

Multistate Conservation Grants

Grant Number: #F12AP00134

Grant Title: Conserving Fish Habitat from Whitewater to Bluewater

Grant Recipient (Grantee) Name and Address:

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Report Number: March 1, 2012- February 28, 2013 Interim Performance Report

National Conservation Need Addressed: 2012, NCN 5, Formation and Operation of Fish Habitat Partnerships to Facilitate NFHAP Implementation.

Costs

Are you within the approved annual budget plan? Yes; or No

Are you within the approved budget categories? Yes; or No

Overall Progress Achieved

How does this annual report on accomplishments compare to the overall Proposed Project Work Plan? Ahead of schedule; On schedule; Behind schedule?

Several tasks have been accomplished, while others remain to be completed. The project has experienced delays, but all objectives are expected to be achieved by the extension deadline of December 31, 2013.

Objective 1: Collectively advance each partnership's habitat assessments through identification of mutual data needs, data acquisition, and landscape-level-analysis techniques for the benefit of fish, mussels, and other aquatic animals. Assist the National Fish Habitat Science and Data Committee in improving the 2015 status report by identifying major data gaps in region-specific fish population, habitat, and human impact monitoring data.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- By June 30, 2012, regular webinar meetings of the Science and Data Committees of the three FHPs will be conducted in order to identify, share, and assemble existing data pertaining to threats to fish habitats. The three FHPs met with the three large LCCs of the region (North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks) in early 2011 to begin identifying mutual science and habitat

- assessment needs related to implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The project will allow the FHPs to continue to develop those relationships and collaborate effectively. Common data needs identified in the 2011 meeting to be addressed during the project include riparian area conditions, barriers to aquatic animal movement, alteration of instream flows and inflows to estuaries, water quality, sedimentation, and geo-referenced fish population data. Discussion and results from meetings can be documented and published online.
- By December 31, 2012, develop a written list of action items resulting from the joint Science and Data Committee webinars in order to focus the efforts of the committees. The information will be published online and can be provided to the LCCs, JVs, universities, and other regional partners.

Actual Accomplishments:

- Documenting mutual science and data needs among the three FHPs was initiated. Current science and data needs for ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP have been identified and compiled.
- ACFHP and EBTJV representatives participated in the NALCC 2012 Science and Data Needs selection process. ACFHP and EBTJV representatives assisted in selecting a contractor to conduct NALCC Habitat Assessment work which will serve as ACFHP's primary GIS based assessment and provide benefits to EBTJV's existing assessment work.
- In January 2013, the ACFHP Coordinator attended the SARP Science & Data meeting to participate in discussions of SARP's future Science & Data efforts, to share information regarding Whitewater to Bluewater commitments, and to discuss potential collaboration opportunities in upcoming projects: SAFMC state of the coast work, SALCC indicator selection, National Fish Habitat Assessment work in the Gulf, and potential synergies with NALCC Habitat Assessment work. FHP Coordinators, staff, and leadership continued to make progress and communicate regarding science and data needs and capabilities.
- In June 2012, the ACFHP Coordinator attended the EBTJV Annual meeting to participate in discussions regarding commitments under the Whitewater Bluewater Grant and NALCC 2012 Science Data Needs Program.
- In February 2012, the ACFHP and SARP Coordinators, Science & Data representatives, and the NALCC habitat assessment contractor participated in a meeting with the National Gulf Assessment team to discuss its status and methodologies.
- SARP and EBTJV have developed web sites on a shared platform and portal with the Appalachian LCC to facilitate improved data sharing in the future.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

Additional EBTJV Steering Committee work load was required for non-grant activities that were not planned for: completing the FHP's catchment level assessment; maintaining the availability of EBTJV data to partners and stakeholders due to discontinuation of NBII; and involvement with the Chesapeake Bay Program initiative that has brook trout population status as a primary objective and measure of progress toward habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration.

SARP Science and Data Committee work towards the grant's activities was slower than planned in 2012 due to committee leadership being assigned to other job functions.

Actions taken to correct:

While the FHPs have not engaged in regular conference calls as outlined in the grant, they have sought to engage each other in science and data efforts that are of mutual interest, which meets the intent of this grant. The FHPs have also identified individuals who serve as intermediaries and participate in science and data activities of the FHPs to insure continued effective collaboration.

Activities Anticipated March – December 2013

Planned Accomplishments

Starting in April, EBTJV and ACFHP representatives began serving on the work group for the South Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Project, led by SARP, that is gathering data on barriers to fish passage and associated data elements.

By June 30, 2013, regular webinar meetings of the Science and Data Committees of the three FHPs will be established to enable them to share, identify, and assemble existing data pertaining to threats to fish habitats. By December 31, 2013 they will develop action items resulting from the joint Science and Data Committee webinars to further focus the efforts of the committees. Products will be published online and can be provided to the LCCs, JVs, universities, and other regional partners. As part of the discussions the three FHPs may also cross-reference identified needs and develop a prioritized project list.

Objective 2: Coordinate ACFHP, SARP, and EBTJV partner engagement and outreach activities to strengthen and expand an already robust base of on-the-ground conservation partners. Assess the structure and function of the three FHPs and identify and implement strategies to enhance their organizational capacity.

Sub-objective 2.1: Develop and implement a streamlined communications strategy and outreach products for the three Eastern U.S. Fish Habitat Partnerships that highlights both synergies and distinguishing characteristics across the individual FHPs, and identifies FHP needs that would be best served individually and those that would benefit from a collective message.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- Starting within three months of project approval and continuing throughout the project period, joint FHP Communications and Outreach meetings will be held quarterly via conference call and/or WebEx with Coordinators and/or appointed staff from the partner FHPs to provide regular, focused coordination of overall communications and outreach efforts.

- By June 31, 2012, develop individual FHP and joint messaging strategies that would identify key target audiences and generate core messages for members of the partnerships to communicate clearly and consistently with those audiences.
- By December 31, 2012, develop content for and the design of an “Implementing the NFHAP from Whitewater to Bluewater” program web page which would include:
 - a map illustrating the territory jointly covered by the Eastern FHPs and the areas and communities where they work;
 - links to or integrated with partner websites;
 - select keystone or iconic species profiles that would feature the work that FHP partners are doing related to these species
- A representative from each FHP will attend at least one conference or other meetings to give presentations/updates either individually or jointly where possible, to various conservation audiences, to inform attendees of FHP purpose and activities, and gain support.
- Throughout the project period, FHPs will maintain their individual websites and outreach materials (e.g. fact sheets, feature article(s) in partner newsletters and other available outlets, existing social networking tools, etc.) that will be dovetailed, where appropriate, with the other Eastern FHPs resources and efforts.

Actual Accomplishments:

- Beginning in April of 2012, the SARP Communications Coordinator, ACFHP Coordinator, and the EBTJV Communications Committee chair began meeting on a bi-monthly basis via conference call to develop a joint communications strategy.
- Under the grant, ACFHP continued to maintain its website which included keeping the website up-to-date with ACFHP and non-ACFHP funding and conference/meeting opportunities and four breaking news releases regarding ACFHP activities. With messaging assistance from EBTJV and SARP, ACFHP also developed three new project fact sheets (Appendix 1). EBTJV initiated a quarterly newsletter that was widely distributed among the Partnership’s community of support and updated its fact sheet for distribution at outreach events (Appendix 2). SARP developed four quarterly newsletters and its 2012 Year in Review. SARP also sent out special announcements for its EPA grant project, the Harpeth River Lowhead Dam Removal and Stream Restoration Project, and also the Harpeth River Project making the NFHP "10 Waters to Watch" list. They also hosted several SARP Communications & Outreach Committee meetings.
- EBTJV collaborated with the Appalachian LCC to redesign and re-populate the EBTJV website without expenditure of grant funds in 2012. SARP started building a website on the same platform as EBTJV and grant funds will be used for that purpose. This will allow the two FHPs to communicate and share information more effectively. Employees of the USFWS and New Hampshire Fish and Game devoted time and effort to EBTJV website re-design instead of hiring contractors.

- Members of EBTJV and ACFHP, in cooperation with NFHP Board staff, developed a half day seminar for the American Fisheries Society 142nd Annual Meeting (August 19-23, 2012) entitled, “The National Fish Habitat Partnership – Building Relationships to Enhance Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems”. At least one representative from each of the three Eastern FHPs presented during the seminar, which included an overview of Whitewater to Bluewater activities.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

The three FHPs have discussed potential messaging strategies during development of the broader communications strategy, which will be further refined when the communications strategy is finalized.

A program webpage which includes a map illustrating the territory jointly covered by the Eastern FHPs and the areas and communities where they work, iconic species profiles featuring the work that FHP partners are doing related to these species, and links to partner websites has not been fully developed. This is due to focusing our efforts to date on accomplishing other grant deliverables.

Actions taken to correct:

The three FHPs have drafted a communications strategy from which the FHPs will identify key target audiences, develop joint message strategies, and generate core messages for members of the partnerships to communicate clearly and consistently with target audiences.

Each FHP has developed a Whitewater to Bluewater web page on their individual websites with an overview of the Eastern FHPs partnership. For more details, please see the following webpages:

<http://www.atlanticfishhabitat.org/aboutus/nfhap/>

<http://easternbrooktrout.org/groups/whitewater-to-bluewater>

<http://southeastaquatics.net/sarps-programs/conserving-fish-habitat-from-whitewater-to-bluewater-program-1>

Activities Anticipated March-Dec 2013

Planned Accomplishments

In April, the ACFHP and EBTJV Coordinators participated in the 69th Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference (NEAFWA), setting up informational displays and outreach materials for each of the Partnerships. The two Partnerships also presented updates to the Northeast Fisheries Administrators Association at their annual meeting, which included an overview of the Whitewater to Bluewater Partnership.

In March, ACFHP and SARP jointly and successfully nominated the Cape Fear River as a National Fish Habitat Partnership “Ten Waters to Watch”. In May, ACFHP and SARP developed and released a joint breaking news release on the project and the award.

The three FHPs anticipate finalizing a communications strategy in June 2013. Using the broader communications strategy, the Eastern FHPs will develop individual FHP and joint messaging strategies to identify key target audiences and generate core messages for members of the partnerships to communicate clearly and consistently with target audiences. Messaging strategies are expected to be completed by December 31, 2013.

By December 31, 2013 the Whitewater to Bluewater webpage(s) will include a map illustrating the territory jointly cover by the Eastern FHPs, the areas and communities where they work, as well as iconic species profiles featuring the work that FHP partners are doing related to iconic species.

ACFHP will continue to maintain its website and outreach materials using funds from the grant. It is also anticipated that funding will be needed to re-invigorate other outreach efforts that were secondary in priority to the EBTJV website. EBTJV initiated a quarterly newsletter that was widely distributed among the Partnership's community of support and updated its fact sheet for distribution at outreach events (Appendix 2). SARP will continue work on its new website on the same platform and grant funds will be used for that purpose.

Sub-objective 2.2: Assess the structure and function of the three FHPs; identify strengths and weaknesses with current delivery of the FHPs; and provide recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and capacity of the FHPs to achieve their missions and goals.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- ACFHP, EBTJV, & SARP develop Terms of Reference (ToR) and a Request for Proposals (RFP) for services to evaluate the structure and function of the three FHPs and make recommendations to improve their organizational capacity by February 2012.
- The FHPs select a qualified applicant by March 2012.
- FHPs in collaboration with the successful applicant complete a review of the FHPs external/internal environment and the past performance to create a detailed understanding of current strategic position and organizational capacity by June 2012.
- Based on the capacity assessment, the FHPs develop Sustainable FHP Plans, outlining organizational capacity objectives and begin to implement those plans by February 28, 2013.

Actual Accomplishments

ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP developed Terms of Reference (ToR) and a Request for Proposals (RFP) for services to evaluate the structure and function of the three FHPs and make recommendations to improve their organizational capacity (see Appendix 3). It was provided to The Nature Conservancy in July 2012, which was followed by one call with a potential candidate, and additional inquires within TNC for potential candidates.

In November 2012, the Eastern FHPs participated in a self-assessment survey in support of the NFHP sponsored FHP Excellence Workshop. The workshop itself was designed based on the results of the FHP internal assessments, nationwide. Representatives of each of the three FHPs participated in the workshop held in January 2013 (see agenda in Appendix 4). In follow-up to the NFHP Excellence Workshop, each of the three FHP representatives will participate in webinars focused in each of three categories: Business and Fund Raising Plan Development for FHPs, Growing Your Partnership and Community Outreach, and Reaching Inside: FHP Steering Committee Member Training.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

The external assessment of the FHPs organizational strengths was delayed by the lack of available and qualified personnel to conduct the assessment.

Actions taken to correct:

The FHPs decided to wait until after the NFHB sponsored workshop to continue in order to avoid duplication of services and to build upon that training.

Activities Anticipated March-Dec 2013

Planned Accomplishments

The Eastern FHPs communicated in April, post workshop, via conference call and email to revise the Terms of Reference, and to identify other potential entities to conduct an external review. In June of 2013 the Eastern FHPs anticipate the release of a revised TOR, with the expectation of selecting a qualified applicant and completing an external review of the FHPs' external/internal environment and past performance, in order to create a detailed understanding of current strategic position and organizational capacity by November 2013.

Based on the capacity assessment and in collaboration with NFHP sponsored business planning webinar, the FHPs will develop Sustainable FHP Plans outlining organizational capacity objectives and begin to implement those plans by December 31, 2013.

Sub-objective 2.3: Build sufficient organizational capacity within and across the three Eastern U.S. Fish Habitat Partnerships to fully implement the Sustainable FHP Program and Plan (i.e. Sub-objective 2.2)

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- Each of the FHPs will designate member(s) to serve as part of a collaborative organizational capacity network.
- The successful applicant will present the findings to the Partner representatives at the joint meeting (i.e. report/recommendations) by November 30, 2012 for the group to review and discuss.

Actual Accomplishments

In November 2012, the Eastern FHPs participated in a self-assessment survey in support of the NFHB sponsored FHP Excellence Workshop. The workshop itself was designed based on the results of the FHP internal assessments, nationwide. Representatives of each of the three FHPs participated in the workshop, which was held in January 2013 (agenda can be found in Appendix 4). In follow-up to the NFHP Excellence workshop, each of the three FHP representatives will participate in webinars focused in each of three categories: Business and Fund Raising Plan Development for FHPs, Growing Your Partnership and Community Outreach, and Reaching Inside: FHP Steering Committee Member Training.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

An applicant for conducting an external review has not been selected and therefore the findings of an external capacity assessment have not been presented at a joint meeting for group review and discussion, nor has a collaborative organizational capacity network been designated to address the findings.

Actions taken to correct:

The FHPs decided to wait until after the NFHB sponsored workshop to continue in order to avoid duplication of services and build upon that training.

Activities Anticipated March-December 2012

Planned Accomplishments

The successful applicant will present the findings to the Partner representatives at the joint meeting (i.e. report/recommendations) by November 30, 2013 for the group to review and discuss.

The collaborative organizational capacity network will be developed based on the results of the organizational capacity assessment and the results of the NFHP sponsored webinars.

Objective 3: Retain and enhance critical capacity to implement each of the individual FHP's Partnership Strategic Plans by facilitating completion of prioritized, on-the-ground, partner-led fish habitat conservation projects that achieve measurable results towards National Fish Habitat Action Plan goals and interim strategies and are easily communicated and understood.

Sub-objective 3.1: Support regular meetings of the individual FHPs to engage with partners, identify opportunities to implement the FHP Strategic Plans, and prioritize actions toward protection and restoring function of eastern aquatic habitats.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- By June 30, 2012, an EBTJV Coordinator is hired and effectively working with the EBTJV Committees and partners;
- By December 31, 2012, hold one joint meeting of coordinators and leadership (10-15 people) from the ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP to facilitate inter-FHP exchange of successes and challenges and foster “Whitewater to Bluewater” collaboration;
- By December 31, 2012, hold one all-partner or steering committee meeting each for ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP to review progress toward objectives and update strategic plans;

Actual Accomplishments:

In January 2013, an EBTJV Coordinator was hired and is effectively working with EBTJV committees and partners.

At the NFHP FHP Excellence Workshop Coordinators and leadership from the ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP were able to exchange successes and challenges and foster “Whitewater to Bluewater” collaboration.

The ACFHP Steering Committee met in October 2012 and reviewed its Strategic Plan and progress towards objectives in the grant.

In June 2012, the EBTJV held its annual meeting which included discussions regarding commitments under the Whitewater to Bluewater grant and NALCC 2012 Science and Data Needs Program.

The EBTJV Coordinator reviewed the partnership’s Conservation Strategy and assessed the EBTJV conservation priorities being addressed by fish habitat conservation projects between 2006 and 2012.

SARP held a Steering Committee meeting in October 2012 and reviewed progress toward objectives of the grant. The Steering Committee is also updated in quarterly web-ex conference calls held between in-person meetings.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

Deliberations among EBTJV Steering Committee members in the development of the roles, responsibilities, and duties of the EBTJV Coordinator position proved more difficult than originally envisioned and the Coordinator was not hired by the originally planned date.

Actions taken to correct:

Roles, responsibilities, and duties were agreed to, a candidate search completed, and a Coordinator hired in January 2013.

Activities Anticipated March-December 2013

Planned Accomplishments

The EBTJV Steering Committee was briefed on the findings of the review and assessment during a conference call in March 2013 and approved a series of recommendations. The Steering Committee will be developing ways to implement the recommendations during their June 2013 annual meeting in Frostburg, MD.

Sub-objective 3.2: Enhanced capacity of the ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP to implement design, construction, and monitoring phases of on-the-ground aquatic habitat conservation projects and aquatic habitat education efforts.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- Each FHP will fund an average of three or more on-the-ground and at least one communication/ outreach project annually;
- By February 28, 2013, ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP have begun to implement strategies to improve delivery of FHPs as identified in Objective 2

Actual Accomplishments:

Each FHP funded at least three on-the-ground projects using FWS-NFHP funds in 2012. Using a combination of new FY2012 funds and a small amount of FY2011 unspent funds, the USFWS provided funding to the top three project proposals submitted to the ACFHP: Restoring the Mangroves of the Indian River Lagoon in South Florida; Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Restoration in the James River of Virginia; and Eelgrass Restoration with Conservation Moorings in Buzzards Bay of Massachusetts.

The EBTJV had eight projects allocated funding by the USFWS in FY 2012. Projects included the removal of two dams in the Wetmore Run Watershed, Potter County, PA; restoration of native charr in Big Wadleigh Pond Maine; a culvert replacement in Jam Black Brook, Searsmont, Maine; restoration of Nash Stream, Coos County, New Hampshire; culvert replacement and instream habitat restoration in the Nulhegan River Vermont; aquatic passage project in Oats Run and Upper Shavers Fork, in Pocahontas County, WV; restoration of aquatic organism passage within Wolf Laurel Branch, NC; and, brook trout catchment scale and climate change vulnerability assessments.

The SARP had five projects allocated funding by the USFWS in FY2012. Projects included Pelican Point Shoreline Protection and Habitat Restoration Project (AL); Restoration of connectivity to Coal Pile, a backwater of the Arkansas River, Project (AR); Restoration of a backwater of the Arkansas River, Rector Chute (AR); Stream bank & riparian restoration along the Wild and Scenic Cossatot River on the Ouachita NF (AR); and Restoration of Essential Habitats for Juvenile Tarpon and Snook (FL). Additionally, SARP had four projects funded by NOAA in FY2012. Projects included GTMNERR Community Oyster Shell Recycling and Living Reef Construction Project (FL); Living Shoreline - Little St. Simons Island, GA (GA); Oyster and Shoreline Habitat Restoration on Beacon Island in the Outer Banks of North Carolina (NC); and Community-based and larger-scale oyster restoration in ACE Basin NERR Phase II (SC).

Each FHP has completed a communications outreach project as noted in Sub-Objective 2.1

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP have not begun to implement strategies to improve delivery of FHP as identified in Objective 2, because a sustainable FHP plan has not been developed.

Actions taken to correct:

The FHPs decided to wait until after the NFHAP sponsored organizational training session in early 2013 to continue this effort to avoid duplication of services and build upon that training.

In November 2012, the Eastern FHPs participated in a self-assessment survey in support of the NFHP sponsored FHP Excellence Workshop. The Workshop itself was designed based on the results of the FHP internal assessments, nationwide. Representatives of each of the three FHPs participated in the workshop held in January 2013 (agenda can be found in Appendix 4). In follow-up to the NFHP Excellence workshop, each of the three FHP representatives will participate in webinars focusing on three categories: Business and Fund Raising Plan Development for FHPs, Growing Your Partnership and Community Outreach, and Reaching Inside: FHP Steering Committee Member Training.

Activities Anticipated March – Dec 2013

Planned Accomplishments

By December 31, 2013, ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP will implement strategies to improve delivery of FHPs as identified in Objective 2

Sub-objective 3.3: By September 30, 2012, identify and vet mechanisms for evaluating and reporting the benefits of fish habitat conservation projects to a wide range of audiences by monitoring region-specific variable(s) that will inform and add to the National Fish Habitat Action Plan tracking effort.

Progress Achieved

Planned Accomplishments:

- By September 30, 2012, identify and vet among the science and data partners for ACFHP, EBTJV, and SARP potential monitoring / reporting measures to track progress of FHPs, including consideration of current measures used to report accomplishments achieved with existing federal NFHAP funds.

Actual Accomplishments:

Representatives of the three Eastern FHPs participated in a Board sponsored session at the FHP Excellence Workshop aimed at exploring approaches to tracking progress and outcomes.

Difficulties Encountered

Why goal/objective not met:

Due to a focus on other objectives within the grant, the Eastern FHPs have not identified or vetted potential monitoring / reporting measures that may serve to track progress of FHPs.

Actions taken to correct:

SARP has begun review of the existing habitat goals and objectives in the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan by the Science and Data Committee and the Steering Committee. We are working with the LCCs in the SARP region to develop appropriate habitat and species related objectives that will (hopefully) work across all conservation partnerships.

Activities Anticipated March –Dec 2013

Planned Accomplishments

The Eastern FHPs will identify and vet potential monitoring / reporting measures that may serve to track progress of FHPs by December 31, 2013.

Annual Reporting

Primary Project Objective: The primary objective of the project is to provide support and enhance the continued operation of, and enhance coordination between, the ACFHP, SARP, and EBTJV to implement the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

Overall Benefits Derived by the End of the Year: Grant funds have been used to support the three primary operational categories for each of the three FHPs: steering committee operation, scientific assessment, and communications and outreach, and to lay the groundwork for improved coordination within and between Partnerships, as well as with the NFHAP Board and Science Data Committee.

Signature: 

5/31/13



ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

Spotlight on Restoring the Mangroves of the Indian River Lagoon

Project Partners

Marine Resources
Council of East Florida

US Fish and Wildlife
Service

Atlantic Coastal Fish
Habitat Partnership

The Indian River Lagoon is a 156-mile bar-built coastal estuary that covers an area of approximately 3,575 square kilometers. It supports coastal mangrove wetlands, salt marshes, intertidal and subtidal flats, and riparian wetlands and floodplains, which provide important habitat to numerous fish species. Unfortunately, the rate of shoreline and wetland destruction has increased, due to decades of urbanization and the spread of invasive plant species. This project will restore over 10 acres of coastal habitat wetlands to the Lagoon.

The project sites are located in the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent public lands and will involve removing 5 acres of invasive plants and planting over 8,500 linear feet of shoreline with wetland species such as mangroves and *spartina* grass to create new fish nursery habitat. Volunteers will help remove invasives, plant natives, and remove trash and monofilament line for recycling.



Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge

A unique aspect of this project is the restoration of mangrove forests, which in addition to providing nursery habitat for commercial and game fish species, are critical to maintaining the overall health of the coastal ecosystem by helping to trap and cycle organic materials, chemical elements, and nutrients. Nearly 80% of mangrove forests have been destroyed or isolated from the Indian River Lagoon, which is significant considering that mangrove forests found in the Lagoon constitute about 20% of the total amount of mangroves found in the eastern United States.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership with conservation dollars to fund numerous components of the project, including the removal of invasives and the purchase and installation of plants. On-the-ground, local level efforts, such as the Restoring the Mangroves of the Indian River Lagoon project, are helping to address regional habitat priorities and coastwide conservation objectives identified by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership.

Project text and photo provided by Marine Resources Council of East Florida.



For more information on the Partnership visit us at:
www.atlanticfishhabitat.org



ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

Spotlight on Eelgrass restoration with Conservation Moorings in Buzzards Bay

Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) meadows support complex trophic food webs and provide habitat for the forage, shelter and juvenile development of fisheries species. However, this habitat is declining in part due to damage from boating infrastructure. Traditional mooring chains drag on the seafloor, causing direct scour of eelgrass plants and degradation to the quality and function of eelgrass beds through increased turbidity. The project will restore eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), by replacing traditional moorings with elastic conservation moorings that minimize impacts to the seafloor by preventing chain drag.

The project site is located in West Falmouth, Massachusetts. Through the replacement of traditional moorings with conservation moorings (that include flexible rodes and helical anchors) in concert with direct eelgrass planting, eelgrass will be restored in 7 mooring scars, each approximately 29m² of impact. This project will provide needed data in support of a long-term solution to mooring impacts to eelgrass. Monitoring will include pre-project scar measurements and mapping, and one month and annual post-project eelgrass shoot density and percent cover, scar measurements and mapping.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership with conservation dollars to fund numerous components of the project, including coordination, equipment, monitoring, and permitting. On-the-ground, local level efforts, like the Eelgrass Restoration with Conservation Moorings in Buzzards Bay project, are helping to address regional habitat priorities and coastwide conservation objectives identified by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership.

Please note, the mooring of boats and the establishment of mooring fields in seagrass beds is generally recognized as a significant source of damage to these important ecological communities across their range. As such, the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership is only providing support to specific remediation actions at this and other designated project sites, which address historic damage caused by the scouring effects of traditional chain and block-anchor mooring systems.



Traditional mooring chain drag creating a scar

Project Partners

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

Town of Falmouth

Light Hawk Aerial Photography

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership

Majority of project text provided by Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and USFWS. Photo credit: T. Evans, 2010.



For more information on the Partnership visit us at:
www.atlanticfishhabitat.org



ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

Spotlight on James River Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Restoration

A lack of clean, hard substrate has been noted as a limiting factor for the restoration of many anadromous species in the James River. The loss of this ideal spawning habitat is due to dredging and excess sediment entering the river from erosion. This project will promote the population of Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) and other anadromous fishes of the Chesapeake Bay through the restoration of spawning and nursery habitat.

The project site is located in a tidal freshwater section of the James River where the dominate substrate is currently a fine sediment and where there is sufficient current to prevent excessive siltation. Many anadromous species, including Atlantic sturgeon, American shad, herring, and striped bass frequent this area.



James River Project Site

An artificial spawning reef will be constructed using approximately 2,500 tons of broken granite.

Following construction, the site will be extensively monitored for spawning activity and outreach activities will publicize the project and its findings.

The objective of the project is to increase the spawning activity of Atlantic sturgeon and other anadromous fish in the James River by providing suitable clean hard spawning habitat. This project will also highlight the need to reduce sediment entering the river from soil erosion.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership with conservation dollars to fund numerous components of the project, including reef construction, monitoring, and outreach. On-the-ground, local level efforts, like the James River Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Restoration project, are helping to address regional habitat priorities and coastwide conservation objectives identified by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership.

Project text and photo provided by James River Association.

Project Partners

James River Association

Virginia Commonwealth University

The Nature Conservancy

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Luck Stone Corporation

Mary Anderson Harrison Foundation

Chesapeake Scientific

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

USGA

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership



For more information on the Partnership visit us at:
www.atlanticfishhabitat.org

Volume 1, Issue 1



Eastern Brook Trout JOINT VENTURE A Fish Habitat Partnership

April 2013



Welcome to the EBTJV Newsletter

I am pleased to be able to initiate this quarterly newsletter, which is intended to provide you with regular updates on EBTJV activities and related news.

To start off, I want to introduce myself to those of you who don't know me. My name is Steve Perry and I was hired as the EBTJV's Coordinator after retiring from the NH Fish and Game Department; where I thoroughly enjoyed a 35 year career. I am thrilled to be working for the EBTJV and look forward to assisting this tremendous Fish Habitat Partnership achieve its vision of healthy cold water aquatic systems that support fishable brook trout populations throughout their historic range in the eastern portion of the U.S.

The EBTJV Steering Committee has

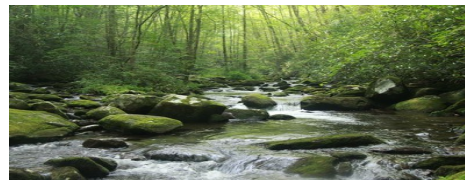
EBTJV Accomplishments

Since 2006, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has provided the EBTJV with \$2.5 million in funding support for 67 brook trout conservation projects spread among 14 states. Partners contributed an additional \$13.6 million in matching funds for

undergone recent changes in leadership as Doug Besler (NC) moved into the Chair position, replacing Doug Stang (NY), who did a phenomenal job leading the EBTJV during the last two years. Long time EBTJV Steering Committee member Alan Heft (MD) stepped up to become the Committee's Vice-Chair.

The EBTJV has been engaged in a diversity of ongoing work that is focused on addressing the needs of wild brook trout populations. This includes initiating a finer scale status assessment of brook trout at the catchment level, assisting with building a climate resiliency model that uses key metrics to determine brook trout vulnerability to changes in air and water temperatures, and

these projects. These projects resulted in enhancing or restoring 208 miles of



supporting important brook trout genetics research.

The EBTJV is also working collaboratively with the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership and the Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership to address common priority needs from a regional perspective. These efforts are associated with the Whitewater to Bluewater Project.

I hope you find value in this newsletter; please provide me with any feedback that will help improve the effectiveness of this quarterly publication.



Steve Perry

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in-stream habitat, improving 254 acres of riparian habitat, and removing 67 fish passage barriers that re-opened brook trout access to 278 stream miles. Additionally, these projects will generate \$381 million in socioeconomic benefits.

EBTJV Conservation Priorities

The EBTJV conservation priorities consist of:

- ◇ Increasing recreational fishing opportunities for wild brook trout.
- ◇ Protecting the “best of the best” habitat that supports existing, healthy wild brook trout populations.
- ◇ Improving and reconnecting adjacent habitats that have a high likelihood of supporting stable wild brook trout populations.
- ◇ Focusing on critical wild brook trout spawning and early life history habitat in watersheds classified as Intact.
- ◇ Preserving the genetic diversity of wild brook trout populations.
- ◇ Conserving unique wild brook trout life history strategies (i.e. lacustrine populations, large river populations, and coastal populations).



EBTJV Partnership Meeting - June 11-12, 2013

The EBTJV is hosting a partnership meeting at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's Appalachian Laboratory, located in Frostburg, MD, June 11-12, 2013.

A more detailed announcement is expected to be released shortly, which will include lodging options and other logistics.

From a travel planning perspective,

the first day of the meeting is an all day event and the second day of the meeting will end at noon time.

The EBTJC Steering Committee will be meeting during the evening hours on June 11th.

Please plan to join us in Frostburg.

Save the Date!
EBTJV Partnership Meeting
June 11-12, 2013

2013 Brook Trout Conservation Projects

The EBTJV received fifteen brook trout conservation project proposals for potential funding by the FWS during fiscal year 2013.

The project proposals were reviewed and ranked by the partnership's Project Review Team and twelve of the projects were recommended to

the EBTJV Steering Committee for their approval and subsequent submission to the FWS for further actions. The final decision on funding these projects is expected to occur before the end of May.

Four of the proposed projects are located in Maine, three are in

Pennsylvania, two are in Vermont, and Virginia, West Virginia, and New Jersey each have one.

Five of the projects focus on eliminating barriers to fish movement, while the other seven projects deal with enhancing and/or restoring in-stream habitat.

Brook Trout Conservation Projects are Hitting the Mark

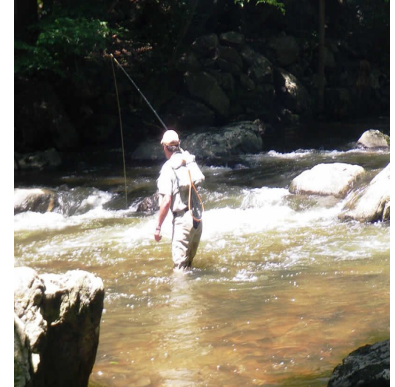
A recently completed assessment of brook trout conservation projects, supported by FWS National Fish Habitat Action Plan funds, demonstrates they are targeting EBTJV conservation priorities.

- ◇ Sixty-six percent (66%) of the projects will result in enhanced recreational fishing opportunities for wild brook trout.
- ◇ Seventy-two percent (72%) entail improving and

reconnecting adjacent brook trout habitat by eliminating fish passage barriers.

- ◇ Thirty-four (34%) are aimed at improving brook trout spawning habitat.
- ◇ Twenty percent (20%) are focused on enhancing early life history habitat needed to sustain brook trout populations.
- ◇ Twenty percent (20%) include efforts to preserve or enhance the

genetic diversity of wild brook trout populations.



New EBTJV Partners

Between 2006 and 2009, the EBTJV had twenty-six partner organizations sign its Memorandum of Understanding. These partners included 16 state fish and wildlife agencies, 5 federal agencies, and 5 non-governmental organizations.

More recently, 5 more organizations have formally signed on as EBTJV partners. These organizations include:

- ◇ US Environmental Agency
- ◇ Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- ◇ Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition
- ◇ Federation of Fly Fishers
- ◇ Wild Trout Flyrodders

“The EBTJV is extremely pleased to be working with our new partners.”

Project Spotlight: Big Wadleigh Pond, ME

This project is restoring native brook trout and arctic charr populations in Big Wadleigh Pond, which is located in northwestern Maine.

Both species are facing the threat of extirpation in this remote headwater pond as a result of an illegal introduction of rainbow smelt.

Rainbow smelt are known to negatively impact native trout populations in Maine.

Once the rainbow smelt are eliminated from Big Wadleigh Pond, it will be restocked with progeny obtained from the pond’s native brook trout and arctic charr

populations. It is expected that successful restoration of these native trout populations will maintain Big Wadleigh Pond as a popular and unique fishing destination.

Eight local partner groups have joined forces to help complete this project.

“Conserving the health of your waters”



Eastern Brook Trout
JOINT VENTURE
A Fish Habitat Partnership



www.fishhabitat.org

www.easternbrooktrout.org



Eastern Brook Trout JOINT VENTURE A Fish Habitat Partnership



Who We Are

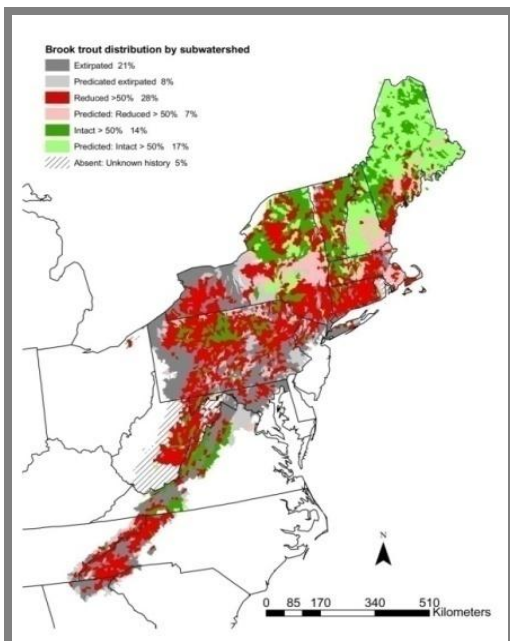
A diverse Fish Habitat Partnership composed of 29 formal partners representing 16 state fish and wildlife agencies, 6 federal agencies, and 7 conservation organizations.

Vision

Healthy cold water aquatic systems that support fishable brook trout populations throughout their historic range in the eastern portion of the U.S.

Where We Work

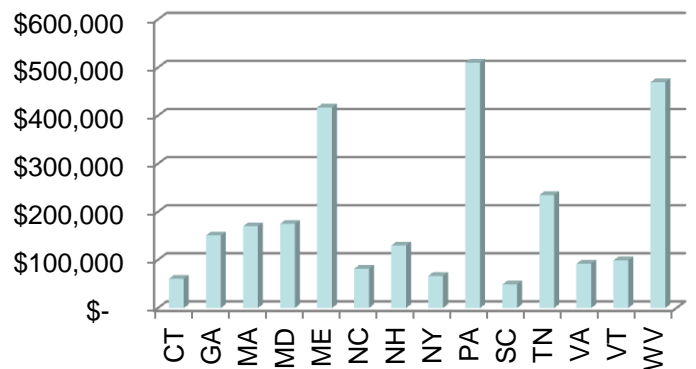
The EBTJV is active from Maine to Georgia and as far west as Ohio.



Accomplishments

Since 2006, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided the EBTJV with \$2.5 million in funding support for 67 brook trout conservation projects spread among 14 states. Partners contributed an additional \$13.6 million in matching funds for these projects. These projects resulted in enhancing or restoring 208 miles of in-stream habitat, improved 254 acres of riparian habitat, and removed 67 fish passage barriers that re-opened brook trout access to 278 stream miles.

Project Funding By State



Contact Us

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(304) 536-1361 x151, callie_mcmunigal@fws.gov

Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Projects

Georgia

Cooper Creek, Burnett Branch
Chattahoochee Brook Trout Restoration
Chattahoochee Brook Trout Restoration Phase II
Chattahoochee National Forest Restoration

Connecticut

Deep Brook Restoration
Leadmine Brook Fish Passage

Maine

South Bog Stream Restoration
Chop and Drop in the Sunday River
Chop and Drop in the Sunday River Phase II
Western Branch Machias Stream Restoration
Clamshell Additions to Low pH Streams
Wood Additions to Sheepscot, Narraguagus,
Machias, & East Machias Watershed
Jam Black Brook Culvert Replacement
Marshall Brook Culvert Replacement
Machias & Saint Croix Stream Restoration
Carloe Brook restoration
Ash Bog Stream Restoration
Jam Black Brook Culvert Replacement

Maryland

Restoring Brook Trout to Aaron Run
Raven Rock Dam Removal
Casselman River Acid Mine Drainage Remediation

Massachusetts

Briggsville Dam Removal Hoosic River
Hathaway Brook Dam Removal
Hamant Brook Restoration
Thunder Brook Dam Removal

New Hampshire

Indian Stream Habitat Restoration
Nash Stream Restoration

New York

McIntosh Brook Restoration
Sevier Road Crossing Stream Restoration
Batten Kill Stream Restoration

North Carolina

Tipton Creek Aquatic Passage Restoration
Wolf Laurel Branch Culvert Replacement

South Carolina

Jocassee Gorges Restoration

Pennsylvania

South Sandy Creek Restoration
Cross Fork, Kettle Creek Restoration
Asaph Run Watershed
South Fork Little Conemaugh River
Catawissa Creek Acid Mine Drainage Restoration
Smethport Reservoir Dam Removal
South Branch Kinzua Creek Restoration
Bob's Creek Watershed
Wallacks Branch Habitat Improvement
Brown's Run Fish Passage
Willow Creek Restoration
Wetmore Run Watershed Project

Tennessee

Lynn Camp Prong Restoration
Lynn Camp Prong Restoration Phase II
Lynn Camp Prong Restoration Phase III

Vermont

Lake Champlain Brook Trout Restoration
Ayers Brook Corridor Restoration
Umpire Brook Culvert Replacement
Nulhegan River Culvert Replacement

Virginia

Smith Creek Headwaters Restoration
North River Stream Restoration
Garth Run Restoration

West Virginia

Big Run Restoration
WV Brook Trout Distribution Assessment
White Thorn Creek Restoration
White Thorn Creek Restoration Phase II
Thorn Creek Aquatic Passage Restoration
Upper Shavers Fork Restoration
Oats Run Fish Passage Project



**Coda Global Fellows
Program
Fellow Request Form**

Please send your completed request to Michelle Machasick at mmachasick@tnc.org. For help completing this request or to discuss your expertise and capacity needs further, contact Jolie Sibert at jsibert@tnc.org.

What will be the focus of the fellowship? The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, and Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture seek a fellow to:

- Assess the structure and function within each Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP) and across the three FHPs, specifically in the arenas of operations, philanthropy, external affairs, communications and partnerships
- Identify strengths and weaknesses with current delivery of the FHPs
- Provide recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and capacity of the FHPs to achieve their missions and goals – as well as those of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan
- Provide examples and suggested steps to implement those recommendations
- Assist the FHPs in developing Sustainable FHP Plans, outlining organizational capacity objectives based on the capacity assessment, including fundraising and marketing strategies.
- In concert with similar efforts lead by the National Fish Habitat Partnership, assist the FHPs in building the skills to implement strategies (such as fundraising).

Type of expertise needed: Expert of institutional review and Internal and external partner development; business and institutional development; philanthropy and marketing; partnerships – to develop a fundraising and marketing strategy for a partner organization and to build the skills of the organization in fundraising to implement the strategy.

Where: United States – or current office location.

TNC Program or Partner: Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, and Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture.

TNC contact: George Schuler

Background: The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture were all launched in the last five years as part of a national effort to do for fish and fish habitat conservation on the

scale of what was done for waterfowl in the 1980s through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Each fish habitat partnership is comprised of fish habitat resource managers, scientists, and communications professionals from more than 30 different state, federal, tribal, and non-governmental entities. These three partnerships individually and collectively represent locally-driven efforts that build private and public partnerships to improve fish habitat and achieve the National Fish Habitat Action Plan's goals to: identify priority fish habitats and establish Fish Habitat Partnerships targeting these habitats, protect all healthy and intact fish habitats by 2015 and improve the condition of 90 percent of priority habitats and species targeted by Fish Habitat Partnerships by 2020.

How does this support TNC's goals?

All three Fish Habitat Partnerships contribute to TNC's Eastern Division and North American Region goals pertaining to freshwater conservation and habitat conservation for sustainable fisheries.

When do you need the fellow, for how long, and for what estimated percentage of time? 6 months (beginning September 1, and ending March 1). This might represent 30 to 50% of the fellow's time.

Do you have funding for Fellowship expenses? Yes. Funding for travel to meetings (East Coast U.S.); printing/copying; office/meeting supplies, conference calls/WebEx

Potential candidate(s) or candidate search image:

- A strong background in business and organizational development
- A strong background in philanthropy and marketing
- Experience in developing business development, philanthropy and/or marketing strategies
- Experience in capacity building with staff and board members in order to implement strategies/recommendations
- Experience in developing an entrepreneurial culture within an organization
- Experience with corporate engagement/external affairs

Fish Habitat Partnership Excellence Project

McMennamin's Kennedy School,
3702 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.
Portland OR 97214
(503) 467-7521

AGENDA

Purpose of Meeting: Help coordinators and volunteer leaders of Fish Habitat Partnerships meet their goals, expand their role within the national dialog about fish habitat conservation and develop wider, public support for protecting and enhancing fish habitat.

Monday January 28, 2013 -- Travel Day

Attendees plan to meet at 6:30 pm at the hotel's "Boiler Room Bar" followed by dinner "on your own".

Tuesday, January 29, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Introductions, Agenda Review, Goals for this Workshop	Wendy Wilson and Diana Toledo, River Network
9:30 a.m. – noon	<p>Vision and Goals</p> <p>What does success mean to each Partnership? What do individual partnerships need to become more successful? How do similar efforts overcome barriers to success?</p> <p>What is the potential of national fish habitat protection efforts? How do the nationwide vision and Partnership visions fit together?</p>	Panel A and Case Studies: to be finalized.
12:00	Lunch	Served in the Library
1:00 – 3:30 p.m.	<p>Communicating Our Vision/ Successful Outreach</p> <p>How does your group add value to fish habitat protection efforts? Targeting our audiences and sharing our vision. Messages and engagement opportunities for your group.</p>	Panel B and Case Studies: to be finalized.
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<p>Models for Participant Engagement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics of "Most Effective Partnerships" 2. Roles & Responsibilities of Coordinators and Steering Committee members, 3. Innovative organizational structures, by-laws and norms. 	Panel C and Case Studies to be finalized.

Wednesday, January 30, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. – noon	Getting the Money we Need Exploring strategies, assets and pre-requisites for tapping private sector philanthropy. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Beyond NFHP grants2) Clubs and NGOs,3) Businesses,4) Individuals,5) Foundations Small Group Sessions: Planning your unique strategy.	BLM Knowledge Resource Center Team
12:00	Lunch	On-site
1:00– 3:30 p.m.	Getting it Done – FHP Leadership Roles and Responsibilities Defining the leadership you need and engaging the right people to implement your vision.	Panel D and case studies to be finalized.
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Open Space Discussions initiated and led by participants	List of topics will be generated on Tuesday

Thursday, January 31, 2012

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Creating a Learning Network Define ongoing assistance and peer support through the Fish Habitat Partnership Excellence Program. Potential peer groups topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scientific Assessment• Protection Tools• Diversifying Funding• Coordinator Leadership Brainstorm and prioritize future webinar topics. Finalize Partnership Action Plans and identify needs for follow-up assistance.	River Network team
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<p>11:00 a.m. – noon</p>	<p>Creating Change</p> <p>Evaluating, adapting and redirecting as we go? Staying true to our vision. Becoming a “change-agent” Creating a community of leaders</p> <p>Sharing <i>Partnership Action Plans</i></p>	<p>Diana Toledo</p>
<p>12:00</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	<p>In Library</p>
<p>1:00 – 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Establishing Strategic Priorities and Tracking Progress toward Outcomes</p> <p>Setting the stage: why are we here, what is our desired outcome, what related efforts are underway or have been accomplished?</p> <p>Case study of a “theory of change”: Application of Strategic Habitat Conservation to FHPs; modification of SHC for application in aquatic ecosystems</p> <p>How FHPs set strategic priorities</p>	<p>For questions or suggestions regarding this portion of the agenda, contact: Steve Perry (ebtjv.coordinator@gmail.com) or Tom Busiahn (tom.busiahn@fws.gov).</p>
<p>3:00 – 3:30</p>	<p>Break</p>	
<p>3:30 – 5:00</p>	<p>Measuring what’s Important: Approaches to Tracking Progress and Outcomes</p> <p>Successes in measuring and communicating the status and needs of aquatic habitats</p> <p>Envisioning success: What would guidance to assist FHPs look like? How would it be used? How can FHP strategic priorities drive conservation actions?</p> <p>Meeting evaluation, next steps</p>	