Title: Partnership Committee

Desired outcome: An informational briefing to the Board on the Partnership Committee's progress towards its 2013 work plan and a recommendation for the Partnership Committee's focus in 2014.

Background: At its October 2012 Meeting, the Board tasked the Partnership Committee with addressing the following priority issues during 2013:

Task A - Develop guidance that assists Fish Habitat Partnerships in establishing strategic priorities and processes that allow the partnerships to document milestones and targets that track progress and outcomes.

Task B - Develop a process that builds consensus support among Fish Habitat Partnerships for Multi-state Conservation Grant proposals, and other pertinent funding sources, submitted by the National Fish Habitat Board on their behalf.

Task C - Establish a vetting process for fish habitat conservation projects submitted to non-NFHP funding sources that need endorsements from Fish Habitat Partnerships.

Task D - Identify approaches for estimating the costs for FHPs to achieve their priority conservation outcomes.

2013 Work Plan Progress

The Partnership Committee met three (3) times by teleconference to address its 2013 tasks.

Task A: The Partnership Committee hosted a half-day session in conjunction with the FHP Excellence Workshop in Portland, OR to talk to FHPs about strengthening their strategic priorities and tracking progress towards outcomes. Information was shared through overview presentations, case studies, and facilitated discussion; however, specific guidance has not been developed.

Task B: The Partnership Committee roughed out a process for building consensus support among FHPs for MSCGP proposals submitted by the Board on their behalf that includes: keeping with a regional based approach (which may differ from the regional breakouts currently being used); establishing a long-term list of priority conservation needs that are best suited for multi-FHP approaches to addressing those needs; and, engaging up front with the processes used by AFWA to develop National Conservation Needs in an effort to ensure alignment with the

long-term priority conservation needs. **Important note:** Until the issue of securing stable base funding for FHP operations is resolved, it will be difficult to institute an approach focused solely on addressing regional conservation priorities, as the MSCGP funds are a crucial source for FHP operational support.

Task C: The issue of establishing a vetting process for FHP endorsement/support of fish habitat conservation projects submitted to non-NFHP funding sources is being sufficiently addressed by networking among FHPs. There are several approaches that FHPs use, which are described within FHP websites. Additionally, the NFH Board adopted a project endorsement template that is readily available for FHP use.

Task D: The Partnership Committee did not address the task of identifying approaches for estimating the costs for FHPs to achieve their priority conservation outcomes in 2013.

Suggested needs to be addressed by the Partnership Committee in 2014:

- Because they are inter-related, the Partnership Committee is suggesting that it combine the need for guidance that assists Fish Habitat Partnerships in establishing their conservation priorities with the need to address the NFH Board's National Conservation Strategies and the need to develop cost estimates for achieving the conservation priorities of FHPs; and, to address these combined needs during 2014.
- As a result of the FHP Excellence Workshop held back in January 2013, a number of FHPs have begun developing Business Plans, and some are using the Business Plan template developed by River Network as an overall guide. During discussions at the FHP session that was held during the 2013 AFS annual meeting, it was suggested that perhaps the Partnership Committee should facilitate the development of a standard business planning template for endorsement by the Board. This task may include a peer learning network to help FHPs apply the template by sharing knowledge and experience.