

**National Fish Habitat Board Webinar Summary: June 28, 2017**

**Members present:**

Peter Aarrestad (NEAFA)	Bryan Moore <i>for</i> Chris Wood (TU)
Stan Allen (PSMFC)	Chris Moore (MAFMC)
Mike Andrews (TNC)	Doug Norton <i>for</i> Benita Best-Wong (EPA)
Tom Bigford (AFS)	Scott Peets <i>for</i> Rob Harper (USFS)
Doug Boyd (private citizen)	Sam Rauch (NOAA Fisheries)
Tom Champeau (At-Large State Seat)	Ed Schriever (WAFWA)
Ross Melinchuk (SEAFWA)	

**Members absent:**

Doug Beard (USGS), Jim Kurth (USFWS), Jim Leach (MAFWA), Mike Leonard (ASA), Fred Matt (NAFWS), Christy Plumer (TRCP), Ron Regan (AFWA), and Sean Stone (CCA).

**Approved by consensus:**

- March Board meeting summary
- June Board webinar agenda

**Approved by motion:**

- NFHP Document of Interdependence; motion by Bryan Moore, seconded by Tom Bigford; unanimous approval.
- Support NFHP Assessment as laid out in the recommendation: *Based upon all of the feedback provided at the last two Board meetings and the associated surveys of all NFHP groups, the Science and Data Committee (SDC) recommendation is the Board approve moving forward with a combination of Assessment Options 2 and 3 which includes: an updated National Fish Habitat Assessment using revisions of current data layers for inland waters; a focus on hydrology and connectivity both nationally and regionally for the Inland Assessment; continued refinement of the Great Lakes Coastal Assessment; and a focus on strictly regional assessments for the Marine Coastal Assessment;* motion by Ross Melinchuk, seconded by Mike Andrews; unanimous approval.
- Comments [on USDA Forest Service National Fish and Aquatic Stewardship Strategy] to submit to Forest Service for consideration; motion by Ross Melinchuk, seconded by Ed Schriever; NMFS abstains.

**Updates and discussions:**

- Welcome and Housekeeping – Chairman Tom Champeau noted that USFWS personnel would not be participating on the call, a decision which stems from a Department of Interior Secretarial Order. He clarified that this Order would not affect funding going out to the Partnerships. Major follow-up discussion focused on another policy affecting projects over \$100k, whether other Agencies are following the lead of USFWS, and if there was anything that could be done to demonstrate support of NFHP.
- Future Meetings – Staff noted that the next Board meeting would be held on October 18 (full day) and October 19 (half day) in Rapid City, South Dakota. A field trip is planned for the afternoon of the 19th. Details pertaining to hotel reservations and travel are forthcoming. There is general interest in a FHP workshop, but currently there isn't fiscal support for it.
- Executive Leadership Team Update – It was noted that the Executive Leadership Team had approved several Board members. These reappointed individuals are as follows: Doug Boyd (Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council), Christy Plumer (Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership), Sean Stone (Coastal Conservation Association), and Chris Wood (Trout Unlimited). Tom Bigford noted that Tom Lang would be taking his place as AFS representative on the National Fish Habitat Board in August.
- Partnerships Committee– A summary of how the Document of Interdependence was created, including several opportunities for comment, was provided. It was noted that the document is within the spirit of

existing documents and that it is a living document that can be updated when existing documents are updated.

- Science and Data Committee Update – The Board was presented with a summary of the recent FHP assessment survey results, a summary of four potential habitat assessment implementation options, and a recommended path forward. Proposed assessment products, process, and timeline were also presented. Follow-up discussion focused on short and long term funding support.
- Legislative Update – The Government Affairs Director at AFWA made the Board aware that S.1436 had been introduced by Senators Cardin and Crapo and the hope is that it would be rolled up in the Sportman’s Package and moved out of committee after the July recess. It was noted that the introduced bill is the same as the bill that passed the Senate last year, but that it may undergo some tweaks. Follow-up discussion centered on the timing for gaining additional cosponsors and outreach materials that are in development.
- Budget and Finance Committee – The Board was informed that a LOI for Multistate Conservation Grant funding had been submitted on behalf of the Partnerships, the last of a three-year commitment to apply collectively. The Board was made aware of the total funding request, the FHPs involved, and the inclusion of funding for program support at the nation level, if needed. Major follow-up discussion included the need to pull together the FHPs to discuss how to proceed at the end of the current 3-year period. It was also noted that NOAA provides support to the Board and is currently working to provide funds to three FHPs.
- Forest Service Fisheries Plan – Chairman Tom Champeau drew the Board’s attention to the NFHP comments to the Forest Service Fisheries Plan. These comments focus on using the National Fish Habitat Board and individual Fish Habitat Partnership to help guide and achieve the goals of the Forest Service’s Fish and Aquatic Stewardship Strategy and the importance of coordinating with state fish and wildlife agencies and their distinctive statutory authorities.
- Communications Committee Update – Staff updated the Board on recent additions to the website, including social media icons and an online donation page, and an ongoing effort to populate the 10 Waters to Watch archive. It’s expected that the 2017 10 Waters to Watch timeline may shift back due to the current low number of submissions. It was also noted that recent funding from BassPro will go towards the development of a NFHP video that will include interviews with Board members and Fish Habitat Partnerships. The Board then viewed a demonstration of the recently released NFHP storymap, which is available for exploring at [www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org).
- Meeting Wrap-up – It was noted that the USFWS FY17 funding allocations are included in the Board Book. Follow-up discussion centered around an interest in working with the 501c3 Board to find funding outside of USFWS.

**Action items:**

- Staff will provide details pertaining to hotel reservations and travel for the October Board meeting.
- Staff will make the final Document of Interdependence available on the web within the next 2-3 weeks.
- AFWA is developing a press release on the recent legislation, and a coalition is developing a one-pager for circulation.
- Partnerships Committee will make a recommendation on approach for applying for future MSCG funding.
- When appropriate, staff will develop a news release reflecting recent NOAA funding to three FHPs.
- The Chairman will develop a strategy and game plan with respect to the DOI Secretarial Order.

**Future Board meetings (2017):**

- Summer Introductory Call for new members (Date TBD)
- October 18-19 (Rapid City, South Dakota)

**Board approved documents:**

- March Board meeting summary
- *NFHP Document of Interdependence*
- NFHP Comments to *USDA Forest Service National Fish and Aquatic Stewardship Strategy*

**Additional attendees:**

Julie Carter (WNTI)  
Jessica Graham (SARP)  
Emily Greene (Board Staff – NOAA contract)  
Deborah Hart (SEAK FHP)  
Lisa Havel (ACFHP)  
Pat Montanio (NOAA-NMFS)  
Joe Nohner (MGLP)  
Steve Perry (EBTJV)  
Ryan Roberts (Board Staff - AFWA)  
Dan Shively (USFS)  
Gary Whelan (SDC Co-Chair - MI DNR)