

National Fish Habitat Conservation Act Summary

This landmark legislation will for the first time establish a national framework for freshwater and coastal habitat conservation and will focus the scientific and conservation capabilities of states, territories, federal agencies, tribes, industry, conservation organizations, and local communities to improve the condition of fish habitat nationwide. Modeled on the successful Migratory Bird Joint Ventures and North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the program carries out fish habitat protection, restoration and enhancement through regional partnerships that engage local partners in conservation action and provide a solid science-based and strategic approach to on-the-ground conservation efforts.

- Introduced in the 111th Congress in May/June 2009
 - Senate bill (S.1214) introduced by Senator Lieberman (I-CT) and sponsored by Senators Bond (R-MO), Cardin (D-MD), Casey (D-PA), Crapo (R-ID), Klobuchar (D-MN), Murkowski (R-AK), Sanders (I-VT), Stabenow (D-MI), Udall (D-CO) and Whitehouse (D-RI).
 - House bill (H.R. 2565) introduced by Representative Kind (D-WI)
- **The legislation would:**
 - Authorize the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.
 - Establish a National Fish Habitat Board to provide oversight.
 - Establish regional Fish Habitat Conservation Partnerships.
 - Establish a National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Office within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support the Board and administer grants.
 - Provide for the active engagement of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Geological Survey, and other appropriate federal agencies to conduct scientific and technical assistance.
 - Authorize a \$75 million grant program for aquatic habitat projects through the Department of the Interior.
- **Progress to date:**
 - National Fish Habitat Action Plan signed by the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce on April 24, 2006.
 - National Fish Habitat Board organized in 2006.
 - Nine Fish Habitat Partnerships are established and 11 more are in development, with involvement in all 50 States.
 - National framework for scientific assessment of fish habitats developed.
 - Since 2006, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided \$8.5 million to support 188 on-the-ground projects in 36 states, leveraging \$19.8 million in partner match, to address the priorities of the Fish Habitat Partnerships.

For more information:

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