

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Project Endorsement Application Guidelines

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership was formed under the auspices of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP). We believe that the mission, goals and objectives of the national effort are reflected in this document.

Endorsement Criteria

Section A

ACFHP endorsement is guided by a proactive approach towards habitat conservation, protection, restoration and enhancement. With this in mind, projects being proposed under an existing regulatory program, court order, or decree will not be considered for endorsement.

Additionally, a project that does not have an evaluation plan (ie. attainment of project goals will not be evaluated) will not be considered for endorsement.

Please describe how your project meets the criteria under Section A, and provide adequate documentation with your response.

Section B

In addition to meeting the Section A requirements, one option under each criterion listed in Section B must be met in order for ACFHP to consider endorsing a project. Please describe how your project meets these criteria, and provide adequate documentation with your responses.

Additional Information

You are not required to provide answers to questions in the Additional Information section in order to receive endorsement; however any information provided will be considered. You are encouraged to answer these questions and to provide adequate documentation.

Other

Please provide a work plan or proposal and an agency contact, who is familiar with your project, if available, for consideration.

Please include any other supporting information that you would like considered, as part of your submission.

Research projects will be considered so long as there is a clear connection to an ACFHP primary issue area, habitat, and habitat issue.

Endorsement Time Frame

Please provide a complete application at least four weeks prior to the date that you would like to receive a response from ACFHP.

Endorsement Type

If approved, a one-page letter of endorsement will be provided. If your project has specific endorsement requests, please include them as part of your submission, and they will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If your project would like to make use of the ACFHP logo, please include this request and intended use in your submission. In the instance that your project has not gained all the necessary permits from pertinent agencies, please state this in your submission.

Definitions

Conserve: “Protect, restore, and enhance the habitats of the nation’s marine and freshwater fish populations to support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species, to promote self-sustaining fish populations, and to provide successful fishing opportunities.” As presented in the *Recommended Strategic Plan Framework for Fish Habitat Partnerships* (NFHAP, 2008)

Protection: “The removal of a threat to, or preventing the decline of, fish habitat by an action in or near a waterbody. Protection may include, but is not limited to:

- the purchase and monitoring of land or easement;
- repairing water control structures;
- assisting local units of government in zoning riparian corridors or saltwater marshes for non-development;
- establishing best management practices for agriculture and forestry;
- establishing best management practices for commercial and residential development;
- allocating water to protect ecological stream flows and lake/reservoir surface water elevations;
- acquisition and transfer of water rights;
- riparian zone fencing; and
- maintenance of structures.”

Based on the *Recommended Strategic Plan Framework for Fish Habitat Partnerships* (NFHAP, 2008)

Restoration: “The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural/historic attributes or functions to degraded fish habitat. Habitat restoration includes, but is not limited to:

- practices conducted with the goal of returning a site, to the extent practicable, to the ecological condition that likely existed prior to loss or degradation, such as restoration of riparian area’s aquatic vegetation or woody debris, restoration of channel sinuosity, re-creation of reefs and spawning shoals or recreation of freshwater inflows ;
- practices conducted when restoration of a site to its original ecological condition is not practicable, but which will partially repair original habitat functions, such as, dredging to reduce sedimentation or developing of new spawning shoals; and
- removal of the disturbing/degrading element to enable the native habitat to re-establish or become fully functional, such as removal of barriers to flow (such as dams or culverts), control of point and non-point source inputs or removal of breakwaters and bank armoring.”

As presented in the *Recommended Strategic Plan Framework for Fish Habitat Partnerships* (NFHAP, 2008)

Enhancement: “The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a waterbody that heighten, intensify, or improve specific function(s) or for a purpose such as water quality improvement, flood water retention or increased fish production/habitat.”

As presented in the *Recommended Strategic Plan Framework for Fish Habitat Partnerships* (NFHAP, 2008)

Compensatory Mitigation: “the restoration (re-establishment or rehabilitation), establishment (creation), enhancement, and/or in certain circumstances preservation of aquatic resources for the purposes of offsetting unavoidable adverse impacts which remain after all appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization has been achieved.” *Compensatory Mitigation Rule* (USACE, 2008).

Mitigation:

“(1) Action taken to alleviate or compensate for potentially adverse effects on aquatic habitat that have been modified through anthropogenic actions.

(2) In-kind mitigation may be substituted for compensation to replace a resource that has been negatively impacted with similar resources (e.g., a stream for a stream).

(3) Out-of-kind mitigation refers to replacement of one resource for another (e.g., a lake for a stream).”

Glossary – Aquatic Habitat Inventory Terminology (AFS, compiled by Neil B. Armantrout, 1998).