

<b>No. 70</b>	<b>National Fish Habitat Action Plan Board Liaison</b>	<b>Stan Moberly</b>
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TO: John Boreman, President  
FROM: Stan Moberly, National Fish Habitat Board AFS representative  
DATE: Annual Liaison Report September 2013 (covering activities from Gov. Bd. mid year to annual meeting)

**Liaison Report:**

AFS has a permanent seat on the National Fish Habitat Board. AFS's participation fits with the AFS Vision Statement, items 2 & 8, & Objective 1.1, #11 & Objective 1.2, #8. The Society was given a permanent seat on the Board as a statement by the Board as their commitment to use science as the basis for making decisions and measuring progress. **Board Charter** can be found at: <http://fishhabitat.org/content/charter>

**Major discussion Items at the February 2013 Board meeting, Washington, DC:**

**Motions Approved by Consensus:**

- Project Prioritization Criteria: Approved with revision. The Board included language on socioeconomic factors.
- FHP Performance Evaluation: Approved with revisions. The Board added socioeconomic language to the second paragraph of the introduction.
- National Habitat Conservation Strategies: Approved
- Board Representative to Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC): The Board approved the Chair as the representative to the LCC National Council, with the ability for the Chair to identify a proxy.

**Major Topics of Discussion:**

- Staff provided background information and highlighted issues associated with 501(c)(3) entities. The Board is discussing the options of non-profit status.

**Legislative Committee** provided an overview on the fate of the Sportsmans bill that contained National Fish Habitat legislation. Despite a good deal of support, the bill did not pass, and its future in 2013 is unclear. The recommendation was made that the Board and others associated with FHPs talk to district staff about the work of Fish Habitat Partnerships and the value that fish and habitat bring to communities.

**Major discussion Items at the June 2013 Board meeting, SLC, UT:**

**Performance evaluation of the National Fish Habitat Board**

Evaluation of the Board: Staff will present at detailed plan for a performance evaluation of the Board at the October meeting. Discussion focused on evaluating how the Board is functioning in an organizational capacity, and also on performance associated with meeting the goals of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Action plan and forward looking strategic planning. The Partnership Committee will serve as a sounding board in developing the plan.

**Congressional Affairs Update:** National Fish Habitat Conservation Act: The version of the bill that cleared the Senate committee in 2012 is expected to be introduced in the Senate as a marker. Minor changes may be made to address concerns expressed last year by western ranching interests. The legislative team is empowered to make minor changes for tactical purposes, but the Board would like to see any important language changes. There is support for a tentative Capitol Hill briefing on NFHP.

**Establishment of a not-for-profit corporation** – approved with Federal members abstaining

The National Fish Habitat Partnership staff is charged with working to establish a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation using a phased, check-in approach. A workgroup of Board members is created to work with staff on this project. The workgroup is charged with oversight and with approval for moving to each step.

**Southeast Alaska (candidate) Fish Habitat Partnership:** SEAKFHP announced during their presentation that they will request full Board recognition in October 2013.

**Science and Data Committee:** Changes in Committee membership are nearly complete, reflecting needs for the future. The Committee has assembled a catalog of habitat assessments from the FHPs. A new version of the online Data System will be released in July, allowing FHPs to upload, document, and serve data through the national system.

**Next meeting:**

- ♦ October 22-23, 2013 –Charleston, NC

**2014 meetings:**

- ♦ January 15 – conference call
- ♦ March – meeting will be held in **Denver** to coordinate with the North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference (March 9-14) and AFS Fisheries Administration Section meeting. The purpose is to connect with State fish chiefs and directors. Fish chiefs will be invited to present information on State habitat programs to the Board, and NFHP will have an informational booth at the North American.

Since its launch six years ago, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan has received wide public support. To date nearly 1,700 partners have pledged their support including a range of organizations and individuals interested in the health of the nation's fisheries such as fishing clubs, international conservation organizations, federal agencies, angling industries and academia.