Revised Guidelines
March 2014

National Fish Habitat Board
March 9-10, 2014 Meeting
Tab 4

Guidance for Selecting National Fish Habitat Partnership 10 "Waters to Watch" Projects

Suggestions for 10 Waters to Watch:

All Board-recognized NFHP Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) will have an opportunity to suggest a project for selection for the 2014 "Waters to Watch" campaign. Due to the number of Board-recognized FHPs, increased competition is expected for the submission process. Therefore, only one project per FHP (submissions dependent) can be selected for a fair process. Not All FHPs will have a project selected for the 10 "Waters to Watch" Campaign. Proposed "Waters to Watch" submissions should be *reflective of projects completed over the past calendar year or projects with dedicated funding allocated for the current year with the intention of the project happening during calendar year.*

Criteria for Selection:

The criteria approved by the National Fish Habitat Board in March 2012 for consideration for a project to be a "Water to Watch" are listed below. Project selection will be based on these criteria although not all categories may apply to any specific project.

- Size and scope of project. Larger scale projects in scope are preferred for selection; Projects that offer greatest impact to habitat improvement are preferred.

- Media Friendly—media market size

- Project involves charismatic leaders and dedicated partners.

- Strong community support/involvement.

- Volunteer involvement

- Youth participation/education involved in project

- Potential for Success— Project needs to show data of habitat loss or need for conservation (numbers, inventory, scientific recommendations, community benefit and increased angler participation) *Projects concerning protection of intact systems will receive strong consideration.*

- Funding opportunities—areas of the country where the probability of strong partnerships and multiple funding opportunities may be more likely.

- FHP Approval.

- Projects done within the spirit and principles of NFHP.

Project Reporting and Updates:

Regular reporting and updates are important for future success of the 10 "Waters to Watch" Campaign. Projects for the 10 "Waters to Watch" will be selected with the understanding that brief reports will be submitted in bi-annually of the given project year upon request by the Communications Coordinator, Ryan Roberts rroberts@fishwildlife.org. A modifiable one-sheet form report will be distributed to each of the Fish Habitat Partnerships that have projects selected for 2014.

Fish Habitat Partnerships that have projects selected will be required to submit annual updates every year following the project being named to the list, with the purpose of updating progress and improvement over time and showing that the selected project has made an impact on improving fish habitat. Please place an emphasis on gathering quality photos for reporting purposes, which will help to tell a good story.

These reports will be critical for accountability for the selected projects and will be used for all of the following:

- Generation of Media Attention (articles, news stories).
- Project Site Visits for partners, members of state and federal agencies, members of state and local governments and members of Congress and staff.
- Crafting of one-sheet (PDF) documents for each of the projects to document progress.
- General updates – keeping track of project accomplishments and of partner involvement, volunteer opportunities, or educational initiatives.

There will be coordination with the Partnerships Committee to make this process as transparent as possible and for the need of any future changes to this criteria.

The "Waters to Watch" campaign has featured 70 projects, since 2007, that are models for aquatic conservation that have received media recognition across the country, raising public awareness of the work of our Fish Habitat Partnerships. Through implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan these projects show over time, that science-based conservation actions and monitoring truly do make a difference nationally to benefit fish habitats.

The 2014 "Waters to Watch" marketing plan and timeline is as follows:

March 21 – Submission process begins - Guidance and Partner Project sheets sent to Fish Habitat Partnerships

April 18– Project proposal submission deadline

April 22 – Review by Communications Committee

April 24 (proposed)- Projects reviewed by Board (via email/conference call)

May 6 - 10 "Waters to Watch" Announcement

Marketing Plan outline:

The marketing of the 2014 "Waters to Watch," will be coordinated with the FHPs of selected projects and will include:

- National Press Release, National distribution plan

- Individualized Press Release coordinated and branded to FHP
- Targeted Social Media promotions (Facebook, Twitter)
- Interactive engagement through social media
- Email Newsletter
- Coordination with PR contacts within State/Federal Agencies and Conservation organizations