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2017-2019 Action Plan

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) 2017 – 2019 Action Plan is a subset of the 2017 – 2021 ACFHP Conservation Strategic Plan. It contains a set of objectives, strategies, and related actions that can be accomplished over the course of a two year period. These actions will be carried out by the ACFHP Coordinator or Action Lead, with the help of subgroups as necessary.

ASMFC Habitat



A. Conservation Objectives

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 1: Work with partners to protect, restore, or maintain resilient Subregional Priority Habitats (using strategies outside of fish passage) to optimize ecosystem functions and services to benefit fish and wildlife.

Strategy A.1.1: Support on-the-ground conservation projects that protect, restore, or maintain Subregional Priority Habitats (outside of fish passage).

Action 1: Allocate U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) funding to annually support a minimum of one project that promotes/supports restoration, protection, and resiliency of Subregional Priority Habitats.

Action 2: Submit a minimum of one funding proposal annually outside of Service-National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) funding (e.g. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA]) to support projects that increase the resiliency of Subregional Priority Habitats.

Action 3: Support four on-the-ground conservation projects annually through endorsement by ACFHP.

Strategy A.1.4: Work with partners to identify and conserve intact coastal habitats and buffers in need of protection.

Action 1: Promote the use of the Species-Habitat Matrix and Northeast-Southeast Fish Habitat Mapping Projects to protect high quality fish habitats through at least one webinar or presentation at a professional conference.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 3: Coordinate with partners to restore, enhance, and maintain adequate and effective fish passage to ensure connectivity within and among required Subregional Priority Habitats.

Strategy A.3.3: Work with partners to increase habitat connectivity within and among Subregional Priority Habitats by directly addressing physical barriers.

Action 1: Allocate Service funding to annually support a minimum of one on-the-ground project that aims to remove barriers in areas identified as a priority for fish passage restoration by an ACFHP partner.

B. Science & Data Objectives

SCIENCE AND DATA OBJECTIVE 1: Work to achieve ACFHP Science and Data needs and fulfill science and data responsibilities established by NFHAP.

Strategy B.1.1: Develop an online searchable database of the Species-Habitat Matrix.

Action 1: Identify a partner who can develop a searchable database of the Matrix andwork with them to publish it online.

Strategy B.1.2: Produce a fine scale ACFHP region-wide GIS map, using existing data, that shows areas for priority habitat protection and restoration which can be used to better target our actions.

Action 1: Establish a timeline and calculate metrics for the Southeast Fish Habitat Mapping Project initiated by Merrimack River Watershed Council using the data layers provided, and the metrics defined.

Action 2: Determine data gaps in the Southeast Fish Habitat Mapping Project.

Action 3: Initiate the Northeast Fish Habitat Mapping Project by compiling all of the necessary data layers.

Strategy B.1.3: Develop project tracking capabilities for the purpose of capturing and reporting conservation results to stakeholders.

Action 1: Develop coordination with the Service Fish and Aquatic Conservation and Wildlife and Sport Fisheries Restoration divisions (which administers Tracking and Reporting Actions for the Conservation of Species [TRACS]) to get all of the NFHAP-funded reports (progress and final) into an online database and/or provide them to ACFHP.

C. Outreach & Communication Objectives

Outreach and Communication Objective 1: Develop new and update current printed and digital content for communicating information that supports ACFHP's goals to target audiences: scientists, resource managers, state and federal legislatures, non-governmental organizations, stakeholders, media, and others as identified.

Strategy C.1.2: Upgrade and seek improvements to content/organization of the ACFHP website to make better use of available technology and enhance accessibility/usability by target audiences.

Action 1: Hire a contractor and complete the ACFHP website redesign within one year.

Strategy C.1.3: Redesign outreach materials for consistency to optimize our messaging.

Action 1: Develop a PowerPoint presentation that can be used by partners to explain what ACFHP is, what we do, etc.

Action 2: Develop a one-page ACFHP fact sheet specifically for primary target audience(s).

Strategy C.1.4: Disseminate communication materials via social media platforms, the website, and participation at professional conferences/tradeshows to extend our coverage.

Action 1: Update contact information for ACFHP partners and followers outside of the Steering Committee and find out how we can increase their involvement in the Partnership.

Action 2: Attend and present a poster or talk at least once per year at a national conference.

Outreach and Communication Objective 2: Promote and broadly disseminate information about the products, projects, and services of ACFHP.

Strategy C.2.1: Share the successes of the on-the-ground conservation projects that ACFHP supports with target audiences.

Action 3: Submit a newsletter article to Rhode Island Marine Trades Association on the benefits of conservation moorings.

Strategy C.2.3: Facilitate the dissemination of best management practices (BMPs) and other fish habitat conservation information from partners to our targeted audiences.

Action 2: Provide Science and Data-approved links on ACFHP's website on topics of interest to target audiences, such as water quality parameters needed to maintain a healthy ecosystem, fish passage tools, riparian buffer BMPs, etc.

Outreach and Communication Objective 3: Maintain relations with the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) Board, fellow Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs), and Beyond the Pond.

Strategy C.3.1: Promote the mission and accomplishments of ACFHP and exchange lessons learned with the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.

Action 1: Participate in at least three NFHP Board meetings per year and present as opportunities allow.

Action 2: Participate on the NFHP Partnership Committee and in NFHP workshops as needed, and report highlights to ACFHP Steering Committee annually.

Strategy C.3.2: Enhance fish habitat improvement through cooperation with fellow FHPs.

Action 1: Produce three quarterly Coastal FHP articles for the newsletter in coordination with other FHPs.

Action 2: Work closely with Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership on Whitewater to Bluewater efforts, and report to ACFHP Steering Committee on progress biannually.

D. Finance Objectives

Finance Objective 1: Maintain infrastructure and mechanisms for managing ACFHP finances.

Strategy D.1.1: Work with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) to maintain ACFHP operations.

Action 1: Coordinate with the Service and NOAA to establish grant/cooperative agreements with ASMFC for ACFHP operational funding annually.

Action 2: Work with ASMFC and NFHP to apply for Multistate Conservation Grant funding annually.

Action 3: Work with ASMFC to apply for Wallop Breaux funding annually.

Strategy D.1.2: Coordinate with Beyond the Pond staff and partners to establish financial capacities for managing grant proposals and awards.

Action 1: Provide assistance and input into the development of Beyond the Pond infrastructure by attending at least 75% of FHP calls and quarterly Board meetings.

Finance Objective 2: Utilize NFHAP funding to achieve the greatest overall benefits for on the ground conservation and Partnership productivity.

Strategy D.2.1: Solicit and select high quality conservation projects through an annual request for proposals process.

Action 1: Convene the NFHAP project review subcommittee annually to evaluate proposals.

Action 2: Evaluate the success of the previous request for proposals cycle and provide the Steering Committee with recommended changes.

Strategy D.2.2: Enhance ACFHP's performance score in the annual NFHAP funding determinations.

Action 1: Complete the annual report to the Service and develop recommendations to enhance or maintain ACFHP's performance score for the Steering Committee.

Finance Objective 3: Leverage new funding for restoration projects and ACFHP operations.

Strategy D.3.1: Adopt a working Business Plan.

Action 1: Present a Business Plan to the Steering Committee for adoption within one year.

Action 2: Prioritize actions in the Business Plan in Year 2.

Finance Objective 4: Fund projects for Science and Data and Outreach and Communication.

Strategy D.4.1: Secure funding or in-kind support to develop Science and Data and Outreach and Communication priority materials and products.

Action 1: Secure funding for an online searchable database of the Species-Habitat Matrix if in-kind support is not feasible.

Action 4: Secure funding to maintain and update the content and organization of the ACFHP website.

