Title: Communications Committee Report

Desired outcome: An informational briefing to the Board on the committee's 2012 work plan and consensus on Board's priorities for the committee in 2013.

Background: At its April 2012 Meeting, the Board tasked the communications committee with addressing the following priority issues during 2012:

1. Develop concise messaging about the Action Plan that targets groups that are already part of the partnership (vs. the general public).

   Accomplishment: Continued outreach on our rebranding effort of the National Fish Habitat Partnership with the FHPs and coordinated on messaging within the 2nd edition of the National Fish Habitat Action to address the priority of the Board.

2. Develop a general awareness campaign that includes key messages illustrated by 10 Waters-to-Watch project results and outcomes for the general public.

   Accomplishment: Site visits and communication began in 2012 on highlighting current Waters to Watch projects. An increased effort was emphasized on reporting results of previous projects to track them and stress the significance of the projects and their impact. Video work through site visits underway will document this priority of the Board.

2012 Work Plan Outcomes

- We are currently coordinating the rollout strategy for the *2nd Edition of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.*

- We launched a new website in August 2012 that improves the online presence of the partnership by making it user-friendly and more efficient for staff to update. The new website helps build the community of support for the national partnership by making it easier to add groups to the partner coalition.

- We are working with the legislative team and the FHPs to help educate Members of Congress and Congressional district office staff about the FHPs and specific conservation project efforts.

- We created, reviewed and approved--and the Board published--the *National Fish Habitat Partnership 2012 Update* that included recent successes and milestones for years 2011-12. http://fishhabitat.org/sites/default/files/www/NFHP_2012_update.pdf

- We announced the 10 Waters to Watch Campaign for the 6th straight year. We received more media coverage on the Waters to Watch in 2012 than in any other year. Major success was coverage of the dam removal on the Harpeth River, TN. SARP was key in advancing the message of the partnership.

- We increased our social media by including Scoop.it news service in our Facebook and Twitter efforts and on the new website. This allowed us to incorporate fish habitat related news in our social media platforms and website. We set a goal of 1,000 Facebook likes (groups and individuals) by the end of 2012. We are currently at about 850 likes with (400+) individuals.

- Ryan Roberts attended two steering committee meetings of Fish Habitat Partnerships and gave presentations on the Board's and the communications committee's activities.

- Ryan completed several site visits to increase board-to-FHP communications and shoot video that can help tell the story of the FHPs and the national partnership. The committee will create an outreach campaign that uses the video work from this summer (see below).

- We engaged in several marketing events in 2012 including River Rally 2012 and the American Fisheries Society annual meeting. These events helped engage individuals in explaining what the National Fish Habitat Partnership is and how to stay connected to the FHPs and the work they do in different regions of the country. We received 150 sign-ups for our newsletter/database at each event.

Tentative list of priority issues to be addressed in 2013:

- Continue building database for newsletter distribution to increase engagement with partner coalition.

- Increase usage of video and further campaign to document work of Fish Habitat Partnerships. (Budget need: $2,000)

- Increase usability in engaging partners through the fishhabitat.org website and increase functions of the Science and Data page of site. (Budget need: $8,000)

- Establish a regular schedule of meetings for the communications committee and work to include more FHP members on the committee.

- Review and make any needed changes to the communications strategy (Board approved 2011) to ensure that it remains a guide for committee work and maintained as a living document.