

**Mountain-Prairie Regional Guidance for Project Selection  
National Fish Habitat Action Plan  
Fiscal Year 2011**

This guidance applies to the Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP), administered from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Mountain-Prairie Region. In Fiscal Year 2011, the Service will provide funds for habitat-based, cost-shared projects that protect, restore, or enhance fish and aquatic habitats or otherwise directly support habitat-related priorities of FHPs that are recognized by the National Fish Habitat Board (Board) under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP).

This guidance applies only to FY 2011. As Regional guidance this may be superseded by guidance from the Director of the Service. This guidance supplements a chapter in the Service Manual (<http://www.fws.gov/policy/717fw1.html>) that describes the general requirements, eligibility criteria, and administrative procedures to guide the use of Service funds to implement projects and provide Federal assistance for NFHAP. Service employees who apply this guidance should also be familiar with the manual chapter.

The amount of funding available for projects in FY 2011 is expected to be approximately \$3.31 million nation-wide (including approximately \$2 million to address climate change adaptation). After October 1, 2010, the Director of the Service will allocate the available project funding among FHPs consistent with the goals and objectives of the Board.

Project Submission

All projects must be entered in the Fisheries Operational Needs System (FONS) to be considered for funding. The attached template must be used in preparing project proposals. FHPs may require more information, but they must submit an abridged version using this specific format. Project proposals must be received by the responsible Service field station no later than close of business September 30, 2010. Projects received after this date will not be considered for funding in FY 2011. Please see the attached fact sheet indentifying field office areas of responsibility and contact person. FHPs must have a prioritized project list to Scott Roth, Mountain-Prairie Regional NFHAP Coordinator no later than close of business November 19, 2010. Projects selected for funding must address priorities of the applicable FHPs.

Climate change adaptation

A portion of available funds (approximately \$2 million) will be directed to projects that implement goals and objectives for adaptation identified in the Service's draft strategic plan for responding to climate change (<http://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/pdf/CCDraftStratPlan92209.pdf>). Adaptation refers to planned management actions to help reduce the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, and their habitats. Our adaptive response to climate change will involve strategic conservation of habitats on a landscape scale.

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs)

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives are management-science partnerships that inform integrated resource management actions addressing climate change and other stressors within and across landscapes. They link science and conservation delivery. A map identifying the operational boundaries of LCCs is attached.

#### National Fish Habitat Board priorities

Proposed projects should identify linkages with the Board's four priority strategies: 1) Identify and protect intact and healthy waters; 2) Restore natural variability in river and stream flows and water surface elevations in natural lakes and reservoirs; 3) Reconnect fragmented river, stream, reservoir, coastal, and lake habitat to allow access to historic spawning, nursery and rearing grounds; 4) Reduce and maintain sedimentation, phosphorus and nitrogen runoff to river, stream, reservoir, coastal, and lake habitats to a level within 25% of the expected natural variance in these factors or above numeric State Water Quality Criteria.

#### Cost sharing by partners

FHPs are required to identify a minimum 1:1 leveraging of resources for their slate of projects. This applies to overall funds allocated to a FHP and does not need to be achieved on every project. Contributions may be from both Federal and non-Federal sources and can be in-kind contributions or cash. Project partners are encouraged to increase matching contributions by broadening the scope of partners involved with individual projects.

#### Performance measures & outcomes

Performance measures should be clearly identified for each project, reflecting what will be accomplished within the available funding. Performance measures should not include future outcomes beyond the immediate project, though future outcomes may be discussed in the narrative. Projects that do not directly deliver conservation outcomes, such as those involving education, inventory or assessment, should show clear linkages to FHP strategic priorities and conservation outcomes.

#### FHP Project selection process

While use of ranking criteria is not required, if used, an FHP should promote consistency between ranking criteria and their strategic plans. FHPs are also encouraged to include climate change adaptation in their criteria. Each FHP must submit a prioritized list of projects to the Regional NFHAP Coordinator including a timeline and narrative description of how projects were solicited and selected.