

Update on the Forest Service's National Fish & Aquatic Strategy

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Why Rebuild the Strategy?

- ◆ The RTTF Action Plan is 30 years old.
- ◆ The agency and society face different and more complex challenges.
- ◆ Forest Service has increased emphasis on integration & collaboration.
- ◆ Our partners have called for it.
- ◆ We recognize many great opportunities.



Process and Progress

- ◆ National team widely representative of the agency, across all branches and at all levels.
- ◆ Team structure: core team, extended participants, multiple work groups.
- ◆ Engaged partners throughout.
- ◆ Recently completed revised draft of strategy based on more than 50 sets of reviewer comments.



Goals

Goal 1: Conserve Fish and Aquatic Resources

Goal 2: Connect People to the Outdoors through Fishing, Boating, and Other Aquatic Activities

Goal 3: Strengthen Partnerships and Work Across Boundaries

Goal 4: Deliver and Apply Scientific Research

Goal 5: Build Capacity through Mentoring and Training

Goal 6: Communicate the Value and Benefits of Fish and Aquatic Resources

High-Priority Implementation Actions

1. Determine barriers to increasing recreational fishing participation and identify high-priority actions that will yield the greatest increase in participation by 2019.
2. Increase the number of youth and adults connecting to the outdoors through recreational fishing and other aquatic activities by 50 percent, from fiscal year 2017 levels, by 2023.



High-Priority Implementation Actions

3. Increase partnerships that result in meaningful fish and aquatic stewardship outcomes with multiple benefits by 20 percent, from fiscal year 2017 levels, by 2023.
4. Conduct and distribute a national fish and aquatic ecology research needs assessment by 2019.



High-Priority Implementation Actions

5. Develop a coarse-scale national assessment of aquatic biodiversity by 2019.
6. Develop criteria for identifying conservation watersheds for fish and aquatic species on national forests and grasslands and select conservation watersheds by 2020.



High-Priority Implementation Actions

7. Develop business practices and protocols for effective mentoring of fisheries biologists and aquatic ecologists by 2018.
8. Work with communications and marketing experts to develop and implement a communications and outreach plan by 2018.



Feedback on Draft and Key Changes to Final Strategy

- ◇ Widespread support on draft.

- ◇ Clarifications:

 - ◇ Removal of verbiage on “native” fish.

 - ◇ Consistent verbiage on “conservation” to that of NFHP.

 - ◇ Addressing state F&W agencies as cooperators.

 - ◇ Increased goal on connecting youth to outdoors from 20% to 50%.

 - ◇ Added NFHP as a partner organization in developing strategy as requested.

- ◇ Addition of Partnership Objective calling out increased coordination among other Federal agencies.





Questions or Feedback?

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