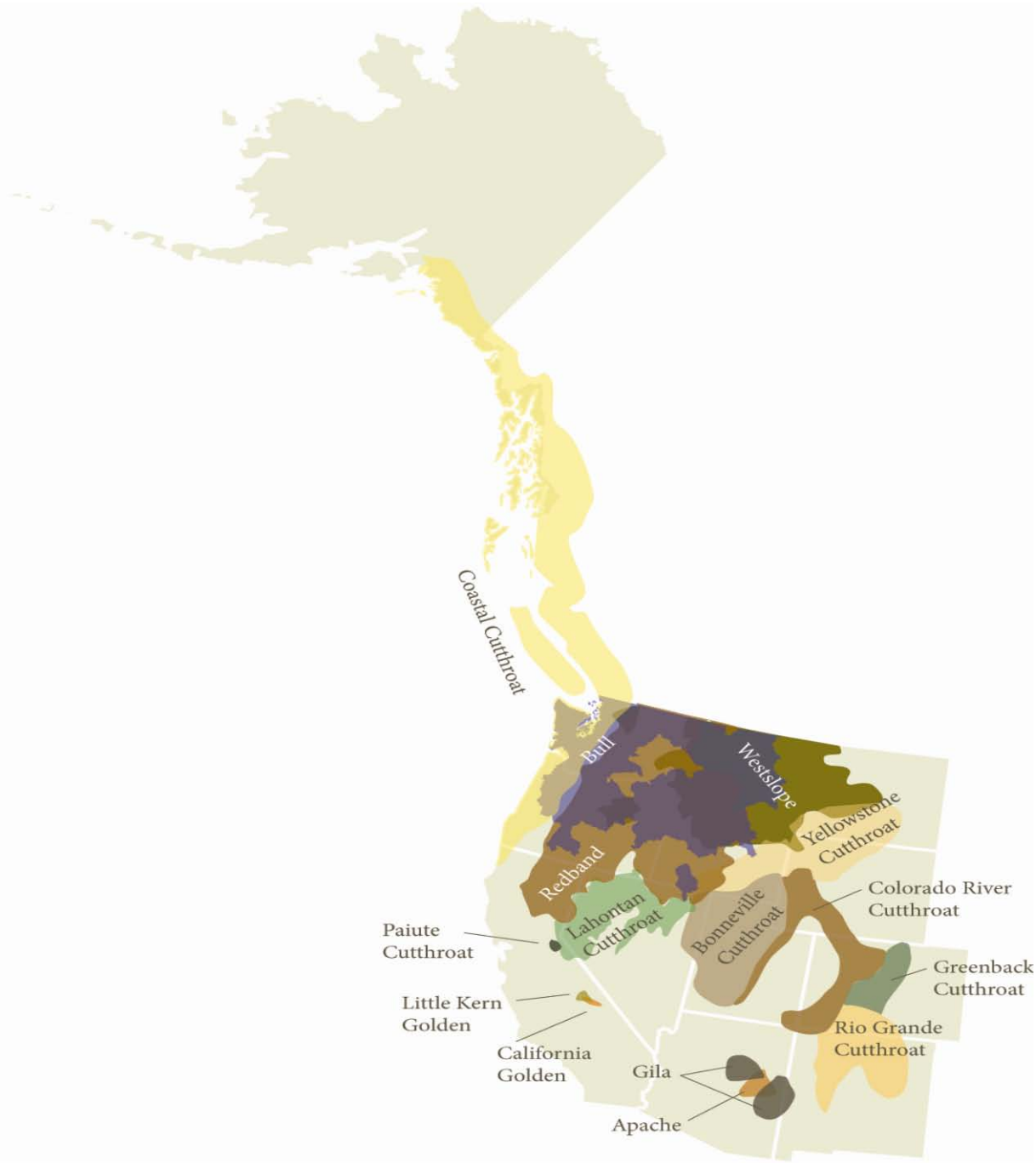
"A National Fish Habitat Partnership "

PRESENTATION
TO
THE NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD

OCTOBER 19, 2011

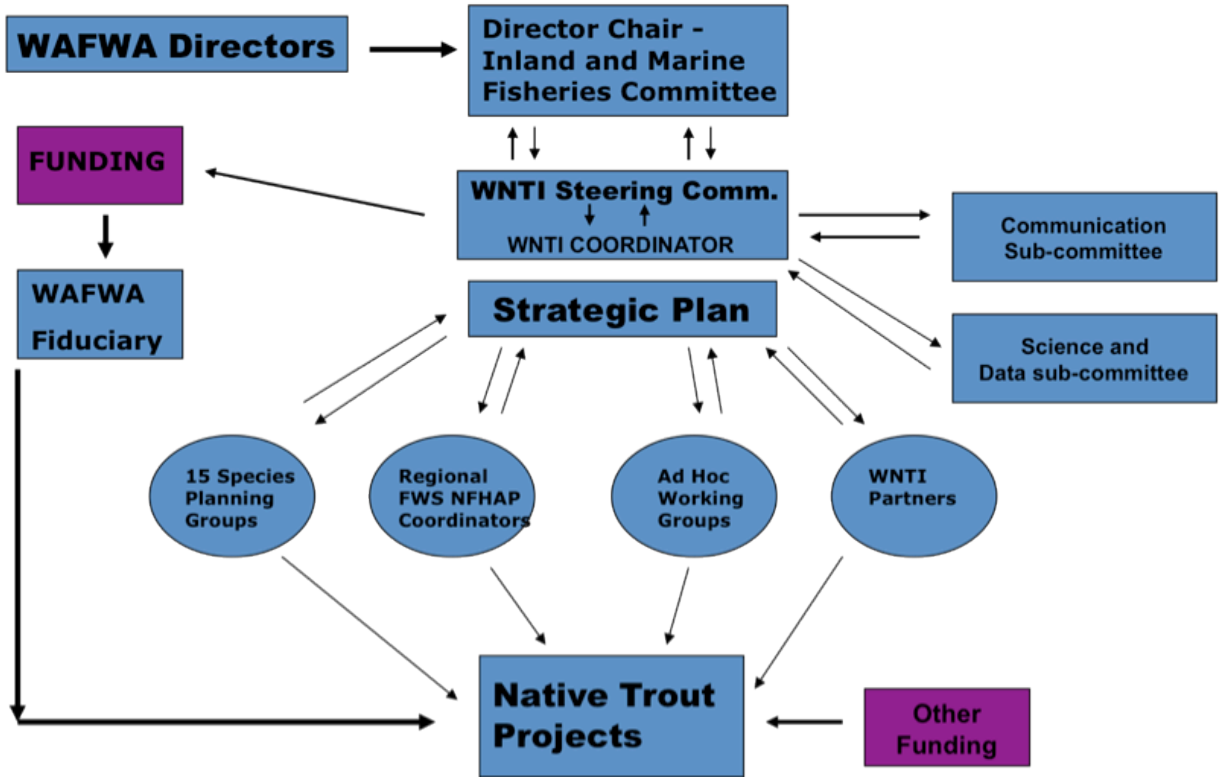
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

FIGURE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF THE NATIVE TROUT SPECIES ORIGINALLY ADDRESSED BY THE WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE



WNTI GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

WNTI Organizational Structure



WNTI OPERATIONAL FUNDING

MULTI-STATE CONSERVATION GRANT # 1 - JULY 2006 THROUGH DECEMBER 2009 - $450,000

MULTI-STATE CONSERVATION GRANT # 2 – JANUARY 2010 THROUGH DECEMBER 2012 - $360,000

NFHAP AND WNTI CUMULATIVE PROJECT FUNDING 2006-2011:

70 Projects
$3.45 M direct funds
$5.600 M match funds

WNTI In The News and Media -2011

WNTI IN THE MEDIA

Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership's June and July Square Dealer - FEATURED CONSERVATION LEADER

Photo courtesy of Bob Eakes.

NAME: ROBIN KNOX
Title: Coordinator, Western Native Trout Initiat**ive**
Location: Evergreen, Colorado

As coordinator of the Western Native Trout Initiative, a National Fish Habitat Partnership, Robin Knox gets to play with fish for a living – not bad for a guy who grew up 10 minutes outside of downtown Chicago! Learn more about Robin and the **WNTI.**

Q: Tell us a little more about the WNTI's work to conserve native trout populations. Why are these populations important to sportsmen?

Native trout in the West are important for a number of reasons. To Native Americans they are cultural icons, and to many anglers they are a worthy quarry due to their limited distribution, their colorful bodies and hard-fighting nature. To conservationists they are indicator species that highlight the stresses placed on coldwater habitats due to population growth, resource extraction impacts, de-watering and invasive species. WNTI's mission is to serve as a catalyst for the implementation of management actions that improve the status of the species through partnerships and cooperative efforts that result in improved habitats, better scientific information and improved recreational opportunities for anglers. WNTI works hard at increasing public knowledge and understanding of the role native trout play as we consider the best ways to conserve and improve coldwater aquatic habitats.

Other:

- Featured in a segment of Trout Unlimited's *Rise to the Future* Cable TV program

- Op Ed on TU Climate Change and Western Trout Decline in Season's End e-newsletter and other publications

"A National Fish Habitat Partnership "

PRESS RELEASE

April 26, 2010

Contact: Robin Knox , Coordinator, Western Native Trout Initiative
wnti.rknox@wispertel.net
Ph.303-236-4402

Western Native Trout Initiative announces small project grant program to benefit native trout

LAKEWOOD, COLO. -- The Western Native Trout Initiative, a National Fish Habitat Partnership, has announced a new small project grant program that will award up to $3,000 for conservation projects that benefit native trout species.

The "2011 Small Project Funding Program" is aimed at local trout fishing clubs, watershed councils and other community groups who want to conduct local conservation projects that will benefit western native trout. The program is funded in 2011 through a $15,000 start-up grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The small project funding program specifically supports collaborative approaches and partnerships involved in local efforts or community-based programs that provide for habitat, educational or public recreational angling programs that contribute to the Initiative's efforts to conserve western native trout.

For more information about the program, types of projects that will be funded and the web-based application materials, visit the Western Native Trout Initiative website at *http//: www.westernnativetrout.org*.

The deadline for submitting grant proposals in June 10, 2011.

The mission of the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) is to improve the abundance of western native trout across a variety of landscapes. WNTI - a collaborative effort of 12 western states including Alaska, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, the US Bureau of Land Management and many tribal and public or private conservation-minded organizations - annually solicits native trout conservation projects for funding through the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. WNTI hopes

to expand the small project grant program in the near future through additional funds from a variety of sources.

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 28, 2011

Contact: Robin Knox, Coordinator - Western Native Trout Initiative
wnti.rknox@wispertel.net, 303-236-4402

WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES SMALL PROJECT FUNDING RECIPIENTS AND 2012 NATIONAL FISH HABITAT ACTION PLAN REQUESTS FOR PROJECTS

Small Grant Recipients
The Western Native Trout Initiative, a venture of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and a National Fish Habitat Partnership, is pleased to announce the recipients of the first round of the new "Small Project Funding Program."

The purpose of this program is to provide a source of funding to organizations desiring to become involved in the conservation – protection, restoration or enhancement – of western native trout at the local level. The small project funding program specifically supports collaborative approaches and partnerships involved in local efforts or community-based programs that provide for habitat, educational, or public recreational angling programs that contribute to the Initiative's efforts to conserve western native trout.

WNTI received 14 applications for small projects in 2011, and the WNTI Steering Committee determined the funded projects at their recent summer meeting. The following projects were funded:

1. Rattlesnake Creek Community Stewardship Program: $1485
2. "Every Cutthroat Counts" Upper Teton River Signage: $775
3. Chicago Creek WCT Re-introduction Project: $3000
4. Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers Outreach Project: $2,000
5. Apache Trout in the Classroom Project: $3000
6. "Surviving Climate Change" RGCT Watershed Assessment: $3000
7. McDonald Creek Water Quality Protection (partially funded): $1740

The WNTI is seeking additional funding for projects in future years. The current round of projects was funded by a $15,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

"A National Fish Habitat Partnership "

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

AUGUST 29, 2011

Contact: Robin Knox, Coordinator - Western Native Trout Initiative
wnti.rknox@wispertel.net, 303-236-4402

THE WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE (WNTI) IS SEEKING CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Deadline for submission: October 14, 2011

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**
JOB FAMILY:	Fund-raising - Marketing
FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
JOB STATUS:	Contract: Part-time, duration to be determined
JOB START DATE:	January 2012
JOB LOCATION:	Location to be determined

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

Responsible for the oversight, planning and implementation of a comprehensive development program that secures the significant financial resources from foundations, corporations, or individuals within the state/country to support western native trout conservation goals in the western United States. Manages all major gifts functions, which may include planned giving, principal gifts, donor prospecting and research, and fundraising campaigns. Works with WNTI Steering Committee to establish fundraising goals and is accountable for these goals. Develops a plan for, and implements donor cultivation and solicitation. Responsible for developing a select group of prospects. Focuses on long-range strategic priorities, advances the Initiative's goals, and communicates a broad vision to others. Understands and complies with all Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies gift-related policies and procedures and ensures ethical compliance, as defined by the Association for Fundraising Professionals.

WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE

NATIONAL FISH HABITAT ACTION PLAN

"A National Fish Habitat Partnership "

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

2010: The Year in review.

Milestones Accomplished:

The Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) continues to be fully involved in the efforts to apply additional fiscal resources to the improvement of the status of western native trout. Particularly notable was WNTI's planning and execution of an all-western National Fish Habitat Partnerships meeting at the WAFWA July 2010 Summer meeting.

As the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) is implemented, communication and cooperation between western partnerships is increasingly important. This meeting was the first time that most of the partnerships had the opportunity to meet with their neighboring partnerships and share their ideas and plans for aquatic habitats and fish species under the NFHAP umbrella.

2010 WNTI Focus Areas

Internal Operations

The Initiative had several areas of focus during the year. They included:

- Implementing improvements in the Intermountain Cutthroat Protocol database
- NFHAP Project Management and Development
- WNTI Web Page Management
- NFHAP Involvement
- Public Outreach and communication

The Western Native Trout Initiative is an operation of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The WNTI operates under the auspices of the Inland and Marine Fisheries Committee., and is headed by an appointed Steering Committee that oversees the day to day functioning of the Initiative.

WNTI Steering Committee

There were several changes in State Agency and Tribal representation on the WNTI Steering Committee in 2010. WNTI lost the Tribal representative and is seeking a replacement at this time. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide guidance to the Initiative and its' Coordinator on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and advancement of the WNTI Vision and Mission. The current Steering Committee members are:

Chair – Charles Corrarino – Oregon
Co-Chair - Julie Carter AZ – Southwest States
Craig Burley WA – Northwest States
Rich Haskins NV – Great Basin States
Roger Wilson UT – Intermountain States
Christopher Estes – Alaska
Mike Sloane NM – At Large
Bruce Rich MT – At Large
Bob Clarke – US FWS
John Moore – BLM
Dan Duffield – US FS
Warren Colyer - Trout Unlimited
Travis Ripley – Canadian Provinces
Robin Knox, Coordinator

The WNTI Steering Committee meets twice a year – during the Summer in conjunction with

the WAFWA summer meeting – and in the Fall for the NFHAP project selection and ranking.

" We cannot do great deeds unless we are willing to do the small things that make up the sum of greatness" Teddy Roosevelt, May, 1899

WNTI Project Implementation

In WNTI's first five years (2006 - 2010), more than $2.14 million of NFHAP and MSCG funds have been applied to western native trout habitat, research and population enhancement projects across the West. This funding is the result of collaboration between the WNTI member states, the National Fish Habitat Board, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Tribal interests, and other non-governmental partners.

In 2010, WNTI received $600,000 in National Fish Habitat Board Funding (NFHAP), and 30 WNTI projects are in various stages of planning and construction. The following list provides a peek at the scope of projects for western native trout that were completed in 2010, and the projects that were newly funded by the 2010 NFHAP allocation:

WNTI – 2010 completed projects

- Eccles Creek Fish Passage - Alaska
- Bear Creek Habitat Protection – Colorado
- N. Thompson Ck. Habitat - Colorado
- Georgetown Ck stream channel - Idaho
- McDermitt Creek barrier – Nevada
- Wolf Creek barrier improvement – Colorado
- Fish ladder at St. Charles Ck. Transtrum diversion – Idaho
- Honey Creek diversion – Oregon
- N. Fk. Ahtanum Ck. Fish passage – WA

Please visit the Western Native Trout Initiative's web page - www.westernnativetrout.org - for detailed project reports and photos of the many completed projects.

WNTI and NFHAP – 2010 funded project

- OR – Deep Ck. And Crazy Ck. habitat
- ID – St. Charles Ck. Habitat Part II
- WA – Lower Wenatchee R. habitat
- AZ – West Fk. Oak Creek renovation
- NM - Tio Grande Ck. Barrier and habitat
- CO – Bear Creek habitat protection
- MT – Therriault Ck. Habitat improvement
- MT – Four Mile Ck. Barrier and habitat
- AK – Southeast AK stream flow analyses and protection
- CO – Middle Fk. Thompson Creek riparian zone exclusions

During 2010, the efforts of WNTI are strongly supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's cooperative habitat conservation programs and partnerships with the Jackson Hole One Fly Foundation and Trout Unlimited's "Bring back the Natives" project- also supported the federal Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service.

Completed projects from 2008, 2009, and 2010 National Fish Habitat Action Plan Funding:

2009 WNTI partially funded Eccles Creek fish passage and habitat– Alaska

"I never won anything without hard labor and the exercise of my best judgment and careful planning and working long in advance." Teddy Roosevelt, 1910

2008 NFHAP Funded North Thompson Creek culvert and habitat - Colorado

2009 NFHAP Funded St. Charles Ck. Fish ladder -Idaho

2009 NFHAP Funded Georgetown Creek Channel renovation - Idaho

2008 NFHAP Funded Wolf Creek barrier – Colorado

2009 NFHAP Funded McDermitt Creek barrier and habitat - Nevada

2010 NFHAP Funded Bear Creek Habitat protection – Colorado

" Of all the questions which can come before this nation, short of the actual preservation of its existence in a great war, there is none which compares in importance with the great central task of leaving this land an even better land for our descendants than it is for us." Teddy Roosevelt

WNTI Data Development

Over the past 10 years, western state fishery agencies have utilized a GIS-based data system to prepare status reviews for most of the inland cutthroat trout populations. In 2008 WNTI began actively supporting the redesign of the Intermountain Cutthroat Protocol (ICP) so that most species would have similarly constructed databases. As part of that effort, WNTI held a multi-state data team meeting in Salt Lake City in April 2010 to discuss priorities for WNTI data management. The work on developing a protocol for consolidating the multiple species will continue into 2011.

WNTI has helped to fund updates of the Westslope cutthroat, the Rio Grande cutthroat, and in 2011, the Redband trout and the Colorado River cutthroat.

During 2010, the Western Native Trout Initiative reviewed and made comments on the National Fish Habitat Assessment, which will be published in early 2011. WNTI also sponsored a presentation on the data at the 2010 American Fisheries Society meeting in Pittsburg, PA in September 2010.

Be sure to visit www.westernnativetrout.org

National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) Involvement

During 2010, as a National Fish Habitat Partnership, WNTI has been actively involved in working with other partnerships in the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, and

helping new and candidate partnerships develop their operating and governance structures.

- WNTI participated in the 2010 National Casting call in Washington, DC.
- WNTI promoted both the NFHAP and WNTI through booths and displays at the American Fly Fishing Trades Association Trade Show, the Federation of Fly Fishers Conclave, and the Western Division of the American Fisheries Society annual meeting.
- WNTI gave an update on its activities and projects at the Wild Trout X Symposium in West Yellowstone, MT in September 2010.
- The Coordinator represented WNTI interests at NFHAP Board meetings and numerous other venues during the course of the year.
- Beginning in November 2010, the WNTI Coordinator has been on a NFHAP workgroup that is making recommendations on future NFHAP funding distributions to the various fish habitat partnerships.

How can you help WNTI?

You can help WNTI by making a product or cash donation and receive a free WNTI T-shirt. Send a donation to:
Foundation for Western Fish and Wildlife
2903 Saintsbury Plz. #106
Fairfax, VA 22031

Western Native Trout
Bull Trout
Redband Trout
Gila Trout
Colorado River Cutthroat
Golden Trout
Little Kern Golden Trout
Westslope Cutthroat
Yellowstone Cutthroat
Coastal Cutthroat
Lahontan Cutthroat
Rio Grande Cutthroat
Apache Trout
Greenback Cutthroat
Bonneville Cutthroat
Paiute Cutthroat

National Fish Habitat Board Update on the September 7th, 2011 Western Fish Habitat Partnerships Discussion Meeting Held at the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA

FHPs represented: Western Native Trout Initiative, Desert Fish Habitat Partnership, Kenai Peninsula, Hawaii, Reservoir, Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership, Mat – Su Alaska, and Great Plains. Candidate partnerships Southeast Alaska and Pacific Marine and Estuarine were also represented.
(A complete list of attendees is attached)

1. **FHP updates and reports** – Each of the Partnership representative s gave a brief update on their activities and their process for soliciting potential 2012 NFHAP-funded projects. Most have a deadline of October 1 to make sure the projects get entered into the Fish and Wildlife Service FONS system.

Some key comments included:

a) WNTI mentioned its current search for a Development Director, with an open RFP at this time, and reported on its new Small Grant Program that resulted in 14 project applications
b) Desert Fishes mentioned it needed to find a foundation for holding donated funds that have been and will be received.
c) Hawaii mentioned that they have had some Steering Committee overturn, and that their project request resulted in some science and data project proposals, but few habitat projects
d) Mat-Su reported that they were planning their upcoming science and data meeting and had a project RFP out.
e) Kenai reported that they were working on getting proposals submitted from their local groups
f) Reservoirs reported that they had an RFP out for projects, that they were planning a partnership meeting in October at Lake Havasu City. All are invited to attend.
g) Southeast Alaska gave a brief description of the path they took to become a candidate partnership and passed out a fact sheet describing the SEAK plans for the partnership and the next steps they are taking.
h) Pacific Marine & Estuarine passed out a fact sheet that described the Partnership with their reduced sphere of influence now that SEAK FHP has been formed for recognition. They have a new Coordinator and are working on developing their goals, priorities, governance structure and a Strategic Plan.

2. **Status of 2012 NFHAP Budget** -Tom Busiahn reported on the status of the 2012 NFHAP budget and guidance for the 2012 NFHAP project selection. The FWS is working on the final guidance at this time, and the budget looks like it will be similar to the 2011 budget. No one knows exactly how it will work out or when the 2012 budget will be finalized. There is likely to be a request to include individual project budgets in the FHP prioritized project requests that get submitted to Washington. This will require some additional work on the part of the Partnerships and the FWS regional FHP coordinators. Details will be available in the final guidance from the Service.

Tom also discussed briefly the NFHAP Board's review of the NFH Action Plan and the effort to revise the plan and add some new objectives. Tom distributed an information sheet that has the draft new objectives on it, and asked the FHPs to review and comment with suggestions and ideas. Comments can be sent to – partner@fishhabitat.org

The objectives are listed here:

- Establish consensus ***national fish habitat conservation priorities*** based on the regional priorities of approved Fish Habitat Partnerships and informed by the National Fish Habitat Assessment.
- ***Conserve or improve*** 2% (??) of all intact or moderately degraded priority habitats throughout the United States by 2015.
- Build a ***community of support for fish habitat conservation*** by increasing fishing opportunities, encouraging local participation in conservation activity, and raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats play in the quality of life and economic well being of local communities.
- Strengthen the role of ***science and economic analysis*** in conservation by filling gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and building a strong socio-economic database for improved understanding of the benefits of fish habitat conservation.
- Identify and communicate key **voluntary, non-regulatory approaches** to fish habitat conservation as part of best management practices.

Tom also reminded the FHPs that there is an upcoming all-FHP tele-conference call on Thursday, September 29.

3. **Discussion of the Fish Habitat Partnerships Evaluation Measures and Evaluation Process-**

The WNTI Coordinator, because he is on the working group that is developing the FHP evaluation process, asked the attendees to comment on the draft FHP evaluation process, timeline, and evaluation form that is being developed. There was a good discussion that clearly pointed out that the partnerships that were present did not have a good understanding of the process, what was expected from the review and exactly what outcomes would result from the review.

Tom Busiahn was helpful, along with the Coordinator, is explaining the intent of the "test drive" of the evaluation process that all the partnerships are expected to be involved in.

1. **Relation to the 5-year FHP review** - According to NFHAP Board policy, the FHPs are subject to a 5-year review. The development of the new evaluation process comes from recognizing the need for such reviews. It is recognized that there is a wide range of FHP ages, from 5 years to less than 1 year, and that the reviews of an annual nature will be different for each of the partnerships due to that fact. It was clarified that the current thinking is that a separate 5-year review will not need to be completed by the older FHPs, and that the completed first annual review will suffice for that.

2. **Performance Measures -** It was explained to the group that the NFHAP Board had on July 27th, at the Wisconsin Board meeting, approved the testing of the FHP Performance Evaluation Measures to evaluate the how the process and the measures worked in a "test drive" situation. The Board indicated that the performance measures would be subject to change depending on how well they worked in the Test Drive. The Performance Measures are included here as an Appendix.

3. **Draft Initial Performance Process, Timeline and Evaluation Form Handout -** Robin Knox, the WNTI Coordinator, distributed the draft process and timeline sheet to the FHPs present to get their reaction and comments so that he could report back to the Evaluation workgroup suggestions on how to improve the draft process and the

Evaluation Form. In addition, the **draft evaluation form** was also distributed to the attendees to help them understand the process.

There was quite a bit of discussion about the evaluation process and what the outcome of the "Test Drive" would be, as well as lots of confusion about how well the **draft evaluation form** questions meshed with the **Performance Measures,** and exactly what was being evaluated. It was also pointed out that a new partnership, with only a year or less of projects, would have a far different response that an established FHP with 4 or 5 years experience.

The outcomes of the discussion provided Robin with ideas that will be forwarded to the Evaluation workgroup for their consideration and modification of documents.

One idea is that there needs to be just one cover letter, explicitly explaining that this evaluation is a "test" of the evaluation process and the performance measures, and that the measures and process will be modified as needed based on feedback and results.

A second idea is to clarify that the evaluation is not an evaluation of the projects that have been chosen by a given partnership, but an evaluation of the process by which projects are chosen, monitored for outcomes and how a partnership has operated in choosing projects.

A third idea is to separate the timeline and steps for the partnerships completion of forms from the timeline and steps that the Board review team will require. This would make the instruction sheet a little more simple and easier to understand.

In addition, a fourth idea was in the Evaluation Form, it was suggested that the Performance measure be listed with the evaluation question for clarity, and eliminating a need to have separate documents on hand.

The attendees expressed some concern about the timeline and amount of work that would be required to a) hold 17 different FHP conference calls and scheduling those; and b) getting the evaluations done during the timeframe when the FHPs are doing their project selection and ranking activities.

4. **Future NFHAP Partnership meetings –** Most attendees felt it was worthwhile to have these face-to-face meetings and discuss issues like understanding candidate partnerships, getting direct information on NFHAP issues like evaluations, and meeting the commitment to coordinate with other FHPs.

The next logical place would be the AFS 2012 meeting in Minneapolis, which will be in an region where there are multiple FHPs. It was decided by those present that Maureen Gallagher would be an excellent person to arrange the next FHP discussion.

Submitted: Robin Knox, WNTI Coordinator
September 10, 2011