Title: 2013 Board Priorities

Desired outcome: Board action to approve its priority tasks for 2013 and assignment of these priorities to the appropriate Committee for task completion.

Background: During the October 2012 Board Meeting, each of the Board's Committees proposed a number of tasks that address different components of the Action Plan's revised objectives as potential Board priorities for 2013. The primary outcome of the Board's discussions of these proposed priority tasks was a request they be bundled under the respective Action Plan Objective, to bring more clarity to what the Committees were proposing.

Recommendation: Approve the proposed priority tasks for 2013 and Committee assignments as presented below.

Proposed Priority Tasks and Committee Assignments

Action Plan Objective 1: Achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships that improve ecological condition, restore natural processes, or prevent the decline of intact and healthy systems leading to better fish habitat conditions and increased fishing opportunities.

Priority Task A: Develop guidance that assists Fish Habitat Partnerships in establishing strong strategic priorities and associated milestones or targets that tracks progress and outcomes; (assign to the Partnership Committee)

Priority Task B: Continue the development of effectiveness measures for conservation actions used to address fish habitat needs; (assign to the Science and Data Committee's Effectiveness Measures Workgroup)

Priority Task C: Identify funding sources that can support core Fish Habitat Partnership operations; (assign to the Funding Committee)

Action Plan Objective 2: Establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by the Fish Habitat Partnerships by 2013*.

*In progress; (Habitat Conservation Committee)

Action Plan Objective 3: Broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by increasing fishing opportunities, fostering the participation of local communities – especially young people – in conservation activities, and raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats play in the quality of life and economic well-being of local communities.

Priority Task D: Review 2012 Communications Strategy, and revise as necessary, to ensure there is a principal focus towards raising public awareness on the role healthy fish habitats play in the economic well-being of local communities; (assign to the Communications Committee)

Priority Task E: Increase the size of the Partner Coalition and improve the management and maintenance of the Partner Coalition database; (assign to the Communications Committee)

Priority Task F: Develop a comprehensive congressional and administration outreach strategy; (assign to the Government Affairs Team and Communications Committee)

Action Plan Objective 4: Fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and its associated database to empower strategic conservation action supported by broadly available scientific information, and integrate socio-economic data in the analysis to improve people's lives in a manner consistent with fish habitat conservation goals.

Priority Task G: Refine and update fisheries, aquatic nuisance and invasive species, dam inventory, land conservation status, and water quality status as data become available; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task H: Improve river fragmentation analysis and national calculation of fragmentation metrics; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task I: Evaluate approaches to refine the marine-inland linkages between the marine and inland assessments; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task J: Catalog and review resource assessments conducted by Fish Habitat Partnerships; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task K: Develop and attribute detailed socioeconomic data at an appropriate geospatial scale; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task L: Develop mechanisms and document procedures to guide Fish Habitat Partnerships in data management practices; (assign to the Science and Data Committee)

Priority Task M: Seek funding sources that will provide the $953,000 needed to accomplish the following National Assessment activities; (assign to the Funding Committee)

- Continued development of the core Marine Assessment - $220,000
- Filling of key gaps in the Marine Assessment - $150,000
- Strengthening of the National Assessment by determining the best approaches for incorporating data on connectivity, hydrology and marine fish and shellfish - $300,000
- Development of standard connectivity effective measures - $206,000
- Acquisition and attribution of socioeconomic data - $77,000

Action Plan Objective 5: Communicate the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Fish Habitat Partnerships as well as new opportunities and voluntary approaches for conserving fish habitat to the public and conservation partners.

Priority Task N: Broaden the visibility of the 10 Waters to Watch list by selecting waters that reflect key fish habitat conservation priorities/needs, track advancements associated with current and past 10 Waters to Watch, and utilize these waters as a means to tell the story and increase awareness of bold efforts to reverse persistent declines in aquatic habitat; (assign to the Communications Committee)

Additional Board Priority

Priority Task O: Further pursue the development of a 501(c)(3) entity to be used as a financial tool by the National Fish Habitat Board; (assign to the Board staff)