National Fish Habitat Board Meeting, October 22-23, 2013 – Charleston, S.C. - SCMRD

Members present:

Kelly Hepler, chairman (ADF&G)	Leroy Young (NEAFWA)	Stan Allen (PSMFC)
Gary Whelan (MAFWA proxy)	Ron Regan (AFWA)	Sam Rauch (NMFS) – day one
Chris Moore (MAFMC)	David Hoskins (FWS)	Stan Moberly (AFS)
Krystyna Wolniakowski (NFWF)	Mike Andrews (TNC)	Steve Moyer (TU) – day one
Brad Gentner (CCA)	Gordon Robertson (ASA)	Tom Champeau (SEAFWA)

Members participating by telephone:
Larry Riley (AZ GFD) proxy for Mike Stone WAFWA

Members absent:
Doug Boyd (SFBPC)
Fred Matt (NAFWS)
Ellen Gilinsky (EPA)
Chris Horton (CSF)
Forest Service representative

Motions approved:

- June 2013 Meeting Minutes

Updates and discussions:

- 2014 Meeting Schedule: The Board will have a call on January 15 to approve the 2014 budget and priorities, followed by a March meeting in Denver. The summer meeting will be either a web or video conference, and the Fall meeting will be in November in Washington, D.C.
- Chair Updates: The Chair shared with the Board that at the AFWA annual meeting the State Directors passed a resolution that reaffirmed their commitment to NFHP. The Board agreed to have the Board Chair remain as the representative to the Landscape Conservation Cooperative National Council, with the understanding that the Vice-chair will attend as proxy, and that Gary Whelan may serve as an alternate.
- Executive Leadership Team Update: The ELT informed the Board that they will seek NRCS' interest in filling the fifth federal Board seat.
- Board Performance Evaluation: The Board requested that additional information be added to the evaluation, and suggestions were provided to strengthen the document. Board staff will revise the evaluation based on the feedback received during the meeting, and the Board will have one more opportunity to review the evaluation by email before it is sent to respondents. Brad Gentner will assist in reviewing the evaluation.
- Conservation Committee Report: A possible approach for setting conservation targets based on USFWS performance measures was presented. The Board provided a diverse array of perspectives on the approach and the appropriate level of information needed for setting national conservation criteria. The discussion shifted between how best to communicate the information, the strength of the performance measures used to measure progress, and how best to set targets. Another discussion theme that surfaced was the potential need to improve performance measures before setting national conservation targets. No action was taken.
- Presentation on Habitat Degradation: Gary Whelan provided a brief presentation on the estimated cost of U. S. habitat degradation. Based on hatchery data, the estimate is approximately $2.6 trillion.
- Funding Committee Report: In 2013 the Committee looked into the capacity of FHPs to do their own fund raising and noted that progress has been made by the ad-hoc subcommittee looking at improving corporate engagement.
- Partnership Committee Report: The Committee Chair indicated that FY 14 work for the

DRAFT

Committee should include combining FHP conservation priorities with Board national conservation strategies and cost estimates, and the development of standard business plans for FHPs. The Committee Chair shared the observation that there appears to be a shift in the way some FHPs see themselves, reflecting a move to a role of facilitating people to come to the table to address common conservation needs, in essence serving as catalyst, which is more than just doing projects on the ground. Others indicated that this had been occurring for some time, and that the Board needs to consider how better to articulate the role of the Board, FHPs, and Partners.

- Communications Committee Report:
  - The Committee Chair presented success stories for the year and suggested priorities for 2014, noting that a working group will be established to expand the public relations campaign. Two video products were presented, and the Board indicated a preference for communication products that make a clear connection to NFHP. A recommendation was made that this be included in all communication pieces. Maureen Gallagher requested the Committee provide guidance and/or criteria for what constitutes an acceptable success story.
  - Joe Starinchak provided a presentation on the need for the Board to consider a marketing/branding effort and the importance of stressing NFHP core values. The Board was supportive, and a small workgroup consisting of Joe, Ryan Roberts, Chris Horton, and Tom Champeau will pursue identifying how this would work in a more systematic way. Topics to be addressed include potential benefits, scale (national or pilot), responsibilities and expectations of those involved. The workgroup will look to organize a meeting between the Board and the interested corporations for the meeting in Denver.
- Presentation - Status and Trends of Coastal Wetlands in the Conterminous United States, 2004-2009:
  Susan-Marie Stedman (NOAA) presenting the findings of the joint NOAA/FWS report to be released in November. Discussion focused on the areas where loss is happening, the role of agriculture policy, and the need to better understand the impact of wetlands loss on fish populations.
- Science and Data Committee Report: The Committee Co-chairs provided updates on 2013 accomplishments and the list of 2014 needs that can be met and those that are not obtainable given anticipated funding. The suggestion was made that the Committee go to the Federal Caucus to discuss unmet needs.
- Draft Budget: AFWA provided an overview of the draft budget for 2014, the total for 2014 anticipated to be 914k. Expenditures generally include coordination of Board and FHPs, communication, sequester, and science and data. The Fish and Wildlife Service shared that it will be a challenging budget year and that difficult decisions will need to be made that may result in less funding coming to NFHP. Sam Rauch indicated that it is incredibly important for the Board and Partnerships to convey the good work that is being done so that those points can be used to defend against budget cuts.
- FWS Allocation Methodology: The Fish and Wildlife Service indicated they are nearing the end of the methodology review process and comments from the ARDs were due on October 22. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.
- Legislative Affairs Update: Members of the ad-hoc committee are optimistic that issues preventing the legislation from moving forward in the previous session of Congress have been addressed, and that Sen. Crapo likely will introduce the legislation in the coming weeks. A discussion ensued on the pros and cons and tradeoffs associated with making changes to definitions and language in the bill in order to increase the probability of passage.
- 501(c)(3): Matt Menashes presented a brief overview of the intended goals for and the process associated with establishing a 501(c)(3). Draft bylaws and articles of incorporation were presented to the Board as well. The discussion focused on clearly articulating roles between the current Board and the 501(c)(3) President, the degree of the Board's independence, and uncertainty with how passage of NFHP legislation will affect the structure. The Board requested that Matt ensure the Board is referenced in the articles of incorporation and that the roles of the

DRAFT

501(c)(3) members be clarified.

- Presentation – FHP Economic Valuation Tool: The presentation covered the methods and data used to develop an online tool that will assist the FHPs in communicating the economic benefits of their work. Board members discussed how best to communicate the information, potential criticisms of the tool, and ways to train the FHPs to use the tool. Brad Gentner will work with Tom Busiahn to organize a training for the FHPs.
- Joint Ocean Commissions Initiative – A draft letter was presented by the coastal FHP coalition for the Board's review. The purpose of the letter is to increase the profile of the coastal FHPs. The FHPs will finalize a draft, share with Board staff for review, and submit a final to the Chair for signature.
- RAE Presentation – Jeff Benoit, Executive Director provided an over of Restore America's Estuaries, highlighting shared goals and potential areas for partnering. A big challenge for RAE is raising estuary health to a level of national importance. Jeff shared that RAE is working on a strategic plan and that they are dealing with similar issues as the NFHP Board with respect to advancing conservation.
- Partnership Presentation – In person presentation from Donovan Henry for the Ohio River Basin FHP.

Action items:

- Board members are to provide comments/edits on the Board Evaluation via email to Tom Busiahn.
- Provide guidance and/or criteria for what constitutes a success story.
- Ad-hoc corporate partnership workgroup to sketch out a corporate engagement plan, and organize a meeting between the Board and interested corporate partners for the March 2014 meeting.
- Matt Menashes to revise articles of incorporation and bylaws.
- Coastal FHPs to share a final draft of the letter to JOCI with Board staff for review and Chair signature.
- Tom Busiahn and Brad Gentner to organize a training on the economic tool for the FHPs

Future Board meetings:

- January 15, 2014 conference call
- Week of March 9 - Denver, Colorado (in conjunction with North American)
- Late June 2014 (date TBD), web or video conference
- November 1-5 (TBD), Washington DC (in conjunction with the 7th National Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration)

Board approved documents: None

Additional attendees:

Ryan Roberts, AFWA
Tom Busiahn, FWS
Maureen Gallagher, FWS
Emily Greene, ACFHP
Tripp Boltin, FWS
Callie McMunigal, FWS
Matt Menashes, AFWA
Steve Perry, EBTJV
Cecilia Lewis, FWS
Chris Meaney, NOAA
David Lawrence, NFWF
Scott Robinson, SARP

By telephone:
Andrea Ostroff, USGS
Katie Haws, MGLP
Steven Krentz, GPFHP
Robin Knox, WNTI
Jeff Boxrucker, RFHP

DRAFT