



FY26 NFHP Funding Process

NFHP Board Meeting

April 28, 2026

Tab 4

ACE Act - Section 8203. National Fish Habitat Board



- **(a) Establishment**

- **(1) Fish Habitat Board**

- There is established a board, to be known as the "National Fish Habitat Board", whose duties are—
 - (A) to promote, oversee, and coordinate the implementation of this chapter;

ACE Act - Section 8212. Funding

- **(a) Authorization of appropriations**
- **(1) Fish habitat Partnerships and conservation projects**
- There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary \$7,200,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2030 to provide funds for Partnership operations under section 8204 of this title and fish habitat conservation projects approved under section 8205(f) of this title, of which 5 percent is authorized only for projects carried out by Indian Tribes.



ACE Act – Section 8204

- **8204. Fish Habitat Partnerships**

- **(b) Purposes**

- **The purposes of a Partnership shall be—**

- (1) to **work with other regional habitat conservation programs** to promote cooperation and coordination to enhance fish populations and fish habitats;
- (2) to **engage local and regional communities** to build support for fish habitat conservation;
- (3) to **involve diverse groups of public and private partners**;
- (4) to **develop collaboratively a strategic vision and achievable implementation plan** that is scientifically sound;
- (5) to **leverage funding from sources that support local and regional partnerships**;
- (6) to use adaptive management principles, including **evaluation of project success and functionality**;
- (7) to **develop appropriate local or regional habitat evaluation and assessment measures** and criteria that are compatible with national habitat condition measures; and
- (8) to **implement local and regional priority projects** that improve conditions for fish and fish habitat.

ACE Act – Section 8205

- **8205. Fish Habitat Conservation Projects**

- **(a) Submission to Board**

- Not later than March 31 of each year, each Partnership shall submit to the Board a list of priority fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Partnership for annual funding under this chapter.

- **(b) Recommendations by Board**

- Not later than July 1 of each year, the Board shall submit to the Secretary a priority list of fish habitat conservation projects that includes a description, including estimated costs, of each project that the Board recommends that the Secretary approve and fund under this chapter.

- **(f) Approval**

- **(1) In general**

- Not later than 90 days after the date of receipt of the recommended priority list of fish habitat conservation projects... the Secretary.... shall approve or reject any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board.



Current Budget Situation

FY 2026 APPROPRIATION **\$6,764,000**

	<u>NON-PROJECT EXPENSES</u>
USFWS SUPPORT	-\$850,000
BOARD SUPPORT	-\$300,000
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT	-\$270,000
DATABASE SUPPORT	-\$91,000
FHP OPERATIONS	-\$2,400,000
TOTAL “FIXED” EXPENSES	- \$3,911,000
REMAINING BALANCE	\$2,853,000

FHPs submit project list to Board

Board approves project list

Board submits list for DOI Secretarial approval



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Board approves project list

Board submits list for DOI Secretarial approval

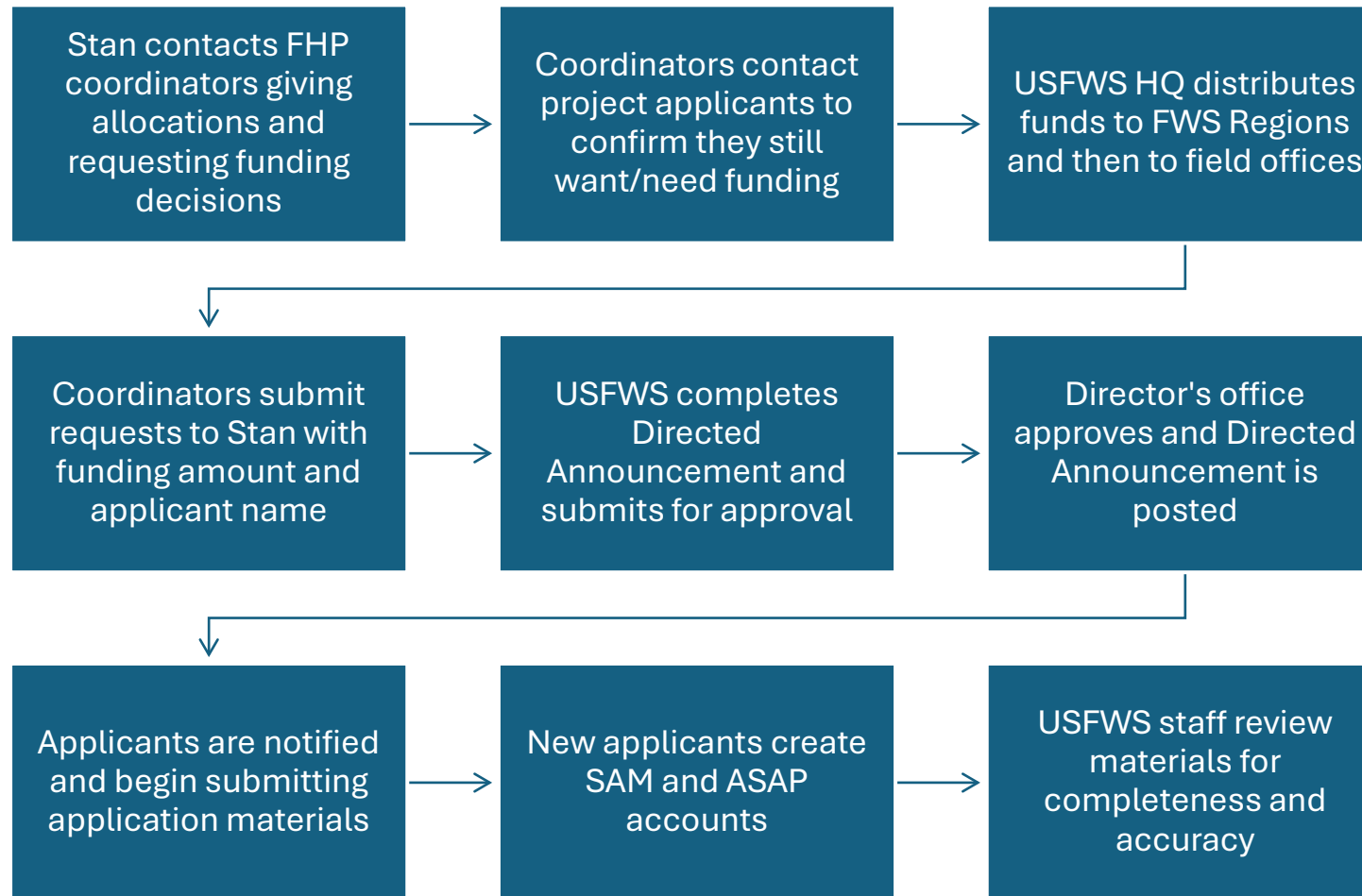
APPROVED

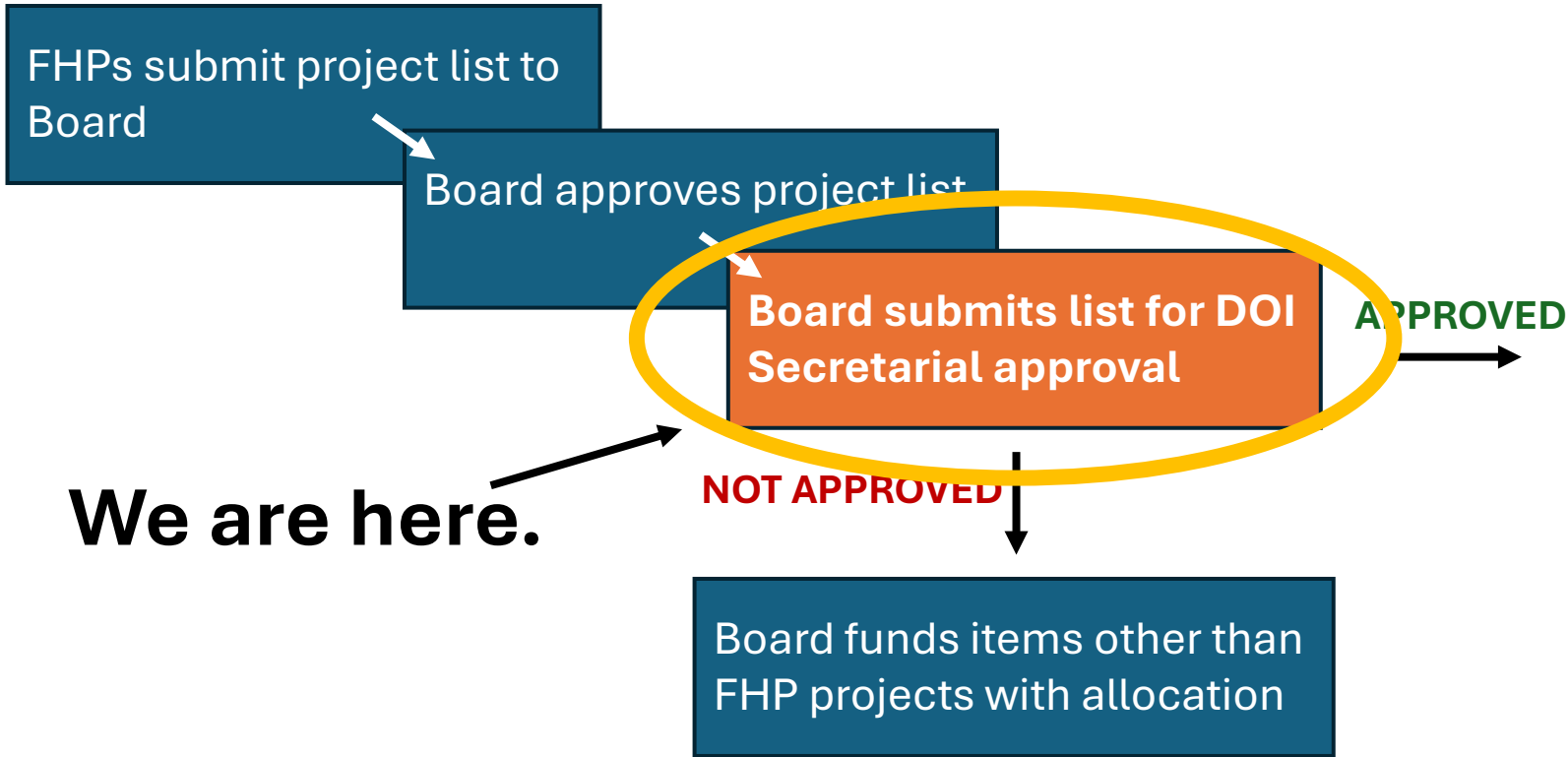
Funds assigned to FHPs based on scoring tier and NFHP appropriation

Subset of projects to be funded are confirmed with each FHP



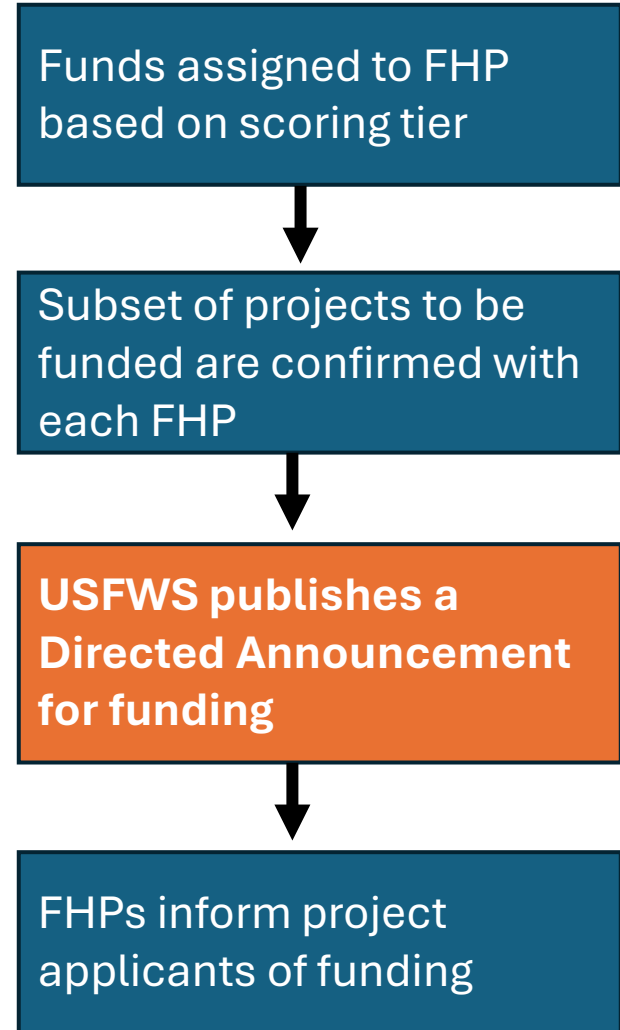
Steps to Complete by June 30





We are here.

We're discussing options for this route in the case the list is not approved.





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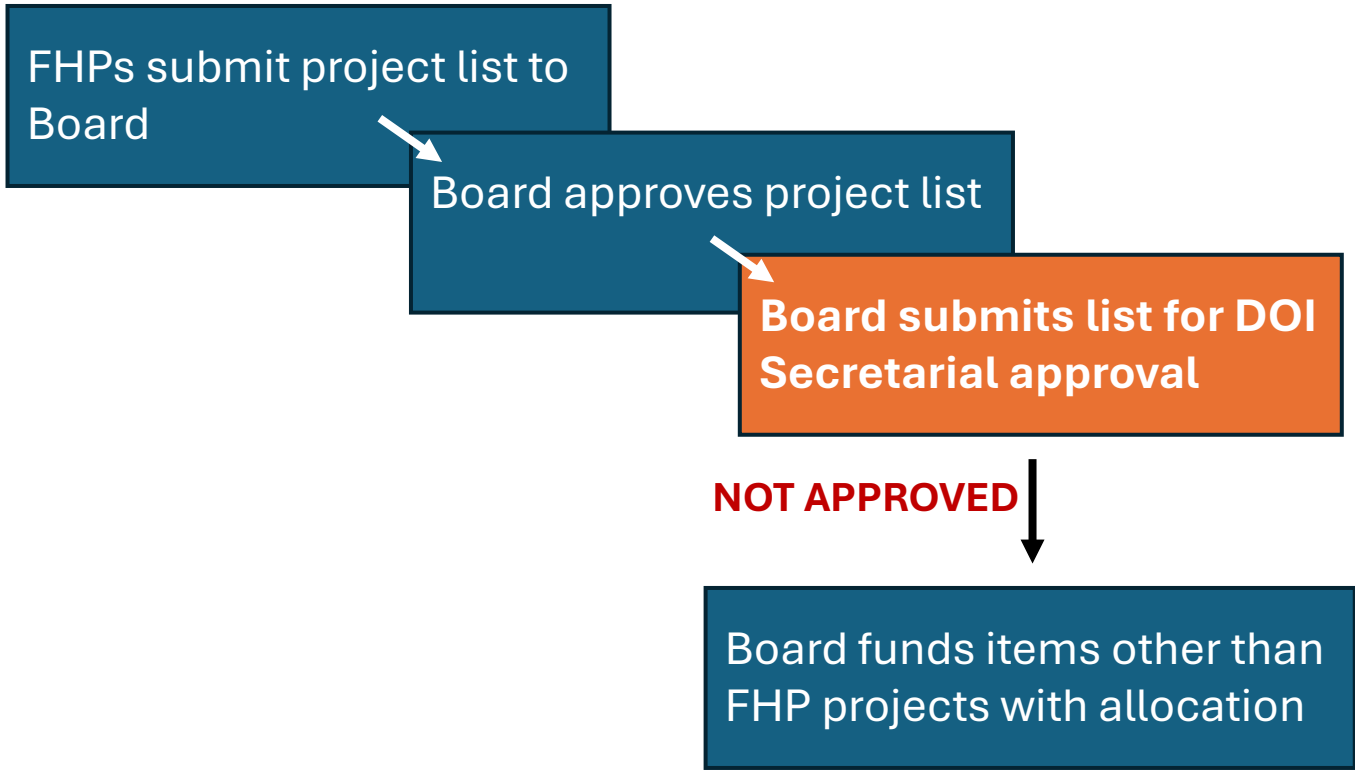
\$2,853,000

Next steps

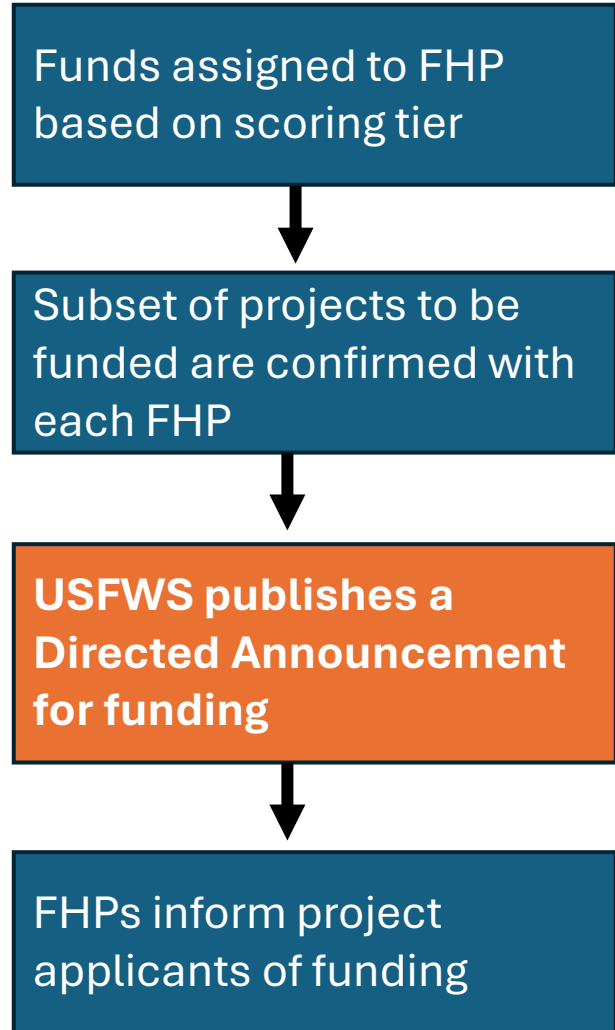
Action	Timeframe
<p>Entities selected for funding (including FHP fiscal sponsors) submit applications for federal financial assistance and related materials in Grant Solutions.</p> <p>USFWS staff work with applicants to complete funding documents.</p>	<p>Before July 1 or during October 1-December 31.</p>
<p>All funding applications are submitted for “enhanced review” before funding is authorized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < \$50k- can be approved by USFWS Director • > \$50k- must be approved by DOI (different approval pathway than original NFHP Project List) 	
<p>Funding is awarded upon approval.</p>	<p>Weeks - months after submissions</p>

MOTION FROM EXCOM

- **It is moved that the NFHP Board's Executive Committee be empowered to act on the Board's behalf to decide whether to advance the alternative slate of Board funding initiatives for FY2026 (in Tab 4) and to determine the final budgeted amounts for each initiative on or around May 8 if the Secretary of the Interior has not yet signed the FY26 Fish Habitat Conservation Projects list nor clearly signaled his intent to do so.**
- NOTE: if the FY26 Fish Habitat Conservation Project list is signed before May 8, staff will move forward to execute projects as usual.



APPROVED



NOT FOR USE AT APRIL BOARD MEETING