NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP

National Fish Habitat Board Meeting Summary: October 16-17, 2012

Members present:

Kelly Hepler (AK DFG- Chair)
Steve Perry (NH FGD/ NEAFWA– Vice Chair)
Stan Allen (PSMFC)– for Randy Fisher
Mike Andrews (TNC)
James Adams – for Doug Boyd (SFBPC)
Hannibal Bolton (US FWS)– for Dan Ashe
Jim Estes (SC DNC/SEAFWA) – for Nick Wiley
Brad Gentner (Gentner Consulting Group/CCA)
Chris Horton (Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation)
Joe Larscheid (IA DNR/MAFWA)
Bob Mahood (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council)
Stan Moberly (Northwest Marine Technology/ AFS)
Steve Moyer (TU) – for Chris Wood
Sam Rauch(NOAA Fisheries)
Mike Stone (WY GFD/WAFWA)
Krystyna Wolniakowski (NFWF)
Chris Savage (USDA Forest Service) – for Anne Zimmerman

Members absent:

Fred Matt (Native American FW Society), Ron Regan (AFWA), Gordon Robertson (ASA)

Key discussion items:

- Establishment of 501(c)(3) component of Board: Matt Menashes laid out options, benefits, and risks for establishing a 501(c)(3) component to the current Board structure. Board members suggested:
  - Doing a more in-depth legal analysis of potential conflicts with the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act, strategic analysis relative to efforts of FHPs to also develop their own 501(c)(3) organizations, costs of establishing new structure, and benefits in comparison to services already provided by NFWF and AFWA.

- Inclusion of FHP representative as a Board member: Based on the comments from FHPs, the Board recommended that:
  - Committees provide meeting summaries to FHPs, Board members consider participating in FHP bi-monthly calls, consider grouping FHP-relevant agenda items together, and make better use of webinar technology to facilitate FHP engagement.

- Corporate Engagement: The Board discussed the concept of establishing a workgroup to develop a corporate engagement strategy which goes beyond funding issues.

- Science and Data Committee Report: Gary Whelan and Andrea Ostroff, Committee co-chairs, updated the Board on progress related to:
  - Core elements of the national assessment strategy, funding gaps, and need to review the membership of the science and data committee.
  - Progress establishing the effectiveness working-group.

- Communications Committee Report: Ryan Roberts, Communications Coordinator, updated the Board on 2012 accomplishments and 2013 priorities. The Board discussed the importance of reviewing the existing communications strategy in the context of Action Plan Objective #3.

- Legislative Update: The Sportsmen's Bill, which includes the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act, has passed cloture in the Senate. There is no accompanying House Bill at this time, but depending on the outcome of the elections in November, the House may adopt it in a lame duck session.

- Government Affairs: The Board discussed the need to be ready to mobilize with key messages on the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act immediately after the elections.

- Awards: Closed session

- Board Priorities and Budget: The Board discussed the value of establishing priorities and funding

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needs and of thinking very strategically about how to spend limited dollars on a large list of unmet needs. Some Board members expressed concern about being able to effectively deliver on core priorities given the large funding gaps.

Motions approved by consensus:

- Approve the July 2012 meeting summary
- Approve the election of Kelly Hepler as Board Chair and Steve Perry as Vice-Chair.
- Approve the award nominations at the Chair and Vice Chair's discretion.

Action items:

- Items to include in the agenda for the February 2013 agenda include:
  - In-depth legal and strategic analysis of 501(c)(3) options for the Board action.
  - Draft national conservation strategies for Board action.
  - Project prioritization criteria for Board action.
  - Report from Science and Data committee that includes a review of committee membership.
  - Update on project effectiveness workgroup composition.
  - Update on the review of the communications strategy.
  - Discussion with Doug Austen on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives national conservation strategies.
- Krystyna Wolniakowski and Chris Horton will help scope key questions to be addressed in a corporate engagement strategy.
- Science and Data Committee should provide their 2012 committee report to other federal agencies for their review and possible contribution.
- The Communications Committee should focus the review of the communications strategy on the objectives in the Action Plan.
- Board staff will organize a conference call with the Board in the second week of November to discuss next steps aimed at passing the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act.
- The Board endorsed the recommendations listed in Tab 9 of the October Board book to increase engagement between NFHP and Federal initiatives.
- NOAA will lead the development of a Council and Commission engagement strategy with Stan Allen and Bob Mahood.
- Kelly will send the proposed letter regarding the FWS Fisheries Program to the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council with a cc to Dan Ashe. Federal agencies will abstain.
- A subset of the Board should discuss our unmet NFHP funding needs with Doug Austen.
- 2013 Priorities proposed by the committees should be bundled up by Action Plan Objectives and provided to the Board before the January conference call.

Future 2013 meetings:

- January 16 – 2pm eastern time conference call
- February 26 and 27 – Arlington, VA
- June 25-26 – Mountain west (TBD)
- Week of October 21-25 – Southeast (TBD)

Board approved policy and/or technical documents:

- None

Additional attendees:

Karen Abrams, NOAA-HQ and Board staff
Tom Busiahn, FWS-HQ and Board staff
Ryan Roberts, AFWA and Board Communications Director
Gary Whelan, MI DNR, Co-chair, Science and Data Committee
Scott Robinson, SARP
Jeff Boxrucker – Reservoir FHP
Chris Vitello, Missouri DOC
Joe Margraf, USGS
Brian Cannaday, Missouri DOC
Doug Hobbs, FWS, SFBPC

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Andrea Ostroff, USGS, Co-chair, Science and Data Committee
Thomas Bigford, NOAA-NMFS
Maureen Gallagher, FWS-Midwest Region
Mark Hudy, USGS
Colton Dennis, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Gene Gilliand, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
Lisa BeBruyckere, PMEP
Rob Simmonds, USFWS
Amy Unthank, USFS
Maureen Gallagher, USWS
Scott Robinson, Georgia DNR
Ron Marteney, Kansas Wildlife Parks and Tourism
Patrick Sollberger, Nevada Department of Wildlife, RFHP
Jeff Lucero, Bureau of Reclamation
Ben Page, Pennsylvania F&BC
Aaron Woldt, USFWS-Midwest Region
Scott Roth, USFWS-Mountain/Prairie Region
Tom Mendenhall, BLM
Mike McGee, Iowa DNR
Donovan Henry, USFWS, ORBFHP
Brooke Patterson, NFWF
Cecilia Lewis, USFWS, Reservoir FHP
Whitney Tilt, DJ Case & Associates

By telephone:
Rebecca Wodder, DOI
Katie Haws, MGLP
Emily Greene, ACFHP
Robin Knox, WNTI
Steve Krentz, GPFHP
Kristan Blackhart, NOAA
Cecil Rich, USFWS-Alaska Region

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