



JUNE 24, 2020

**NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD MEETING
(WEBINAR)**

<http://fishhabitat.org>



**Maunalua Bay, Oahu
Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership**



National Fish Habitat Board Webinar
June 24, 2020
2:00 – 4:00 PM ET
Agenda

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/99293762670?pwd=OFoxQ29FTm5wVWxqVkVOY1ZjeGJHdz09>

Meeting ID: 992 9376 2670

Password: 470793

Conference line: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 992 9376 2670

Password: 470793

Time (ET)	Agenda Topic	Tab	Lead(s)
2:00 – 2:25 PM	Attendance & Welcome <i>Desired outcomes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board staff action to take attendance.• Board welcome Dr. Mike Bailey as new USFWS NFHP National Coordinator.• Board action to approve the agenda and notes from the April Meeting.• Board awareness of future meeting schedule and locations.		Ed Schriever (<i>Board Chair, Director – Idaho Department of Fish and Game</i>) & Board Staff
2:25 – 2:35 PM	USFWS Update <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of the status of FWS funding allocation and any other updates.		David Hoskins (<i>USFWS</i>)
2:35 – 2:50 PM	Legislative Team & Working Group Updates <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of the status of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act and any relevant stimulus packages.• Board awareness of potential changes to the Board Charter should the legislation pass.	Tab 1	Mike Leonard (<i>ASA</i>) & Bryan Moore (<i>TU</i>)
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Multistate Conservation Grant Update <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of planned future changes to the Multistate Conservation Grant process.		Ryan Roberts (<i>NFHP Board Staff</i>)

3:00 – 3:10 PM	Science and Data Committee NFHP Data Catalog <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of NFHP Data Catalog activities by the Science and Data Committee.	Tab 2	Daniel Wieferich (NFHP <i>Science and Data Committee</i>)
3:10 – 3:35 PM	NFHP Action Plan Revisions <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board discussion of the remaining decision points in the revised Action Plan revisions.• Board awareness of timeline for finalizing revised NFHP Action Plan		Gary Whelan (NFHP <i>Science and Data Committee Co-Chair</i>)
3:35 – 3:50 PM	NFHP Work Plan <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of the timeline and format planned for the NFHP Board work plan to accompany the Action Plan.		Doug Nygren (NFHP <i>Work Plan Working Group</i>)
3:50 – 4:00 PM	Bass Pro Shops Small Grants Program Update <i>Desired outcome:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board awareness of the status of the FHP projects selected for funding.	Tab 3	Ryan Roberts (NFHP <i>Board Staff</i>)

Title: Legislative Update

Desired outcome: Board Engagement on the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act

Background:

Since the inception of the National Fish Habitat Partnership, a NFHP legislative team has been working to craft a legislative proposal that would achieve the goals as laid out by the Board and establish an organic statute for the Partnership and the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The NFHP legislative team includes representatives from Trout Unlimited, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the American Sportfishing Association, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, American Fisheries Society, the Coastal Conservation Association and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. Since 2006, this team has worked closely together to advance this legislative proposal – now known as the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act (NFHCTPA).

Previous versions of NFHCTPA have enjoyed broad bipartisan support in Congress, including bipartisan approval by the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee (the Senate Committee of jurisdiction) and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee. Until this Congress, the legislation had not been introduced in the House of Representatives since 2009, and instead the legislative team had focused on the Senate as the most likely body in which to advance the bill. The legislative team made a decision in 2019 to refocus our efforts on the House as well as the Senate, and bipartisan companion bills were introduced in each respective body. The Senate bill, S. 754, is led by Senators Mike Crapo (R, ID) and Ben Cardin (D, MD). The House bill, H.R. 1474, is championed by Congressmen Rob Wittman (R, VA-1st) and Mark Veasey (D, TX-33rd).

For several reasons, Congressional approval of NFHCTPA has been complicated, with leadership shifts, initial concerns about the scope and extent of the program, a general distaste for new federal programs and the cost of the legislation among the primary obstacles. In recent years, smaller pieces of legislation such as NFHCTPA are often unsuccessful as stand-alone bills and must move forward on larger legislative packages such as comprehensive energy legislation or public lands packages. For several Congresses now, the legislative team has worked to ensure NFHCTPA language is an integral component of any sportsmen's or public lands package.

2020 Legislative Priority and Accomplishments:

Board Priority Task A: *Continue coordination with legislative affairs team in supporting developments of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act; (assign to eligible Board members and legislative team)*

Accomplishments:

The National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act (NFHCTPA) has been approved by both the House and Senate by voice votes in slightly different forms as part of

larger packages. The latest package is the Senate amended version of **H.R. 925 – America’s Conservation Enhancement Act**. H.R. 925 was approved by the full Senate on January 9th, 2020, and currently awaits a House vote. In addition to Senate-approved NFHCTPA language, this package includes a reauthorization of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act; reauthorization of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Act; a number of reauthorizations for Chesapeake Bay Programs; and language authorizing a commission and task force to address Chronic Wasting Disease in wild cervids. The Senate version of the package also contains potential elements that could slow the progress of NFHCTPA if House action is not taken soon (e.g. a waiver under the Toxic Substances Control Act for lead fishing tackle). Representative Cunningham (D,SC-1st) spearheaded a letter to Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer on March 6th that was signed by 36 House Democrats encouraging H.R. 925, as reported by the Senate, to be taken up expeditiously on the House floor under a suspension of the rules. This letter was well received and House leadership entertained our requests to have the bill on the House floor. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent focus on related legislation slightly stifled the momentum generated after the letter as floor time was dedicated to pandemic relief. However, the legislative team have kept in contact with key House staff and have reengaged in conversations to secure time on the floor for H.R. 925. We hope that the bill will move to the floor within the next two months.

Approach:

Since the start of the 116th Congress, the NFHP legislative team has advanced as our top priority the education of key Congressional members on the importance of enacting NFHCTPA. In addition to encouraging Senate and House Members to cosponsor S. 754 and H.R. 1474, respectively, we are now pushing outreach campaigns in favor of the House approving H.R. 925 with Senate-enacted NFHCTPA language. These current efforts have focused on encouraging key NFHCTPA supporters in the House to approach their respective leadership and encourage the House to take up H.R. 925 for a floor vote as soon as possible.

Title: Science and Data Committee NFHP Data Catalog

Desired outcome: Board awareness of NFHP Data Catalog activities by the Science and Data Committee.

Background: The [NFHP Data Catalog](#) (link to sciencebase) is intended to centralize data products allowing the Board, partners and staff to understand and report accomplishments and prioritize efforts based on available science and data. Having data products documented in a central location also helps to identify collaborative opportunities along with gaps in available information at regional and national levels. Currently, an existing data catalog is in place but is lightly populated. USGS is working with the Science & Data Committee and Fish Habitat Partnerships to help identify effective ways to populate and visualize the NFHP Data Catalog.

Main Goals and Considerations:

- 1) Populate the NFHP Data Catalog with regional and national data products
 - a. Minimize workload of all those involved without sacrifice of quality/understanding.
 - b. Work with partners to better understand potential pros/cons and needs of the NFHP Data Catalog (e.g. some partners may benefit from this effort and use it as their primary data repository, while others may have forms of data distribution).
 - c. Where possible incorporate processes to help avoid potential issues due to high turnover.
- 2) Give NFHP community capability to query and visualize data products.
 - a. Minimize software development (expensive and limited availability).
 - i. Use generalized technologies already with institutional support.
 - b. Allow for multiple geospatial datasets to be visualized
 - c. Flexibility for sorting/querying of the catalog to meet changing goals, needs, and initiatives of NFHP community.

Title: 2020 Bass Pro Shops/NFHP Small Grants Program

Desired Outcome: Board awareness of the small grants process and selected projects funded by the Bass Pro Shops donation from 2019.

Intro:

In 2020, the National Fish Habitat Partnership announced a small grants opportunity open for solicitations by all 20 FHPs under NFHP. This grant program will be implemented through Beyond the Pond, the Section 501c3 organization established to benefit the National Fish Habitat Partnership. This grant opportunity was made possible through the generous \$50,000 contribution from Bass Pro Shops. Funding through this grant was made available **to implement or complement on-the-ground conservation projects.**

A scoring and evaluation team comprised of National Fish Habitat Board members, Beyond the Pond Board members and NFHP staff scored the grant applications, and the following grants were selected for funding.

- South Fork Toutle-Bear and Little Cow Creek Restoration, WA (Funding Requested: \$12,000) – **Pacific Marine and Estuarine Partnership**
- Gilbert Creek Trout Habitat Improvement Project, WI (Funding Requested: \$15,000) – **Fishers and Farmers Partnership**
- Elephant Butte Adapt-a-Cove, NM (Funding Requested: \$15,000) – **Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership**

The National Fish Habitat Partnership received 17 grant applications from the FHPs, and individual FHPs were limited to (2) submissions. Grant Applications were scored based on the following criteria:

Eligibility Screening

Project is specifically on-the-ground habitat conservation work (Y/N)

The project support Goals and objectives of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (Y/N)

Project is implemented through one of the 20 Partnerships under the National Fish Habitat Partnership (Y/N)

Conservation/Community Benefits (5 points possible)

Project has great potential to foster/generate a community conservation ethic through citizen/youth involvement.

Project proximity to a Bass Pro Shop retail store (store locator:

<https://stores.basspro.com/>)

Project benefits a sportfish species

Quantifiable habitat benefits (i.e. Stream Miles restored, vegetation planted)

Project benefits Anglers

Involvement with partners (4 points possible)

The appropriate/relevant partners are involved (i.e. other state or federal agencies, or nonprofit partners) and contributing to budget (in kind or cash).

Budget items and partnership contributions are clearly defined and considered reasonable.

Grant award catalyzes or sparks other partners or future or ongoing efforts.

Project involves/benefits youth

Application Quality (1 point possible)

Proposal is well-written, complete, and clearly conveys sufficient information to evaluate project.

Next steps:

- **Memorandum of Agreement in place for project funding (June)**
- **Coordinating on project announcement with Bass Pro/NFHP**
- **Projects completed by end of 2020**