

Note – there was insufficient time for participants/attendees to provide comments on the preliminary summary statements included in the first 10 pages below during the closing session. Therefore, comments from participants on these summary statements and all inputs provided by participants are still welcome per the cover email instructions distributed directing you to this web site. Please email your comments using track/changes to Mike Staggs (Mike.Staggs@Wisconsin.gov), and copy Doug Stang (dxstang@gw.dec.state.ny.us), Gary Saul (Gary.Saul@tpwd.state.tx.us), Eric Schwaab (eschwaab@iafwa.org), Christopher Estes (Christopher_Estes@fishgame.state.ak.us), and Vern Herr (VHerr@groupsolution.us). Please save and rename this file with your last name added to the file name before modifying and submitting the comments. Please also insert the subject phrase “*NFHI AFS Workshop Comments*” in the subject line of your email. Thank you. We recommend you review all comments in addition to the summary comments.



**American Fisheries Society
National Fish Habitat Initiative Partnership
Workshop Transcripts**

September 10, 2006

Lake Placid, New York

**Facilitated and Prepared by:
Brett Boston & Vern Herr**



Box 940
Alpharetta, GA 30009
770.757.9828
www.group-solutions.us
VHerr@groupsolution.us



Contents

Poster Session Summary

What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?.....	4
What standards should be used to assess strategic plans of regional partnerships? .	5
What potential partnerships should be considered?.....	6
How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?.....	6
Briefly describe your view of NFHI success	7
Other thoughts and recommendations	9

NFHI Workshop Session 10

1. What are the critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships?	10
2. What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?	14
3. Standards for assessing strategic plans of regional partnerships?	19
4. What potential partnerships should be considered?	23
5. How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?	26
6. How would your organization/agency like to participate?	28
7. Briefly describe your view of NFHI success	32
8. Other thoughts and recommendations.....	36

NFHI Workshop Session 2

1. What are the critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships?	41
2. What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?	43
3. Standards for assessing strategic plans of regional partnerships?	44
4. What potential partnerships should be considered?	46
5. How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?	48
6. How would your organization/agency like to participate?	49
7. Briefly describe your view of NFHI success	50
8. Other thoughts and recommendations.....	51

Presentation Summaries

Dr. Mamie Parker	55
Seth Mott	55



Over 100 participants attended 2 separate sessions at the American Fisheries Society Conference in Lake Placid to explore issues and offer recommendations to the Board. The initial following 10 pages capture the summary themes from both sessions. The complete transcripts from both sessions follow.

What are the critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships?

- Partnerships have to be "right-sized:" Too big and they'll be unmanageable, too small and they'll underachieve
- Partnerships need scalability with a framework of hierarchy that enables reaching local level (i.e. Regional/ecosystem/watershed/pond), by remain linked to and landscape level initiative. Some schema that indicates how every project fits into the partnership.
- Inter-jurisdictional participation and planning is essential
- Participation from EPA, Ag, diversified NGOs, landowners and other non-traditional stakeholders will be important
- Shared vision amongst participants is essential
- Openness to have all ideas considered objectively
- Participation on an equal footing for traditional and non-traditional stakeholder groups
- Assume all solutions won't be win-win; not everyone will get everything they want
- Assessing the results of the initial pilot projects then prioritize next steps
- Clear problem identification before problem solving is attempted
- Link to existing regional partnerships and associations before reinventing new ones, including Water Fowl, Ag, EPA, and others
- Make sure there is a clear understanding by all participants of each partner's roles, responsibilities, and organizational requirements
- Each partnership must have some common framework and infrastructure that helps everyone understand where to plug in and fit in the overall effort



- Strike a balance between loose confederation and centralization with a real support structure
- Incorporate big lessons-learned from the waterfowl experience
- Link and communicate the benefits of improved fish habitat to society at large and broaden our message to be much bigger than simply fish habitat

What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?

- Turf battles
- Reaching consensus on assessment criteria for broad approaches (i.e. is there already support/buy-in for a project?)
- The initiatives objectives must integrated into each partner's job objectives within their employing organizations to ensure it is a priority and that employees receive recognition within their own orgs for working on partnership efforts
- Fully-committed agencies
- Lack of performance standards and incentives for staff level employees to participate
- Differences in how NGO, State and Federal partners transfer funds require creative funding mechanisms that enable better funding sharing
- Support and sponsorship from executive/leadership levels of Federal and State Agencies
- All must be expected to contribute some measure of time/talent/treasure
- The need for an infusion of fresh resources to maintain interest & commitment
- Lack of awareness of the importance of cultural capital (NRCS..history/better relationships with landowners).
- Differing assumptions on how to balance native fish vs. sportfish objectives



- Lack of funding for administrative support to sustain partnerships (A set percentages should be budgeted)
- False consensus between partners. Conflict/resolution must be expected on common issues
- “We’ve always done it that way” thinking – we have to reach beyond fisheries and think at the sustainability level.

What standards should be used to assess strategic plans of regional partnerships?

- Get the measures/assessments right before initiating partnerships
- Objectivity
- Strong stakeholder support
- Is it practical? Can it be done? Is it sound scientifically? Will it grow/expand long-term? Is it self-sustaining? Does it bring in additional partners?
- Partners willingness to continue to be involved
- Regular feedback from partners on how we can improve
- Understanding the historical perspectives of what we're trying to accomplish (i.e. restoring the habitat may not get us back to where some want to go)
- Regional partnerships must acknowledge habitat requirements of multiple states in context (Tie these to fish population data)
- Future human development trends must be anticipated and planned for
- Addressing the root causes of habitat degradation...avoid putting band aids on symptoms
- A common understanding of national trends has to be established and shared
- Guidelines on the ideal size/scope of successful regional partnerships



- Time-scales are needed to assess success at a regional scale
- Create a recommended template for partnerships to use
- Identify who will do the assessments (peer review?)
- Define how different regional plans will be evaluated
- The scale and scope of partnerships must be significant (Get the maximum watershed/stream segments possible under each partnership)
- Establish baseline information at the start that identifies if the project has (or can get) sufficient stakeholder support to be successful

What potential partnerships should be considered?

- There WILL be overlap. Don't expect the geographic approach of the waterfowl plan will work
- Where regional fishery ecosystems exist, be sure to link to them
- Be sure plans are flexible enough to include bigger picture/landscape approaches
- USDA and conservation and Farm Bill links can link to create a bigger picture of who our partners might be. Link partnership efforts to these where feasible

How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?

- Overlaps aren't automatically negative. They may help set priorities in some cases. Broaden partnerships and seek opportunities to create sub-partnerships under an "umbrella"
- Consensus-based solutions will be absolutely, positively be necessary to resolve overlap
- World-class communication between entities will be vital to addressing overlap. Being aware of and tracking known overlaps will be the key



- Establish a consistent set of standards for what constitutes a partnership. Set rules and live by them.
- Some partnerships could be watershed-based with GIS

Briefly describe your view of NFHI success

- Fisheries are remaining stable in a degrading environment or improving
- There is public appreciation that steady progress toward NFHI goals is being achieved
- The general public is aware of NFHI efforts
- We are able to communicate regular major progress on a national basis.
- We stop losing habitat (no net loss?)
- NFHI partnerships contribute to clean air and clean water. (Many projects will have benefits to this and climate change)
- Partnerships are focused on a bigger picture than just fish
- “Protection” ceases to be a bad word
- Powers-that-be grasp that problems are long-term. Solutions will need to be too
- An understanding that all growth is not good (smart/balanced have to be future focus)
- Partnerships include new/different partners at the table (developers/landowners/growth advocates)
- Success will have to be defined via process, conservation and organizational goals, influence goals
- Progress, process and impact
- Socioeconomic improvements can be measured and linked NFHI partnership implementations
- Successful Joint Ventures are being imitated in new locations



- NFHI strategies are formally recognized in regular funding mechanisms (i.e. Clean Water Act and others)
- There should be some expansion in the range of native fishes
- The number of self-sustaining fish populations increases measurably and significantly
- Declines have leveled, or been reversed in habitat loss
- Review complimentary activity measures that could be beneficial (i.e. improving water quality)
- Public awareness, and support for the gains made
- Sportswriter stories and shifts in perception/support become more positive
- Local Congressional representatives ask for progress reports
- Partnership plans get referenced in emerging legislation
- Decreases in the number of listed species
- Delisting of the rate of threatened/endangered species (or reductions)
- Improvements in the index of biotic integrity (less sensitive to species-specific) that show improvements in aquatic habitat
- Improvements in how urbanization/growth is planned
- Greater awareness of environmental factors before growth is approved

Other thoughts and recommendations

- A systems approach reaching out to partners other than biologists and "the usual suspects" is needed
- Bring the action plan to other meetings (geomorphologists and other multidisciplinary SMEs is needed)
- Big picture with smaller groups
- In assessing needs what is the magic about 2012. Is this artificial or will these partnerships be of real value?
- Anticipate the very different needs of marine and fresh water partnerships.
- Some flexibility to accommodate partnerships already in progress will probably be necessary
- Consider single-species partnerships vs. eco-systems approaches
- Anticipate pressure to focus on partnerships devoted to sportfish (balance between these and indicator species)
- Consider the balance between high profile/high demand species and ecosystems (can be tricky)
- Look at a broader spectrum than a single-species for partnerships
- Counterpoint: It is easier to measure a single "indicator species" to measure ecosystem health in some cases
- Select indicators that can be reliably measured
- Concentrate on what's already working well. The established shorebird joint venture might be a logical link with Atlantic partnerships
- NFH should embrace sustainability to link to and address the most significant and contentious policy issues (human use/non-use, biodiversity, agency advocacy roles). A sustainability framework could be useful for addressing these, and other difficult challenges



NFHI Workshop Session 1

1. What are the critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships?

Highlights

- *Partnerships have to be "right-sized" Size and scale need to be considered*
- *Hierarchical/scalable structure*
- *Partnerships need to be IJ and include NGOs*
- *Balancing efficiencies have to be a consideration*
- *Shared Vision is essential*
- *Key for partner members to understand all have equal voice, have an opportunity to have ideas considered*
- *All partners need to be equal*
- *Partnerships need to reach deep to the local level*
- *Balance structure with local links*
- *All solutions won't be win-win; not everyone will get everything they want*
- *Assess the results of the initial pilot projects then prioritize*
- *Got to know what the problem is before it can be successfully solved*
- *Link to existing regional partnerships and associations*

Ability to engage partners and stakeholders from all areas - not just gov't agencies and traditional environmental organizations. Landowners, land use planners, and others are critical

Landscape/regional level planning and implementation ability

Sufficient funding and coordination

Clear, open lines of communication and methods of operation

Effectiveness Monitoring

Partners need to have common goals

Shared vision, trust, and open and honest communication

Shared vision.

Strong supporting network of grassroots organizations.



A broad and diverse set of partners including Fed, state, NGO, and private entities.

Shared governance and planning.

Clear strategic plan with priorities

These plans need to address multiple species and not one individual species

Diversified partners

Combining the public will with the technical expertise of resource managers

Partners need to be able to share resources (i.e. dollars, in-kind) without impediments

Fair and efficient process. Needs to efficiently funnel dollars and resources to on-the-ground efforts

Making links across states when issues are state specific but are common to multiple states.

Open communication with all stakeholders

Partners need to be able to effectively communicate with each other and with National

Having measurable outcomes

Willingness to work with all partners. Open to all ideas presented.

Partners need to be fully committed to tasks at hand

Buy in from all partners at the onset of the partnership and formal recognition in an MOA or MOU.

Include all potential partners

Communication among all partners

Common goals and strategies to achieve them

Local success stories

Optimal geographic scale. Too large the group is difficult to focus. Too small and the effort may not be have the desired ecological effect.

Participating groups need to actually contribute (have resources, authorities, to make things happen)...don't need meeting "attenders" that accomplish little



Developing an scale that is appropriate scientifically AND appropriate from a "partnership" perspective.

Need to have consensus on goals and objectives

Localized changes with a big picture impact

Identifying what you want to accomplish and what is expected from each of the partners. Make sure that everyone knows and understands what is expected from them and how their efforts will advance the attainment of the project goals.

Communicating what we learned today about the lessons of the NAWMP to the local and regional level of all interested FWS, NOAA, and other federal I state agency and watershed group, other stakeholders at the field, regional and national levels e.g. holding meetings similar to those held by the SFBPC that lead to NFHI..as maybe first step with exact same presentation over the next 3 mos. after the first board meeting in CO

Having the three leads of the NFHAP, - AFWA state members, USFWS, NOAA actually hold similar meetings within each of the USFWS 7 regions collectively to figure out how those 3 lead entities will carry the same message to their national, regional and local staff? Maybe there should first be same type of meeting of today with just those 3 entities at the national, regional levels then with their regional field and local offices so those three lead entities and their staff top down and bottom up are all on the same page?

Broad and diverse array of partners: Feds, state, NGOs, private.
Shared governance and planning efforts.
Comprehensive strategic plan with priorities.
Monitoring and assessment plan.

Strong public interest in the geographic / species focus area.

A Plan with clearly identified restoration goals and a process identified for incorporating lessons learned to inform future actions. (Need to incorporate both lessons learned at the site specific project level and at the larger partnership level).

Organized method of tracking progress

General support among relevant agencies (most or all) and interested parties.

Habitat and ecosystem based boundaries; not geo-political boundaries

Inclusion of diverse federal agencies, not just FWS and the states



Recruitment/buy-in/participation of land management agencies key (NPS, DOD, USFS, state forests, etc.)

They should focus on the most critical aspect of fish habitat, the presence of water. Especially in adequate quality and quantity, whether that be in flowing or standing waters. A primary issue in stream flow issues, should not be the maintenance of minimal flows but rather in establishing flow regimes that restore healthy stream functions.

Adding layers of reporting requirements with giving working local partnerships either the staff for doing that reporting or some other staff/money/ tools in return will not attach functional local groups to join as they will see this as just a diversion of resources. There needs to be a real incentive that will benefit already active groups on the ground or they will not join in.

Framework set up in such a way that overall success can be measured in all layers of the joint venture

Good internal and external communication.

Agreement on indicators (physical & chemical habitat, landscape scale)

Don't equate the inability to consistently measure outcomes in a standard data format as a failure of the FHP concept to be effective. Sometimes biological intuition should be sufficient.

Good decision making framework for selecting projects within the partnership.

Recognize cannot always have a win-win situation, may be win-lose

Also failures need to be documented so the wheel isn't reinvented later on down the road-so framework needs to be able to document failures and successes

Need for regional leadership

How about having the same presentation first two presentations by Schwaab and Seth to all the regional AFS chapters no need for the computer part just the two presentations and a q and a.

Partnerships should be regional in scope, address multiple species and multiple habitats

Membership encompasses agencies with management authority and local/state/regional/federal for habitat conservation



A Regional Habitat Plan supports activities. Plan uses existing regional habitat plans or Regional Fishery Ecosystem Plan as vehicles to provide measurable habitat conservation at the watershed level.

Critical to link existing regional Habitat plans or Fishery Ecosystem Plan development efforts which brings partners with vested interest in habitat conservation, protection and restoration that is intended to support healthy fish populations as defined by regional assessments.

Must enhance significant State and Federal mandates for fish habitat conservation or protection in a region (e.g., Essential Fish Habitat). Fishery Ecosystem Plans provide recommendations and fish habitat protection down to the watershed.

How about having these presentations by Eric s and Seth at the same regional SFBPC stakeholder meeting sites ?

Need top-down, as well as bottom-up support

Critical to bring in NGO stakeholders to the partnership.

Integrate into agencies budget planning

Partners within entire watershed of interest must be involved.

A few good projects to get the ball rolling. Develop a goal. Assess. Prioritize. Implement. Assess. Assess. Assess.

2. What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?

Highlights

- *Turf battles. Address these by involving highest levels of each org*
- *Assessment criteria need to specify broad approaches (i.e. is there already support/buy-in for a project)*
- *Institutional barriers (the way orgs operate is often a barrier to communication)*
- *All agencies are fully-committed*
- *Staff level employees haven't gotten the word. Performance standards are not yet in place at agencies. Need incentives for all to participate*
- *Integrate these into agency assessment guidelines on a day-to-day level*



- *Be sensitive to the differences in how NGO, State and Federal partners transfer funds between each other. We all have different business calendars. Streamline these wherever possible*
- *Seek creative funding mechanisms that enable better funding sharing*
- *Personnel time at the local level (get communication from top down that this will be a priority)*
- *Do you bring Time/Talent/Treasure to the table? Are partners really partners?*
- *Get better at using volunteers (we talk about it, but don't get a lot better at it)*
- *During initial pilot phase, we'll need an infusion of fresh resources to maintain interest & commitment*
- *Cultural capital is another resource partners can bring (NRCS..history/better relationships with landowners). Don't overlook this important capability*
- *Native fish vs. sportfish: How will these balances be defined?*

Obtaining adequate start-up funding to get projects started that will gather enough interest to help harbor additional partnerships within states.

Parochialism. There are a number of fish-related efforts out there already, and some are already vying for the right to be THE FHP for a certain area or species. This will be very destructive - the Board needs to adopt criteria that make it very clear that Partnerships need to be broad and inclusive.

Communications between potential stakeholder. Inclusion of appropriate agencies whose actions affect projects directly or indirectly.

Lack of commitment to the program, not willing to change traditional way of doing business

Jurisdictional overlaps; diversity of user groups could make it difficult to prioritize.

Differences in Fiscal Year funding between agencies and organizations, follow-up and variability of moving funds from one agency organization to another

Matching fund criteria of federal versus state, etc. if an issue

What do you do about conflict between native species and introduced species?
Missions of partners may be different.

Effective communication with the public about project successes; sparking participation.



If the NFHA causes a shift in funding from existing sources, then disruption in current programs will be counter productive to its goals. Funding through the Plan should be from new and additional sources.

While money should not be the focus, many entities are willing to contribute resources in the early stages of partnership development, but long term sustained participation will require an infusion of funding. Nearly all entities getting involved are adding these activities to already overloaded plates.

Administrative barriers that each agency or NGO have internally that slow progress

Being able to get a seat at the table when decisions that impact habitat needed by fishes are being made. I'm thinking specifically of who gets the water in our rivers and will their be enough to support river fisheries, reservoirs, and freshwater flows into coastal areas.

How can partners participate and meet both their agencies mission as well as NFHI mission?

Funding and staff time in all partner organizations. Most organizations are already fully committed. To be effective JVs can't get bogged down in process. To justify allocation of staff & \$ they will have to demonstrate greater bottom-line results than existing efforts.

Differing agendas by partners, especially by type of habitat; how reservoir managers will view success as apposed to river/stream managers

Getting all the partners to agree on what needs to happen and what needs to be accomplished with all the different views and needs of the partners

Lack of understanding about roles and responsibilities between partners.

Turfism

Many of us (states, feds so far but hopefully many more) are working on a potential partnership along the Atlantic coast. We're facing a "chicken and egg" conundrum. How much do we do as a narrow group (just marine fish interests) before we extend our reach to other partners? In our narrow form we fear others will think we aren't worthy of an official "partnership." But we need to get the ball moving so we have a concept to attract partners. We think everyone should be flexible in the early months of partnership formation so good ideas can be nurtured.

Translating the criteria of success measurements to the lay public.



Must transcend changes in political leadership/administrations

Upper administration of state agencies need to embrace the NFHI concept.

Competition from other partnerships.

Lack of administrator support to provide enough staff and time to manage projects within respective states.

Board support for recognition of partnerships without a sport fish focus

Some human requirements i.e. drinking water/ sewer systems are diametrically opposite fish habitat needs in groundwater supported systems. Resolving these issues in areas of growing populations will be a tough nut.

Identifying and balancing needs of competing native species of concern (Am. eel vs. brook trout)

Success sometimes takes time, or small increments. Dampen the expectation of instantaneous results, especially among the public.

Start up funding, funding for administration and coordination/general operation of partnerships.

Prioritizing and concentrating efforts/funding means someone's favorite stream/river/reservoir or species will be left out or not receive priority initially. Partners will have to buy in completely to the planning and prioritization process.

Communicating among scientists and land-owners with markedly differing world views

Being able to meet the missions of all partner agencies and NFHI

Communication issues as a result of stakeholders and public entities being from different backgrounds and having different values and objectives

Showing the results/outcomes that Seth referred to will be important to keep the partners involved.

Investing in this program with no promise that program will be around long enough to monitor on a meaningful time scale



Establishing a mechanism for translating the Partnership's goals and recommendations into the land and water use decision making process at the local level.

Getting bogged down in the bureaucracy (political and funding) that would keep partners from doing effective science

Hidden agendas by partners, board members, congressional members, lobbyists, etc. especially those with \$\$\$\$ and ability to leverage their ideas

The new FHP will need to include marine and all other species in the plan. Marine and estuarine habitats can't be left behind.

Formalizing structure for the partnership that enables the joint venture to administer the acceptance and expenditure of funds

The ability for all partners to engage themselves at a meaningful level

Competing goals of various agencies - not always there for the same reasons (diked wetland waterfowl production vs. open access for fish)

Develop structure and function of framework

Barriers include the ability to quantify success for conservation and protection habitat down to type by watershed.

Problem if major habitat conservation mandates and management activities (e.g., Magnuson Act and Essential Fish Habitats, including inshore and near shore habitats critical to managed or prey species) are not addressed. Addresses protection across species and life stages.

Single species efforts should be addressed and prioritized within individual regions if there is no movement of populations across boundaries.

Being able to identify fish health criteria that are appropriate for each region. Have concerns that national criteria may get too cumbersome. Favor establishing a framework for creating criteria for common situations.

Institutional and social conflicts versus technical or scientific

How will NFWF funds be blended with current funds allocated by USFWS?

The big economic interests (agriculture, development, industry) are not directly engaged.



Providing performance incentive to staff at national regional local level to accomplish NFHAP goals/objectives

Conflicting state and or regional water laws; right of capture

Not knowing who the contacts are for NFHAP in the local, regional, and national levels for the Federal Caucus, FWS, NOAA and AFWA

The need to get viable and visible projects in the public eye to promote the initiative versus getting too far ahead of the technical measurement criteria that is yet to be established.

Different states are at different levels with their assessment protocols. States do not necessarily use the same methodologies in assessments so information completeness may be a barrier

One contrary comment from an elected official can be incredibly damaging to the partnership. Need constant "spin control"

Programmatic constraints. If the water body is listed for a TMDL, how will this program work within that framework?

3. What standards should be used to assess strategic plans of regional partnerships?

Highlights

- *Practical piece..partnership willingness to continue to be involved*
- *Getting regular feedback from partners on how we can improve*
- *Historical perspectives of what we're trying to accomplish must be considered*
- *Restoring the habitat may not get us back to where some want to go*
- *Regional partnerships must acknowledge habitat requirements of multiple states in context*
- *Tie these to fish population data*
- *Future trends must be considered: human development must be anticipated*
- *Addressing root causes of habitat degradation...avoid the symptoms*
- *A common understanding of national trends has to be established and shared*
- *Get the measures/assessments right on the front end*
- *Is there an ideal size for regional partnerships?*
- *To assess success at a regional scale we must include time-scales*
- *Is it practical?*



- *Can it be done?*
- *Is it sound scientifically?*
- *Will it grow/expand long-term*
- *Is it self-sustaining?*
- *Does it bring in additional partners?*

Does the partnership include those with authority to affect changes in local planning and zoning master plans?

How objective are they? How comprehensive? We have to make sure these plans are scientific and not political or driven by "my favorite species".

Integration and evaluation of federal agency land use and management plans, state comprehensive plans, and local land use plans.

Strong support from local communities and grassroots organizations.

The current status of fish and aquatic species (threatened, endangered, species of concern

Do the strategic plans put an emphasis on effectiveness monitoring that measures the status of the target species and not just money spent?

Effectiveness monitoring

Facilitate communication

In the end if the project is successful will the work make a difference to the resource. In this case it is all about the fish. Will the project improve the fish as defined in the project goals.

Evidence of strong and repeated communication among the various state partners.

Establishment of monitoring process to evaluate results

Outreach strategy for their partnership

The typical: Scientific/technically sound! Amount of \$ likely to be drawn in; Ability to reach out to draw local decision makers (inland/wetlands commissions, conservation commissions, etc.). Not necessarily to individual property owners ... but rather to groups/entities with influence or control over really large amounts of habitat.



Partnerships need to be assessed on the basis of fish habitat improvements, not organizational criteria

There has to be some measure of benefit to fish and constituents. If we can't relate plans back to the public we will never get the support (political/financial) for plans to succeed. Waterfowl thorough involvement with DU has gotten and maintained the support of a key constituent group.

Outline monitoring and evaluation to demonstrate success

Should not include promotion of non-native species (e.g., brown trout)

Assess plans based on the extent to which they have key aspects included- as per those outlined in Question #1.

Need to include possibilities for focusing on any aquatic species - for instance mussels and their host fish not just those species that are recreationally sexy or commercial.

Seems like what Seth said needs to be emphasized we aren't measuring numbers of fish but habitat gains... even bird folks can't measure the bird numbers

Monitoring efforts should focus the results of fish populations. We don't want to be in the same position as waterfowl after 20 years.

Plans should focus on getting things done on the landscape that will make a difference in fish populations.

We need each of the partnerships to have enough of a common thread so that we can bring all together to make Statements Nationally and Regionally about the health of our aquatic ecosystems and habitat

The partnerships should have a track record of project success at some level and some reasonable ideas for evaluation.

There should a measurable, positive economic impact. People protect what's valuable to them.

Monitoring should be a requirement of not only data but how the partnership works-have annual round table meetings for each joint venture or initiative.

Connection with FHI Action Plan Vision Goals, scientific foundation, output metrics



Does the plan identify and address the root cause that led to the degraded habitat?

Ability to meet broader regional habitat mandates (e.g., conservation of Essential Fish Habitat at the watershed level and combined for the region).

Ability to meet broad regional prioritized objectives

Credibility of the partnership

Continuing participation of partners, wide recognition of the effort by external entities, willingness of partners to commit to group consensus at a "cost" of perhaps not achieving their own objectives fully

Existence or commitment to a rigorous effectiveness monitoring program

Need to re-visit these periodically

The product should be rigorous (scientifically) and needs to consider the scale and history of species. The EBTJV may have different measure of success than WNTI at some scales, but there needs to be the potentiality of scaling up. For example EBTJV focuses on one species. WNTI focuses on multiple species with various ranges of opportunities for success.

Commitment from highest levels of partner agencies, particularly fisheries mgt. agencies

Should not be generated just by states. Should not be compilation of existing documents -- should be a thoughtful consideration of as many existing management and land use plans as possible in addition to other information.

One point not emphasized from the NFHAP is that successful partnerships need the resources, \$, technical expertise etc to have the capacity to design, implement and evaluate their efforts in terms of planning and implementing projects and assessing and reporting their outcomes

Focus should be on restoring natural processes. Not short-term, high cost activities that may not address root causes.



4. What potential partnerships should be considered?

Highlights

- *Geographic approach of the waterfowl plan probably won't work. There will be overlap*
- *Organize around ecosystem partnerships*
- *Where regional fishery ecosystems exist, be sure to link to them*
- *Be sure plans are flexible enough to include bigger picture/landscape approaches*

All partnerships should be considered. Geographic, keystone species, focus areas (e.g., reservoirs).

Anadromous fish of the Atlantic coast.

Gulf Sturgeon, Atlantic sturgeon, and shortnose sturgeon - these species are affected by the deteriorating condition of estuaries and could serve as a focus for many habitat problems.

ESTUARIES - maybe group by region and pull out all those CCMPs written for the National Estuary Program.

Partnerships focusing on mussels or a combination of mussels and fish

Local sources and contacts in both the public and private sectors should be considered. Locals have the greatest interest in seeing that a project is successful.

Midwest brook trout need to be considered as part of the Eastern Initiative or established as its own partnership.

Desert Fish Habitat Partnership

Look at ongoing efforts for habitat management of threatened / endangered fish species.

This initiative can benefit these efforts by providing guidance for evaluating success and communicating examples of appropriate habitat project.



Federal, state, NGOs, Universities, are obvious partners. But partnerships need to reach out to draw in local regulating entities. Also consider user groups; recreational anglers, commercial fishermen, landowners

Driftless Area Habitat Initiative

Reservoirs or lakes (not necessarily promoting just black bass or walleye)

Don't limit partnerships. Fish are not ducks, my fish aren't my neighbors fish. Let FHPs emerge organically, not bureaucratically - but set the minimal standards for FHPs to operate.

Huron-Erie Corridor Habitat Initiative

"The sky's the limit"! The initiative should be very flexible as the potential for partnership combinations is endless. While large multistate projects should be fair game for NFHI, projects confined to an individual state should be just as eligible. There are many aquatic communities that are biologically rich that are unique to a state, a region, the nation and the world.

Just those that focus on native species

Enhancement of important sport fisheries through habitat improvement.

Lake Superior Cold Water Habitat Initiative

Partnerships focused on medium-large river systems such as Colorado or Rio Grande.

Some of the existing partnerships claim they are indeed cast in stone and permanently endorsed. seems like what Eric S said that they still have to prove themselves needs to be shared with the folks that represent those existing 5 pilot partnerships

Some sort of partnership to develop needs to be developed to give fish and habitat (I'm thinking specifically of water levels) a place at the table to be able to show their importance. No water in rivers, reservoirs, etc. no fish, no anglers, no boaters, and no support for any further conservation.

Partnerships should not be limited by to a minimum of 50,000 square miles, as stated in the recent draft. Large partnerships actually could be harder to manage as efficient and effectively than smaller can be managed.

Partnerships need to illustrate that they are new or expanding an existing partnership that had not previously focused on habitat restoration. I am



concerned that we will have a feeding frenzy of existing partnerships that want to be considered under the NFAHP just to make them eligible for funding.

We need a partnership that addresses the Great Lakes Watershed. This a huge freshwater resource.

Upper Mississippi River Watershed

AFS and NFHI need to involve other related professional societies at the planning and national management level such as the North American Lakes Management Society, SETAC, NABS, environmental engineering, etc

All partnerships should be considered if they are organized and have multiple state partners.

Broad regional partnerships can guide formation and purpose of smaller more focused partnerships

Native vegetation introduction in aging reservoirs on a nationwide scale

The effect of pharmaceuticals and related endocrine disruptors on water quality - a perfect opportunity to bring in drinking water concerns to garner broad public support and interest in the partnership!

Need to integrate with existing programs so we can be efficient and effective and not duplicate efforts. Integrate with Programs such as NAWQA (National Water Quality Assessment Program) of USGS, USGS Great Lakes Aquatic GAP program, USGS Water Science Centers

Ongoing efforts of range wide assessments technical working groups etc.. Many of these groups plans have the same vision and goals that WNTI and have thought of the issue of scale and assessment.

The Habitat Board should direct where possible that the main partnerships be:

- Regional in scope (e.g., SARP);
- Encompass recommendations to the watershed level provided through Regional Habitat and/or Fishery Ecosystem Plans that; Have the ability to support sub regional partnerships (acknowledge regional differences);
- Partnership that address multispecies/multi-habitat and take ecosystem view of habitat conservation.

The minimum and maximum square mileage presented in the draft is a good rule of thumb for spatial scope. Consider increasing minimum square mileage (50k is size of small states -- questionable whether this is regional significance -- exception is when there is species need of national importance)



Need to be careful about applying the landscape scale utilized in NAWFMP (continental) versus effective aquatic management landscape scale which is often at the sub-watershed level. While we should plan on a watershed level, the practical working scale within a local community is much smaller.

Promote fish habitat conservation on arid lands (desert fish)

5. How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?

Highlights/Themes

- *Overlaps may help identify areas of priority...this doesn't have to be a bad thing*
- *Communication between entities is vital*
- *Be aware of and track known overlaps*
- *Establish a consistent set of standards for what constitutes a partnerships. Set rules and live by them*
- *Consensus is necessary where there is overlap*
- *Consider/exploit opportunities to use overlap as a benefit*
- *Broaden partnerships and seek opportunities to create sub-partnerships under an "umbrella"*

All of the partners within the range of the projects have to be involved in the project.

Geographic overlaps are inevitable with species and habitat type FHPs. The Board should REQUIRE that any geographic of resource overlap be addressed by a MOU between the overlapping FHPs so there are no questions about how they will cooperate or divvy up responsibilities.

Overlapping geographic partners may consider splitting into smaller workgroups for projects on different systems (i.e. small streams versus large rivers).

Managing overlap may be one of the factors the board should address n managing the growth of the National program through chartering partnerships. Perhaps those that overlap whether geographically or otherwise should be reorganized to more adequately represent the aquatic issues of concern. Another way would be for the Board to identify potential partnerships and take action to create them as opposed to partnerships coming to them.

Ensure communication occurs between entities



This should be encouraged because it increases stakeholder involvement.

It would be nice if overlap could be prevented, but aquatic resources are not neatly organized that way. Make sure communication exists and jurisdictions are clearly articulated

If the projects are large scale we should expect and encourage overlap.

Boundaries for the fish partnerships will most likely overlap, especially if you develop a joint venture for a keystone species, e.g., BKT versus a joint venture for coastal species.

No need to worry about overlap. Focus on individual plans or JVs based on keystone species, species groups or specific habitat units.

Board should ignore if support exists then embrace them. Who cares whether Waterfowl JV uses pretty maps with neat political lines?

I don't see this as a major problem. States should have the capability of joining and participating in various regional partnerships if they are active, dues paying members of one or more associations. For example, in Missouri we have issues in common with southern states as well as Midwestern states.

Regional partnerships through regional association of fish and wildlife agencies could set priorities for each region for consideration by the Board.

Have the three lead entities service, states, NOAA plus their caucus and board members make sure that their lead national and regional staff keep communication flowing between regional and other geographic partnerships. in other words have national role of leaders keep the info flowing between partnerships from the partnerships so they have option to better share resources and be more effective. also board should be able to help based on how it is currently structured in its leadership representation

To the extent possible, there should not be overlap. Partnerships focusing on improving habitat within an area should generally benefit all species within an area- thus there is a level of redundancy with overlap.

Be flexible with the new partners to allow for the most partners

Areas of overlap offer opportunities for cross comparisons/paired studies.

How will we handle differences of opinion by various groups in particular watersheds. If we can't overlap geographically, will it be first come, first serve??



If partners could agree to common focus "clean water, etc" then I think the overlap would only make the partnership more powerful.

Geographic overlaps will happen because the NFHI includes all habitat types (lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, rivers). The NAWMP could avoid geographic overlaps because they only managed one habitat type (wetlands). Good communication at the national and regional level will ensure that each project area learns from the others and avoids duplication.

Overlap should be based on the overall goal of the NFHAP to provide for more meaningful, cost effective successful outcomes and should be intuitive.

6. How would your organization/agency like to participate? (Include your electronic business card please)

J. Fred Heitman
jfredd@aol.com

NOAA is a strong supporter of NFHAP and will be participating by serving on the Board, staffing the Board, and participating in coastal, marine, and anadromous fish FHPs.

Susan-Marie Stedman
NOAA Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway F/HC
Silver Spring MD 20866
301/713-4300 ext 132
susan.stedman@noaa.gov

I am Larry Claggett, Trout Coordinator with the Wisconsin DNR (email: lawrence.claggett@dnr.state.wi.us). I am involved in the Driftless project, but would like more direct communication with the national coordination effort.

BASS Federation Nations/BASS Angler Conservation Teams - Volunteer base for projects
Chris Horton
christopher.m.horton@bassmaster.com

The Eastern Region of the USDA Forest Service is already a partner in the EBTJV as well as a signatory on the Letter of Intent for the Management of Atlantic Salmon. We have national forests scattered in a 20 state area that will and have been a partner with states and others for many years.

Robert Nick Schmal
Fish and Aquatic Ecology Programs



USDA Forest Service Eastern Regional Office
626 East Wisconsin Avenue Suite 700
Milwaukee, WI 53202
nschmal@fs.fed.us
414-297-3431

This will become clearer as we learn more and as JVs develop. Certainly looking to be involved in implementation of EBTJV. Would like to be part of a coastal river herring partnership or JV. Bill Hyatt, CT DEP, Inland Fisheries, william.hyatt@po.state.ct.us

The USDA Forest Service is a key player in the NFHI. We will be actively involved and supportive. Considering the location of rare, remnant native fish populations across the nation (primarily on public lands and much of that being Forest lands), their involvement in habitat restoration activities throughout the nation, their involvement in many existing initiatives, and their ability to fund new projects, the agency should be considered to serve on the NFHI steering committee.

Our state agency is embarking on a White River partnership involving Table Rock Lake and Lake Taneycomo. Our Commission has allocated funds this fiscal year for this purchase and we have submitted an application to the NFWF.

We want to put good, quality habitat projects on the ground (i.e. turn dirt). We have a number of existing habitat initiatives, many working with multiple partners now. I will need to retrofit these existing efforts into FHPs. We have quite a bit of experience working with citizen groups on habitat projects (Stream Teams, White River Partnership, numerous local reservoir projects using local fishing clubs and our Aquatic Habitat Program, etc). We are now identifying priority watersheds to focus riparian restoration efforts. I am particularly concerned that these local, grassroots focused efforts are not lost in the grander vision of landscape scale partnership visions.

Michael Armstrong
marmstrong@agfc.state.ar.us
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

Tim Patronski
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Midwest Regional Office
1 Federal Drive
BHW Federal Building
Minneapolis, MN 55111

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is already providing its support and is committed to continue helping make implementation of the NFHAP successful.



I cannot speak for my organization, but the NFHAP should collaborate with the USEPA EMAP on survey design and indicators to maximize the applicability of both programs--instead of running wholly independently (hughes.bob@epa.gov)

Jeff Hastings, Project Manager for Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort...work with the various partners to develop a Strategic Plan for the Driftless Area, help coordinate projects, help groups write grants for NFHI funding, jhastings@tu.org

Christopher Estes Christopher_Estes@fishgame.state.ak.us

Kelly_Hepler@fishgame.state.ak.us

McKie_Campbell@fishgame.state.ak.us

Tom_Brookover@fishgame.state.ak.us

I believe the EPA/CBP would like to assist in any way they can/is needed.

Jana Stewart
USGS WI Water Science Center
8505 Research Way
Middleton, WI 53562

The USGS WI Water Science Center and other USGS State Water Science Centers have Hydrologists that have knowledge about hydrology, geomorphology and water quality that affect habitat. We are interested in being involved. We also have staff that would like to coordinate that are working on the USGS Great Lakes Aquatic GAP program and the National Water Quality Assessment Program (NAWQA). I can be a contact for both of these projects Nationally and locally.

Explore developing a glacial lakes joint venture for inland lakes in the Great Lakes region and New England states to share information on programs and strategies to address land use development, invasive species, fisheries management, water quality, and aquatic plant control in natural lakes.
Gwen White, gwhite@dnr.in.gov, 317-234-4407
Indiana DNR Lake and River Enhancement Program.

I forgot to add my email address and phone number above:

Jana Stewart
See address above
email: jsstewar@usgs.ov



Phone: 608-821-3855

NH Fish and Game would like to be an active participant in partnerships, including providing staff and funding

I failed to provide my electronic business card with a previous comment that we were engaging with various partners in a NFHI project in the White River system. My contact info is steve.eder@mdc.mo.gov

J. Douglas Sheppard
NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, N.Y. 12233-4756
dxsheppa@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Water quality/fish habitat restoration from neutralization of acid mine drainage.
Fred W. Fox
U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
ffox@osmre.gov

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Inland Fisheries Division
Ken Kurzawski
ken.kurzawski@tpwd.state.tx.us

Tim Patronski
tim_patronski@fws.gov
612-713-5168
(see address above)

Bob Gresswell USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center
bgresswell@usgs.gov 406-994-7085

Louise Maudin
louise_maudin@fws.gov
608/783-8407
Midwest Driftless Area Restoration

7. Briefly describe your view of NFHI success

Highlights

- *Fish/Fisheries are remaining stable in a degrading environment or improving*
- *Public appreciation that we are achieving the goals which have been set...We're making progress*
- *People are aware of NFHI efforts*
- *Be able to communicate big stuff happening on a national basis. Communicate regularly*
- *Stop losing (no net loss?)*
- *We contribute to clean air and clean water. many projects will have benefits to this (and climate change)*
- *Look for a bigger picture (more than just critters)*
- *Waterfowl example: understand the relationship between what was done and what happened*
- *Stop losing habitat: protection shouldn't be a bad word (avoid getting trapped in the "lock it up" box)*
- *Get beyond protection triggering negative reactions (address through user groups/landowners)*
- *Get the message to powers-that-be that problems are long-term and solutions will need to be too*
- *Frustration with Congress (and 2-year terms/attention spans)*
- *What have you done for me lately? Do we have the necessary planning horizons to accomplish real results?*
- *Change in society's view of how we do business: all growth is not good (smart/balanced have to be future focus)*
- *Can we get comfortable including new partners at the table (developers/landowners/growth advocates)*
- *Success will have to be defines via process, conservation and organizational goals, influence goals,*
- *Progress, process and impact*
- *Improvement of local, national and regional economies need to be measured (socioeconomic)*
- *When successful projects are imitated in new areas (leverage our learnings/successes)*
- *Formal recognition of NFHI strategies in regular funding mechanisms (Clean Water Act and others)*
- *Distribution of native fish should be greater than it is today*
- *Should be some expansion in the range of native fishes*
- *Understanding through the watershed how we develop certain levels and the economic impact of habitat loss*



Establishing measurable criteria based on increasing fish populations or community diversity. Then documenting how projects met these criteria.

A set of partnerships that coordinate effectively and produce outcomes that are measurable in terms of improving fish habitat trends and fish population trends, and address the real priorities in a national context.

I think that you have a promising program. Your long term success will be determined by the projects that you do and how well these are publicized. If you are out on the water with locals and at a state level doing successful projects this program will go for years.

Re-focus agency and priorities on fish habitat, rather than narrow resource management and regulatory issues

Makes fishing better and sustainable.

Recognized within the angling community as a reason for improved fishing. Increased, measurable visitation to specific projects due to better fishing.

Concerned that the NFHI is measuring outputs rather than outcomes. All initiatives need to be focused on the causes rather than symptoms.

There are potential opportunities with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation to develop habitat friendly management practices on a variety of river systems.

EBTJV is a great example. The Forest Service has many non fish programs and funding sources in fire and vegetation programs that if integrated with our fish habitat objectives, would become great ways of doing business. Examples include Stewardship Contracting End Results, use of the Wyden amendment to use forest service funds on non forest service lands, and taking vegetation from forest service treatments to use for habitat improvements

Improve status or improving trends in fish assemblage condition

Ability to attract money and partnerships and to efficiently turn these into on-the-ground, broad-based, conservation success.

Improved fish populations and fishing success.
Happy partners.

Getting projects done on the ground and showing they are having results.
A coordinated approach that makes a difference on a geographically scale - bigger than the sum of the parts.



Efficiency is key!

Today's first two presentations by Schwaab and Seth were best presented to date and need to be reproduced nationally, regionally and locally.

Biodiversity of aquatic communities is conserved in every state. Important sport fisheries are enhanced.

Fish habitat and water quality and quantity become a standard component of the dialog when land and water use planning decisions are made at the local, regional and national level.

Effective communication and coordination. Public knowledge and appreciation of our efforts. Ability to show others our effectiveness.

Our Commission specifically earmarking funds in our budget to meet NFNI projects each year.

The best item is currently the awareness that fish habitat is of national issue of importance to those in fish science.

Success can be as small as a landowner agreeing to have a project done on their land to as large as improved population growth/status region wide

Success would look like a patchwork quilt of partnerships across the country with as little overlap as possible. We need to be careful to limit the number of partnerships to a level that is still meaningful. Too many partnerships could reduce effectiveness and efficiency. These partnerships should be able to show success in terms of population response over time. Need to show success in generating funding support and show accountability for how the funding is used. Keep it as simple as possible. Set a goal, measure progress toward that goal, communicate results and lessons learned, and incorporate lessons into future activities.

Awareness on a basic level with the general public, state agencies (Transportation, Environmental Services, Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Foresters, etc), and federal folks as well.

Behavior change in the general public outside fisheries managers and anglers, so that they recognize and improve approaches to land use and recreational impacts on water resources and fish habitat.



Improved working relationships between sport fish managers and biodiversity initiatives (especially State Wildlife Grant projects) to achieve common goals that support sustainable natural systems and recreational resources.

People will become more aware of fish habitat preservation and conservation and why.

Funding programs and names have integrated concept of protection, restoration and enhancement and the outcomes have been so positive there is desire to keep the implementation process continuing. similar to NAWMP

Improved water quality on all levels

Success is local staff and stakeholders all agreeing to network at local, regional, national levels with any type of activity relating to this effort

Need to demonstrate economic benefits..

Making sure there are indeed marine in addition to freshwater outcomes

Success would be when we look around the room and it isn't just fisheries related folks in it

Having agency programs that have protection outcomes as a goal

Identifying economic benefits of the NFHAP outcomes

Integration of NFHAP concepts in all federal and state programs including federal aid..

Talk is cheap, having agencies actually commit and be able to demonstrate they have shifted programs to support this effort.

We are successful if we play a part in creating a next generation of stewards in school children today



8. Other thoughts and recommendations

Highlights

- *Systems approach that reaches out to more partners than biologists and "the usual suspects" is vital*
- *Bring the action plan to other meetings (geomorphologists and other multidisciplinary SMEs is needed)*
- *Big picture with smaller groups*
- *In assessing needs what is the magic about 2012. Is this artificial or will these partnerships be of real value?*

While working in the stream corridor, trying to increase fish numbers, we should also look at increasing the carrying capacity of other species...state Wildlife Action plans will help identify "critical species in need". This action alone should help bring in additional dollars and partners.

I think Seth's comments about needing good guidance from the Board should be conveyed to them.

Mamie's opening comments were optimistic and enlightening but a bit too FWS centric for a partnership that extends beyond that one agency. Ditto for aspects of her talk, such as appropriations to implement. She/we need to speak and act more broadly or we will not have the depth and breadth we need to pursue fish habitat partnerships on all scales and in all habitats.

I agree, there is considerable fish expertise in other agencies that some FWS staff prefer to ignore rather than engage in the process.

The most limiting component for fish habitat is water. In the Plains, water has been viewed of economic value primarily to produce commodities. This is changing; water for recreation and other amenities are now starting to be considered better economic uses than producing more surplus crops. We need an irrigation reservoir initiative to lease or buy water from irrigators. This wont be cheap (~\$125 per acre foot).

Have attempts been made to bring in some of the big private actors whose actions may be significant for fish habitat? The agriculture interests, the developers, the power companies, etc. Would this be beneath the interest of Archer Daniel Midland Co., for example, or some large real estate development group? If so, it doesn't bode well for the enterprise. If not, maybe they should be courted.



Spatial context of habitat for streams needs to include both watershed and stream network components

All agencies on the Great Lakes have a formal agreement that attempts to address habitat issues on a basin level. It is the Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, and all state, provincial, federal (US and Canadian), and tribal agencies in the GL basin are signatories. That agreement calls for the development of formal environmental objectives for each lake. Pursuant to that, a Great Lakes GIS is being developed at U of Mich, with significant support through the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act. Maybe I'm just missing it, but I don't see any formal linkages between this Action Plan initiative and the environmental objectives work being pursued by agencies pursuant to the Joint Strategic Plan. It seems to me that the two could be mutually supportive.

Concerned about recent, sudden emphasis on states to the subordination of other partners (NGO's and feds)

Won't have a successful partnership without equal participation with NGO's, especially from the funding side

Over-emphasis on just 1-2 federal agencies is not healthy

Lack of land management agency representation of Board is disconcerting. Where is USFS? NPS?

Geology / fluvial geomorphology are often overlooked in the development of fish habitat projects. Identifying these elements a priori will assist partners in developing projects that have a greater potential for longevity and effectiveness.

Develop a rigorous effectiveness monitoring program: regional scale, statistical (random or stratified) design, quantitative indicators (physical & chemical habitat, fish species & their abundances, land use/land cover at multiple scales)

What is the significance of the 12 partnerships by 2010?

Board structure changes after plan was "signed" is problematic. Why need to discount federal agency representation? Why EPA representation in perpetuity? Will FWS adequately represent the other DOI agencies? Board MUST address these questions to ensure long-term buying from other federal partners.

Yes. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission already participates in SARP and in the EBTJV and plan to continue.



We need to take a Systems and multidisciplinary approach. We need to involve hydrologist, not just biologists. Bring in folks from States and Feds (i.e. USGS Water Science Centers need to be brought in). Hydrology is a key factor to habitat in streams, and other water bodies and is being overlooked by not bringing in key partners.

Rush to include partnerships from all USFWS Regions is NOT a strategic approach. Board MUST be able to say no to those partnerships that have been funded but may not really meet criteria for an FHP (for example, is Driftless Area Really a need? If SARP is nothing more than a line drawn around the Southeast, than can we create WARP by drawing a line around the West?)

Federal Caucus has no clear role. Input filtered through USFWS. Need rotating chair with resources to attend Board meeting.

Try to streamline the overhead and process as much as possible. A lot of people meeting in exotic locations is not as important as getting the money to people who know what to do and are doing good work on the landscape.

Funding needs to be distributed by Board, should not be sent out equitably to WS Regions which have led to current problems (i.e., partnerships thrown together for convenience sake).

Need to give "extra points" to fish habitat candidate projects in competitive project award deliberations

USFWS Regions 5 and 3 believe they are decisional authority for dispersing funds -- they should NOT be regarded as USFWS funds but should be pass-through with distribution set by Board.

Need strategic plan supported by industry, private partners, NGO's, etc. to ensure long-term funding and authorizing legislation

Need to bridge NAMWMP with NFHAP efforts

Cost-share is important BUT should not be a requirement for funding every project. FHP's should be developed in those areas where there are no partners with ready access to considerable funding. This is one of the problems with NFWF and other fed habitat fund sources.

Add protection to fish and wildlife service program names don't limit to restoration. be consistent with goals of nfhap with agency program names so that all goals can be funded.. and achieved



Need consistency in announcing and distributing Requests for Proposals. EBTJV has done a good job of getting RFP out to all partners (not just FWS offices and a few states). Should include other federal agencies -- not all about getting funding to just the states.

Must embrace other federal agencies (not just the two Services driving initiative). Partnerships need to contact Federal Caucus for potential partners, project implementation.

Send complete copy of all these recommendations to the existing 5 partnerships recognized and to all the participants in this workshop , I mean all the suggestions not just the summary statements.

Seth comments regarding the Waterfowl joint venture are enlightening. NFHI will not be able to anticipate all issues that may be impediments to success. How about an adaptive management framework. Also, restoring habitat takes time. Commitment to assessment extends beyond the FY funding cycling. Long-term commitment to assessing results will be necessary.

Is there a way to bring this home to local governments, who make decisions affecting and use and fish habitat?

Make sure everyone knows the definition of conservation for purposes of NFHAP includes protection, restoration and enhancement of fish habitat and populations not just one of those goals...

Monitoring effectiveness of projects important, but it does not need to be hyper-rigorous. Most of the funding should not be eaten up by this. There is no need for a PhD dissertation to be done on every culvert removal.

The broad approach starts with "Strategic actions addressing root causes of habitat decline". I think this refers to physical causes -- for example, how forestry alters surface water and, as a result, effects stream flow and habitat. Perhaps thought should be given, explicitly and separately, to institutional causes. That is, how the institutional and regulatory structures facilitate or frustrate habitat protection.

For this to be successful there will have to be open and transparent process. One should not be able to be labeled as NFHAP recognized unless they actually make their best effort to follow the guidelines that come from the NFHAP and board.. i.e. this shouldn't be used to only get \$ by calling your partnership a NFHAP partnership in name only

Does this initiative have a philosophy about the relative merit of a) restoring habitat through direct action and restoring habitat by protecting and b) restoring



habitat by protecting what is left and enhancing processes that will in time restore habitat that has been lost?

Removal of non-natives from high-value habitat should be an acceptable use of NFHI funds. You cannot address habitat in many areas (ex: brook trout in the west) without dealing with non-natives.

Link to some degree with the EU's Water Framework Directive

Measure of success: arresting decline in native aquatic species diversity /rates of extinction.

Send this electronically to everyone that participated

Emphasize dam removal and in stream flows; fish and other biota need naturalized flows and minimal barriers to occupy and migrate among habitats to fulfill life history needs

Don't get hung up on always trying to improve something. In some cases, just maintaining habitat or a fish community at its current state will take a significant effort and should not be discounted.



NFHI Workshop Session 2

1. What are the critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships?

Highlights

- *Need for all to understand who all the partners are at the table*
- *Multiple groups*
- *Primarily a state program*
- *Need to understand where all plug into the system*
- *Understand each partner's true roles and missions*
- *An understanding of what the other programs are is critical*
- *Some framework/infrastructure*
- *Balance between loose confederation with a real support structure*
- *Apply lessons-learned from the waterfowl experience*
- *Connecting the benefits of improved fish habitat to society at large*
- *Got to have a clear, conceptual link between fish habitat and benefits to citizen/taxpayers*
- *Help everyone understand where to plug in*
- *Define our message as more than just critters*
- *Make the message compelling to everyone..not just fishing and hunting interests*
- *Communicate the value to the general public*

There should definitely be strong NGO and industry components to these partnerships.

As mentioned in the opening presentations, there needs to be a solid baseline from which to monitor success. Without this information, setting measurable resource objectives will have little value.

Building on existing partnerships would be the most efficient approach.

A clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities for the partners. An organizational structure that ensures by in and support among members. Realistically based time-frames for getting things accomplished or making sure progress is made.

Signed agreement among participants and development of a local/regional plan that identifies clear measures of success for population protection and recovery.

Critical elements of successful NFHI partnerships should include:

1) an explicit, well-documented and nationally standardized scientific framework for sustainable fisheries; the framework should include conceptual and



measurable elements for environmental/habitat health, socioeconomic benefits and general management effectiveness;

2) decision-making processes that are based on appropriate and impartial data, informed consent of partners/stakeholders, specific and measurable management objectives shared by partners, and management systems that ensure adequate monitoring, timely reporting of accomplishments, evaluation and appropriate adaptation/re-alignment of management resources as warranted

Support for the non-participating public; i.e. the non-fish people who still care about water, watersheds and healthy aquatic environments.

Well laid out goals and objectives, strong scientific foundation, holding all partners accountable to deliver measurable results, flexibility of delivering assets, and ensuring that all partners get something out of the partnership

Measurable results that are important to broad based user groups and political decision makers

Must have a clear set of goals and objectives. A good database of current status and resource conditions is necessary to evaluate impacts.

Consider Regional Joint Ventures based on physiographic collections of watersheds with similar characteristics & problems.

Clear, quantifiable objectives

Early success in measurable habitat and/or species improvement.

Statistically valid, affordable evaluation strategy with interim milestones

A "permanent" organizational infrastructure that can sustain the partnership through the natural ebbs and flows of membership participation

Measurable objectives

Avoiding political pressure in project selection and resource allocation.

A successful partnership must have a well laid out communications plan to spell out successes and ensure that all levels of the partnership are informed of successes

Successes must be tied to some economic benefits that partners and supporters can relate to and feel internally



Partner roles should be clearly defined and logical for the capabilities of the group. For example universities and agencies can provide technical and/or regulatory support, extension agencies can provide educational support, and citizen groups can provide fund raising and political support. There should be a clear commitment from each partner to their roles.

2. What barriers and constraints will NFHI partnerships face?

Consistent long-term funding will be a key. I'd recommend that a guideline for partnerships be a cap on the administrative portion of funding. We operate mainly with a 3 percent administrative cap within the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program.

Seth Mott was very perceptive in noting that multiple partners will take credit for resource successes by double-counting. The reporting needs to be worked out to minimize this.

Partnerships will probably run into issues of legislative authority and jurisdiction. Certain partnerships may push the boundaries of the legislative authority of Federal agencies--e.g. NOAA Fisheries will be limited outside the estuarine/coastal/marine environment, USFWS may have issues working on projects involving state-managed species. The authority of states may be limited in interstate partnerships.

Clear definitions of roles in the onset...a sense of responsibility usually yields a more productive result

Barriers may include trying to ensure an objective approach for project consideration at a National scale exists/ is perceived by the partnerships. Program continuity and support at regional or more local scales may be inconsistent. Ensuring that identified partners follow through on proposed roles, if they can't appropriate measures should be in place/available may be a constraint.

Significant barriers NFHI will face include:

- 1) Timely adoption/development of an interdisciplinary, science-based framework that links results of NFHI with important socioeconomic benefits valued by humans (i.e. the average voter, taxpayer, elected official)
- 2) Balancing short-term, "on-the-ground results" with equally important capacity building (e.g. scientific framework development, adequate monitoring & evaluation, partnership outreach & development, related institutional investments)



3) Timely re-allocation of funding and management resources to habitat priorities (i.e. when significant resources are committed and valued by partners in other management areas such as artificial propagation, put & take fishing programs, etc.)

Clear roles and responsibilities, with the willingness to transcend beyond those defined roles and responsibilities in order to achieve success, also a willingness to share success credit, etc to ensure that the goals and objectives related to sustainable aquatic resources are being met

A consistent and reliable source of funding from both the federal sources and the partnerships

Bowling shirt mentality

Need to get political differences resolved.

Keeping the momentum going after the initial start-up of the Initiative

Be aware that competition for funding will generate competition between and among all partnerships, with the potential to demarket individual actions or partnerships themselves. Must be a timeframe which is adequate and reasonable to allow partnerships the timeframes to ensure some success before any overall evaluation is imposed which will increase/decrease funding based upon the existing metrics

Flexibility and not rigidity must be the norm for the first few years....

Lack of an identified source of funding support for coordination of FHPs may be a problem -- Multi-state Conservation Grants have been very valuable, but are not a long-term solution

3. What standards should be used to assess strategic plans of regional partnerships?

Highlights

- *Who will do the assessments?*
- *How will different regional plans be evaluated?*
- *Peer review?*
- *Get the most watershed/stream segment under a partnership*
- *Scale/scopes should be significant*



- *Regional/ecosystem/watershed/pond: show all where they fit into the partnership*
- *Have the baseline information available at the start that identifies if the project has a chance to be successful*

Dollars spent by habitat restored.

Measured increase in target fish population and age class distribution.

The plans need to have clearly-defined, measurable resource outcomes.

The plans need the capability to be adaptive to changing future conditions.

The plans should acknowledge the fine work of previous planning efforts, such as the State Wildlife Action Plans or basin wide-or coastal fishery management plans.

Plans need to include realistic goals and strategies with associated measurable biological criteria

As others have pointed out, there are existing models. It would be a good exercise to examine similar efforts in the field of natural sciences. Standards will need to be realistic and achievable. Quantifiable measures would be preferable and efforts to ensure these are part of any project (evaluation) should be required to the degree they can be.

Clear metrics to ensure that the appropriate biological, ecological, economic, sociological, and other objectives are either being met, exceeded, or not met. All standards need to be re-evaluated whenever goals and objectives change significantly.

Clearly defined goals and strategies that can reasonably attain those goals.

Outcomes should include measures of habitat restored, populations response to habitat changes and public benefit (angler success, angler use, or public awareness of benefits to non-game species).

Feedback loops and cross partnership review of criteria

Objectives and goals need to be clear and quantifiable. Best ones will be simple and focused on doable activities that do make a measurable difference. This allows for wider and more grass roots participation in the partnership.

Strategic plans should include a strong outreach component.



4. What potential partnerships should be considered?

Highlights

- *Federal Farm Bill/Dept of Ag: Fisheries have not traditionally played here.*
- *USDA and conservation and Farm Bill links can link to create a bigger picture of who our partners might be*
- *Link partnership efforts to the Farm Bill where feasible*

Great Lakes FHP (and consider including Lake Champlain in this FHP)

Atlantic Coast FHP (to include Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast regional coastal/estuary/freshwater areas) with a focus on diadromous species

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP)- An effort being initiated by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It will focus primarily on marine fishes, as opposed to current freshwater efforts. Currently, the ACFHP is proposing to focus initial efforts on diadromous fish species.

Water quality monitoring networks...there are many new networks currently being established, such as SWAMP in CA. Also, VIMS is involved in habitat mapping of the Chesapeake Bay . NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office' involvement in the Chesapeake Fisheries Ecosystem Plan Technical Advisory Panel to initiate the ecosystem-based approach in CB.

Watershed groups developed through the EPA nonpoint source program.

Also, in the west, water users such as irrigators and municipalities.

I agree with previous commenters ideas for an Atlantic Coastal Habitat Partnership. Much of the groundwork for this has already been laid through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, but NGOs and other federal and state agencies also need to be brought in.

Whatever partnerships are considered, they should have a strong NGO and industry group involvement.

I like the idea of looking very hard at the six pilot initiatives as potential partnerships. Much groundwork has already been done for each of these.

There are a large number of river basin restoration programs in existence (anadromous fish restoration driven from 1960s-70s) in the Northeast that have long-standing state and federal agency partnerships (CT River, Merrimack River, Delaware River, Sususquehanna etc...)



Consider overlaying the fish partnership template on the waterfowl model; i.e. partnerships geographically cover the same area.

What about the water and fish we share with Mexico and Canada? The USA plan should leave room to eventually embrace all the watersheds on the No. Am. continent.

Significant potential partnerships that should be considered include:

- 1) USDA/federal Farm Bill legislation; conservation title alone is over \$3 billion ... 1,000 times the \$3M allocated to NFHI
- 2) Department of Transportation - bridges, culverts, habitat fragmentation issues, etc.
- 3) National professional society of regional planners (i.e. to get fish and aquatic resource issues on their radar screen)
- 4) AFS, TWS, ESA

An Atlantic coastal partnership focusing on anadromous diadromous species or assemblage of species must be in place to complement upland riparian based partnerships.

I also see the real need for an Large Reservoir joint venture which could /emulate/complement the old reservoir research program.

We should consider reaching out to bring in major corporate industrial and development interests for political as well as financial support.

Agree with Great Lakes fish habitat partnership idea - there is lot's of money and attention going there but the habitat needs organization and focus

Northern natural lakes shoreland habitat partnership in response to continuing shoreline development and loss of riparian and littoral habitat - although the local efforts would end up being focused on a particular lake, a regional effort would help pull together science, focus and public attention.

I definitely like the idea that key assessment and population dynamics scientists from both the AFS and TWS and ESA join a scientific technical committee approach to craft the best models and metrics



A partnership in the interior Southeast that targets the many imperiled fish and mussel populations in that geographic area. Mussels are key factors structuring habitats in southeastern rivers.

5. How should the Board address overlaps in geographic areas of partnerships?

Highlights

*Coordinate to make sure partners are aware where efforts are taking place
Partnerships should be watershed-based with GIS*

Require individual partnerships to coordinate activities at the local level.

There needs to be some level of national coordination and accounting of current restoration and protection activities of the FHPs, so that efforts are not identical.

I think that a small amount of geographic overlap is okay if the objectives are fairly distinct. For example, an eastern brook trout partnership might have little conflict with a New England large rivers partnership. Even though the large-scale boundaries overlap on a map, the habitats and species objectives would be very different.

This may best handled on an individual basis based upon many factors. I don't suspect that it will be a source of issues.

Geographic overlap is not a problem. Insuring involvement and participation of all states and other government and private groups is more important.

Establishing a separate identity from current programs including Federal Aid, SWG, LIP, CREP etc.

Watershed-based approaches(i.e. mutually exclusive hydrologic boundaries) using GIS should be able to resolve such "overlap" issues.

Yes. Depending on the goals and objectives of a partnership, there is no reason that they can't regional overlap. A trout joint venture should not preclude another partnership for example.

Overlaps must not be considered bad or undesirable at this stage of the process. Look at this as another opportunity to ground truth gaps and leverage interests and action



Any overlaps must be considered in terms of the overall three-dimensional nature of biological, ecological, and socioeconomic interactions.

Involvement of all of the appropriate agencies and groups in each initiative.

Priorities should be assigned by ecological not political boundaries and insure that decisions are made by entities not influenced by other factors. Responsible agencies should take the lead in assigning priorities.

6. How would your organization/agency like to participate? (Include your electronic business card please)

We are a scientific communications & integration group, so keeping abreast of the status of the NFHAP with interest to including progress in publications would be beneficial to both parties.

Kate Boicourt
UMCES/NOAA partnership
Cooperative Oxford Laboratory
Oxford, MD 21654
Kate.Boicourt@noaa.gov

The USFWS Federal Assistance Division doesn't do hands on habitat work, but we could assist in information sharing among State fisheries agencies and providing opportunities to bring States together. Ron Essig Region 5 FA staff

The Northeast Region of the USFWS Fisheries Program is already engaged in these efforts, and will be more so over the next few years

Jaime Geiger, ARD- Fisheries, Northeast Region, USFWS

USFWS would provide guidance for fish habitat initiatives and help with funding opportunities
vincent_mudrak@fws.gov

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is a registered NFHAP partner and will continue to participate on appropriate regional partnerships.

Michael Staggs
Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Bureau of Fisheries Management
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707
mike.staggs@dnr.state.wi.us



7. Briefly describe your view of NFHI success

Highlights

- *More self-sustaining fish populations*
- *Declines have leveled, or been reversed in habitat loss*
- *Review complimentary activities that would be beneficial (i.e. improving water quality)*
- *Public awareness, and support for the gains made*
- *Sportswriter stories (and shifts in perception/support)*
- *Does local congressman ask "how's it going"*
- *Are plans referenced in emerging legislation?*
- *Decreases in the number of listed species*
- *Delisting of the rate of threatened/endangered species (or reductions)*
- *Improvements in the index of biotic integrity (less sensitive to species-specific) that show improvements in aquatic habitat*
- *Improvements in how urbanization/growth is planned*
- *Greater awareness of environmental factors before growth is approved*

I agree with thoughts expressed by Seth Mott. The criteria used to measure the success of the program need to be biological, not financial. One could spend a lot of money on a variety of projects, but if there is no corresponding increase in the various fish populations, then it's hard to justify the program. Also measuring success only in habitat terms, i.e. #stream miles opened, etc., may not correlate with the recovery or restoration of a fish population.

Increase in the number of self-sustaining fish populations; reduction in the number of candidate fish populations; increase in the number of delisted fish populations

NFHI success would be initially seen in more acres or river miles of aquatic habitat restored or protected through acquisitions or easements. Over the longer term, there should be clear evidence of fish and aquatic species population recovery, or at the least, prevention of further declines which should be considered as a success in this day in age.

Success will be at different scales as was mentioned. Successes include; reducing the rate of habitat destruction or impairment that is occurring, improving the long-term health and sustainability of aquatic organisms, recovering listed populations, reducing that rate of population/species listings, increasing the public awareness of our concerns, making sure other regulatory agencies are supportive and aware of what is trying to be accomplished (make them partners - DOT etc)



First level of success would be completion of the organization structure and the development of several joint ventures. It is then important to see if the NFHI can generate consistent funding. Finally, have you developed an efficient mechanism for getting these funds to on the ground habitat projects.

Increases in individual populations or assemblages of populations as a result of these efforts.

Increases in anglers or angler/boater participation as an outcome of these efforts would also be valuable

An apparent improvement in fish productivity and health in the systems addressed by the partnerships

A clear understanding of the relationship between what was done and how the fish populations changed

Key publics and legislative understanding and support for the NFHAP and the work and successes of the partnership

Reverse declines in native fishes and aquatic species with endpoints that are clearly delineated, e.g. recover species now on the T&E species list, restore depleted populations to self-sustaining status meeting management goals

- 1) Federally threatened and endangered fish species are de-listed, or listing rate declines.
- 2) IBI's show improvement.
- 3) More human benefits are being provided.
- 4) Human user satisfaction increases.

8. Other thoughts and recommendations

Highlights

- *Consideration of the difference between marine/fresh water partnerships. Different needs*
- *Allocation for pre-existing partnerships and their structure (may require some flexibility to accommodate partnerships already in progress)*
- *Single-species partnerships vs. eco-systems approaches*
- *May be pressure to focus on partnerships devoted to sportfish (balance between these and indicator species)*
- *Beyond fish: what about mussels and shellfish?*
- *Consider the balance between high profile/high demand species and ecosystems (can be tricky)*



- *Look at a broader spectrum than a single-species for partnerships*
- *Easier to measure a single "indicator species" to measure ecosystem health in some cases*
- *Be certain to pick an indicator that can be reliably measured*
- *Established shorebird joint venture might be a logical link with Atlantic partnerships*
- *Concentrate on what's already working well*
- *It can be hard to join other people's parades)*
- *NFH should embrace sustainability to link to and address the most significant and contentious policy issues (human use/non-use, biodiversity, agency advocacy roles). A sustainability framework could be useful for addressing these, and other difficult challenges*

Look for ecological and scientific linkages between the Waterfowl JV's and the Fisheries/aquatic JV,s. Look for the individual strengths of both which will benefit both

In the NFHAP Partnership Guidelines, there needs to be some consideration for large pre-existing partnerships (such as SARP, or ASMFC), with pre-existing structures. As these organization were not originally created for the NFHAP, some different criteria should be developed to incorporate efforts by such large groups with strong existing support structures. The formation of an FHP under one of these existing partnerships will fundamentally need to follow a different process of creation than a new partnership organization. However, the value of pre-existing partnership structures is invaluable, and should not be a hindrance in the creation of an acceptable FHP.

Closely link this effort with state fisheries funding.

Use existing data/models to provide baseline. For example, EPA and states should have impaired stream reaches identified and the Army Corps has developed geomorphic wetland classifications that could apply to fish habitat.

Scale using USGS HUC classifications.

There may be some criteria needed to account for efforts to restore/protect marine habitat as opposed to freshwater habitat. In many ways, these two types of habitat areas must be approached in different ways, and on different scales. Some acknowledgement of this difference is needed in the FHP guidance criteria.

Some Considerations:

- 1) Pressure to form partnerships that benefit recreationally and commercially important species versus non-game species
- 2) Partnerships that benefit single species vs. ecosystems



- 3) How to sell partnership that may benefit less glamorous fish species assemblages
- 4) Balance of inland, freshwater partnerships vs. marine/coastal partnerships
- 5) Taxonomic issues--partnerships to benefit invertebrates, e.g. freshwater mussels

The national board should develop regional habitat assessment indices that each partnership can apply so that data will be consistent.

Which also brings up the point that this plan needs data consistency and a warehouse.....

Some of the State Wildlife Action Plans involved considerable interaction and participation by a wide variety of stakeholders. The momentum of bringing these folks together within a State could be expanded across the boundaries of several states to form partnerships on species of concern that span several states or an entire region.

NFHI partnerships could potentially be given increased consideration for funding through the Multi-State Conservation Grant program. This program is currently designed for shorter-term efforts, but approved NFHI partnerships would seem to be high enough priority for longer-term funding.

Probably the most significant fisheries initiative in twenty years ... and one of the few with this level of professional agreement and support! Keep up the great work.

Do not focus on bureaucracy and process, but on the science, partnerships, and joint desired outcomes

Be sure to transmit message and mission to publics who do not fish but value a whole array of aquatic organisms and habitats.

Need to be certain that deliverables are defined and showcased to insure the long-term success of this effort. \$\$ must translate into successes that are quantifiable

Let National Board select appropriate partnerships

NFHI should employ concepts of sustainability to recognize, conceptually link to, and address historically significant and contentious aquatic resource



management issues such as human use of fishes, biodiversity, sustainability and agency advocacy (see related AFS policy statement).

Consider a symbol or logo appropriate for public recognition. and a slogan to go with it "More fish" is a good one.



Dr. Mamie Parker on OMB Expectations: They're looking for:

- Outcomes
- Performance and Measures
- Priorities
- Shared Vision
- Strategic Direction

Seth Mott on the North American Waterfowl Compact (Session I & II)

Outdoor Writer for the Washington Post went to Casting Day on the Potomac
We gotta get Angus to "feel the love"
Not a believer in the potential for a bunch of politicians signing a document

What have we learned over 20 years?
It's not about the money.

Waterfowl program came along in May 1986...a new way of doing things...different approach to waterfowl conservation
Getting this done on a continental scale was a big challenge

On the scene at early joint ventures began.

NA Waterfowl mgmt plan was just a couple of pages in 86. Basic, not a detailed plan for preserving waterfowl
Called for the creation of JVs to get the actual work done
Called for a focus on using existing science

It's not about the money: It is about partnerships and science
These things will GET the money.

The first Joint Ventures were centered around designated projects
Areas of greatest trouble/importance to constituents (mallards/pintails)
This was unprecedented...it had never been done before

Scientific rigor became more important. This drove greater organization and structure to assess results and outcomes
Felt big plans and dollars were important..and they were.
The idea got people excited and when they got together to do projects things began to happen.
People like to do good things for conservation resources!
This provided a framework to work within.

Protecting and restoring important segments of states and provinces drove interest in joint ventures.
This brought some problems too..not all Joint Ventures were equally effective.
Success generated more interest..more groups joined the effort, added more and more Joint Ventures

What kind of good stuff did they do?
Duck projects: marshes, wetlands, grasslands where ducks need them (attracted shorebirds too)
Estuaries on the west coast (had benefits for salmon too)
Porters also brought non-waterfowl issues to the table



There is a lot of overlap on conservation issues: duck habitat and fish habitat tend to be pretty similar, especially in estuaries

5-yr plan updates are mandated

If 20 years was the original timeframe envisioned what can we point to as evidence of progress?

Changes in land use are critical to the future of waterfowl and partnerships.

What hasn't worked so well?

Acres/dollars originally believed to be necessary have been carried for 20 years as our major performance metric

At last update we agreed to do a 20-yr update. What happened?

\$4 billion of dollars have been spent in US/Canada/Mexico

Almost 20 joint ventures are in place

15-16 million acres have been protected/restored

...*WHAT HAS IT DONE FOR THE DUCKS?*

...*How do you know?*

...*It just is*

Primary recognition from the last update is the need for a comprehensive re-assessment.

...*how well can we link our habitat achievements to vital rates of wildlife populations?*

...*how can this be linked to sustainability studies?*

...*what outcomes can be claimed?*

Major recommendation of the last update: comprehensive continental assessment

Never been done before

Lots of fights about JV approval and review

Tendency to want to turn dirt...belief we know what needs to be done..forget the science

20-yr assessment took about a year to complete

Draft report will be posted 9/11/2006 to the web

Key point: At a Continental scale, we still really can't tell to what extent all this work has had on changing the survival rates of ducks, geese, swans

A SCIENTIFIC CONNECTION CAN'T BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN WHERE WATERFOWL POPULATIONS WERE IN 1986 AND WHERE THEY ARE NOW

A BETTER PROCESS FOR MEASURING OUTCOMES (INSTEAD OF OUTPUTS) SHOULD HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN

It's not about the money...it's about the science and the partnerships!!!

Step outside of your program role once in a while.

It's not about the Federal Agencies, but involving the landowners (those who like to do things) is critical.

These are the people that will get excited and get you the money

Partnerships have to be able to measure outcomes

Partnerships have to be able to prove results

Partnerships have to be able to say what they've accomplished over 20 years

Washington Post Headline: Male bass across the region found to be bearing eggs!

Pollution concerns arise in drinking water source



This is the issue everyone needs to care about:

If you can share demonstrated results on this you'll have all the partners you'll ever need

The Fish Habitat action plan must include this framework..nobody else will be able to do this

YOU HAVE TO MAKE THIS PART OF WHAT YOU DO

How was the big assessment done?

Framework was created, we looked at desired outcomes (pop changes/status of strategic plans & JVs/how the national board was communicating with SHs and JVs)

Went to JVs and flyway councils to answer questions (compared to planning docs)

Many had very good answers

Most JVs could point to acres/dollars, BUT WERE UNABLE TO SAY IF WE WERE GAINING OR LOSING GROUND

Do FH JVs require a coordinator? Who decided when a coordinator was assigned?

USFWS provided one for the first 6. Still does

Many JVs not are not Service employees

Many JVs that came on over time have been funded by partner contributions

Need a coordinator to roll-up and roll-down data mgmt and keep partners in touch

As the number of JVs have grown were partners concerned that things were growing too fast?

Did you try to manage the pace they were coming on line?

There has always been concern about if JVs were sufficiently under "control"

Perhaps they have not been

Conundrum: if you control it too much it isn't really a partnership

In later years JVs began to express the feeling there wasn't enough guidance coming from the National structure to keep them as focused as they'd be on their own

How did JVs reach out to local landowners, especially the biggies?

JVs don't control anything. Making things happen comes from a big event.

Get people within the state involved through major SH groups (NC/BASS)

If they understand the framework and are turned loose to do things they respond and get excited

They can do something at a small scale that make them feel good, but also know it's part of a plan leading to meaningful change

What they are doing matters.

It takes a while to pull in diverse groups of agencies and SHs (County FSA committees/Watershed mgmt Districts/Mosquito control boards)

Having a new plan doesn't make this work....showing results does

Individual landowner is always concerned about HIS land. Wants public to help preserve HIS private land.

Just trying to maintain watershed integrity

Need to influence mindset of POs. Greater ownership is the connection of all property owner

TALK ABOUT CLEAN DRINKING WATER AND FLOOD MANAGEMENT...not fish & wildlife protection

SHOW THE SUPPORT OF PEOPLE TO PARTNERSHIPS AND THE MONEY WILL COME

Do the joint ventures overlap? How is this coordinated?

They were designed to NOT overlap.

The problem with good advice is people always have other plans!

What about defining broader partnerships than solely fish?



One of the JV partnership issues is their work benefits everything. When you bring in other initiatives (shorebirds, etc.) this brings in additional organizational issues that have to be worked through. How well an existing bird JV could be merged and called the same thing might be difficult

Follow-up assessment linkages difficult. We seem to be under a lot more pressure for accountability in fisheries. Seem to have a hi level of engagement for appreciation of what science there is and the value of it for regulators. We still get drilled over the lack of science. inadequate for management decisions. How have you managed to continue show the benefits of what you're doing without a reinforced science underpinnings to validate goals and assumptions. How did you manage to do that?

We haven't...it's been ignored for a long time

Our parallel is the flyway councils and the habitat studies.

Goals of harvest mgmt and habitat mgmt were completely separate

6mm birds/8mm allotted for harvest. Equation doesn't balance

Desire for scientific credibility has been driven from the harvest side

Everybody knows habitat conservation is good...nobody questions it, or asks for outcomes

Critical elements of national fish habitat partnerships..what are they?

Have you attempted to summarize some of the critical lessons learned?

This is part of the assessment

There is no silver bullet here. Sound science base. Being able to state uncertainties and testable assumptions

Putting together mgmt boards that are participatory that include all major SH groups

Why do you think there is a credibility issue with the press?

My example was because that writer has lived on and heard about saving the Chesapeake Bay all of his live. Simply didn't believe a bunch of suits signing a document would make a difference

Despite 20 years of feel-good activities, there is a lot of dissatisfaction with waterfowl mgmt

How well can we track accomplishments? Can you prove it?

There is some level of skepticism with all of our claims

Not being able to be as transparent and accountable as our Stakeholders think we should be

Some may not have realistic expectations. Some are antagonistic

With Federal Aid we have the same issue with tackle manufacturers. We depend on these funds for running fishery programs. We need to develop separate identities with measurable outcomes Same pertains to differentiating from State Wildlife Grants which is struggling for permanency now.

Despite the acknowledgement of how great partnerships are, the gov't and most of us have a very programmatic mentality.

When we try to use other bills, NGOs and assemble these to do good things concerns will be raised.