

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee Meeting

November 8 – 10, 2022
The Ocean Place Resort
1 Ocean Boulevard
Long Branch, New Jersey

Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

Day 1: Tuesday, November 8th

1. Field trip: meet in hotel lobby 8:30 am
2. Return to hotel from field trip 12:15 pm
3. Lunch (on your own) 12:15
4. Welcome and introductions (*K. Smith*) 1:15
5. Committee consent (*K. Smith*) [briefing materials {BMs} 1, 2] 1:25
 - Approval of agenda
 - Approval of summer 2022 meeting minutes
6. Overview of ACFHP in the next few months (*K. Smith, P. Campfield, L. Havel*) 1:30
7. Technology break 3:00
8. Overview of next few months con't (*K. Smith, P. Campfield, L. Havel*) 3:15
9. Wrap up and overview of Day 2 (*K. Smith*) 4:30
10. Adjourn Day 1 5:00
11. Annual Dinner 6:30

Day 2: Wednesday, November 9th

12. Reconvene 9:00 am
13. Strategic Plan discussion (*L. Havel*) [BM 3] 9:10
 - Review current draft of Strategic Plan
 - Consensus on objectives, strategies, order, and language
14. Lunch (Captain David H. Hart Award Luncheon) 12:00 pm
15. Action Planning 2023 – 2024 (*K. Smith & L. Havel*) [BM 4, 5] 1:30
16. Wrap up and overview of Day 3 (*K. Smith*) 4:30
17. Adjourn Day 2 5:00

Day 3: Thursday, November 10th

18. Reconvene 9:00 am
19. Action Planning 2023 – 2024 (*K. Smith & L. Havel*) 9:10
20. Wrap up and next steps (*K. Smith*) 11:30
21. Adjourn Day 3 12:00 pm

Summer 2022 Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Habitat Partnership Steering Committee Meeting Notes

July 20-21, 2022

The Westin Crystal City

Arlington, Virginia

Members Present In-Person: Russ Babb (NJ), Mari-Beth DeLucia (The Nature Conservancy), Alexa Fournier (NY), Jimmy Johnson (NC), Aaron Kornbluth (Pew Charitable Trusts), Wilson Laney (NC Coastal Federation), Chris Powell (RI), Kent Smith (FL), Jessie Thomas-Blate (American Rivers), Marek Topolski (MD)

Members Present Virtually: Jeff Beal (Ducks Unlimited), Lou Chiarella (NMFS-NE), Jessica Coakley (MAFMC), Bob Groskin (Fly Fishers International), Mark Rousseau (MA)

ASMFC Staff Present: Pat Campfield, Tayler Fewell (intern), Lisa Havel

Guests (in-person and virtually): David Arnold (facilitator), Remy Moncrieffe (Audubon), Will Duncan (USFWS-NE)

Action Items from notes (some text modified here for clarity)

Lisa noted that we might want to create a subcommittee for Science and Data to come up with things we want to do, prior to November, to facilitate our planning effort.

Kent said that he, Lisa and Jessica would work on the first draft of the strategic plan.

Wilson suggested that we flag strategies/actions which would require more staff capacity.

Lisa indicated that she would include the list of non-selected Action items from the last plan in the briefing materials for the next meeting.

Once the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies are agreed upon, each SC member should develop 1-3 action items for each strategy to vote on prior to Action Planning.

9:00 am: Welcome and Agenda Review: Kent Smith

Kent convened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He introduced David Arnold, retired FL FWC, who will be facilitating the meeting for us. Kent noted that we will have a process we will follow for the next two days. He explained how we will need to conduct our planning, and how we will have to proceed under the new Act, and make operational changes. He hoped that we are in the mindset to work. He reviewed our agenda for today. We will be asked to do a survey at various points along the way. Tomorrow we will work in small groups. We will look at what we do well and how to maintain that, and how to enhance our future work.

Kent noted that it was great to see those of us who were able to attend in person. Kent noted that he is a people guy and glad to be here in person. He noted that we also have members present virtually, and are doing a hybrid meeting. Kent noted that for those online, they need to make sure that their issues are articulated. Please do interrupt.

Lisa noted that they will have to interrupt, because she is working off one laptop and can't see when someone raises their hand virtually.

Kent noted that a lot of those in the room are wearing masks. He noted that he has had Covid three times now, and usually wears masks on planes and in other close quarters. Kent noted that for those of us with masks on, please raise our hands and get David's attention. He noted that with masks on, you can't see non-verbal signals as well.

Kent covered logistics. Bathroom locations. There is no food outside for us. We will have a break at lunch. Coffee and tea, water will be coming in during the day.

Kent asked for questions. There were none.

Kent asked for those virtually present to introduce themselves: Will Duncan, Jessica Coakley, Jeff Beal were all on.

Those in the room introduced themselves.

9:10 am: Overview of ACFHP accomplishments 2017-2021 and polls: Lisa Havel

Lisa noted that she will walk through all of our previous objectives to determine what we accomplished. She has 74 slides, but noted that it can be a discussion. She does want it to be interactive, and asked us to access the link she sent to us earlier this week.

Lisa reviewed each of the objectives beginning with the Conservation Objectives ([presentation available](#)).

Lisa noted that she felt we had accomplished Actions 1 and 2, and partially accomplished Action 3, but had NOT accomplished Action 4.

Chris asked them to define subregional habitat focus areas for newcomers.

Kent explained that we have four subregional habitat regions, and each of them have 3-4 priority habitats.

Russ noted that we should have a slam-dunk on Action 3, the endorsements. We tend to forget about them.

Kent agreed that should be a slam-dunk, and noted that Russ has been good putting in projects.

Aaron noted that he has also pushed for projects to be submitted. He asked if we tracked projects that had been endorsed, to see if they were funded.

Lisa noted that she had begun doing that last year. She only checks on projects that are over a year old. The answer is yes.

Aaron suggested that if we have the numbers, we can report, even though we can't say it is cause and effect.

Lisa noted that the funding rate for endorsed projects is over 90%, and that is on our website on the endorsement page.

Kent noted that we haven't rejected very many projects requesting endorsement. Kent noted that the ones we have rejected have been very broad.

Chris asked Kent to explain the endorsement process, for our newer members.

Kent did so. Basically, ACFHP writes a letter of endorsement for projects we can support. It brings some technical expertise and provides the ACFHP umbrella moving forward.

Will chimed in as well, with his comments on the overall objective. He felt that we had done well on this one.

Lisa covered the next Strategy A.1.2, and noted for this one, we never developed any strategies.

For A.1.3, we had one Action and we achieved it. She noted that Pew had compiled an entire list of documents, and the Science and Data Committee reviewed and approved it, and it is on the website.

For A.1.4, we achieved Action 1, and partially achieved Action 2. For Action 2, Lisa noted that it is hard to do; the website does let us know some information.

Lisa reminded us of the Objective and summarized our accomplishments. She asked us to go to the first survey question, and select a response.

There was another question regarding the subregional priorities. Lisa displayed the map on the screen.

Kent explained where the boundaries are.

Mari-Beth asked about the priority areas, and Kent noted that we had specified priorities, based on the GIS analysis we had done for the SE and NE, but those are in a different objective.

Wilson clarified that once we have been through Lisa's presentation, we do need to articulate any recommendations we may have.

Lisa moved to the A.2 Strategies and noted that we didn't have any Action items for that one.

For Conservation Objective 3, Strategy A.3.1, we also had no action items. We also had no actions for A.3.2. We did the action item for A.3.3.

Wilson asked if we checked "continue" we can still have further discussions and tinker with the strategies and actions.

Lisa moved on to the Science and Data Objectives. She reviewed each of them. For B.1.1, we had two Actions, and we achieved the first one. She noted that we had never pulled the trigger on updating the Matrix to add new species. She gave us partial credit for that one.

Strategy B.1.2: We achieved all three action items under this one.

Strategy B.1.3: We partially completed one action and completed another. We are getting our projects into a database (the NFHP database, just not the one describe in this Action).

B.1.4: We have partially done both actions under this one, but are waiting on the NFHP Board for further guidance on Action 1. Action 2 is partnering with Pew on scoping the feasibility of developing SAV protocols.

Will Duncan asked for a refresher on what the Science and Data expectations are for the future.

Lisa asked to put a pin in that question, until later, when she does the crosswalk between the way we were operating, and the ACE Act. We will need to keep in mind the requirements for the ACE Act vs. what was expected of us prior the Act passing.

Kent noted that the Science and Data Objectives were very specific in contrast to the previous ones, and that is just due to the nature of them.

Lisa moved to B.2.1: We failed to accomplish Action 1, which deals with culvert assessments. She noted that we had begun some discussion on this one, but haven't really accomplished it. She gave us partial credit for Action 2, dealing with the NOAA Fisheries CVAs, because NOAA did use some of our habitat work.

Jessica noted that we are partially working through the NE Regional Habitat Assessment, which does include the ACFHP Matrix. She noted that there are written narratives for many ASMFC species.

Wilson and Jimmy noted that there are some culvert assessments that have been done in NC, in the Black River (Cape Fear drainage) and also the Chowan River drainage (Sara Winslow work).

Lisa agreed that those are out there, but ACFHP hasn't worked on any of it.

Alexa noted that TNC has done one as well.

Kent noted that we could likely easily compile them.

Lisa agreed that we could discuss that further and Jessie agreed.

B.2.2: We had no action items for this one.

Members were asked to select their votes on this one.

Lisa moved to Outreach and Communications.

C.1.1: We had no action items for this one.

C.1.2: We had three actions under this one and accomplished all three of them. Lisa explained that if we want to do Action 2 again, we need to specify a starting point from which to compare.

C.1.3: We achieved both actions for this one. She noted that a new presentation is being worked on, along with a video as well. We also developed a one-page factsheet. It is hot off the press. There were two more actions, the development of a new display was put on hold, due to the pandemic. We achieved the second one, which was to develop a block "ad" which could be used in newsletters by other NGOs. Lisa noted that we also have ACFHP "postcards" which are ready to go, once we decide they can be useful, i.e., post-pandemic.

C.1.4: Both of the initial actions under this strategy were achieved. Lisa explained how those were achieved. There were four more actions, three of which were partially achieved, and one entirely achieved. Lisa noted that federal agencies can't provide links on their websites to any organization that has a "donate" button.

C.2.1: The first action was achieved. The other two were not achieved; PowerPoint presentation on conservation moorings. We are doing these partially, but Lisa gave them storm clouds.

C.2.2: Lisa gave us a gold star for Action 1, but a storm cloud for Action 2. Lisa noted that we really haven't touched water quality very much. Lisa gave us partial credit for Action 3, and we have done Actions 4 and 5. We have promoted World Fish Migration Day, but some of our promotions were cancelled due to Covid.

Wilson noted that he had compiled a draft table of river herring festivals for NMFS use in the River Herring Strategic Habitat Conservation Plan, and can share that at some point, and noted that as the festivals resume, post-Covid, ACFHP will have lots of opportunities.

C.2.3: Lisa gave us credit for some of the actions identified, including a gold star for identifying topics of interest.

10:00 am Lisa moved to Outreach and Communications Objective 3:

C.3.1: We did these actions.

C.3.2: We failed to achieve Action 1, because the coastal FHP newsletter ceased to exist. We partially achieved the second Action.

Kent felt that we should get a gold star for the second Action, based on what we did with the funding we received.

Chris agreed that we should give ourselves more credit that Lisa is giving us, but she is a tough reviewer.

Kent noted that Lisa has done a great job with this objective, engaging with Beyond the Pond, and NFHP as well. Kent noted that she did this during the right time, during the pandemic.

Outreach and Communication Objective 4:

C.4.1: Actions 1 and 2 were partially achieved; Action 3 got a gold star. Lisa noted that we might have done better on Action 2 than she thought, but she didn't take time to count them.

C.4.2: There is no action item under this one, but Lisa does do it.

Finance Objectives, D.1.1: All three actions under this one were done, and Pat has been instrumental in accomplishing these.

D. Finance Objectives

D.1.2: We had only one action item and achieved it.

Lisa noted that for this one, we had all gold stars.

Will asked if Beyond the Pond was all set up to do what they needed to do.

Kent and Lisa noted that they were not in the past, but they are very engaged now, and trying to do what they need to do. We have offered our assistance in getting their base operations funded, and we have engaged other FHPs in doing the same. But they have been slow to give us a list of needs (and costs). Kent noted that this is a very important project for us.

Lisa noted that she could spend two days talking about this.

Will noted that this has been a long-term issue. He suggested that we need to re-evaluate this one.

Kent noted that we are definitely going to have further discussion.

D.2.1: We achieved with a gold star.

D.2.2: Lisa noted that we achieve this one, getting very high ratings.

D.2.3: Lisa noted that we just needed to track legislation on this one, so we got a gold star, but the bar was pretty low.

Kent noted that the conversation here focused on who can, and can't, engage in lobbying.

Remy noted that he can lobby.

Chris noted that Wilson can also engage in lobbying.

Lisa noted that often we don't take a stand, because we don't want to alienate our partners.

Will asked for clarification on D.2.1:

Lisa explained that this is the financial aspect of conservation projects.

Kent suggested that he bring this up during later discussions.

D.3.1: Of the three actions on this one, Lisa gave us a gold star for Action 1, and partial credit for Actions 2 and 3, prioritizing and updating the Business Plan.

D.3.2: We achieved Actions 1 and 2, and partially achieved Action 3. We have an intern working on Action 3. Lisa noted that we aren't exactly sure yet exactly what we can do.

Kent noted that the one-page factsheet does partially address this.

Chris asked Lisa to give us more information regarding the intern we have.

Lisa advised her name is Tayler, she is completing her MS at the University of Miami, and has done a lot of work for us.

Chris asked if we are paying her.

Lisa indicated that we are, and she benefitted because she needed to do an internship as part of her degree requirements. Lisa shared that Tayler is developing additional products for us as well. She is also beginning to work on the video for us.

Russ asked if there was any Miami bias in selecting the intern. Lisa jokingly said 'absolutely.'

D.3.2: We achieve Action 4, researching donors, with Sharity. Action 5 has not been done, because we can't yet approach donors since Beyond the Pond does not have the licenses in place.

Chris suggested that we have a review of this with some of our members, since this is a complicated process.

D.3.3: No actions for this one.

D.3.4: Of the three actions here, two were partially accomplished (1 and 3) and Action 2 was given a storm cloud. She noted that this one, how we are going to support ourselves for the next five years, needs to be a big part of our discussion for the rest of the meeting.

Bob joined us online.

D.4.1: We achieved both of the first two action items, partially achieved two and completely achieved the last one.

Lisa noted that overall, we had 60% gold stars. Some things are out of our hands, but we also did a lot outside of the strategies and actions.

Kent noted that there were certain things that we have to achieve. We do have more understanding now of what we have to do to continue to receive funding from NFHP. There have been two years of flux, which have required nimbleness from us. Hopefully we will be able to hone in on some of the actions. Also, Beyond the Pond's capacity was an issue. We have had to find other ways to administer federal grant funds. In 2023, we will have to assume all of the responsibilities that the USFWS used to perform for us. We will be having these discussions moving forward. Some of the things in the plan were aspirational, and we are making progress toward them. We do need to have some subjectivity.

Everyone submitted their responses and Lisa asked the survey to analyze the results.

David suggested that we go ahead and take our 20-minute break now, at 10:30.

10:30 am 20-minute break.

10:53 am: Kent reconvened the meeting. He noted that David is going to lead us through the discussion of the survey results. He noted that we want to set the stage for tomorrow. He asked us to consider whether we are finished, or need some modification, or have some further discussion about greater modification. We will be in discussion groups tomorrow, in break-out sessions. We will have a lunch break. You may have some clarifying discussions during lunch. David noted that if we have ideas about modifications, we may want to write those down and share them.

David noted that he would keep a running tally and send these to the folks with us virtually.

Jeff chimed in from the ether. He noted that Lisa had noted that we do lots of things outside of the action items, and he asked that she summarize those.

Lisa noted that for a lot of the strategies, we had no action items, but we did work on them. She provided an example. We do distribute ASMFC products. For another action item, all we had was attend meetings, but she has been working with Ryan to update the donation platform for Beyond the Pond and the FHPs. That is an action that wasn't captured. Updating the agreement with Beyond the Pond, is something that she has worked with the ASMFC counsel on, and Beyond the Pond, and modified our guidance as needed. Also, none of the work that we did with Sharity is captured in any of the action items. We may need to set up a new 501(c)3, etc. and none of that is captured. None of the new needs created by the ACE Act are captured either. So, there is a lot of work that wasn't captured.

Jeff noted that most of those are related to the financial aspects and he anticipated further discussion.

Lisa noted that we also added new partners, such as Audubon, and none of that was captured either.

David asked us to discuss the results for Objective C.1. Most members felt that this one needed to be continued. One person had asked for further discussion. Several suggested slight modifications.

Kent noted that the person who had asked for modification might not be in the meeting with us.

Marek noted that it might have been him.

David noted that if we want to change the wording of C.1, we can discuss that now, or tomorrow. He asked that we try to jot things down to remember what we want to say.

Kent suggested that David call on the folks who said that they want to modify the language.

David said we would try that approach for this objective.

Jessie said, we need to decide where we want to go, during the next five years. Thus far, we have been opportunistic and done projects here and there. Her question is broader than just this objective.

Lisa noted that we had done a bigger picture survey a couple of weeks ago, and we can go through that one.

David said, if we are not doing something well, we have to go lower, or higher, or not at all.

Wilson questioned why we had the word “resilient” in there. He didn’t think it was needed, because it would possibly preclude us working on non-resilient habitats which we want to improve.

Aaron agreed exactly with Wilson about “resilient” and also suggested that we might want to add the word “humans.”

Chris asked about another change.

Mari-Beth noted that we really need to make climate change and its impacts front and center. Some habitats that we may have funded projects within, are going to be under water.

Lisa noted that in our previous plan, we did add it in the introduction. In talking with the DOJ committee, they agreed that it needs to be worked in there.

Marek asked Mari-Beth if she meant for us to be more specific.

She agreed. She noted that most of the habitats in DE are going to be under water by 2100. We need to keep that in mind.

Will noted that he was reflecting on where we want to be in five years. Will noted that we may not need big changes in direction, but he suggested that we have a better focus and work on fewer things. Focus on what ACFHP does really well. Think about what it is we really want to do and focus on that.

David moved to the objective dealing with water quality.

Kent noted that it partially had to do with the regulatory nature of water quality.

Marek noted that it also had to do with the nature of the water column.

Chris noted that we had also pushed to avoid it because others were working on it.

Wilson noted that he agreed it was a hard topic, because of the public trust nature of it, but he noted that there is a lot of information out there and it might be beneficial for us to summarize some of it.

Lisa noted that it should perhaps go under the Outreach objectives.

We continued reviewing the survey results and David captured our recommendations on the easel as a reminder.

For O.2: half wanted slight modifications, the other half wanted to continue.

Chris noted that we need to have some discussion about what “slight modification” means.

Marek noted that he was thinking mostly about modifying the strategies.

For O.3: A majority wanted to discuss or modify.

For O.4: Mostly discuss.

For F.1 and F.2, slight discuss.

For F.3: slight discuss.

Kent noted that it appears for most of the objectives, we want to make some modifications. He noted that discuss was sort of between modify, and retain.

Chris explained what he meant.

Lisa noted that no one, except for one individual, wished to delete anything.

Takeaways:

- Discussion of big picture – last 5 years we supported a number of projects, S&D, and communication; what is the direction ACFHP wants to go in the future? Is there a bigger picture, coherent, focused vision of where ACFHP should work?
- Notion to be more explicit about climate change throughout the new strategic plan
- Focus on a short list of areas ACFHP is best suited to address, and don't try to be everything to everybody

Russ noted that the discussion people, and continue people, are likely close and it was good that we didn't have any deletion recommendations.

Wilson asked if the ACE changes are going to impact our operations a lot, and if so, don't we need to have that discussion first.

Lisa and Kent agreed that would be useful, so they moved that post-lunch discussion to now.

Lisa walked us through the ACE Act crosswalk with the current operational process ([presentation available](#)). She explained the table that she had created and how we should interpret the columns she created in it. She asked that we stop her if we disagreed with her interpretation.

Marek asked about “private partners.”

Lisa explained that included NGOs.

Jessie asked what “diverse” meant in this context.

Lisa explained.

For “use adaptive management principles” Lisa colored them yellow. She thinks the legislation is alluding to habitats.

Mari-Beth thought that we can adjust and achieve this one.

Lisa agreed.

Chris asked what “national measures” are.

Lisa said they are NFHP measures, versus ACFHP measures. They will finalize their priorities at their September Board meeting, but they have the ability to change them annually.

Lisa moved to Designation Criteria. All of them were green, except for “ability to develop and implement projects that address priorities.” She noted that the NFHP was interpreting these as very broad. They did have a lot of back-and-forth about “self-governance structure.” Lisa had bolded the one that states: “strategic plan that details required investments for fish habitat conservation that addresses the strategic fish habitat priorities of the Partnership and supports and meets the strategic priorities of the Board,” since that is what we’re working on this meeting.

Will was wondering if Lisa had any insight into the second to last bullet, the one in yellow.

Lisa noted that she had summarized from the ACT language.

Will noted that this is supposed to be a partnership, so partners should have some say.

Lisa noted that the Board has not yet completed their interpretation of the Act. The Board doesn’t want FHPs to NOT be accepted by Congress. They are trying to be careful in what they say.

Chris asked, for the bolded criterion, do we have anything in writing from the Board.

Lisa said that they do, but they haven’t finalized them yet.

Kent noted that there are several influencers on the Board, with past influence, and that helps, but many of the newer Board members are still trying to fully understand the process.

Lisa noted the requirements for recommendation to Congress, directly from the Act. There are multiple requirements.

Jessie noted that the language totally leaves out rivers.

We had some discussion of the need for “rivers” to be included in the language of the Act.

Lisa noted that we didn’t have much influence on the language.

Remy noted that they had left out “freshwaters” as well.

Chris asked how “coral reefs” got in the list. He also asked what “strategic” meant in the context of Number 4.

Wilson felt that the use of “key stressors” and “impairments” in Number 4 certainly opens up the potential to address water quality issues.

Lisa continued her review of the Act’s requirements (Numbers 5-8).

Marek noted that in Number 7, “declines in fish populations” could be related more to fishing impacts, and we don’t really address that. He noted that if we restore an acre of habitat, we can’t say what the positive impact is.

Kent noted that for some of the coastal habitats, SAV and oyster reefs, we do have some tools that can help us do that.

Mari-Beth noted that we can come closer to documenting increases that result from fish passage projects.

Lisa noted that the criteria she had reviewed are what is required for us to be certified by Congress, some time in the next three years.

Lisa turned to Project Criteria and her crosswalk. She had created another table. Some of the criteria are required, others are “extent to which...” a project fulfills a criterion. Lisa noted that the Board can change the priorities annually but she hoped they won’t do so.

The ones that she made yellow include the national Board priorities, national measures, increases in rec fishing opportunities, increased access, and conserve species of GCN. The only one she made red was the 1:1 non-federal matching requirement. Lisa discussed each of these. She noted that the matching requirement is not a problem for the on-the-ground projects, but it is a problem for our operational funding.

She asked for questions. Chris wanted to know who put that match requirement in there.

Kent noted that technically, we could incorporate x amount of funding into the projects we fund. He asked who makes that decision.

Lisa said, it is either NFHP, or Congress. NFHP is working right now to determine what constitutes a “project.” Lisa said if we accept the NFHP funds in one lump, we could theoretically take 20% for operations. It is unclear that we can call all the ACFHP projects for a given year, as one project. If operations is a separate project, then the 1:1 match is required. She isn’t confident that an overall 1:1 match will be good enough.

Kent asked Lisa where we are now.

She said we have about 35-45% of the match. We currently use about \$85K for operations. We really can’t grow any, if we have to keep it at that level. Ideally we secure double that to grow.

Lisa noted that ACFHP is based at ASMFC. Some of the other FHPs based at NGOs have an easier time finding additional match. Since the ASMFC is federally-funded, we can’t count any staff time like accounting, or office space or supplies like her laptop. We are in rougher shape than many of the other FHPs. However, many still can’t find the 1:1 match.

Kent noted that we need to start meeting at free facilities.

Chris asked if the other FHPs are bringing this to the Board's attention.

Kent and Lisa indicated that they are. Kent asked if the new USFWS representative on the Board is aware of this.

Will wasn't sure, but hoped that he was.

Wilson confirmed that Steve Guertin is the new USFWS representative on the Board.

He asked if Steve wasn't aware of this and has it in his wheelhouse.

Lisa indicated that he is aware. She noted that the 15% overhead allocated to the USFWS was minimal, in comparison to what is really needed.

Will noted that without sufficient funding, the USFWS, and the FHPs, and the NGOs, can't function.

Jessica had a question relative to the funding. She asked what "details required investments" means. She wasn't sure that we had ever sat down, once we had our actions written, and estimated what the actual amount of funding and/or match would be. She wanted to flag that for us. She suggested it might be good to take our plan to the Board and say to them, we can't really accomplish the plan, unless we have this much.

Kent agreed that it would be good to say, this is what it takes to run this organization. Kent noted that Sharity had recommended that to us as well.

Lisa noted that this is just alluding to how we are going to achieve our objectives.

Kent suggested that at least somewhere in the plan, we need to refer to the Business Plan. He noted that it doesn't get us to a one-to-one match, by just talking about it.

12:00 pm Lisa continued her review of the table. All of these project criteria apply to on-the-ground projects.

Will asked if the reference to "communities" meant fish communities or human communities.

Lisa thinks it is fish communities.

Lisa noted the four monitoring criteria that each project must have in an evaluation plan. Lisa has told the Board that this is simply not going to be done for each project.

Kent noted that this comes from the federal legislation.

Lisa noted that this would require a PhD dissertation for every project.

Mari-Beth thought that for some projects we might be able to address these.

Kent noted that we could do some minimal calculations.

Russ noted that it is good they don't define what is meant by "report."

Lisa noted that the metrics they are discussing are very general. Some of them are pretending this doesn't exist. She noted that we will have to ask for these things in our RFP, and this will be a lot to ask.

Chris asked to who in Congress the Board will report.

Aaron felt it would be the House Committee on Natural Resources, at least it should be our “friends” in the natural resources community.

Mari-Beth stated if she sees this in the RFP, she would reply with a paragraph.

Kent noted that we are going to have to include some guidance.

Mari-Beth said she doesn’t read this as requiring a study on a \$50,000 project.

Kent agreed, but noted that as scientists, we tend to go to extremes.

Lisa turned to the last slide, which contains the draft conservation priorities. The coordinators were concerned that the Board might get too far into the weeds.

Chris asked how they defined “conserve.” The definition is at the bottom of the list.

Marek asked how they defined “healthy waters.”

Aaron also asked for a definition.

Marek noted that the sixth bullet almost appears to be targeted to the 1:1 match.

Lisa noted that was added by the Board to ensure that we could use funding for operations.

Kent noted that was added to ensure that we could function.

12:13 pm Bob noted that he felt that it was interesting that the priorities are related to fishing and people who fish.

Lisa said she and maybe some others had made that recommendation to align with the ACE Act.

Bob said he agreed that it is important to relate fish habitat, to fishing.

Lisa said that she felt ACFHP interprets the benefits of the work we do, much more broadly, to include communities, and the ecological services.

Kent agreed.

Marek noted that there is a comma missing between “commercial” and “subsistence” in the last bullet.

Lisa confirmed that is the case.

Kent noted that we will return after lunch and look at the previous survey results.

12:18 pm The SC recessed for lunch.

1:44 pm Kent reconvened the meeting. He asked Lisa to review the previous survey we had taken a while ago, on the bigger picture.

Lisa noted that she had received 17 responses to the survey. Most of the responses came from the SC. With respect to the area of most success for ACFHP was funding on-the-ground projects; increasing collaboration, endorsing projects, and Science and Data informing conservation.

Chris noted that we are also good at long-range planning.

Lisa advised that for least successful, we had funding other projects (not-on-the-ground); disseminating information through workshops, and disseminating information on the web.

Kent noted that some of these we were unable to fund.

David asked if the responses with the most respondents were our highest priorities.

Chris asked where building support for the organization should have been in the list of things about which we were not very successful.

Jessie wanted to note that if funding on-the-ground restoration is at what we are most successful at, given the limited level of funding we have, perhaps we should position ourselves to be more successful elsewhere, given that a lot of funding sources have much more to offer than do we.

Marek noted that a partnership is expected to implement on-the-ground projects. He agreed that we should give some thought to what our priority should be, relative to long-term sustainability. He noted that we have discussed this for eons, but implementation hasn't been there. He noted that we are good at talking about it, but not good about implementing it.

Jessie asked if we still want to focus on NFHP, or do we want to be something different, in order to be more sustainable.

Marek suggested that we shouldn't ignore NFHP.

Lisa noted that NFWF is another organization that funds on-the-ground work, and they are much larger. What makes us special?

Kent asked, what is the ACFHP selling point?

Pat noted that he wanted to connect some of the dots. If we use Science and Data, we are in the top four response. He asked if we could be more strategic, with our overall coastwide approach. He felt that we were doing B+ work in using our own science tools. With respect to the more recent strategic planning discussion at Cape May, they decided to be less strategic. Pat suggested that we might want to focus on the larger areas, key places, maybe the Susquehanna River, and shad and river herring. He didn't think that we would head toward specific watersheds, instead of just seeing what comes in via the RFP and selecting the technically best ones.

Chris noted that we don't target particular watersheds. We basically take what we get and select the worthiest.

Lisa noted that in November, she had pitched a plan in which we would select a more specific project theme or area, such as SAV in the Mid-Atlantic. Then we could target proposals.

Aaron noted that might put off some partners.

Mari-Beth asked what we are talking about for ACFHP funding.

Lisa noted that we had around \$250,000 this year, but around \$30,000 from other sources.

Lisa noted that in consideration of under-served communities, and smaller organizations, those are things that we need to consider but which we won't be able to fund using NFHP funding.

Bob asked which partners have received the most funding. He asked because people will pay for things which are valuable for them. He noted that partners will have the most knowledge about what is important to their constituents in their local area. He noted that it is hard to get excited about SAV, but a community that values fishing, might be more excited about SAV. Finding partners which are excited about that could direct partners into ACFHP. That in turn may direct others into ACFHP. We are a partnership, but who are we really partnering with. If we are partnering with the same organizations all of the time, that isn't going to get us where we want to go.

Lisa noted that we currently have 38 partners who have signed the MOU. Additional ones are not "official" partners who have allocated staff to the work. She leans on us to bring partner efforts to the table.

Kent noted that most of the partner projects are not fully funded with NFHP funds. He noted that we might bring 20% or less of a given project's cost. We are just one of the partners. He stated that it's kind of inherent in being a partner.

Lisa noted that the ratio was 17:1 for funding.

Kent noted that Lisa has terrific vision, for the long run. We are making pretty good strides in terms of being able to coordinate with specific donors. We have to have the right legal authorizations in place. There are other opportunities out there right now. One he mentioned to Pat and Lisa last night. He noted that we are trying to become a more significant partner, in terms of the on-the-ground projects. That is how we are selling ourselves, as getting this kind of work done. We have the capacity to fund toolbox development. He sees us taking what important work we are doing now, and incorporating DEI, and also expanding.

David asked, if we are trying to decide what we are going to do for the next five years, are we going to be able to secure the same amount of funding, under the new rules.

Kent said he didn't believe that NFHP will go away, but we do need to find new sources of funding.

Lisa noted that depends on being able to meet the match.

Kent noted that isn't carved in stone as yet.

Chris noted what we do, we do well. He suggested that we keep on doing what we are doing, but try to build capacity. We have good expertise. But we don't have the ability to build our capacity. If we had millions of dollars, we could give more away. But we are doing a great job, based on all the projects we have funded up and down the coast.

Kent agreed that is our niche.

Chris said that we need to do something, to keep climbing. He noted that having an intern is a great advantage. Lisa's having an intern has made a huge difference. We need to build the resource and capacity.

Marek noted that we have to tackle the operational piece, in order to keep climbing, otherwise we will hit the wall.

Will Duncan noted that he really likes what he is hearing. Even if we add up all we are going to receive from BIL, it isn't going to be sufficient to address climate change. The ACFHP needs to grow other sources of funding in order to support resiliency projects.

Mari-Beth agreed ACFHP is good at funding projects. She asked if that is enough. She suggested that our ability to pull the science together is a strength. She questioned whether NFWF will even be able to do enough.

Aaron noted as we are going through this challenging process, we may need to prioritize things just in order to stay alive. We may need to repurpose some of our funding, in order to go out and talk to foundations.

Lisa noted that we can't hire someone to fundraise, Beyond the Pond has to do that. We can ask that funders provide funding to NFHP, designated for us. You can only fundraise on behalf of the organization that receives the funds.

Marek said, if someone funds on our behalf, does NFHP have any say in how those funds are used?

Lisa said that if the funds are earmarked for ACFHP they will go to us. Beyond the Pond can take 10%.

Kent noted that enhancing Beyond the Pond was engaged six months ago, and assisting them might need to be our highest priority. It takes some time to put everything together on the ground, when you don't have the funds to do it.

Russ stated that the amount of juice we get from the squeeze, including squeezing Lisa, and our intern...are there other FHPs that contribute through a membership? That isn't something that we should discard.

Kent said SARP has paying members.

Wilson asked about SARP paying dues.

Jimmy advised that they do pay dues, \$5,000 each, but it is mostly the states who pay. Not all the members pay.

Agreement and emphasis on increasing fundraising → ACFHP's capacity → in order to expand ACFHP's conservation region

Action, top priority: generate funding to fully stand up Beyond the Pond and hire development contractor

Interest in shifting more towards providing expert guidance to where to prioritize restoration activities, using habitat science tools

S&D new strategy/action: gather restoration projects' monitoring data to analyses efficacy of projects individually, by watershed, by state, by ACFHP region

Survey results: Discussion of what level ACFHP should operate on?

Higher: Congress, federal agencies, big corporations;

Partners: Habitat Managers, Scientists

Grassroots: local orgs, conservation project leads

ACFHP's unique role is connecting the local groups with the higher level opportunities (NFHP, FWS, NOAA RFPs)

Lou: there's a lot of federal money moving out now; ACFHP's \$50K per project is not meeting a critical need; primary role should no longer be doling out small restoration awards

Kent, Jessie: ACFHP new role in knitting together large-scale projects not funded by NOAA/FWS/EPA via BIL; including serving as resource for SVI communities who don't have the staff/funding/resources to generate grant proposals

Will: new roles 1) pursue funding opportunities fed agencies cannot, 2) nimble, well networked fundraising operation to create new funding streams, 3) connect with SVI communities to provide support via #1 and 2

Mari-Beth: ACFHP's \$50K per project is not juicy hook; what else can we offer as truly value added? Replicate the NFWF-TNC-ASMFC River Herring restoration prioritization project; it still drives NFWF funding directions today.

Alexa: consider what we as individual SC members contribute now, and whether we can contribute more time and energy, or not?

David: keep in mind the strategies, actions from previous strategic plan we decided to continue, need to fold into new bigger pictures directions we're envisioning for ACFHP in the next 5 years.

Wilson: "re-cast" ACFHP as expert group to advise higher level policy/administrative audience, and maintain but de-prioritize supporting restoration projects as our primary function.

David noted that we need to move on from this conversation; we can discuss more tomorrow.

DEIJ Subcommittee Report

Lisa provided the report. They met three times. She shared their recommendations. Cut down a lot of the introductory statements, more ([presentation available](#)).

The last statement is, here is what we plan to do in 2022-2026. They note that the language needs wordsmithing. They checked in with other organizations to see their DEIJ work. There are external and internal needs. The internal would be operations and include finance and DEIJ representation. She defined "finance" for us in this context. She noted that Aaron had left the room, but noted that he has begun mapping our previous on-the-ground projects (see briefing materials number 6).

Wilson noted that we will face a challenge here, because of the fact that we discussed earlier, which is the public trust nature of aquatic, versus terrestrial ecosystems. He gave some examples. He also noted that he thought that the map the subcommittee produced was excellent and a great way to assess how we had distributed our projects.

Kent agreed and noted that it was further complicated by the fact that fish were a mobile resource. He noted that our analysis was post-hoc. We did some things that benefitted some of these communities. In the future, we can be more strategic.

Lisa noted that one of our foci should be “connecting” these communities. Perhaps we can be the organization to connect these communities to the science, and give them the tools.

Will said that this is an outstanding conversation. He was glad we are taking it on. He noted that the USFWS is also trying to address this. Three lessons they have learned: not enough to just locate a project there, but you need to show a benefit to the community as well. You need to understand that just because it occurs there, doesn’t mean that a benefit occurs. Keep that in mind.

Kent noted that is a good point. One thing NFHP is pushing right now, is accessibility for public fishing. Those are things that we can begin targeting, that benefits the communities. There are ways to look at this to enhance the net benefits.

Will said that makes sense, and embodies the recommendations in the report that Lisa shared.

Aaron noted that he hadn’t had the pleasure of meeting Will. He agreed it would be great to get information on how the communities are benefitting. That kind of information requires people that can go back to the communities and talk to the town officials and get that kind of information.

Will agreed. He complemented Aaron on the work.

Chris asked Aaron if it was possible to take the same database and generate a map without the dots. He would like to see a map of the whole coast to see how extensive the SVI areas are.

Aaron indicated that he has that data layer.

Kent noted that some of this makes a lot of sense to him. A lot of the underserved areas have damaged resources. We are doing this in areas that have been impacted, not intentionally.

Aaron indicated the composite index produced by the CDC, accounts for 15 different categories. He isn’t an expert on how this was done. He named some of the criteria that went into the analysis. It is pretty broad.

Bob noted that Will had brought up a point he was trying to make earlier. That is why we need to develop partners in those communities, because they will be able to tell us how projects will improve their life. People in these communities may have so many other things on their minds. This can be done through outreach strategies and actions.

Wilson noted the issue of unintended consequences, whereby we might encourage fishing by subsistence fishers, when the fish they are targeting are unfit for consumption. We don’t want to accidentally create an unhealthy circumstance.

Kent agreed.

Chris gave us another example of subsistence fishing by people who come from an underserved community, to fish in an area where fishing is better. He wasn’t sure how we can address this.

Kent noted that ACFHP is not likely to develop some remarkable way to address this.

Lisa noted that we can address it through outreach, when we can.

Aaron noted that the subcommittee had discussed the need to move in a better direction. None of the ways that we develop will be perfect.

David noted that if he heard Lisa correctly, the subcommittee does have some recommendations.

Lisa noted that those are under Number 7.

David suggested that we remember this for tomorrow's break-out sessions.

Kent noted that Lisa had color-coded all of these, and we can check back in on those tomorrow. He noted that his personal opinion is that in looking at that DEIJ direction, and climate change, with that opener, and then addressing it as we go through is a great way to proceed. He likes the first draft. He asked us to scrutinize the draft tonight, if we hadn't already read it. Make sure that we understand the color code.

Mari-Beth asked where it was.

It is in Lisa's June 29th email.

2:45 pm: David noted that we are up to Pat's presentation.

NFHP Grant Administration (Pat Campfield)

Pat noted that specific to the NFHP grant, based on the most recent information, there is going to be a significant change in FY2023, both for on-the-ground projects, and operational funds. These changes are mandated by the ACE Act. The USFWS role will significantly diminish. In anticipation of the change, they sketched out multiple options for how the funds can be identified.

Pat reviewed the options and noted that they are hitting us cold. There are five of them and each has pros and cons ([presentation available](#)). We as an FHP will need to set up the preferred option, and work with Beyond the Pond to implement any of them we select to pursue.

Option 1 involves Beyond the Pond. Pat noted that a pro is that it is in place, there is some structure there, and Lisa would work with Ryan on implementation. The indirect would only be 10%, which is better than most university overhead. Negatives include BTP having only one staff person, so they couldn't administer all our needs. Another negative is that start-up funds would be needed. At a minimum, short-term funds would be needed to ramp up BTP staffing. ACFHP would have to gather some funding from some sources. The last bullet is a significant change in that the ACFHP Director/staff would have to assume the role of restoration project coordination with PIs, and monitor post-restoration progress.

Chris asked what current role USFWS has now, versus what they played in the past.

Pat explained that USFWS is still conducting a lot of on-the-ground support at present.

Chris asked what change would occur.

Pat noted that the ACE Act mandated that change.

Jessie asked if the NFHP understands this situation. She believes that NFHP should be working to understand and fix this.

Lisa noted that at the April meeting, this was discussed. Many of the other FHPs have staff to take this on. She wasn't sure how the other FHPs which are housed in USFWS, will operate in the future. She said that we are in the minority, not having the capacity to handle these funds. She noted that this is a big lift for ACFHP. The Board hasn't yet told us that it is up to us to figure this out.

Pat said that Option 1 is one of the most viable options, since BTP already exists.

The second option is status quo, having USFWS continue their role. Pat asked Will to address what the USFWS indirect was, and whether it has changed in the recent cycle.

Will noted that it hadn't changed. The indirect percentage USFWS was taking, was used to pay for the USFWS support staff. Will indicated that he didn't know what the percentage was this year, but he thinks that USFWS received \$4,000 per project. He stated that was a significant drop. It used to be 30%. The USFWS staff really no longer work on the projects.

Lisa noted that Callie's staff this year had not worked with applicants on the proposals. For the first time they are seeing applications which they weren't involved in.

Pat asked Will if this will definitely be shifted away from USFWS. If the answer to that is yes, is there another way to move funds to USFWS.

Will wasn't sure he caught all of Pat's question, but they believe that this is inevitable. It is more likely than ever. It's going to happen. In terms of future direction, what he has seen from other FHPs, the expectation is that NGOs will shore up the work. He noted that we had already discussed the need for personnel capacity. There is a need to expand personnel capacity. There is a need for funding from the private sector, and consider how to receive any funds. Will noted that some of this may be talked through. Whether it is applicable here or not, is up for discussion.

Pat noted that the USFWS had carried the program for a long time. Pat asked if anyone else around the table had any other comments.

Lisa noted that we don't yet know whether USFWS can handle funds for FY2023, or not, at this time.

Kent noted that the Board is aware that the capacity-building on their part will benefit ACFHP. They noted that building up BTP can serve to support all of the funding coming in for all of the projects. We need this sooner than later, and have been pushing for it.

Lisa noted regardless of how it turns out, more is going to fall on ACFHP than before. Some of the other FHPs are already asked for additional funding, to cover additional staff.

Chris asked if any of the other FHPs had received any additional funding.

Lisa wasn't aware if they had or not. Either way, they have to match any additional funds they ask for.

Kent noted that ASFMC can't administer the funds, so even if they come, we have to determine a mechanism to use. The staff would have to coordinate with all the projects and all aspects.

Chris asked where BTP is based.

Kent indicated that they are in DC. Kent indicated that when all the coordinators met in Portland, NFHP put BTP in place, but they never built the capacity to receive funds. The only staff person there is Ryan Roberts and he only does this on a part-time basis.

Lisa noted that he doesn't have development experience, either.

Chris stated that he can't understand why the NFHP Board can't understand this.

Jessie asked why ASMFC can't do this.

Pat indicated that they are already overwhelmed. The CARES Act funding has come to them. Taking on another set of grants would not be possible.

Jessie asked if there was any way.

Pat noted that multiple USFWS staff had been conducting this role.

Pat moved on to Option 3. If BTP, and USFWS, are not viable options, then perhaps the NFWF would be a viable, or some other ACFHP partner who is a 501(c)3 organization. Pat noted that they had sent out a survey several weeks ago, to ask partners if they were a viable alternative. Some of the cons are that partners may be regional or local, and not able to manage coastwide grants. In any case, the ACFHP Director would still have to assume the role of project coordination.

Pat noted that the last couple of options were 4) for ACFHP to form its own 501(c)3 (that was taken off the table in November).

Kent noted that there was a time lag with that one.

Lisa noted that even if we could do it legally, the optics would not be great.

Pat said that the last option would be to move ACFHP out of ASMFC into a new administrative home with sufficient grant management capacity. Pat noted that we would lose a lot of ASMFC in-kind support for managing other grant funds coming to ACFHP. There is also a lot of contracting support for other special projects.

Pat indicated that is the quick rundown. He asked for any other pros or cons of which they haven't listed. Also, we need to determine a preferred option.

Jessie asked if anyone had actually talked to NFWF to know if that is even a viable option.

Kent indicated that he had talked to the Fish and Wildlife Foundation in FL, and they are interested.

Will asked if the 501(c)3 would be more nimble, and whether he is correct in thinking that is the case.

Kent noted that they would be able to work with any 501(c)3 working with us, is interested in pursuing funding for ACFHP. We would not have to move out of ASMFC. The NGO could fundraise for ACFHP, if they were willing to do so.

Chris noted that there is huge synergy which has developed between ASMFC and ACFHP. He noted that Lisa serves as the ASMFC Habitat Coordinator as well, and half the ACFHP members are on the Habitat Committee.

Mari-Beth noted that she remembers having this conversation in the past. She noted that there could be a transitional period. She noted that if many of the other FHPs are not having this problem, it is worth looking at how they are operating.

Lisa noted that some of the coordinators are contractors.

Bob asked Lisa if she could sell some of the intellectual property she has developed and raise revenue that way.

Lisa asked what intellectual property.

Kent noted that a lot of the data were developed from public resources, so you can't sell them.

Kent noted that the match also is an issue.

David noted that we need an answer to this option question, before we leave tomorrow, so how are we going to answer it.

Lisa noted what is on the agenda after this item. She noted that we will be having a big picture discussion afterwards. She noted that the two things that keep her up at night are: 1) operational funding; and 2) how we are going to administer funds in the future.

3:20 pm: Kent asked us to take a 20-minute break.

3:40 pm: The meeting reconvened.

Several options that are unlikely were discussed. Winning the lottery would be one. Wilson noted that we could solicit funding from an unlikely source, such as the Gates Foundation, but we might have to leave NFHP to do so and become an independent NGO.

Lisa completed reviewing the more general survey results. These included asking on which areas ACFHP should focus in future years.

Lisa noted that the focus should be on operations, and find other sources of funding for other aspect of ACFHP. Increasing opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders was another focus area recommended. Finding ways to improve our impact on underserved communities was also among the five highest options.

Lisa noted that some of the things we had been deemed best at, did not receive a lot of support.

David asked for any other comments.

Marek stated that there was a lot of emphasis for what to do, but perhaps the survey didn't ask the right questions.

Lisa noted that she had put some of the questions in operations, not here in the focal area portion of the survey.

Lisa noted that the highest score was finding additional funding for restoration.

Will noted that it was surprising that the second bar was highest.

Lisa noted that was because of our limited capacity.

Will understood that point.

Mari-Beth noted that some of the people who filled this out were not as knowledgeable as the SC members.

Lisa was asked who the people were who were surveyed. It was the Science and Data Committee, SC members, Outreach and Communication members, and partners. There were only 17 respondents.

Lisa noted that in general, our audience is our partners, and so the survey asked if the survey participants were happy with the level at which ACFHP was operating. Thirty-five percent said that we should work at a higher level. Twenty-three percent said we should work at a more grassroots level. That was tied with respondents who said we should work at the current level. Lisa suggested that given our present capacity, we just need to stick to our current level.

Alexa noted that we are already at capacity, so she agreed that we should just stay where we are for the time being.

Chris agreed that we should stay at our current level, unless we can build more capacity. Perhaps we should focus more on certain areas.

Mari-Beth said it seems we should at least put down a vision on paper, for the long run. If we say that we want to keep things the same, that isn't very exciting, especially for the big funders.

Lisa stated that we can have a vision, but she wants to keep what we do at the same level. She noted that we can have a vision for some things, but not do them at the present time.

Chris agreed that it would be good to have a vision, but also have something that we know we can accomplish with what we have right now. The vision would be for the future.

Marek stated that one concern he has, in trying to engage multiple levels, is having to differentiate how the content is delivered to different levels. I.e., it might have to be different for the grassroots level, than it will be for the higher-level administrator. You can deliver the same information for the two different audiences.

Lisa agreed. The website is mostly for us and our partners. When we begin thinking about strategies and actions, we need to consider who our audience it, and keep it at appropriate levels.

Remy asked for an example of higher levels.

Lisa said it could be Congress, or the USFWS.

Pat noted from an efficiency perspective, working at a higher level could go far, if we build capacity. Working at the grassroots level is more appropriate if we are targeting for more local projects, such as culverts in NH, or sponges in south FL. He wasn't sure what the requester meant.

Marek noted that he was trying to determine whether we were talking to scientists, or administrators.

Remy thought it would be administrators, if it was "higher levels."

Marek stated that if it is administrators, you would have to structure the focus differently.

Lisa suggested that we would be better off focusing on one level.

Remy noted that it often turns out that an administrator has given the review task to a staff person, who knows much more about it.

Russ noted that we right now have to stay laser-focused, but it costs us to not focus on the root issue.

David noted that he wanted to point out that we may not want to fund what other people decided what is their highest priority.

Remy noted that “grassroots” covers a lot of different people. There is a dichotomy of what you want to do, versus what you are able to do. Sometimes you can develop materials for both the grassroots level, and administrators, but that might knock out the scientists, who like the details.

David noted that the question does say, “in general” so we should bear that in mind. The question asked whether we wanted to make that a primary target. You have to find people to do the projects that you want to do. David noted that organizations heads don’t likely develop the priorities anyway; usually the projects are being generated by staff.

Lisa indicated that she didn’t think we are being efficient. Our priorities are broad. She isn’t sure what level we are at right now. Things get thrown at her a lot right now, and she needs help focusing.

Lou was on virtually. He noted that he had been listening to the conversation for a while now. He felt that we have an identity crisis on our hands. With all of the funds that will be passed to the states and others for resilience, fish passage, and other purposes, we need to consider what we can do. He didn’t think people would rely on us any more for a little bit of money. We need to consider doing something different than handing out a little bit of money. We can’t play that game anymore.

Mari-Beth agreed with Lou. She asked if for the next five years, we could assist in making those large pots of money digestible for the recipients.

Russ asked how we can use our existing tools, to influence those projects. How do we secure the consultations?

Lisa asked if our niche could be helping others. She asked if we could provide the connection, serve as a connection.

Mari-Beth suggested that would also solve the issue of USFWS management.

Lisa said we would just have to find a lot of 1:1 match.

David said, if more people are getting funding from other sources, what else can you provide.

Will said that Lou brought up some really good points. Will noted that the FHPs can come in and fill some of the vacant niches. Communication is one area. ACFHP can be an advocate in ways that federal agencies, and other partners, cannot. Will noted that the 1:1 match is a huge deal. Perhaps ACFHP can be nimble enough to create new funding mechanisms, through new partners. We need to bridge our conservation goals with those in the community. If we could do those things, it would be super.

4:15 pm Lisa moved to the next questions. A question was asked about what percentage of indirect would be charged. The last question was for other recommendations. Lisa showed us the responses. Several of the recommendations focused on increasing emphasis on DEIJ and climate change. List noted

that when we combine everyone's available time to work on ACFHP, we have 86 weeks per year. How do we want to use those 86 weeks?

Lisa reviewed the timeline with us for development of the Strategic and Action plans. The goal is to have the plans done by the end of December.

David asked if anyone wanted to see again any of the things that we covered. He asked if members had access to anything Lisa had presented today.

Lisa indicated that they didn't have the presentations that she had given, but she shares them after the meeting.

Will noted that we didn't answer the question of where ACFHP needed to focus.

Lisa said that if we can answer that question, it would help us to decide where to go.

Will said that what he thought he is hearing from the group is that there is a strong need for determining how to come up with non-federal match. That means a break from status quo. We need to think more broadly about how we communicate and with whom we communicate. Building capacity will necessitate a change in how we do work. Will would like to hear what others have to say. He would like to hear from Lisa or others.

Lisa noted that we in the room are mostly scientists and managers. We have been operating at this level for 13 years. But we're not bringing big funding in. Perhaps we need to change our level.

Chris would like to see us maintain where we are today, and move forward. He didn't want to see us move backwards. He would like to see us maintain the size of the steering committee and the partnerships, and the projects we do. He would like to see us accomplish more in the future. We can't stay stagnant. How do we find more funds to do this? Otherwise, we are just going to paddle along and not increase our capacity. He thinks we can do a lot more than we are doing.

Will asked if he meant a change from the status quo.

Chris stated that we need to move up from the status quo.

Marek was unclear on what "increasing capacity" means.

Chris said he means that we increase our ability to increase our work. Having an intern has paid big dividends already.

Lisa noted that Lou had pointed out that what we had been doing on the ground, is changing, and may not mean as much in the future.

Mari-Beth stated that she has been hearing that if we don't dramatically, we may not matter in a few years. She felt that there are some big issues that have to be resolved.

Lisa noted that we can try to resolve some of these issues in the plan.

Alexa asked what does the "something else" that we need to do, look like. She stated that we can't expect a lot of hours from our partners or SC members, given that they are already overworked. She asked what are the goals? For us to fund a project, that is something. We can knock out project reviews

in a few weeks. She noted that she had spent a lot of time reviewing other projects. What are we committing to, if we are saying that we are going to change our focus?

Mari-Beth noted that there were discussions a few years ago, regarding river herring, and NFWF was brought into the discussion, so we did it once, and we can do it again.

Lisa noted that we can use NFHP funding, to put out reports, so if we have in-kind funding, we can use that. We may want to shift from putting stuff on the ground, to using our resources more effectively. Putting funds on the ground is good for PR, but not as effective as some other projects we could do.

Kent noted that we can diversify. He noted that he had just jumped in the queue and apologized.

Aaron liked where the conversation is going. He agreed that it might be time for us to change focus, and still keep a few on-the-ground projects. He noted that Pew, ASMFC, Audubon, etc., have the ability to take a big picture view, and can do things that are scalable. We like to take good ideas and export them.

Chris noted that when he said “status quo” he didn’t mean that we should keep doing the same things. He didn’t want to see us regressing too much. He agreed that we can re-focus.

Kent noted that we have a good track record. There are new opportunities, such as blue carbon. He noted that we have a good track record, with the USFWS involved. But we need to develop capacity. We need to determine the option we need to pursue. There are only a couple of viable options. All of those need to be packaged up in the new plan. Lisa makes a good point in that when we begin working on the plan in November, we need to have specifics in mind. We can put things on the table that are somewhat immediate in terms of what we need to do. He does like the idea of continuing some on-the-ground funding. He noted that partners have been asked to go find projects on-the-ground, and then we got narrowed up, having to do some things in terms of metrics, to do what we needed. Right now, things are a bit broad. If NFHP changes things annually, that will be a challenge.

Lisa noted that if we want to focus on another river herring needs document, we can do so. The problem is that we are too unfocused right now.

David noted that he thought we had covered a lot. He asked if there are current Strategic Plan components that are essential for moving forward.

Kent agreed that there had to be a systems check at some point.

David noted that we had to determine how the funding is coming.

Kent noted that we may just become a technical advisory committee at that point.

Lisa asked if we wanted to disseminate information on fish contaminant levels, could we do that work. She thought that we could ask for NFHP funding to do something like that.

Remy thought that would be possible.

Kent noted that with DU and Audubon on board now, we can broaden our perspective.

Remy asked about the sportfishing organizations.

Kent and Lisa noted that ASA is on the NFHP Board, and Bob is representing fly fishers.

Pat noted that CCA Maryland was selected for one of the NOAA projects. We don't have regular representation from some of the sportfishing groups. The ACFHP update is provided at the Commission meetings, and so CCA is obviously aware of what we are doing.

Wilson summarized where he understood that we are. There was general agreement with his understanding.

Kent agreed with Wilson, except with his characterization of the shift as "radical." The reality is that we need to increase our capacity, and we can ultimately integrate to doing more on the ground.

Wilson explained what he meant by radical. We need to re-cast ourselves and role.

Will agreed that change is going to be needed. He agreed that the changes we are discussing is going to have to be one quickly. The rate of change has to be great.

Lisa said that the only way we can keep on doing what we are doing, is if we have 1:1 match. If we don't have 1:1 match, we have to change what we're doing. Because we lose our operational funding.

Remy asked if the way we are now, could be carried on into the future.

Lisa indicated that we have around \$40K in match now. In order to find the rest of the match, someone needs to write a check. She noted if TNC hosts the meeting, that would help, but not a full \$40K amount.

Chris said that the driving force for change is the 1:1 match.

Lisa said it is a combination of the match, and all of the new funding coming in. Our little bit of funding means less.

Kent said it is very important to consider the amount of funding coming in from BIL, which is coming from EPA, NOAA, and USFWS. All of those funders are looking for big projects. Kent noted there are two big projects in FL that FL FWC will be partners on. He can easily put ACFHP on one of them. He is taking what Lou is saying with a grain of salt. There are a lot of projects out there, but not all of them will be funded. NOAA has ten million dollars.

Lisa noted that Jessie had suggested that we combine some of the smaller projects into one and we could manage them; that would reduce the need for operational funding.

Kent indicated that was a genius idea. He noted that we had tried this before. Now, we might be eligible for ten million dollars. We need to be innovative about how to find that match. The worst-case scenario is that we need to find more. We do need to address it. His inclination is that we continue to use operational funding as we have, until someone rejects it.

Lisa said that the worst-case scenario is having to make that matching requirement, and do it by March 31, 2023.

Lisa noted that she hopes the Board will figure this out.

Chris asked if the FHPs have come together as a group and brought this issue to the Board's attention.

Kent said that we have two more years before we have to apply to Congress to be recognized as an FHP.

Lisa noted that we can apply to Congress, but NFHP Board does that on our behalf.

Kent noted that we are supposed to wrap things up in our discussion. He noted that our small groups will address these things tomorrow. We have discussed alternative approaches, and increasing capacity. Kent noted that it is very important that every organization go through a self-evaluation. He noted that he didn't want folks to be afraid. We need to focus on putting these things together. We need to collaborate with NOAA and USFWS, who have funding. Kent noted that perhaps we can stitch together 15 small projects, for the USFWS NE and SE Regions. That is exactly what the partnerships are designed to do. That would be genius.

Kent asked David to summarize what we are going to do tomorrow.

David said he plans three groups. Each group will go through the entire Strategic Plan, and do the same thing. We will look at each Objective and decide what each group wants to recommend. After several hours we will come back together and then spend the afternoon working through the details.

Lisa noted that the how, we don't have to answer. That will come up later. Think more about what we want to do.

Kent noted that we are all action-oriented and most of us tend to go through the actions.

Kent noted that it was 5:02 pm He asked if we have any final thoughts or concerns. No one did. He asked us to reconvene at 9:00 am tomorrow morning. He thanked everyone today for their great ideas. For those participating on the virtual side, he thanked them and noted participation virtually is not the greatest. He noted that Mark will be with us tomorrow virtually. Kent noted that we will talk dinner options shortly.

Lisa noted that the virtual participants will be in one break-out group tomorrow.

Kent asked Jessica to moderate the break-out group tomorrow.

Chris asked if we would be working from the draft SP she had provided, tomorrow.

Lisa indicated that is what she had provided, based on prior discussion.

Day 2

9:00 am: Welcome and Day 1 Recap: Kent Smith, Lisa Havel, David Arnold

Kent welcomed everyone and explained that we are going to work in small groups for most of the morning. They have divided us in the room, into two groups. The virtual participants will be the third group, online. Kent noted that David is an expert at this approach.

Kent summarized our discussions from yesterday and what we had decided. He turned the floor over to David.

David noted that we would see what we produce today, at least twice more. Don't get bogged down in the actions, today. You can polish them up later. Think about the new opportunities, who will manage the grants, how much opportunity you will put on the ground, etc., later. Today is about stepping into

those 13 objectives. The idea is that the folks joining us virtually will talk amongst themselves; those in the room will be separated into two groups. David noted that there will be three separate report-outs, so one group may come up with something the other two don't. We can use the flip charts if we wish. David noted that if we capture the thoughts electronically, we can project those on the screen. This afternoon, we will review the group reports and see if we can reach consensus. David noted if all goes well, we can leave early and miss the traffic.

Aaron asked if all three groups will go through the entire suite of objectives.

David said yes.

Aaron asked if there was a recommendation regarding how to use what Lisa sent out to us.

David said that we can use her draft as a guide.

Lisa noted that we can work from the draft that she sent out, if we wish, so we can cut and paste and not re-type them. She noted that we had a lot of discussion yesterday, and we can reorganize the entire Strategic Plan if we wish, by adding or deleting or moving objectives around.

Jessie asked Lisa to send out the Word file for the one that she had edited. She only had a pdf of it.

Aaron confirmed that we shouldn't worry about Action Items.

Lisa said if we have specific ones we want to write down, fine, but don't spend much time on those.

Chris asked if we should all begin at the top and work our way down.

Lisa indicated that would be fine. She did have a Word version of the edited draft and she will send that to us.

Aaron asked if we could change Finance Objectives, to Operations and Finance.

Lisa said yes. She sent the Word file to everyone.

Group 1: Kent, Pat, Remy, Russ, Jessie, and Alexa

Group 2: Lisa, Jimmy, Wilson, Mari-Beth, Aaron, and Marek

Group 3: All those online

9:14 am: Lisa briefed the online group

Resume Meeting for Small Group Report-Outs

1:19 pm The meeting reconvened and Lisa reported out for Group 2. She noted that ACFHP did not have any goals in its SP, so our group developed four goals. She stated what those were: create an environment suitable for habitat, conserve habitat, provide access to habitat. The fourth goal was operations. We had the objectives for Science and Data, etc., under each of those goals.

David suggested that we need to have a new afternoon agenda. We will start with Group 1, then the virtual group, then have Group 2 at the end. At the end of the discussion, we can then discuss the organization. David suggested that if the virtual group, and Group 2, will weigh in to the Group 1 recommended changes, then the exercise will go faster.

Jessie was the recorder for Group 1, and also the reporter.

Lisa shared the file that Group 1 had on the screen.

Jessie stated that they had taken the approach of delete, modify, or keep as it was. They changed “maintain resilience” to “enhance.” They merged fish passage back with non-fish-passage projects. They also added “people” to the objective. They did keep them separate in the strategies. They did not discuss the actions. They deleted the strategy on coastal develop and water-dependent uses. They kept BMPs in the list. They deleted the coastal habitats and buffers in need of protection strategy. They don’t see ACFHP spending a lot of time in the future. They moved another strategy into A.3.3, for increasing connectivity within and among subregional habitats by directly addressing physical barriers. They added two new strategies, for using science and data tools in high priority areas, and a second one for marginalized communities. They moved one item to Science and Data.

David asked that Jessie go back to the top and seek clarifying questions.

Alexa noted that they had struck several of the objectives. She noted that they had struck the one dealing with water quality because they don’t see ACFHP engaging in this a lot.

Chris noted that Kent had pointed out that hydrology and connectivity is something that we do.

Kent noted that they view water quality as related more to the regulatory world. There were a couple of strategies with no action items, and those were problematic for them. What we do improves water quality, but we are not working to change septic fields to advanced wastewater treatment.

David asked for any more questions.

Marek asked, for the new strategy, relative to high priority areas identified in the mapping, is that something that needs to be pushed into Science and Data.

Jessie said, they have the maps, right.

Marek said yes, but maybe he is overthinking it.

Kent noted that they had worked pretty quickly.

Russ asked if they were pivoting from conservation, to on-the-ground.

David asked the virtual group, and Group 1, do any of these changes resonate.

Wilson noted that the wording changes made by Group 1 are consistent with ours.

Lisa explained that we wanted to highlight that working on connectivity is different from working on riverine bottom habitat.

David asked to hear from the virtual group.

Jessica reported. She said that they had a similar discussion. They too had discussed “resilience” but left it in for the moment. They did add “healthy watershed using a regional or watershed approach. They added a new strategy to support conservation by helping build capacity around small project proposals to communities/tribal and other small communities (multiple small grants). They modified A.1.4.

They modified Conservation Objective 3 and its strategies.

Kent noted that he likes the term, but most people have issues with the word “healthy.”

Alexa noted that using the term “watersheds” involves a large portion of the terrestrial area, so that will open up a lot.

Aaron agreed that we aren’t likely to deal with forested areas.

Pat noted that using the Science and Data results to prioritize focus areas, would generate more consensus.

Will said that the point is that we are trying to have conservation within a watershed, or a water body. Maybe the terminology is not quite right.

Jessie said, we should consider if we say regional or watershed approach, we need to figure that out, and how to implement. There needs to be something to clarify what we are discussing.

Jessica thought that the strategy of small grants and targeting smaller communities addressed that point.

Lisa agreed that focusing our approach and ACFHP was desirable. Whether the focus was species, geography, etc., she got pushback. She liked having some more specific priorities. Our group is definitely supportive of focusing.

Marek said, as a follow up, to have the concept of transferability, the ability of transferring whatever you develop for a given priority, to be transferable, say from NC to Chesapeake Bay, or NJ.

Jessie asked if he meant model projects.

David asked Jessica to scroll down further so the in-person group could see if they had more questions.

Mari-Beth noted that Group 2 talked a lot about linking groups to resources.

Jessica noted that there are a lot of other groups out there working on this. She said more but I had difficulty understanding due to the sound quality (she was breaking up). Multiple members had trouble understanding her.

David said the virtual group is looking at on-the-ground funding, but larger than just passage.

Lisa said “fish habitat connectivity” eliminates fish ladders.

Kent said ladders provide access.

Wilson explained that Group 2 had considered access and hydrological improvements resulting from dam removal, but ladders just providing for access along.

Aaron concurred with Wilson’s explanation. Aaron noted that a lot of our partners are doing dam removal.

Mari-Beth suggested we say “effective” fish passage.

Aaron asked if we become the arbiters of what constitutes “effective.”

1:53 pm [Had to go check out, so missed part here until return.]

Returned to notes, 2:00 pm

Lisa was discussing what Group 2 had done with the Goal and objectives for our on-the-ground approach.

Marek noted that tackles the dam removal versus ladder issue.

Kent noted that any barrier removal could be covered.

Marek felt that it was important to keep the water quality statement in there. He gave an example. If you have cows walking in the stream and you do riparian restoration, you are addressing multiple issues, such as sediment input. This is a large issue in parts of the Chesapeake Bay.

Kent noted that everyone can wrap their heads around putting water quality in objectives under a goal. We can qualify it in that context. Kent noted that we all recognized it as a big issue previously and had issues coming up with strategies for it. They negated it, but realized that they were improving it. If that was a key goal, it is more direct.

Aaron noted that it is often more indirect.

Lisa noted that a lot of the projects we endorsed or funded did address water quality.

Jessie noted that this speaks to what the differences are between goals, objectives, and strategies.

Lisa noted that we noted that some things fit under multiple categories, and we chose to use this approach.

Aaron noted that this is more of a vertical approach. The goals are separate, but then the further down you go, the more similarity you see.

David asked that Group 1 present their Science and Data Objectives.

Jessie said that Group 1 tried to reframe the wording more toward the partnership, as opposed to NFHP. So, it is kind of a placeholder. They put in a new strategy to update and maintain the things we have done. There may be pieces of some of the others that we need to develop specific actions on, down the road. They modified B.1.3 and have two actions. For B.1.2 they added climate vulnerabilities for marginalized communities. They did the same for the following strategies.

David asked for questions for Group 1.

Lisa asked if there should be another objective for developing new data.

Jessie said we need to have a conversation about what we want to do with Science and Data.

Kent noted that we need to be consistent in using the DEIJ terminology.

Chris said they also put in something about updating the Habitat Matrix and adding new species.

Aaron asked if that was an action item.

Chris and Jessie indicated that it was.

Mari-Beth suggested that there is a lot of new information on fish and climate vulnerability so we need to take a look at that before we update the Matrix.

David asked us to move to the online report on Science and Data.

Jessica gave the report.

She shared the text on the screen. Lisa asked her to change her audio, which she did.

They feel the group should work with what is available. They don't have time to do new research. They modified the first objective to help our partnership of managers and habitat practitioners use the best available science. They created a new strategy. They deleted three strategies. They modified Science and Data Objective 2. They added a new strategy for seeking funding and resources to support specific actions and resources. They deleted Strategy B.2.2 because they felt that we are not actively doing it.

That covers their Science and Data discussion. No one else in the group had anything to add.

David noted that the distinction made by the online group is to spend less time creating science, but spend more time making sure people know where the best science is.

Marek noted our group had discussed that we don't need another tool. He asked if the restriction on research projects has been removed.

Lisa thought that was the case.

Kent noted that he didn't see any preclusion for doing research work.

Marek noted that was an original restriction.

Kent noted that he thought that more came from a USFWS restriction. The original charge was to enhance habitat, and the metrics prohibited us from doing that.

Will noted that was part of the history of how the program worked originally.

Lisa noted that you can interpret research as in the field, or hiring a post-doc to run an assessment.

Jessie said that we should not completely dismiss Science and Data, because there could be some coastwide project.

Aaron noted that we had in fact discussed some of those. Such as compiling threats by river basin, data on communities, and monitoring data. Those could be done at the subregional scale, or lower.

Jessie confirmed that USGS is a partner in ACFHP.

Lisa noted that we can work as the group that can pull information together. She gave Wilson's example of compiling all of the threat data for a given river. We could compile threats to diadromous species coastwide.

Aaron noted that it could be like a meta-analysis.

Lisa noted that we might want to create a subcommittee to come up with things we want to do, prior to November, to facilitate our planning effort.

David said that he is hearing that there are some that think we can't do or shouldn't do research, versus Lisa saying there are some things that we can do.

Mari-Beth noted that assessing and compiling is not pure research.

Kent noted that he appreciated David's concern. We do have to think about our capacity.

Pat asked about monitoring, and whether we do that already, through the project-tracking done by USFWS. Is that ongoing or would it be a big lift.

Lisa noted that once a final report is submitted, projects don't have to keep us informed. We have developed a questionnaire. She noted that we are going to collect long-term information. She noted that we have discussed producing a "lessons learned" document about a particular project. We are waiting to hear from NFHP about monitoring since it is in the legislation. If they have additional information they want, we will add that into our questionnaire. That is why we've held off on sending it out.

Pat noted that is good to hear. Sounds like you are already on it.

Lisa said it is in a holding pattern. If we do want to create a lessons learned paper, what will the product be?

Pat asked if we can report out what we have accomplished in total, after we get the reports on the projects.

Wilson noted that there is a new MOU between the ASMFC and USGS with respect to working on diadromous species, and that might be useful for us in terms of developing strategies and actions.

Pat agreed that is a possibility and noted that not only is USGS represented on the ACFHP SC, but also on the Science and Data Committee.

2:30 pm We moved back to Group 1 and the Outreach and Communication Objectives.

Jessie gave their report. They modified the language and took out some of the strategies. They wordsmithed the remaining strategies. They kept C.1.4. They added a new strategy for development of an outreach plan for reaching target audiences (including marginalized communities). A potential action item could be assessing the needs of target audiences.

Kent noted that they didn't flesh that one out a lot.

They added a potential action item to increase awareness and knowledge among the ACFHP SC and partners.

They kept the next strategies and actions. Some of them may need some wordsmithing. The point is to get the word out there about things. They kept C.3.1 about maintaining relationships with the NFHP Board and BTP. They want to add a new strategy and say something about influencing priorities for federal funding streams, and connecting people to those streams. They kept Objective 4 and all the actions.

Under Goal 4, we should add: Work with NFHP to get Congressional approval.

David asked for questions.

Mari-Beth noted that in Group 2, we talked a lot about who, and what. We need to consider who they are, and what we are trying to get them to do. Are we the right organization? We need to think about our work in the context of what we are trying to get people to do, otherwise we are wasting our time.

Jessie agreed with Mari-Beth's statement.

Lisa noted what she felt we needed to communicate about our goals and objectives.

Aaron noted that we added that part of our communication should be able to solicit funding. We need communications tools to keep us in the black.

David asked the virtual group to report out.

Jessica gave their input. Jessica noted that they made no changes to Objective 1, or any of its strategies. For C.2, they felt that ACFHP had overextended itself. They deleted Strategy C.2.3, because they deemed it redundant. They deleted Objective 3 and its strategies. They felt that it is part of doing normal business. They left in Objective 4, for promoting the activities of partners. They noted that it could be merged with Objective 2 to streamline the plan. She asked if anyone else on the virtual group had anything to add.

Will had a comment. He noted that Lisa had asked for some guidance on what levels at which to communicate. He wasn't sure that was yet addressed. He wanted to acknowledge his hope that someone would have some theory.

David asked Group 2 to report out, then perhaps we could come back to Will's question that was on the table.

Lisa gave Group 2's report. She shared the objectives that they had developed. She shared our strategies as well. She noted that we had collapsed the objectives we had, into strategies which are all in here. She agreed that we want to get the word out about our partners projects. We maintained a lot of it.

Aaron noted that there were a couple of small things.

David asked for any questions about that group's approach.

Alexa asked about speaking to the Board.

Lisa noted that we had moved that one to Goal 4. She showed where Group 2 had incorporated.

David returned to Will's big picture question: who is your audience, and how are you going to communicate to them. He asked how you communicate to Lisa, and to yourselves.

Lisa said for Group 2, a lot of our communication would be based on science and data. We would determine why, and that would determine our approach. It could be workshops. It depends on what we want to do. We haven't yet come up with specific methods.

Mari-Beth thought that this sort of communication is tied to what we are doing, and not so much to fact sheets. Maybe we just email something to partners, and we are done. She felt that this type of communication would make it clear what we are doing.

David said, as long as it is clear who is doing what, and where, and for what reason.

Mari-Beth thought we had put that in Goal 4.

Jessie noted that Group 1 had talked about ACFHP about being a hub. It would spin outside of just what ACFHP is doing alone.

Lisa asked for clarification. Do you mean communications about what works, things beyond just ACFHP Science and Data? She felt that there should be.

Alexa stated that we should have pretty things, things that we can use as part of our products, and things we can use in fundraising.

Lisa asked if we could make smaller organizations aware of available tools and information.

Pat said Group 1 was steering more toward communications with small groups who we can steer toward the larger federal sources of funding. That certainly wouldn't preclude information about good tools. Pat noted that perhaps we don't have to spend as much time on Science and Data now. The SC meetings are really where we focus on what we are going to do for the next time period.

David asked for any further follow-up from the online group. No one did.

Lisa returned to the infrastructure and communication. She suggested that Group 2 could communicate about what the infrastructure needs are. She noted that she had received a message today from the EBT Coordinator, telling her about a forthcoming workshop.

Jessie asked about the needs. She noted that she isn't really aware of what the needs are.

Aaron noted that Pew has done some large grants applications with partners during the last year. The smaller groups don't have the staff or expertise to make applications.

Jessie indicated that we could perhaps bundle, and/or help make connections.

We moved to the Operations Objectives (former Finance).

Jessie said that they had pulled the first one from what Lisa had suggested. They put two new strategies in there, one of which was evaluating the composition of the SC with an intention toward diversifying the SC membership.

They modified the original Objective 1. They kept the first two strategies, and modified the BTP one. They added a new strategy for engaging with appropriate funding entities and noted that Lisa had suggested additional ones in her draft. They kept Objective 2 and some of the actions. They deleted the federal legislation one, since that is done. They kept and modified Objective 3 and most of the strategies. They deleted the last one since they had merged it with the one above.

David asked for questions and there were none.

The virtual group reported via Jessica. She noted that they kept Objective 1, and simplified some of the language of the strategies. They modified Objective 2, and modified Strategy 1, and deleted the next two strategies; one was done, and the other appeared to them no longer needed. She noted that we had discussed issues with funding a lot yesterday. We are likely to struggle no matter who winds up

helping us with grant administration. They kept Finance Objective 3, and added a couple of explanatory notes. They talked about whether there is a policy and planning guide for how ACFHP conducts operations; that should be a part of the plan. Jessica said if Lisa was to move on, we need to have some guidance. She asked if anyone else in the Group had anything.

Lisa noted for an Operations Plan, Lisa noted that she had written 25 pages of guidance when she went on maternity leave, and that would be a good starting point.

Pat noted that there is some guidance in the Business Plan, but thought that Jessica was saying they need more.

Jessica noted that this came from Bob. He suggested that there is a need for such guidance to be consolidated all in one place.

Jessica and Chris noted that we do have a Charter and Bylaws.

Lisa again noted that her maternity leave letter does address a lot of guidance, with respect to contacts and so forth, and how to handle new projects, and so forth.

Chris noted that we had discussed this the other day. We definitely need a “cookbook” for the ACFHP Director, especially if Lisa leaves. Chris noted that it changed across the years and is now more complicated.

David asked Lisa to share Group 2’s input.

Lisa noted that we had put Science and Data under each of the goals, but left it pretty generic, as whatever we decided, fund it. We did create an Operations Goal, and it has similar wording. Lisa reviewed the objectives under Goal 4. She stated that we do need to begin working with other 501c3, because of the uncertainty of BTP enhancement. She noted that we also considered putting in a line item for the Director’s time, so we don’t have to rely so much on NFHP.

Aaron noted that we didn’t fully flesh this one out, so we would add maintain our relationship with other FHPs.

Chris asked about the last one. He noted that we don’t want NFHP to think that we don’t need their money.

Kent noted that if Congress decided that we couldn’t be a partnership, that would change things.

David asked Kent how close the three different versions are, in his mind.

Kent said Group 1 and the Virtual Group are not that far apart. Group 2 just came up with a different approach to packaging everything. He asked Lisa about the ease of reporting.

Lisa said she thought that it would be both easier to report, and also easier to communicate what we do.

Kent noted that in the past, we had to address NFHP priorities. He noted that he was not averse to looking at the goal-based approach.

Mari-Beth noted that you have operations under each of the goals. She felt that it makes it easier to create a story, if you have a lofty goal. She suggested that you could have a fact sheet on each of the goals, and ask for funding on that basis.

David asked what are other people's reactions to this goal/silo approach?

Chris asked to whom it will go, once it is finished.

Lisa said, us, and the Board.

Chris said most of the Board members will just read the Executive Summary.

Lisa felt that this organizational approach would be easier.

Marek originally felt there was a lot of redundancy, but as he thought about it more, it provides tangible work flows. He likes it more and more, the more he thinks about it.

Lisa felt that it makes it easier to tell our story and how we are doing what we do. She gave some examples, and felt that it would be easier to cost out, and to sell, and find funding.

Wilson noted that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. The three products are pretty similar. He wondered if a side-by-side comparison or crosswalk would help us in deciding which outline to adopt for the SP.

Jessie felt that more specificity would help. She wasn't sure that she understood the first Goal. The general concept Group 1 had was that water quality wasn't something that ACFHP was going to do.

Kent noted that they had talked about the fact that we are really doing water quality, but it is wrapped into other things.

Jessie asked if it should be a separate goal.

Kent noted that Group 2 broke it out.

Alexa felt that they had decided to incorporate the water quality hydrology differently.

Lisa gave some examples of some endorsements that we could give. We could also fund some projects for riparian restoration, or protection.

Mari-Beth noted that we could provide examples coastwide of what diadromous fish needs are.

Kent noted that both Group 1 and the Virtual Group had issues with water quality. He noted that protection projects would not fly very well in Florida. He made some more comments that I couldn't hear very well.

Jessica noted that her opinion is that she feels that it waters down our messaging. It is before the restore, maintain, etc., bigger bin. She feels that those components are embedded in the bigger goals. She noted that we have had a lot of discussion about how to make our SP more focused. She's not really crazy about this as a separate goal. She feels we should lead with Goal 2. She feels that water quality is a trailing edge.

Marek said, structurally, he could swap Goals 1 and 2. We need to set up the habitat, make sure the fish can survive in it, and get the fish there. He noted that a lot of time we do things, and assume that the fish will come, but they don't.

Aaron noted if there is some sort of thermal pollution, and you can do something to improve water quality.

Marek gave another example, of something else that you need to address. You might build the house, but they don't come.

Jessie asked if we are tracking the house.

Kent felt that water quality was an intractable issue. He noted that Aaron had mentioned a projects. He liked the way that we had put it together.

Lisa noted that we don't have to address water quality in a comprehensive way. We could do an outreach campaign in a different way.

Mari-Beth noted that she didn't care whether water quality was Goal 1 or 2. But, she noted that the Delaware River had had a lot of money poured into it, and there are still issue to be addressed, such as impervious surface. Compiling information and getting it out to decision-makers would be good.

Kent noted that the other thing that was noted is that we can get credit for water quality, if we use this format.

Chris was curious where the whole goal idea came from, Pew or what.

Lisa said that Carol recommended it.

Chris asked if we could take the other two team's efforts and merge them into this.

Lisa said yes.

Kent said he was sold on it, if it was utilitarian. If it is better for on-the-ground, then we should do it.

Chris said, let's try it.

David said the question is, this is the SP. These are the things on which you are going to work. Are you going to get a lot of funding for this? This isn't what you are going to spend a lot of time on.

Mari-Beth noted that the river herring project focused on everything. This is just making the plan more livable.

Lisa noted that climate change, and shifting SAV beds and climate change have to be addressed.

Alexa said putting it here sounds like we are going out there and clean the water, for the fish, and we really are not going to go in there. Is it really correct to say that we are supporting good conditions?

Kent thought that we can do some wordsmithing.

Alexa asked, are thing that we are doing going to help the water quality. She didn't feel that our goal was to improve water quality.

Lisa felt that living shoreline do improve water quality.

Alexa said living shorelines fit more into the second goal.

Wilson shared his thoughts. He doesn't care if water quality goal is number 1 or number 2. He noted that we do need to consider the water quality context of any project we fund. We need to keep the preamble of the CWA in mind.

Kent noted that his major point is that we haven't been getting credit for the water quality benefits that we have done.

Jimmy noted that he likes the way this is laid out. He agrees with Wilson that we have missed the boat by not focusing more on water quality.

Jessie said she is okay with what Alexa said. She said if we leave it in here, what are we going to do? We need to be specific.

Aaron agreed with making Goal 2, Goal 1, then put fish passage next. Then water quality could come next. We could also commit to funding at least one project that addresses water quality.

Jessica likes Aaron's suggestion for reorganization. When it comes to funding, she likes some of the other actions that we had under Science and Data about identifying BMPs. She noted that addressing water quality in conversations is difficult. So, maybe having Science and Data address this would be a good strategy. Perhaps that would be a good compromise.

David asked for any more comments from online.

Lisa noted that if we want to include more on EJ, then the Anacostia River comes to mind, and we could certainly do something to address it.

Chris asked Lisa to scroll up to Conservation Objective 1.

Lisa noted that we had moved it under our Goal 2.

Chris agreed that one should be Goal 1.

Lisa noted that the goals and objectives are big, and then we narrow them down via strategies and actions.

Chris supported moving Goal 2 to Goal 1.

David asked about integrating "people" into the document.

Aaron felt that it will take some more time to come up with final wording.

Chris wanted to make sure that climate change was integrated into the SP, somewhere. He felt that it fits in there somewhere.

David asked if we had put Science/Data into each of the goals.

Lisa noted that's we had done so.

David noted that we may wish to address whether our Science and Data Committee would be seeking funding to do more science, or whether we would be using existing science.

Kent noted that generally we would be using existing science.

David noted the ACE Act would appear to require a lot of science, based on their criteria.

Kent agreed that's was the case, but noted that he hoped that would not be rigorously enforced.

Lisa noted that NFHP asks a lot. We need to think about the best way to use that funding to make it easier on ourselves.

Kent noted that we know what we do best but, we can start looking for other opportunities.

Wilson asked what metrics we will have to provide: 1) to Congress, and 2) to NFHAP, if we are going to be annually evaluated. And, if the latter, then does it make any difference what outline we use for our SP.

Lisa addressed how we had been evaluated in the past. The USFWS evaluated us based on three sections. NFHP had removed Section 2 of that approach. She explained why NFHP made the changes they did. She is assuming that they will use some metrics for evaluation, but we don't yet know what those are going to be.

Wilson noted that we will have to justify ourselves to Congress, and we know what we have to do to quality for being an FHP.

Pat noted that the previous SP wasn't keyed to the annual evaluation procedure, so this one need not be.

Wilson asked if it would be useful to have a document comparing each of the three group's outputs.

Lisa thought that she could put something together.

Kent said that he, Lisa and Jessica would work on the first draft of the strategic plan. He asked if everyone was good with using the goal-structured format.

Everyone was okay with that approach.

Wilson clarified that Lisa, Kent and Jessica will change the order of the goals, putting water quality in third place.

Russ asked, when are we going to address the administrative needs and how to cover our financial needs?

Lisa noted that the actions were not fully fleshed out during this exercise.

Kent said the next phase of this will be combining everything. He, Lisa and Jessica will do that.

Aaron asked if they could put a document online that we can use track changes in.

Kent indicated that there are some real projects out there in Science and Data that we need. Also, we need to try to address what the partners need.

David noted one challenge is getting the partners to answer.

Chris asked about Kent's blue carbon idea.

Kent noted that it is listed in the strategies right now. But all we can do is explore it.

Jessie said we need to settle on Goals, Objectives, and Strategies, before we decide on actions.

David noted that will occur in November.

Aaron noted that if we can't come up with something, we need to put them in the parking lot.

Jessica said that we should have a strategy under each item, and if we don't, we should ask why it is there.

Bob said, in talking about the Science and Data Committee, can we have them make the Species-Habitat Matrix more useful to user groups. I.e., if he wants to fish for striped bass, in which habitats should he look?

Kent said it wasn't set up for that use.

Bob agreed, but if we could make it more useful, perhaps we would generate more support. If someone is looking at it, we could capture an email address, then solicit funds.

Kent said that was a good idea. We would have to go back and look at the Matrix.

Mari-Beth said it wasn't really designed for that.

Marek noted that we would need habitat maps to link into the Matrix.

Kent noted that would take time.

Wilson suggested that we flag strategies/actions which would require more staff capacity.

Russ agreed that we should put some aspirational aspects in the plan. He supported Wilson's idea as a useful one.

Marek asked about the idea of having a parking lot for actions that we think are useful but we haven't been able to do.

Lisa indicated that she did have a parking lot of action items from the last plan. She noted that we have changed a lot during the past five years.

Marek noted that we may come up with actions that we simply don't have the capacity for, we shouldn't just throw those away.

Kent felt that we could keep those in a parking lot.

Mari-Beth said that we could identify the ones we can do with partners.

Lisa shared the ones that we had "parked" in 2017.

Chris said that we don't want to hit "delete" on any of these.

Marek noted that the parking lot periodically does get cold.

Lisa indicated that she would include the list in the briefing materials for the next meeting.

Chris noted that we had winnowed down our list of action items significantly.

Lisa noted that five years ago, we just threw out actions, then voted. She asked if we had a better way to do that exercise.

Chris wondered about pulling out that list.

Alexa said that they are old, but we can look at them.

Jessie asked if Lisa, after we do some work on the goals, objectives and strategies, could send out the draft and asked members to populate it with actions.

Lisa indicated that she could do that.

Kent noted if everyone comes with one or two ideas for each of them, that will be a bunch.

Once the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies are agreed upon, each SC member should develop 1-3 action items for each strategy to vote on prior to Action Planning.

Russ suggested that we use survey monkey ahead of time to narrow them down.

Bob asked if the next meeting would focus solely on the Action Plan?

Kent and Lisa noted we had finished in one day last time.

Bob asked if we should invite a person of color to come from a partner organization and ask them what we can do for them.

Alexa felt that we shouldn't put more work on them.

Kent and Chris noted that we had invited Ambrose and he had done a presentation for us online.

Bob said that he was talking about getting a young person, someone in the field, and they would learn a lot from the process.

Kent agreed the idea was good. He suggested that perhaps we could get someone who is engaged in a project in an underserved community.

Russ said that they have a really intense EJ program. Someone asked about someone from near where the Annual Meeting is going to be held.

Lisa noted that students are not really our audience. But the Billion Oyster Project is in our wheelhouse.

Alexa noted that if we brought someone in who is getting paid to work on the project, would be good.

Kent felt that it doesn't have to be a person of color.

Lisa agreed. Lisa noted that the last time we did this, we had assessed the threats in each subregion. She noted that we may wish to keep the threats in mind, as we develop actions. She noted that this may be helpful in deciding where we want our actions to go.

4:26 pm Kent asked if we had achieved what we need. He thought that we had. He noted that this stuff isn't easy. He asked the question to his group today, should ACFHP exist. Some felt it should, others weren't so sure. He noted that it is a very valuable exercise to question our existence.

Chris noted that we shouldn't question the most successful partnership in the country.

Kent noted that we do need to examine what changes that we need to make. He felt that ACFHP is fundamentally making connections across a broad geographic range.

Lisa stated that we do need to get better about leveraging our time. She asked us to think about what we are doing and how ACFHP might be able to assist, and thereby enable us to count that time.

Kent noted that putting together an endorsement could count.

Russ noted that he has cited Havel et al. a number of times. The best thing about this group is our scope and expertise, but it creates multiple personality disorder. During the next five years, we have to aim small, and get more capacity for Lisa, and leverage the science and data information. There is going to be a ton of money on the ground, and our funding is small potatoes.

Kent noted if RAWA comes through, there will be a lot more funding.

Lisa said, what if we use funds toward a report that we have done. Maybe we can combine information-sharing with projects on the ground. Our communication may be a larger component and we can use it for operational funding.

Kent thanked David Arnold for the time he put in, as well as Jessica and Lisa for the time they put in. He noted that David is being paid only for his travel and not for his time. Kent noted that it was good to work with David again. He didn't think that we could have done this without a facilitator. Kent reviewed next steps. We will work collaboratively on making the adjustments. We really need to make this work. This is more and more challenging as we have redoubled our work and hosted all of those Teams meetings. He noted that's it was great to see everyone in person for a change. He thanked us for all of our efforts. He noted how difficult travel is these days. He wished everyone would stay healthy and happy. He thanked Jessica for her work with the virtual team.

4:34 pm The meeting adjourned.