



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisheries and Habitat Conservation

Fish & Wildlife Conservation Offices *Habitat Conservation*



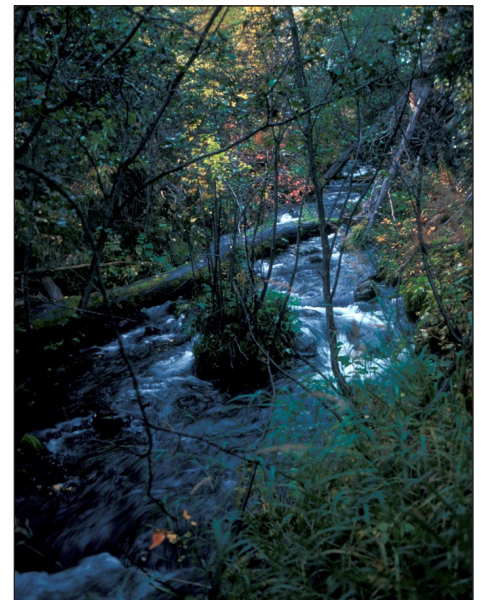
HABITAT IS WHERE IT'S AT!

The value of healthy habitat is vital to well managed aquatic resources, continuing ecological, recreational, commercial, and subsistence contributions to our Nation's prosperity. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices are committed to providing the most innovative approaches to fish habitat conservation. We apply scientific data to focus efforts on preserving high-priority watersheds and restoring critical aquatic habitat (in-stream and wetland) and re-opening fish passage. We also participate in the National Fish Habitat Action Plan and the National Fish Passage Program.

FWCOs are shifting existing resources and applying new resources to become habitat based. In 2008 alone, we conducted 1,249 habitat

assessments of 231,400 wetland acres, 515,392 upland acres, and 9,392 in-stream miles; removed 94 barriers and reopened 28,751 acres and 641 stream miles to fish passage; and restored 64.7 in-stream miles, 65.6 riparian miles, and 63.6 upland acres.

To help us achieve our goals, we've adopted a new way of thinking more comprehensively and strategically about what we do: Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC). With this approach, on-the-ground actions are guided by planning and design that is directly linked to the improvement of our Trust Resources and are measured through monitoring and research. SHC has a broad scope. As a result, multiple internal and external partners are working toward explicitly stated habitat conservation objectives.



What is Strategic Habitat Conservation?

It is an adaptive management approach to conservation planning, implementation, and evaluation with our partners in four basic steps:

- BIOLOGICAL PLANNING - establish population objectives, identify limiting factors
- CONSERVATION DESIGN – develop habitat objectives for desired landscape conditions
- DELIVERY - implementation of conservation actions on the ground
- MONITORING AND RESEARCH – monitoring, evaluation, and testing of planning assumptions

National Fish Passage Program

The National Fish Passage Program (NFPP) is a voluntary, non-regulatory effort that helps remove or bypass artificial barriers that impede the movement of fish and contribute to their decline.

The National Fish Passage program (NFPP) provides technical and financial assistance to restore native fishes and other aquatic species to self-sustaining levels by reconnecting habitat that has been fragmented by barriers. Since its inception in 1999, access has been restored on **11,249 miles** and **80,556 acres** of habitat for native species, such as trout, herring, striped bass, shad, sturgeon, salmon, minnows, and darters. Recent fish passage accomplishments include:

- Hersey River, MI: Dam demolition, providing seven additional miles of high quality habitat for native brook trout and other aquatic organisms.
- Mill Creek, FL: Removal of four fish passage barriers, restoring 2,500 feet of stream channel for a now self-sustaining population of endangered Okaloosa darters.
- York Haven Dam, PA: Fish ladder implemented to reopen 435 miles of spawning habitat for migratory shads and herring. To date, 29,062 American shad have used the ladder.



Hersey dam removal, MI

National Fish Habitat Action Plan

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) is a voluntary, non-regulatory program designed to protect, restore, and enhance the Nation's fish and aquatic communities through regional Fish Habitat Partnerships.



Sockeye salmon

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) is a national investment strategy to make conservation dollars go further. Leveraging Federal and privately raised funds to build regional partnerships, NFHAP aims to fix the nation's biggest fisheries problems with on-the-ground projects. In 2008, NFHAP funded 63 projects in 28 different states. The Fish and Wildlife

Service contributed \$2.4 million, with an expected partner match exceeding \$6.9 million. Partners include Federal, Tribal, State, local, university, and private organizations. Current restoration projects include:

- Bear Wallow Creek, AZ: enhancement of 1.8 miles of stream habitat for the threatened Apache trout.

- Togiak River, AK: incorporation of 760 acres of Native allotments into the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge for salmon conservation.
- Stony Creek, VA: restoration of a 1.5 mile riparian corridor for the threatened candy darter, which is an endemic species found only in West Virginia and Virginia.

For more information about Habitat Restoration, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Fisheries and Habitat Conservation at (202) 208-6394 or visit <http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/fwco/>

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
(800) 344-WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>**

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