



3rd Edition of the NFHP Action Plan

September 18, 2025

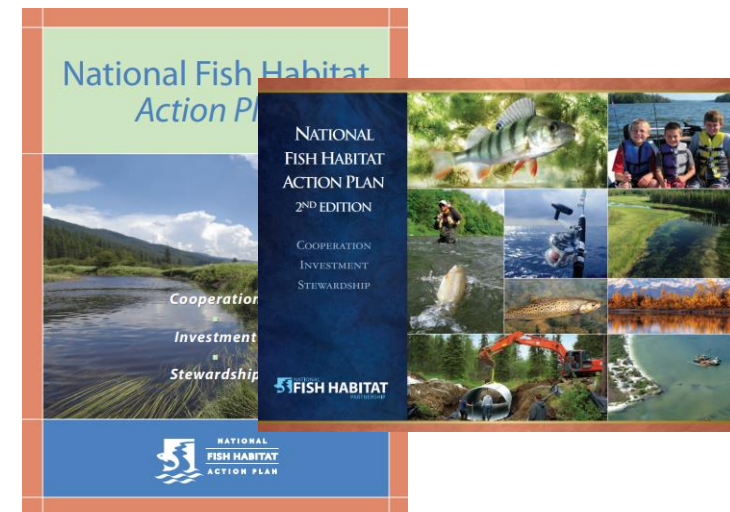
Bloomington, MN

Alex McOwen & Jason Olive



Background & History

- **A plan for all of NFHP**
- 1st Edition - 2006
- 2nd Edition – 2012
- ACE Act passed Oct. 2020
- Started mid-2024 on 3rd edition
- Board, FHPs, and external survey fed into development of this 3rd edition of the AP





Development Team

- Jason Olive & Alex McOwen (staff leads)
- Gene Gilliland
- Adam Ringia
- Steve Perry
- Pat Rivers
- Ian Nakayama
- Anne Kinsinger (*retired*)
- Lori Maloney
- Todd Ewing
- Holly Steindorf





Sections

- Introduction & Call to Action
- Roles of Board, FHPs, and Staff
- America's Conservation Enhancement Act & Reauthorization
- **Goals --> Objectives --> Strategies**
- Appendices



Today's Objectives

1. Preview the AP's objectives & strategies
2. Ask questions to gain context for your review
 - Do you see the inputs and revisions you hoped to see in this revision?
 - Do you see a role for yourself/your organization in advancing these goals?
 - Is there anything you think is completely missing?



Provide National Leadership and Coordination

- Establish a specific set of National Conservation Priorities coinciding with each term of a Board Chair.
- The Board, in concert with the Federal Interagency Task Force, will review, revise, and implement an Interagency Operational Plan every five years, providing a process for coordination among federal agencies in support of this Action Plan.



Provide National Leadership and Coordination

- By 2030, leverage resources and enhance coordination with eight new national and regional partner organizations that align with NFHP's mission and goals.
 - Work with Tribes and tribal organizations to identify and ensure linkages and consistency between NFHP-supported fish habitat efforts and tribal needs, impacts, and cultures.
 - Reach out to at least three regional or national landscape-scale conservation initiatives (e.g., Regional Landscape Initiatives, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, Federal Water Policy Committee) to explore opportunities to increase cooperation and coordination.



Provide National Leadership and Coordination

- By 2030, leverage resources and enhance coordination with eight new national and regional partner organizations that align with NFHP's mission and goals.
 - Work with Regional Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to identify and ensure linkages and consistency between NFHP-supported fish habitat efforts and State Wildlife Action Plans and other similar programs. Specifically use the Action Plan to leverage and implement appropriate fish habitat conservation programs outlined in the State Wildlife Action Plans and other relevant programs.



Provide National Leadership and Coordination

- The Board (excluding federal members) will advocate for the full authorized appropriation from Congress, and commitments from federal and state agencies each year during Fiscal Years 2027-2031 to fund and support the strategic actions of designated FHPs.
 - Obligate the number of FTE's outlined in the Board's Staffing Plan by 2031 to assist with executing the requirements outlined in the ACE Act.



Provide National Leadership and Coordination

- The Board (excluding federal members) will advocate for the full authorized appropriation from Congress, and commitments from federal and state agencies each year during Fiscal Years 2027-2031 to fund and support the strategic actions of designated FHPs.
 - The Board Policy Committee will lead advocacy for appropriation of all authorized technical and science support funds to the federal agencies mentioned in the Act every fiscal year.
 - Use an annual work planning and project approval process to ensure accountability for how NFHP funds are being used by FHPs.
 - Submit a report to Congressional committees of jurisdiction every five years demonstrating accomplishments.



Mobilize and focus national, regional, and local support for fish habitat conservation

- Increase cooperation and coordination among federal, tribal, state, local agencies, conservation organizations, landowners and other stakeholders each year through 2031.
 - Increase the number of federal agencies participating in the Interagency Task Force by 2028.
 - Develop a list of Tribal fisheries contacts (regional consortia) and implement outreach initiatives to increase their participation.
 - NFHP Board Staff will deliver presentations to regional AFWA's and other gatherings of state agency leadership.



Mobilize and focus national, regional, and local support for fish habitat conservation

- Increase cooperation and coordination among federal, tribal, state, local agencies, conservation organizations, landowners and other stakeholders each year through 2031.
 - Develop a list of NGO's that are not currently engaged with NFHP and increase their awareness and participation.
 - NFHP representatives will attend annual aquatic conservation meetings and give presentations. Create a database of aquatic conservation related events that NFHP representatives may wish to attend.
 - Develop a pledge program to increase support among non-traditional organizations to promote conservation actions related to NFHP priorities.



Mobilize and focus national, regional, and local support for fish habitat conservation

- The Board's Policy Committee will engage with potential Congressional sponsors to secure passage of legislation that reauthorizes NFHP funding no later than September 30, 2030.
 - The Board's Policy Committee will sponsor annual Congressional briefings on NFHP.
 - The Board will hold one of its in-person meetings in Washington, D.C. at least biennially.



Mobilize and focus national, regional, and local support for fish habitat conservation

- The Board's Communications Committee will develop a Communications Plan and guidance/toolkit for use by FHPs by December 31, 2027.
 - Each FHP will have a communications plan that incorporates the guidance.
 - The Board will pursue increasing staff to support FHP communications efforts.
 - Each year, at least 25% of FHPs will host an event around a project or initiative where policymakers or regional conservation leaders are invited.



Mobilize and focus national, regional, and local support for fish habitat conservation

- Engage the recreational fishing community in fish habitat conservation by ensuring that 75% of FHP steering committees have a recreational fishing organization representative on their steering committee by 2030.



Achieve measurable, science-based fish habitat conservation outcomes

- Each FHP will facilitate increased collaboration among stakeholders by convening state, territorial, tribal, and federal agencies, conservation groups, landowners and other interested parties by organizing events annually that focus existing and new resources towards increasing effectiveness in achieving long-term, sustainable results.
 - Each FHP (or multiple FHPs jointly) will host at least one meeting annually where partners and/or potential partners gather to discuss recent activities and discuss joint priorities for future efforts.
 - FHPs will host workshops or symposia either stand-alone or in conjunction with conferences (e.g., AFS, regional AFWA's) to share the latest fish habitat conservation science and collaborative opportunities.



Achieve measurable, science-based fish habitat conservation outcomes

- Fish Habitat Partnerships will update their strategic plans every ten years to identify priority conservation outcomes and develop strategies that influence fish habitat conservation work conducted by partners across the landscape.



Achieve measurable, science-based fish habitat conservation outcomes

- Fish Habitat Partnerships will annually support (via direct funding, leveraging additional funding, and partnerships) fish habitat conservation projects that address the root causes of degradation to habitats identified in strategic plans.
 - FHPs will work with the Board, using a prescribed process to provide NFHP-appropriated funds to priority projects.
 - FHP Coordinators will assist partner organizations pursue funding to use to accomplish shared strategic objectives.



Achieve measurable, science-based fish habitat conservation outcomes

- By 2031, provide an online portfolio of regionally or nationally accepted science-based methods and tools that help FHPs plan, measure and demonstrate progress.
 - Support the continued development and maintenance of the NFHP project tracking database and continue to publicize its existence.
 - Provide links to existing best practices and design standards for fish habitat projects.
 - Review existing and established state, federal, tribal and local agency monitoring programs and provide links.
 - Catalogue appropriate habitat project evaluation tools and methods.



Evaluate and communicate the status of fish habitats and address gaps in scientific knowledge

- Prepare a national fish habitat assessment by 2030 that is informed by regional FHP assessments and FHP strategic plans that identifies causative factors related to the NCPs.
- Develop a communications strategy for National Fish Habitat Assessments that outlines the utility of Assessment results.
- Develop a socioeconomic planning and evaluation toolkit for FHPs by 2028 to use for project-specific and regional analyses to quantify economic benefits to local communities and raise public awareness of the role healthy fish habitat plays in improving quality of life for the American people.



Timeline

Milestone	Timeframe
Draft AP presented & discussed	September 18, 2025 Board Meeting (Bloomington, MN)
Board and FHP review	September 19 – 30, 2025
External partner review	October 6 – 24, 2025
AP Team completes revisions	October 27 – November 10, 2025
Board vote on final AP text	November 18, 2025 Board Meeting (Virtual)