



FY2026 Recommended NFHP Funding

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Board Staff

National Fish Habitat Board Meeting

June 10, 2025



Outline

- Board responsibility & requirements
- Recommendation development & revisions
- Final recommendation summary
 - FHP Fish Habitat Conservation Projects
 - Board Operations
- Staff recommendation
- Potential motion



Thanks to the Board Review Team & Staff!

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Board Responsibilities & Requirements

- ACE Act requirements
 - Section 203(a)(1)(D) – Board duty to review and make recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.
 - Section 203(e)(1)(B) – No recommendations may be adopted by the Board, except by the vote of 2/3 of all members present.
 - Section 205(b) – Board shall submit to the Secretary a priority list of projects including a description and estimated cost of each project for Secretary approval and funding by July 1.



Board Responsibilities & Requirements

- ACE Act Reauthorization
 - Given changes in the reauthorization, FHP operations funding are **no longer considered fish habitat conservation projects**.
 - FHP operations funding requests **no longer need to go to the Secretary for approval**.
 - The Board can approve them as a budget item, not as an ACE-required action anymore given the changes in the reauthorization bill.



Recommendation Development

- Two groups scored 12-13 FHPs each (10 per group + 2-3 more randomly assigned).
- Developed funding tiers based on FHP scores.
- FHPs were scored on:
 - “Hard” & “soft” ACE Act criteria
 - Justification for operational funds
 - Overall application quality and completeness
- FHPs operational funding did not require non-federal match
- All FHPs will receive a report with their score & reviewer comments.



Minor Changes in FY26 Project List

- Great Plains FHP – fiscal sponsor is WAFWA
- Ohio River Basin FHP – operational request should read \$125K



Board Review Team Recommendation

- All proposed projects should be included in Board recommendation to DOI with implementation contingent on available funding.
- **Recommending 107 fish habitat conservation projects be advanced for Sec. of Interior consideration (*excl. Board operations and FHP operational funding*) for a total request of \$7.38M (with \$27.2M in leveraged funds)**



FY2026 Board Operations Proposal

Component	Cost
Communications and Travel Support	\$300,000
Project Tracking Database Development & Support	\$91,000
Board Assessment Data System Maintenance	\$270,000
Total	\$661,000



Board Staff Recommendation

- Board staff recommends that the complete Board Operations Proposal (\$661K) be approved by the Board.



FY2026 Recommended Funding

Component	Cost	Leveraged
FHP Projects (107)	\$7,383,533	\$27,225,900
FHP Operational Funding	\$2,400,000	\$2,604,040
Board Operations	\$661,000	-
Total	\$10,444,533	\$29,829,940



Recommended Motion

- It is moved that the Board Recommended Projects, 107 Fish Habitat Conservation Projects (\$7.38M), be approved to be submitted by July 1, 2025 to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior by the Board Chairman.