2015 Board Budget Justification

The 2015 Board Justification document provides information to help relate expenses presented in the 2015 Budget to (1) the *National Fish Habitat Action Plan, 2nd Edition* and to (2) Board Priorities. Specific budget notes are provided to help clarify spending plans. This document does not require action by the Board, rather it is provided as background information to aid in the Board's discussion pertaining to budget and priorities.

Relationship of Budget to 2nd Edition 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.

Activity: Support specific deliverables from Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) for both conservation (Objectives 1 and 2) and support coordination of the National Fish Habitat Board and FHPs.
Funding (secured): 2014 Multi-State Conservation Grant (2154): ($225,000 - FHP); 2015 Multi-State Conservation Grant (2155) $490,000 (FHP); $25,500 travel support for staff and Board as necessary (AFWA/FWS Coop 2102); $7,000 for board meeting rooms etc. (MSCG 2014).
Lead Committee or Partner: Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) and FHPs; AFWA will sub-award funds from the Multi-State Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) to support projects conducted by 11 FHPs. Project funding will be targeted in regional breakdowns as indicated in the Multi- State Conservation Grant

Activity: Continue coordination with legislative affairs team in supporting developments of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act
Funding: In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: Eligible Board members and Legislative Team, made up of representatives from The Nature Conservancy, American Sportfishing Association, and Trout Unlimited.

Activity: Development of a process for building consensus support among FHPs for funding proposals (e.g. MSCGP and other sources) submitted by the Board on their behalf
Funding: In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: Partnership Committee

Activity: Identification of redundancies between the Board's FHP Performance Evaluation criteria and the criteria the FWS uses to allocate NFHAP funds to FHPs and provide guidance to the Board on ways to minimize overlap between the two processes
Funding: In-kind

Lead Committee or Partner: Partnership Committee

Activity: Continue development of a 501(c)(3) Board of Directors and policies to be used as a financial tool by the National Fish Habitat Board and FHPs.
Funding: $4,436 in start-up support (AFWA state funds 8010) and In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: Board leadership

Activity: Continue development of standard effectiveness measures for conservation actions used to address nationwide fish habitat focus areas.
Funding: In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: American Fisheries Society, Board Science and Data Committee, and Partnership Committee

Objective 2. Establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by FHPs by 2013.

Activity: Objective achieved. Next step: Develop an approach that demonstrates the linkages among FHP conservation priorities and the Board's National Conservation Strategies
Funding: In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: Partnership Committee

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.

Activity: Consider potential avenues for collaboration with Restore America's Estuaries
Funding: In-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: Restore America's Estuaries, Board Leadership, Communications Committee, and Legislative Team

Activity: Continue building database for newsletter distribution to increase engagement with partner coalition; and continue to use AFWA to increase engagement with State Fish and Wildlife Agencies; maintain and re-develop NFHP Website, Annual Awards program, and develop annual report
Funding (secured): Communications Coordinator salary and Benefits (Multistate Grant 2154A); $12,256 for website (AFWA/FWS coop 2102); $5,500 for annual awards and annual report (AFWA/FWS coop 2102); and in-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: AFWA staff and Communications Committee

Activity: Continue development of the NFHP Marketing Campaign and re-branding efforts for the NFHP program and the FHPs; and re-develop the website in order to raise greater

public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats play in quality of life and economic well-being to build a broader community of support for fish habitat conservation;
Funding (secured): Seed funding for education and outreach work $35,000 (NOAA)
Lead Committee or Partner: Communications Committee and marketing team

Activity: Establish a regular schedule of meetings for the Communications Committee and work to include more FHP members on the committee; Review and make any needed changes to the communications strategy (Board approved 2011 and updated in 2013) to ensure that it remains a guide for committee work and maintained as a living document. (assign to the Communications Committee and marketing team)
Funding (secured): Communications Coordinator salary and benefits (Multistate Grant 2154A) and in-kind
Lead Committee or Partner: AFWA staff and Communications Committee

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.

Activity: Examine and review National Assessment products produced by Marine and Inland Assessment Teams along with activities underway by the F H Ps and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs). This activity was scheduled for FY2014 but products were not mature enough to warrant a face-to-face meeting review of products.
Funding (secured): $20,000 (AFWA/FWS Coop 2102) to support a single Science and Data Committee meeting to focus on the products from the 2015 National Fish Habitat Assessment along with FHPs and LCCs Assessment efforts.
Lead Committee or Partner: Science and Data Committee and Marine and Inland Assessment Teams.

Activity: Develop coordinated delivery of the 2015 assessment, including adding new online capabilities following Science and Data Committee direction to help partners and stakeholders understand and best use the new National Assessment data and products.
Funding (anticipated): $135,000 to support applications developer team, metadata specialist, infrastructure maintenance and support – in-kind from USGS for FY2015.
Lead Committee or Partner: USGS and Science and Data Committee

Activity: Continue to catalog science data products and assessments completed and underway within each of the established FHPs and the National Assessment teams via the NFHP Data System. Dedicated data management workflow strategies following the NFHP Data Standard Operating Procedures will be implemented to ensure data access, understanding, and re-use currently and in the future.

Funding (anticipated): $34,000 to provide dedicated data management support to catalog FHP data – in-kind from USGS for FY2015.

Lead Committee or Partner: USGS and Science and Data Committee

Activity: Refine and improve the National Inland Assessment by updating fisheries, aquatic nuisance and invasive species, dam inventory, land conservation status, and water quality information. Improve river fragmentation analyses and national calculation of fragmentation metrics and initiate development of lakesheds and lake assessments. Demonstration project areas will be identified and implemented with interested Partnerships. Evaluate approaches to improve hydrology and temperature incorporation and refine the marine-inland linkages between the inland and marine assessments.

Funding (secured): $151,000 to continue refinement of the National Inland Assessment – USFWS funds.

Funding (needed): $42,300 to support data management activities for National Inland Assessment Team

Lead Committee or Partner: National Inland Assessment Team and Science and Data Committee

Activity: Refine and improve the 2010 National Marine Assessment by incorporating updated datasets. Complete a full assessment of estuaries in the northern Gulf of Mexico, building on the results of the recently concluded demonstration project in the region to develop the new marine assessment methodology. Continue data collection, processing, and initial analysis for West Coast estuaries. Begin data collection and processing to support additional regional estuarine assessments starting in the Pacific Northwest, including fish/shellfish abundance and diversity, physical habitat, anthropogenic stress, and biological response datasets. Incorporate available information from Great Lakes Assessment efforts being funded by the Great Lakes Basin FHP and the Great Lakes Fishery Trust.

Funding (anticipated): Approximately $180,000 in-kind funding and staff support from NOAA Fisheries in FY2015 to support ongoing activities.

Lead Committee or Partner: National Marine Assessment Team, NOAA Fisheries, Great Lakes Assessment Team, FHPs, and Science and Data Committee

Activity: Provide Science and Data Committee outreach to FHPs, LCCs, Board, and other key audiences on developed products and requested scientific and data issues. Science and Data Committee outreach efforts will: ensure coordination of assessment and data actions among all interested entities including AFS, FHPs and LCCs; inform Board and key audiences of the direction and products of the National Fish Habitat Assessment and its integrated data system; and seek new resources and partnerships from appropriate entities and groups to increase efficiency and the quality of the National Fish Habitat Assessment.

Funding (secured): $12,000 to support state agency Science and Data Committee Co-Chair travel for six trips @ $2,000 each to include 2 NFHP Board meetings, 2 AFWA meetings and 2-3 other trips to be determined by opportunities.
Lead Committee or Partner: Science and Data Committee

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.

Activity: Increase usage of video and further campaign to document work of Fish Habitat Partnerships; Broaden the visibility of the 10 Waters to Watch Campaign as a means to tell the story and increase awareness of FHP efforts to conserve fish habitat and consider prioritizing outreach to younger generations through social media and smart phones; Support staff travel to event marketing and AFWA/NFHP events
Funding (secured): $9,000 for NFHP Event Marketing and staff travel (AFWA/FWS Coop 2102); $10,000 for video and other related marketing (AFWA/FWS Coop 2102)
Lead Committee or Partner: Communications Committee (with potential support from FHPs)

Key Areas without known resources for FY2015 (Science and Data):

- Implementation and delivery of 2015 habitat assessment product

  Resources Needed: TBD after Board direction on requested product production gaps.

- Continue to develop selected socioeconomic data and analyses to support decision making by the Board and FHPs. This work will focus on continuing and expanding the currently funded work to attribute and incorporate appropriate socioeconomic data into the existing Board Data System.

  Resources Needed: $35,000 to support specialist work to acquire and integrate socioeconomic data into the Board Data System with the development of a limited set of appropriate analytical tools for the proper analysis of these data by FHPs and Board. Fully developing and attributing of detailed socioeconomic data and analyses on the same geospatial scale as habitat assessment to improve conservation planning abilities of the Board and FHPs will require $100,000 in annual contractual services over several fiscal years.

- Develop new science and data products from existing and new Fish Habitat Partnership assessment databases to further support FHP habitat analysis and the Board's 2015 National Fish Habitat Assessment. Key FHP assessment datasets will be identified and reviewed by the Science and Data Committee and these data along with appropriate analytical tools will be integrated into the Board's Data System for wider inter-FHP habitat assessment efforts. Initial background survey work on this task was completed in 2013 and this FHP would be updated to facilitate the determination of existing information.

  Resources Needed: $60,000 to support additional GIS specialist time to integrate key FHP assessment datasets and develop associated analytical tools.

- Strengthening the science foundation of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board's National Assessment by determining the best approaches for incorporating data on connectivity, hydrology, and marine fish and shellfish. These were all gaps in the 2010 National Habitat Assessments that were consistently identified by reviewers, the Board, and FHPs.

  Resources Needed: $400,000 for 2.0-3.0 FTEs and workshops to fully develop approaches and integration of these data into the National Assessments.

- Strengthening the science foundation of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board's National Assessment by developing standardized effectiveness measurements for FHPs' connectivity projects which will include developing new methods to incorporate fine-scale system process information from FHP projects. This task was requested by the Board.

  Resources Needed: $400,000 or equal in-kind services for 2.0-3.0 FTEs to develop standardized connectivity effectiveness measures for funded projects in this area.

Key Areas without known resources for FY2015 (Marketing):

- Continued development of NFHP Marketing Campaign with Fishpond, D & I – Denver, CO. Provide additional deliverables for use by the FHPs.
  Resources Needed: $80,000 - $90,000 based on original contract deliverables.

Budget Notes

Note 1. Budget Accounts.
The NFHP Board's budget includes a series of "accounts" as listed below. The accounts that are numbered (e.g. 2100) are held by AFWA and the numbers are internal to AFWA's accounting system.

1. AFWA/FWS Cooperative Agreement (2102). This cooperative agreement has generally been funded at $135,000. The 2102 Agreement funds science travel and salary and salary and travel for Communications Coordinator. Carryover from prior years is anticipated to be $75,000.

2. Multi-state Conservation Grant – FHP Coordination. The remaining funds in this grant are (2154 A – Science and Data) (2154 B – FHP Coordination)

3. AFWA State Funds. This account includes funds received from state fish and wildlife agencies either paid directly to AFWA or through draws from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

4. NFWF State Funds. This account is a "holding" account for the NFHP Board and includes funds received from state fish and wildlife agencies