

2018 Multistate Conservation Grant Program

Grant Proposal

Executive Summary

(Limit – 2 Pages)

1. **Project Title: Conservation Collaboration across the U.S. through the National Fish Habitat Partnership**
2. **Full Legal Name of Organization:** National Fish Habitat Board.
If awarded, the grant will be administered on behalf of the National Fish Habitat Board by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 1100 First Street NE, Suite 825, Washington DC, 20002
3. **Organization Information:**
 - a. Applicant Classification: Nongovernmental Organization
 - b. Nongovernmental Organization Classification (if applicable): 501(c)6
4. **Lead Applicant’s Contact Information:**
Mr. Tom Champeau, Chief (Inland Fisheries), Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
Chair, National Fish Habitat Board
c/o Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
1100 1st Street NE, Suite 825
Washington, DC 20002
Email: tom.champeau@myfwc.com
Phone Number: 850-556-7684
5. **Name and Affiliation of Co-Investigator(s)/Partner(s) (if applicable):**
Gary Whelan, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Ryan Roberts, National Fish Habitat Board Communications Coordinator
6. **Project Length: (1 year) (Final year of three year application)**
7. **Funding Requested:**
 - a. Total Amount for 2018: \$209,960.00
8. **Estimate of Partnership Funds to be Leveraged (if applicable): \$ 1 Million**
9. **Funding Source.**

Percent WR: _____% Percent SFR: 100%
10. **State Benefit Requirement:** a. X b. X c. X d. ___
11. **Primary National Conservation Need (NCN) Addressed:**

NCN #14: Broadening Conservation Partnerships through the National Fish Habitat Partnership

- 12. Terms and Conditions.** *Use of MSCGP Grants - All applicants must ensure that their proposed project does not fund, in whole or in part, an activity that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife or taking of sport fish.*

I agree with the above terms and conditions.

13. Summary Statement (200 words or less):

Since 2006, the National Fish Habitat Partnership (Partnership) has supported 679 projects benefiting fish habitat in all 50 states. The Partnership works to conserve fish habitat nationwide, leveraging federal, state, tribal, and private funding resources to achieve the greatest impact on fish populations through priority conservation projects of 20 regionally-based Fish Habitat Partnerships. The Fish Habitat Partnerships work through their partner members and also through regional partnerships across the country to utilize grant opportunities such as this one to expand and augment their on-the-ground conservation work to benefit habitat for anglers in the United States. With level federal funding and growing partnerships in numbers and needs, collaboration is necessary through these projects to maximize conservation impacts and success.

Project Narrative

(Limit – 10 Pages)

Title:

Conservation Collaboration across the U.S. through the National Fish Habitat Partnership

Problem Statement:

Waterways, healthy habitat, and thriving fish populations are vital to the well-being of American society, providing clean water, food, and recreation. Healthy waters sustain their ecological functions and resilience while meeting the economic and social needs of society. Unfortunately, in many places around the United States, fish and the habitats on which they depend are in decline. This is a particular concern to the 48 million recreational anglers who pursue fish and too many others who depend upon fish and shellfish for sustenance and commerce. Nearly 40 percent of the nation's freshwater fish species are considered at risk or vulnerable to extinction. Through the efforts of the National Fish Habitat Partnership, established in 2006 our 20 Fish Habitat Partnerships established regionally are collaborating on efforts to stop and reverse declines and impairment of fish habitat through voluntary, non-regulatory efforts.

Project Goals and Objectives

The project goals for this grant application as described in the deliverables section are diverse and designed to meet additional needs and build capacity for the Fish Habitat Partnerships to

achieve their objectives. This grant funding provides resources to the Fish Habitat Partnerships that they otherwise would not have to accomplish strategic objectives, due to current limited funding and growing partnership needs. The number of Board recognized Fish Habitat Partnerships have grown in number over the past several years, but overall funding for the National Fish Habitat Partnership has remained static. This multistate grant funding provides an opportunity for Fish Habitat Partnerships to coordinate shared regional and national conservation priorities, advancing strategic initiatives for fish habitat while catalyzing collaboration across the U.S.

Deliverables and Benefits

The National Fish Habitat Partnership brings a focused and coordinated approach to conserving, rehabilitating, and enhancing the nation's aquatic habitats under the objectives of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. This proposal strengthens that approach by linking the oversight responsibility of the Board and the operational responsibility of the FHPs to achieve national and regional science and data driven conservation goals.

In general, this project will support activities of the Fish Habitat Partnerships that will help to achieve four of the objectives in the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, 2nd Edition:

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.
2. *Broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation* by improving fish populations that lead to increased fishing opportunities, fostering the participation of local communities – especially young people – in conservation activities, and raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats and robust fisheries play in the quality of life and well-being of local communities.
3. *Fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment* and its associated database to empower strategic conservation action supported by the best available scientific information to improve people's lives in a manner consistent with fish habitat conservation goals.
4. *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.

More specifically, the project will provide the following deliverables:

- Across the United States through the **Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership**, this grant funding will help provide a Story Map for displaying project information in a geographic context on the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership website. Grant funding will also help the partnership produce project summaries for distribution to project partners and states to better inform local communities on existing projects and the potential for future projects. Funding through this grant, will also help incorporate more reservoir and impoundment data sets into development for the National Fish Habitat Assessment.
- **In Hawaii**, The main Hawaiian Islands have over 700 miles of shoreline. A variety of shallow water aquatic habitat types are represented along these coasts, including ancient Hawaiian fishpond structures, semi-enclosed embayments and both groundwater- and

surface water-supported estuaries. This project will continue on-going estuary benthic and littoral habitat surveys to include adjacent coastal habitats that function as nursery habitat and are important for production of coastal fish and invertebrates. Principal project activities will include development of a spatial framework linking watershed characteristics to coastal systems. Results of this work will provide information for prioritizing conservation and management of Hawaiian estuaries and will produce information for revisions for incorporation into the National Fish Habitat Assessment.

- On the Pacific Coast the grant would fund two elements: 1) support for a Coastal Cutthroat Symposium/Proceedings in 2018 to share results from the recent completion of the range-wide assessment for Coastal Cutthroat Trout through the **Western Native Trout Initiative**.

2) Support for a project to monitor small dam removal effectiveness for steelhead trout in Southern California. **California Fish Passage Forum (CFPF), and Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI)** propose to evaluate the post-removal effects on fish passage and stream habitat following removal of small dams in several drainages in Orange, Los Angeles, and Ventura Counties. All of the dam removals (less than 10 feet in height) completed to date have left in place the associated fill stored behind the dams to minimize riparian disturbance. The work proposed would help document the time it takes for downstream redistribution of the material as well as its effects on the downstream habitat given the flashy nature of southern California streams. To accomplish this work, NOAA/California Conservation Corps Veterans Corps and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission staff will be used to enhance previous monitoring efforts at 82 dams in the Los Padres National Forest, at Leo Carrillo State Park, and in the Cleveland National Forest. Another aspect of this work is collection of data on the effectiveness and effects of various dam removal techniques. For example, the US Forest Service is removing 80 small dams in Cleveland National Forest to prepare habitat for steelhead pending the removal of the Interstate 5 legacy barrier lower in the watershed. They are principally using explosives for dam removal. This technique is not currently covered in the existing NOAA RC's and CDFW's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program's National Marine Fisheries Service biological opinions and offer an opportunity to gain an understand of a wider range of dam removal methodologies. Monitoring these methods could give us key thresholds for barrier removals to better inform permitting and restoration design.

- In the Great Lakes: The **Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership's (MGLP)** strategic plan identifies the need to implement a communication strategy to improve fish habitat conservation outcomes through increased awareness, changes in beliefs, and changes in behaviors of people that affect fish habitat. One major threat to fish habitat in Midwest glacial lakes is removal of riparian vegetation, aquatic vegetation, and nearshore large woody debris. This threat is correlated with shoreline residential development, because property owners landscape and clear vegetation from their properties to improve access to the water and perceived aesthetics. They also use environmentally-damaging techniques such as installation of sea walls or impermeable surfaces.

This proposal seeks to improve fish habitat conservation outcomes through increased awareness, changes in beliefs, and changes in behaviors of people that affect fish habitat by developing and delivering outreach materials to shoreline property owners. Outreach materials will provide information on the benefits of natural shorelines for fish habitat, and will market natural shorelines to shoreline property owners. Specifically, photographs of shoreline restorations will be captured and placed in an electronic database available to all Midwest Glacial Lakes Partners to facilitate communication regarding natural shorelines. Photographs will be used to create an ESRI Story Map to tell the stories of a series of shoreline restorations highlighted by the project. Additionally, photographs will be used to develop outreach collateral for natural resource managers, natural shoreline contractors, and other proponents of natural shorelines to increase implementation of natural shoreline practices by private property owners. These outreach materials will expose property owners to the social norm of natural shorelines, increase acceptance of landscaping with native plants, increase retention of large woody habitat, and ultimately increase natural shoreline conservation.

- In the Western U.S. the grant would fund two strategic elements through the **Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) and the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership (DFHP)**: 1) Continue the successful multi state grant collaboration between WNTI and DFHP to produce a new film, a 30 second version for social media, and multiple associated outreach materials on two focal native fish species in the intermountain west. Thanks entirely to a 2016 multi state grant, WNTI and DFHP produced the 7 minute film [“Blueheads and Bonneville”](#) about WNTI and DFHP’s collaborative work in the Weber River, Utah, with other partners from the Weber River Partnership. The film serves as our anchor outreach piece for a broader Blueheads and Bonneville campaign celebrating our conservation work on the Weber River and broadening strategic partnerships to complete future projects that are still needed. The film celebrates both fish species, with a focus on themes of water, western landscapes, fish habitat, and the power of partnerships.

2) Support to strengthen strategic partnership development and outreach by working with well-established public, private and non-governmental conservation groups to develop communication, education and outreach materials to help inform potential partners and to increase overall NFHP-based western project awareness and understanding of goals, objectives and accomplishments. More specifically, activities will continue the successful collaboration between WNTI and DFHP to raise awareness about and generate external support and funding for an increased level of conservation actions in nexus basins where WNTI and DFHP focus conservation activities, and to build and strengthen grassroots networks of support by communicating conservation needs and results using new and traditional media and events.
- In the Midwest, **The Driftless Area Restoration Effort** Fish Habitat Partnership has hired a full-time Stream Restoration Specialist (contingent on grant funding) to do long term planning of stream restoration projects with our partners. Additional funding is needed to support this new specialist. This position is available to do all aspects of a

stream restoration project and project planning with partners, surveying, design and oversight of installation, and building the capacity of county conservation field offices to develop their own projects. The Driftless Area recently received two multimillion federal grants to be administered by Trout Unlimited (Driftless Area Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant and a Kickapoo Mississippi River Basin Initiative). These two grants over the next five years will provide millions of additional dollars to local landowners to do stream restoration in the Driftless Area provided staff are available to design and supervise installation of the projects.

- In the Pacific Northwest: the **Pacific Marine and Estuarine Partnership (PMEP)** will use this grant funding for an important project for native eelgrass, which is widely recognized as valuable habitat for many species of fish, aquatic invertebrates, and waterfowl. Currently, PMEP is compiling a “State of the Knowledge” report on eelgrass habitat across the West Coast. We are reviewing scientific literature about the extent of eelgrass coverage within estuaries, fish use of eelgrass, and other ecosystem services that eelgrass provides. Part of this work is to identify key data gaps for future exploration. With funds from the Multi-state Grant, the PMEP will begin to implement the recommendations outlined in the “State of the Knowledge” report in order to fill data gaps. PMEP will also incorporate all the spatial eelgrass data collected into its broader spatial data management system, allowing experts in the field to access this specific data layer within the broader West Coast wide estuary data framework. This information will be helpful to practitioners along the West Coast working to protect and restore eelgrass habitat or who are planning future studies.
- Through three partnerships in the Northeast, the **Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership and the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership**, the grant funding will be used to continue a multi-year collaborative focus on whitewater to bluewater fish habitat connectivity needs that span the geographic boundaries of these three Eastern Fish Habitat Partnerships. The primary objectives of this coordinated effort is to finalize a tiered listing of priority drainages and to institute a coordinated process among the Eastern Fish Habitat Partnerships to address fish habitat connectivity issues within these focal areas.
- This grant will also provide **staff and Board support for the National Fish Habitat Partnership** through activities that highlight the National Fish Habitat Partnership program. Activities include support of national meetings in 2018, meeting sponsorship and involvement, as well as supporting communications efforts for 2018, including producing videos and Board member testimonials regarding their involvement in the Partnership effort. This funding request will also support communication activities to continue promoting the 2015 National Fish Habitat Assessment Report and help fill current completion gaps for the NFHP Science and Data Committee.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All of the Fish Habitat Partnerships conduct regular short and long-term monitoring for on-the-ground projects that are implemented through this grant program. Reports are also provided to the National Fish Habitat Board throughout the year and updates regarding the grant are provided to relevant AFWA committees.

Experience

Galvanized into action by continuing losses of aquatic habitat, an unprecedented coalition of anglers, conservation groups, scientists, state and federal agencies, and industry leaders forged the National Fish Habitat Action Plan in 2006. The Action Plan is an investment strategy for making the most effective use of habitat conservation dollars and achieving real gains in aquatic habitat quality and quantity by protecting, restoring, and enhancing key fisheries habitats. Since 2006, the Partnership has supported nearly 700 projects benefiting fish habitat in all 50 states. The Partnership works to conserve fish habitat nationwide, leveraging federal, state, tribal, and private funding resources to achieve the greatest impact on fish populations through priority conservation projects of 20 regionally-based Fish Habitat Partnerships.

Certification Regarding Fishing/Hunting

“By submitting this proposal, the organization’s primary contact and/or authorized representative identified in this grant application certifies that the National Fish Habitat Partnership (1) will not use the grant funds to fund, in whole or in part, any activity of the organization that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife or the regulated taking of fish; and (2) that the grant funds will not be used, in whole or in part, for an activity, project, or program that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting and trapping of wildlife or the regulated taking of fish.”

Certification Regarding Partnership Funds (if applicable)

“By submitting this proposal, the organization’s primary contact and/or authorized representative identified in this grant application certifies that the National Fish Habitat Partnership: 1) understands that partnership fund contributions are assessed in the Association’s review and selection of its priority list of MSCGP projects, but are not considered by the USFWS to be an official non-federal match/cost-share; 2) will provide the partnership funds identified in order to complete the proposed project; 3) understands that if the promised partnership funds are not provided, and there is not a sufficient explanation, potential consequences could include a poor “quality assurance” evaluation by the National Grants Committee for the organization’s future MSCGP applications; the imposition of “special award conditions” on this proposed grant and/or future grants (pursuant to 43 CFR 12); and if the failure to provide partnership funds affects the scope/objective or deliverables or other terms and conditions of the grant, then the USFWS could take necessary enforcement and termination actions (pursuant to 43 CFR 12).”

Budget

Budget Reflects indirect cost rate of 20%

	Fish Habitat Partnerships	MSCGP	P.F.*	Total
AFWA	Program Support	\$24,000.00		\$24,000.00
Eastern U.S.	Atlantic Coastal FHP, Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership	\$36,000.00		\$36,000.00
Western U.S.	Desert FHP Western Native Trout Initiative	\$18,000.00		\$18,000.00
Midwest U.S.	Driftless Area Restoration Effort	\$16,000.00		\$16,000.00
Great Lakes	Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership	\$18,000.00		\$18,000.00
U.S.	Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership	\$20,000.00		\$20,000.00
California	California Fish Passage Forum Western Native Trout Initiative	\$16,000.00		\$16,000.00
Hawaii	Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership	\$16,000.00		\$16,000.00

Pacific NW	Pacific Marine and Estuarine Partnership	\$12,800.00		\$12,800.00
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Budget Breakdown

Total request = \$209,960.00

Travel	12,000.00
Supplies	12,000.00
Contract	152,800.00
Total	176,800.00
Indirect	33,160.00
Grand Total	\$209,960.00

Total MSCGP for the 1 year project is \$209,960.00; Total complimentary partnership funds for the 1 year project are \$1,000,000.

Qualifications of Key Personnel

Tom Champeau, Chairman, National Fish Habitat Board

Mr. Champeau became chair of the National Fish Habitat Board in 2015. Tom has spent 35 years with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission. While working in the field, Tom led major lake habitat restoration projects, worked with the local communities and the mining industry on lake design and management for phosphate mined pits, and defining fish community metrics for establishing minimum flows for rivers in Southwest Florida. Tom holds degrees from the University of Michigan and University of Nebraska.

Ryan Roberts, Program Manager, National Fish Habitat Partnership

Ryan Roberts is the Communications Coordinator for the National Fish Habitat Partnership. Mr. Roberts has 10 years of experience in public relations/communications and has worked on the National Fish Habitat Partnership since 2008. Mr. Roberts created several communications toolkits for use by National Fish Habitat Partnerships and created an overall communications strategy for the partnership. Mr. Roberts’ contributions were key in the development and release of the Status of Fish Habitat Partnership 2010 Assessment and the 2nd Edition of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (2012). Mr. Roberts graduated from Penn State University with a B.S. in Telecommunications/Business (Minor).

Gary Whelan, NFHP Board Science and Data Committee Co-Chair

Gary Whelan is one of the two co-chairs of the NFHP Board Science and Data Committee and has worked on NFHP since its inception. Mr. Whelan is a Program Manager for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Fisheries Division where he manages the Research Section, oversees the Fish Health Program, and provides direct support to and manages components of the Habitat Management Unit. His fisheries career has spanned over 34 years and he has worked

in nearly every aspect of fisheries in the State of Michigan. In his role for NFHP, he has been responsible for all of the Board's Science and Data efforts including the development and release of the Status of Fish Habitat Partnership 2010 and 2015 Assessments. He was also deeply involved in the development of the 1st (2006) and the 2nd Editions of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (2012). Mr. Whelan holds a B.S. in Zoology (Fisheries Management focus) from the University of Wyoming and a M.S. in Fisheries Management from the University of Missouri.

Staff level leadership and management support of the work of the Board group will be provided by AFWA, USFWS, NOAA, state agencies and other partners such as NGO's.

National Fish Habitat Board Members: <http://www.fishhabitat.org/about/staff-board/>