

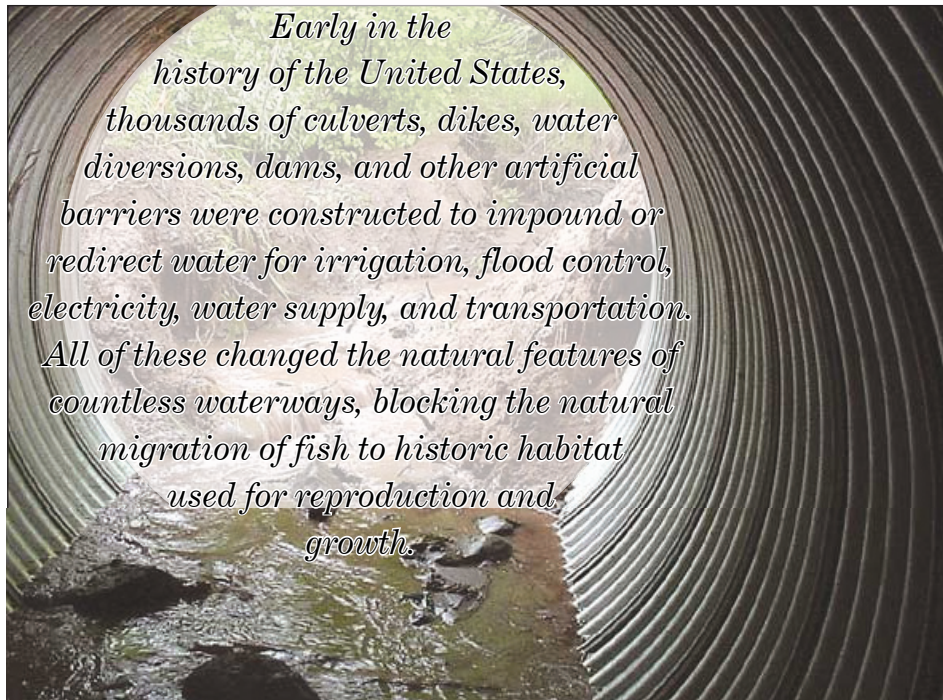


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisheries and Habitat Conservation

National Fish Passage Program

Reconnecting Aquatic Species to Historical Habitats



which add significant matching funds that help stretch taxpayer dollars, and allows citizens at a number of different levels to become directly involved in restoration work that can have important benefits.

Since 1999, NFPP has removed or bypassed 749 barriers across the country. The Service, working with local communities and partners, has supported cost-share projects that have reopened 11,249 miles of river and 80,556 acres of wetlands for fish, contributing to larger and self-sustaining populations of fish and more recreational fishing opportunities. Reestablishment of healthy fish populations will not only restore the ecological integrity of the habitat but it will benefit other species that directly depend on aquatic ecosystems.

An estimated 2.5 million barriers to fish passage, including dams, culverts, and spillways exist throughout the United States. Many no longer serve their original purpose and were abandoned years ago.

Launched by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1999, the National Fish Passage Program (NFPP) is a voluntary, non-regulatory effort that provides financial and technical assistance to remove or bypass artificial barriers that are impeding the movement of fish and contributing to their decline.

NFPP has become one of the Service's most popular programs and is a model for collaborative conservation.

The NFPP plays a very important role in job creation. \$20 million worth of fish passage improvement projects would create 1,080 new jobs across the nation within three to six months. And this doesn't include secondary job creation! The program embraces partners from every level of government and a wide range of private and civic conservation groups, most of



Young volunteers with the Ballou Dam Project in Massachusetts.

The goal of the National Fish Passage Program is to restore native fishes and other aquatic species to self-sustaining levels by reconnecting habitat that has been fragmented by barriers.

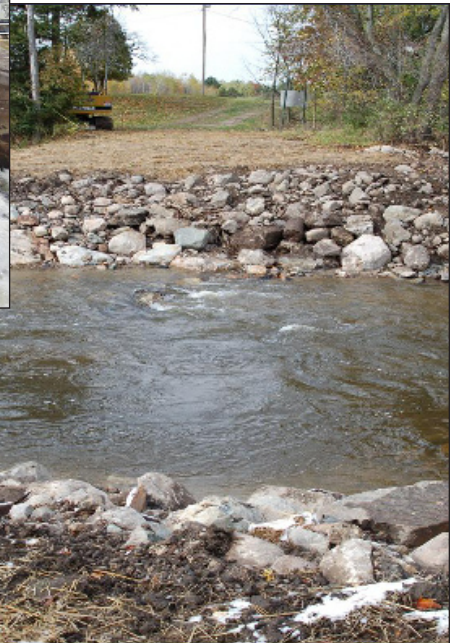
The range of projects completed with assistance from NFPP includes large-scale projects such as the removal of Edwards Dam on Maine's Kennebec River and, most recently, the removal in 2008 of the Merrimack Village Dam in New Hampshire, to the repair or removal of culverts and other water diversions.

To support the barrier removal process, the Service utilizes the Fish Passage Decision Support System, a web-based application with analytical and geospatial capabilities. The Service currently identified 718 unfunded fish passage projects with a total cost of \$158 million that, when implemented, would remove or bypass more than 600 barriers. The Service will continue to work closely with its many partners to complete these projects as funding becomes available.

In 2009, the budget for the National Fish Passage Program is close to \$11 million and includes \$6 million to support the Administration's Open Rivers Initiative (ORI). Increased funding is being used towards in-the-water fish passage habitat improvement projects that emphasize the removal of small dams, as well as increasing the engineering support and technical assistance capabilities of the Service.



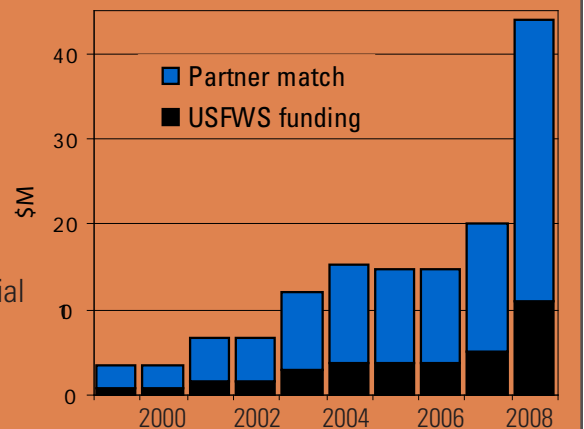
Hersey Dam Removal



Flowing free in an area blocked for 148 years, the Hersey River in lower Michigan now provides seven additional miles of high quality habitat for native brook trout and other aquatic organisms.

The Power of Partners

The National Fish Passage Program has worked with over 700 different partners to implement on-the-ground fish passage projects. These are all voluntary projects that could not be completed without the in kind and financial support of States, Tribes, private organizations, public institutions, and citizens.



Four fish passage barriers have been removed from Mill Creek in Florida, restoring 2,500 feet of stream channel for a now self-sustaining population of endangered Okaloosa darters.



Mill Creek Restoration

For more information about the National Fish Passage Program, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Conservation at 703-358-1718 or visit www.fws.gov/fisheries/fwco/

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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