



Conservation Action Plan 2025-2026





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2025-2026 Action Plan

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) 2025 - 2026 Action Plan is the final subset of the 2022 - 2026 ACFHP Conservation Strategic Plan. It contains a subset of objectives, strategies, and related actions that can be accomplished over the course of a two-year period. These actions will be carried out by the ACFHP Director or Action Lead, with the help of subgroups as necessary.

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A. On-The-Ground Implementation Objectives

On-the-Ground Implementation Objective 1: Conserve¹ and connect priority aquatic habitats to improve ecosystem function and increase climate resilience for fish, people, and nature.

Strategy A.1.1: Fund on-the-ground projects that conserve and/or connect Subregional Priority Habitats.

Action 1: Annually fund at least two habitat conservation projects consistent with ACFHP priorities.

Action 2: Annually seek funding for at least one project that conserves or reconnects subregional priority habitats or improves water quality and hydrology.

Action 3: Track project outcomes for the purpose of reporting conservation results to stakeholders and NFHP.

Strategy A.1.2: Improve access to fish habitat conservation funding for organizations working in/with under-resourced communities.

Action 1: Update the annual ACFHP project funding application to align with requirements in the newly reauthorized ACE Act.

¹Conserve is to protect, restore, and enhance.

²Historically under-resourced counties are those identified as economically distressed with the highest percentages of underserved populations. Underserved populations are those that meet certain racial and poverty criteria, as determined by the DEQ Environmental Justice Program.

On-the-Ground Implementation Objective 2: Collectively advance and elevate the work of ACFHP partners to support transformational³ conservation projects on priority habitats

Strategy A.2.1: Leverage relationships to support transformational projects at the landscape scale that conserve and/or connect Subregional Priority Habitats.

Action 1: Work with resource agencies to identify projects for Federal Highway Administration & State Dept. of Transportation funds to support culvert passage projects for river herring or other ESA-species' range limits.

Strategy A.2.2: Support projects that conserve and/or connect Subregional Priority Habitats.

Action 1: Identify strategies to support fish conservation in FERC hydropower relicensing & re-evaluation plans.

³“Transformational” can also be defined as catalyzing landscape-scale conservation projects.



B. Science & Data Objectives

Science and Data Objective 1: Develop and synthesize information and products that help identify or assess fish habitat conservation activities that support ACFHP goals.

Strategy B.1.1: Evaluate, update, and maintain ACFHP's existing science and data products.

Action 1: Maintain an interactive online map of projects funded/supported by ACFHP that provides a brief narrative to highlight projects.

Action 2: Provide access to ACFHP project information via the interactive NFHP Project Database & Accomplishment Map.

Strategy B.1.2: Evaluate the status of ACFHP's fish habitat restoration projects.

Action 1: Distribute survey for project updates created by Science and Data Committee.

Action 2: Use information from the project survey to update ACFHP's interactive online map with brief narratives, photos, links to project and partner websites, etc.

Action 3: Compile and report on the status and outcomes of past-funded projects.

Strategy B.1.3: Develop fish habitat conservation tools and resources that support managers and practitioners.

Action 1: Convene at least one Science & Data Workshop.

Action 2: Identify new members for Science & Data Committee based on SAV Priority.

Action 3: Develop a Guidance Document on SAV seed-transfer practices in partnership with others.

Strategy B.1.4: Develop the fish habitat conservation tools and resources that support under-resourced communities in whichever ways are most relevant to said communities.

Action items related to this strategy were previously implemented in the 2023-2024 Action Plan

Strategy B.1.5: Strategically utilize science and data tools to focus project solicitation and selection on high priority areas identified in ACFHP's mapping efforts on habitats and climate vulnerability.

Action 1: Develop a strategy to support seed-based SAV restoration.

Action 3: Incorporate S&D tools into NFHP funding proposal development requirements.

C. Outreach & Communication Objectives

Outreach and Communication Objective 1: Promote ACFHP’s mission and vision to target audiences to grow our influence and impact.

Strategy C.1.1: Develop new and evaluate/update current printed and digital content.

Action 1: Review and update communication materials (website, printed materials, etc.) with the intent of making them more user-friendly and ACFHP brand specific.

Action 2: Create a dynamic and engaging ArcGIS StoryMap to highlight ACFHPs mission, emphasize the importance of collaboration among conservation partners, and enhance public engagement in support of healthy, sustainable fish habitats.

Outreach and Communication Objective 2: Share and disseminate information about the products, projects, and services of ACFHP and its partners to further the conservation of fish habitat.

Strategy C.2.1: Disseminate communication materials via digital platforms and participate at professional conferences/tradeshows to extend our coverage.

Action 1: Merge NFHP Project Accomplishments Map with the ACFHP project page to promote the NFHP program at large.

Action 2: Minimum of 4 social media posts/mo., 4 website posts/yr., and 2 conferences/tradeshows/workshops/yr.

Action 3: Invite partners who are not on the steering committee to give a short presentation on their current projects at a steering committee meeting and discuss what role ACFHP played or could play in advancing their habitat missions.

Action 4: Share case studies and one-pagers of successful projects at conferences and through social media.

Strategy C.2.2: Seek opportunities to expand media engagement with ACFHP products, projects, and services.

Action 1: Develop outreach content in collaboration with other regional fish habitat partnerships to contribute to the 20th NFHP Anniversary Campaign in 2025.

Action 2: Review and identify current and new partners, respectively.

Action 3: Develop an outreach plan and assess ACFHP's capacity for implementation by Fall 2025 Steering Committee meeting.

Strategy C.2.3: Publicize partners' actions, projects, and products via various communication platforms.

Action 1: Periodically update State Fact Sheets and consider adding language that promotes NFHP/ACFHP.

Outreach and Communication Objective 3: Engage with those directing funding streams to promote our conservation priorities.

Strategy C.3.1: Educate/inform funding sources such that they consider ACFHP's priorities when identifying conservation projects to support.

Action 1: Add a cover letter to the ACFHP Memorandum of Understanding and By-Laws describing the benefits of being an ACFHP member.

Action 2: Share upcoming federal funding opportunities with partners (e.g., FEMA, NRCS, etc.).



D. Operations Objectives

Operations Objective 1: Utilize funding and expertise to achieve the greatest benefits for fish habitat conservation.

Strategy D.1.1: Provide and direct funds to high quality conservation projects through annual requests for proposals (NFHP, ACFHP general, NMFS Habitat and Recreational Fisheries, etc.).

Action 1: Pursue new project funding and collaborations to support on-the-ground restoration, science, and outreach projects.

Action 2: Implement the Business Plan and periodically update.

Operations Objective 2: Enhance administrative capacity for receiving, distributing, and maintaining ACFHP funding to increase Partnership productivity.

Strategy D.2.1: Explore alternative means to administer grant awards and donations for conservation, science, and outreach projects.

Action 1: Coordinate with new Beyond the Pond working group to expand their functional role in supporting ACFHP and other regional Fish Habitat Partnerships.

Strategy D.2.2: Expand organizational capacity of ACFHP.

Action 1: Implement a fundraising strategy led by the ACFHP development subcommittee.

Action 2: Add representative from Maine to the ACFHP steering committee.

Strategy D.2.3: Ensure alignment between ACFHP and NFHP’s priorities.

Action 1: ACFHP Director liaises with NFHP as needed and provides updates to steering committee; steering committee provides high-level thoughts to convey to NFHP as needed.

Action 2: ACFHP Director attends all NFHP and FHP coordinator meetings.

Operations Objective 3: Achieve a fully inclusive Partnership to engage and empower existing and new members.

Strategy D.3.1: Evaluate the composition of the ACFHP members and committees toward increasing capacity, expertise, engagement, and diversity.

Action 1: Engage with partners via a virtual or in-person workshop to provide status updates, strengths, and feedback on needs from ACFHP.

Action 2: Identify steering committee and partner organizations missing representation (e.g., tribal, under-resourced communities, etc.) and engage them to consider becoming ACFHP partners or members of the steering committee.

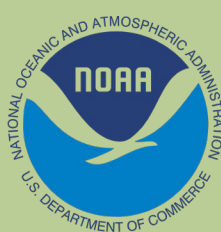
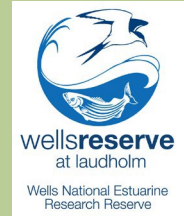
Strategy D.3.2: Recruit new ACFHP partners representing diverse communities that benefit from healthy fish habitat.

Action items related to this strategy were previously implemented in the 2023-2024 Action Plan

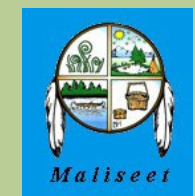
Strategy D.3.3: Through habitat restoration RFPs, evaluate and promote funding opportunities for projects in under-resourced communities.

Action 1: Distribute RFPs to organizations and/or academic partners representing under-resourced communities.

ACFHP PARTNERS



New England
Fishery Management
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MERRIMACK RIVER
WATERSHED COUNCIL

