

Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership Partner Update

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NFHP Board Meeting – March 7, 2018



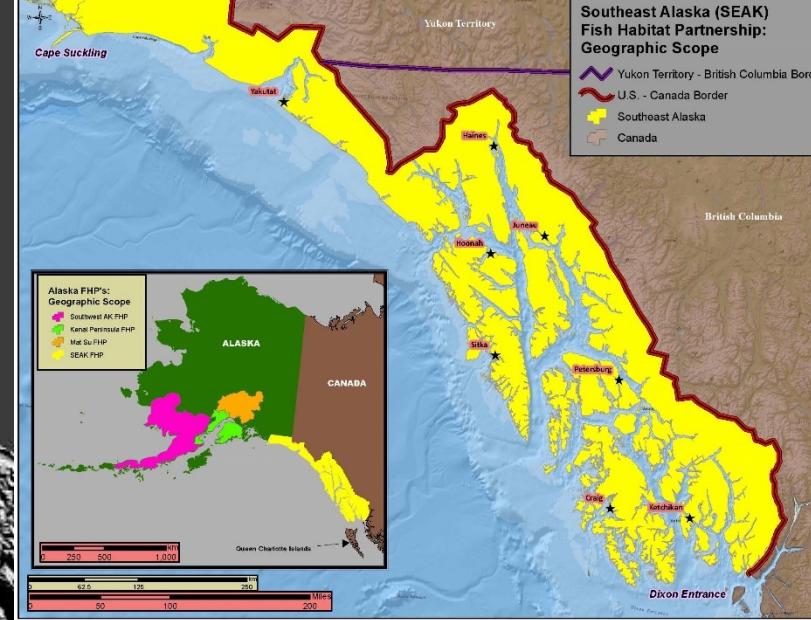
**SOUTHEAST ALASKA
FISH HABITAT
PARTNERSHIP**

Presentation Highlights

- Demonstrate how SEAKFHP has risen to become a robust Partnership
- Introduce the partnership's business plan and newly revised conservation action plan
- Introduce our request to the NFHP Partnership Committee – seeking guidance and support on addressing long-term funding needs for SEAKFHP

Southeast Alaska

A complex landscape and biogeography



- Largest coastal temperate rainforest in the nation, home to the Tongass National Forest
- Covers nearly 45,000 mi², including 12,000 mi² of marine waters, with a shoreline length > 16,000 miles
- Freshwater habitats abound, including > 20,000 lakes and ponds
- Tides range -4 to +21 feet
- 30- 160" of rainfall
- >1,000 named islands
- > 5,000 mapped anadromous fish streams

Southeast Alaska

A region of people with strong connections to fish

- 96% of Alaskans surveyed say salmon are essential to the Alaskan way of life.
- Human Use of Salmon
 - Nearly 90% of rural households in Southeast Alaska use salmon.
- Robust subsistence, sport and commercial fisheries support this economy with use values exceeding \$466,000,000 annually in Southeast.
- Current legislation (HB199) and ballot initiative (fall 2018) prompting improvements in fish habitat protection





Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Who We Are

34 member organizations including:
Federal, state and local governments
Tribal entities
Non-profit organizations
Local watershed groups
Fishing organizations and associations
University members

Structure and Capacity

12-member Steering Committee
Supportive partnership co-chairs
Active Science and Data Committee
Part-time coordinator





Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Our partners share a common vision to ensure healthy, thriving habitats that support all life stages of resident, anadromous, and coastal dependent fishes across their range in Southeast Alaska

How we are different from other FHPs

- We do not receive NFHP funding for coordination or project funds
- We rely on strong partner participation to guide actions of the partnership
- We commit a strong focus to partner services

What we add to the NFHP family

- We represent a region with highly productive intact fish habitat - and lots of fish
- Our communities are passionate about fish
- Our practitioners are knowledgeable and contribute greatly to conservation at larger scales
- We promote NFHP goals and objectives and contribute to value to the NFHP family





Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Accomplishments:

Partner Engagement

- Broad partner support
- Successful organizational structure – New Business Plan
- Functioning committees
- Strong NFHP relationships

Collaborative Strategic Action Plan

- Focused fish habitat conservation strategies for freshwater and coastal areas of Southeast Alaska

Partner Services

- Promote regional dialog and coordination
- Elevate regional assessments and guidance documents
- Host resource website and data archive
- Host symposia and outreach events
- Provide project endorsements

**Operational Strategy
and Business Plan
2017-2021**



**CONSERVATION
ACTION PLAN
2017-2021**





Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Partner Services

- Foster interagency & regional communication
- Support regional assessment and data sharing
- Coordinate relevant conservation strategies for protection, enhancement, and restoration of fish habitat
- Provide project technical review and endorsement to partners
- Facilitate conservation outreach and provide annual symposium and event facilitation
- Leverage regional funding to support on-the-ground restoration activities

SAVE THE DATE!

**2018 SOUTHEAST
ALASKA
WATERSHED
SYMPOSIUM**

"Stepping up to the plate for
collaborative restoration"

MARCH 5-7, 2018

JUNEAU, ALASKA





Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

On-the-grounds project:

Tongass Top 5

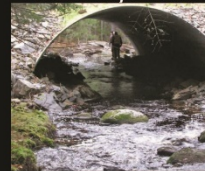
Fish Passage Design Initiative



Barrier road culvert



Fish-friendly road culvert



Many culverts cause big problems for fish. Migratory fish—like salmon and steelhead—need room to move and are particularly hard hit by barriers where roads cross streams.

Designing fish-friendly crossings where roads intersect streams helps ensure a seamless transition for fish passing underneath. Across the nation, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and many partners have come together to improve fish passage under roads: in 2016, the U.S. Forest Service celebrated over 1000 fish passage projects completed nationally.

This effort has been deeply embraced in Alaska across the Tongass National Forest. Between 1998 and 2015, over 500 crossings not previously meeting fish passage standards were improved.

In spite of this good work, it is estimated that a third of remaining assessed road-stream crossings in the Tongass do not currently meet fish passage standards. To address this need, the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership have teamed up to develop the TONGASS TOP 5. The goal: design fish passage sites to a 'shovel ready' state and ultimately develop a plan to restore these remaining high priority sites for improved fish passage.

“...building better culverts to open waterways for fish to grow, reproduce and survive, to improve the resiliency of roads to flooding, and to protect transportation infrastructure for communities
—Celebrating 1000 Culverts, Washington D.C. 2016

Your help can make a difference for fish in the Tongass!

\$100K

\$140K Goal

Click to Donate!



Time series of culvert replacement for fish passage (USFS THP Monitoring and Evaluation Report).



For more information, contact:

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Make a direct tax-deductible donation for this effort [here](#)



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

How do we compare in the Allocation Methodology?

Self-assessment:

- ✓ FHP Recognition Requirements
 - ✓ Criteria 1: Habitat Assessment
 - ✓ Criteria 2&3: Priority/Trust Species and Area
 - ✗ Criteria 4: Project Completion
 - ✓ Criteria 5: Monitoring and Evaluation
 - ✓ Criteria 6: Leveraging
 - ✓ Criteria 7: Strategic Implementation
 - ✓ Criteria 8: Conservation Actions/ Outcomes
- = **PERFORMANCE LEVEL 2 Among National FHP Cohort**



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership Business Plan

Operational Strategy and Business Plan 2017-2021



SOUTHEAST ALASKA
FISH HABITAT
PARTNERSHIP

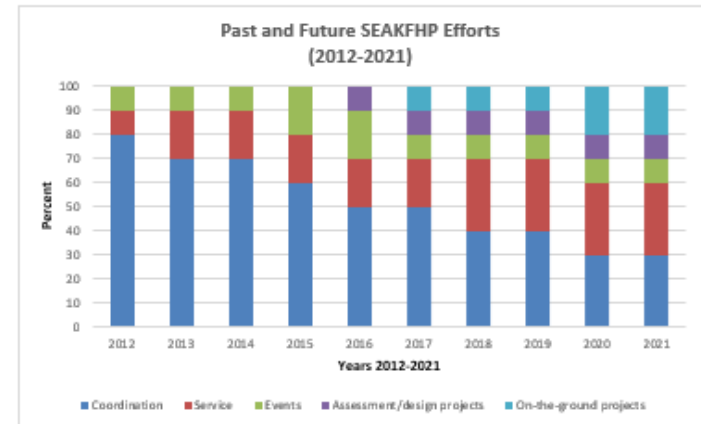


Figure 1 Past and future efforts for the partnership. Showing years 2012 through 2021.

PARTNERSHIP OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES

SEAKFHP's Strategic Action Plan provides guidance for SEAKFHP partners and others to pursue organizational and service strategies, referenced as 'Partnership Strategies', which directly contribute to meeting the partnership's mission and to reaching shared conservation goals in the region. Guidance identified in the strategic plan instills stakeholder and community ownership and encourages partners to focus on the highest priorities and conduct conservation activities with the best methods and protocols. Some strategies recommend coordination and interagency participation, but in no way bind affected agencies or partners to implement these strategies or relinquish any mandated or delegated authority. This document revises the initial organizational strategies, recognizing that the partnership has advanced over the last few years to now one that has secured a place within the region serving its partners. The strategies listed below are long term and serve to provide operational guidance as the partnership advances to the next stage in its development, one of persistence and focus on on-the-ground projects supporting protection and restoration of fish habitat across the region.

PARTNERSHIP GROWTH AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

- Ensure SEAKFHP composition represents landowners and stakeholders of Southeast Alaska.
- Routinely assess stakeholder gaps in partnership participation and identify other collaborators working in Southeast Alaska to ensure the partnership does not duplicate services or actions.
- Regularly inform the public on the governance and activities of the SEAKFHP using both print and digital media.



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Current funding situation, Strategies 1-3 in Business Plan:

USFWS Coastal Program (through December 2018)—Funds part-time coordinator, symposia planning, and partner support services (project facilitation/website)

NOAA Pacific Coast Fisheries Management Support Grant via Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission)—Funds part-time coordinator, coastal conservation planning activities, and partner support services (webinar platform/website)

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund—Funds part-time coordinator, symposia planning, partner support services and now on-the-grounds projects like the Tongass Top 5 – fish passage design initiative

Chapter under the Beyond the Pond

In-kind support—Trout Unlimited (fiscal sponsor), USFWS (WebEx and teleconference services), and Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition (symposia co-sponsor)

Long-term support, Strategy 4 in Business Plan:

Fully eligible participant under the NFHP program (FWS allocation process)



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Our Request to the NFHP Partnership Committee:

- Provide guidance and support for a SEAKFHP request to the FWS to participate in the FY2019 NFHP funding allocation process
 - How best do we do this?
 - Looking for a path forward by October 2018



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Table copies of our plans will be available soon....

CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN 2017-2021



**SOUTHEAST ALASKA
FISH HABITAT
PARTNERSHIP**

FRESHWATER FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Southeast Alaska's Freshwater Landscape

Southeast Alaska is a complex geography with more than 1000 islands sitting adjacent to the highest coastal mountain range in the world. The Coast Range supports some of the largest glaciers and extensive ice fields in North America. Rivers that drain these glaciated slopes play an important role providing minerals and nutrients that fertilize bays and estuaries across the region. Interactions between the land and water are strong, southeast rivers discharge about 90 cubic miles of freshwater annually and carry nutrients from the land to nearby marine waters producing hotspots for primary productivity and create feeding areas for fish, marine mammals and birds. In addition, freshwater habitats across the region provide vital functions for fish, serving to provide needed habitat for spawning, rearing and wintering for anadromous fish species. The landscape of southeast is predominately forest and the ability to maintain habitats for fish is tied to the condition and integrity of the forests and watersheds around them. Salmon are an essential part of the region's ecology, they rely on the region's freshwater landscape and play a major role in transporting marine and freshwater nutrients to the forest ecosystem. Nine anadromous fish species are abundant in the region: king salmon (Chinook, *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), red salmon (sockeye, *O. nerka*), silver salmon (coho, *O. kisutch*), pink salmon (humpy, *O. gorbuscha*), chum salmon (dog, *O. keta*), steelhead (*O. mykiss*), Dolly Varden (*Salvelinus malma*), cutthroat trout (*O. clarki*) and eulachon (hooligan, *Thaleichthys pacificus*).



COASTAL FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Southeast Alaska's Coastal Landscape

Southeast Alaska, a unique landscape encompassing more than 18,000 miles (29,000 km) of shoreline, collectively supports a variety of fishery habitats including over 12,000 individual estuaries that serve as important nursery areas for a variety of fish and invertebrate species (Albert and Schoen 2007; Ecological Atlas of Southeast Alaska 2016). In addition to estuaries, Southeast Alaska's coastal landscape is characterized by extensive nearshore areas connecting over 5,000 islands spread across the Aleutian Archipelago including intertidal and beach habitat and other wetland features. Within these rich ecosystems aquatic resources abound and include diverse and abundant populations of commercially and culturally important fish and shellfish species, such as Pacific salmon (*Oncorhynchus* sp.), herring (*Clupea pallasii*), blackcod (*Anoplopoma fimbria*), Pacific cod (*Gadus microcephalus*), halibut (*Hyppoglossus stenolepis*), king crab (*Paralithodes* sp.), dungeness crab (*Metacarcinus magister*), geoducks (*Panopea generosa*) and many others. This region is also home to 74,000 people dispersed across 34 communities, all of which occur along the shoreline and tidelands. Fishery and other aquatic resources critical to these communities are robust and flourishing yet potentially at risk as human activities increase due to urbanization and through dispersed activities, such as marine related ship traffic and residual impacts from historical land-use practices (Baker et al. 2011; TNC Coastal-GIS Human Activities Database 2011). In addition, they face additional challenges linked to emerging changes in climate and ocean conditions. These changes not only threaten important fish populations in the region, but they also alter the ways in which these resources need to be considered to ensure resilient ecosystems foster healthy communities and indigenous cultures in the future.





Thank You!

Questions?