

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan: Western Native Trout Initiative

FY 2011-FY2012 Progress Report



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On the cover: Fly fishing in high quality aquatic habitat at Glacier Slough in the upper Swan River Valley, Montana. From—National Fish Habitat Board. 2010. *Through a fish's eye: The status of fish habitats in the United States 2010*. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Washington D.C. (Photo: L. Lohr).

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL FISH
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TROUT INITIATIVE
FY2011-FY2012 PROGRESS REPORT

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WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE
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Executive Summary – The National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) is an effort to protect, restore, and enhance aquatic habitats and fish communities using a network of Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) across the nation, for which each have a region, species, or aquatic system focus. The FHP that the Columbia River Fisheries Program Office (CRFPO) primarily works with is the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI), which protects and restores a suite of 20 native salmonids in 12 western states. During FY2011 and FY2012, the CRFPO assisted with the implementation of WNTI primarily through compiling and reviewing project proposals, and assisting with implementation of projects recommended by the WNTI steering committee to receive NFHAP funding. The CRFPO submitted over 10 proposals each fiscal year for consideration by Region 1 Fisheries and WNTI on the behalf of external and internal partners. Projects submitted by the CRFPO that received NFHAP funding through WNTI include the Redband trout range-wide status assessment in FY2011 (\$92,936) and Mabel Creek resident cutthroat trout passage and habitat restoration in FY2012 (\$27,000), both of which were completed in FY2013. Additional WNTI activities by the CRFPO during FY2011 and FY2012 consisted of tracking and reporting requirements of ongoing projects submitted during previous fiscal years.

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Introduction

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan describes an approach to conserve aquatic habitats supporting fish and other aquatic resources in the United States (National Fish Habitat Board (NFHB) 2006, 2012). Initial efforts to develop the plan were led by the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, who in 2002 recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) initiate a nationwide effort to protect fish habitat similar to the approach used in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The USFWS agreed to support the effort, which became known as the National Fish Habitat Initiative, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) assumed the lead in the initiative's development and coordination with partners. After several regional and national workshops among state and federal resource agencies, tribes, conservation organizations, and corporate representatives, a core work group, with assistance from numerous teams, produced the Draft National Fish Habitat Action Plan in 2005, which was finalized in 2006 and a revised second edition was released in 2012.

The mission of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (hereafter referred to as the "Action Plan" or NFHAP) is to protect, restore and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people (NFHB 2006, 2012). Goals of the Action Plan are to:

- Protect and maintain intact and healthy aquatic systems.
- Prevent further degradation of fish habitats that have been adversely affected.
- Reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve the overall health of fish and other aquatic organisms.
- Increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species.

Several objectives in the original Action Plan have been achieved so that objectives were revised in the second edition. Current objectives include:

- Achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships that improve ecological condition, restore natural processes, or prevent the decline of intact and healthy systems leading to better fish habitat conditions and increased fishing opportunities.
- Establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by the Fish Habitat Partnerships by 2013.
- Broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by increasing fishing opportunities, fostering the participation of local communities – especially young people – in conservation activities, and raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitats play in the quality of life and economic well-being of local communities.

- Fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and its associated database to empower strategic conservation action supported by broadly available scientific information, and integrate socio-economic data in the analysis to improve people's lives in a manner consistent with fish habitat conservation goals.
- Communicate the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Fish Habitat Partnerships, as well as new opportunities and voluntary approaches for conserving fish habitat, to the public and conservation partners.

A governing board (i.e., the NFHB), was formed soon after release of the initial Action Plan and has two standing committees. The Communications Committee advises the NFHB and Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) on outreach efforts and initiates; and the Science and Data Committee provides scientific assistance, tools, and habitat assessments at the national scale, such as a national fish habitat assessment that was completed in 2010 (NFHB 2010).

The primary work units of the Action Plan are the Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs), which are focused on distinct geographic areas, species, habitat types, or aquatic systems. The FHPs involve diverse groups of public and private members committed to pursuing aquatic habitat conservation, achieving goals of the Action Plan, and seeking official recognition from the NFHB, which entails following an established process (e.g., preparation of a strategic plan by each FHP, presentation to the NFHB). Recognition confers eligibility for NFHAP funding, which has largely been through the USFWS, and technical assistance. To date, 18 FHPs have received recognition and 4 are considered candidates (Figure 1).

In implementing the Action Plan, the FHP that the Columbia River Fisheries Program Office (CRFPO) primarily works with is the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI). The initiative is a non-regulatory, science-based, cooperative conservation effort endorsed by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) and is focused on protecting and restoring western native trout. Efforts leading to formation of WNTI started in 2005 with agencies in 12 western states meeting with Federal resource agencies to explore how to collectively address conservation needs of western native trout. With financial support from Federal Aid to a Sportfish Restoration multi-state conservation grant, a broad partnership with representatives from state, Federal, tribal, industry, and non-governmental entities developed the WNTI strategic plan (WNTI 2008). The initiative became a recognized FHP in 2008. An addendum was subsequently incorporated in the WNTI strategic plan in 2010, which primarily revised goals and objectives, as well as expanded the number of taxa considered native trout addressed by WNTI¹.

¹ Taxa addressed in original strategic plan: Apache trout, Bonneville cutthroat trout, bull trout, California golden trout, coastal cutthroat trout, Colorado River cutthroat trout, Gila trout, greenback cutthroat trout, Lahontan cutthroat trout, Little Kern golden trout, Paiute cutthroat trout, redband trout, Rio Grande cutthroat trout, westslope cutthroat trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

Additional taxa incorporated in the 2010 addendum: Arctic char, Arctic grayling, Dolly Varden, freshwater rainbow trout sub-species, freshwater kokanee within historical range, lake trout within historical range.

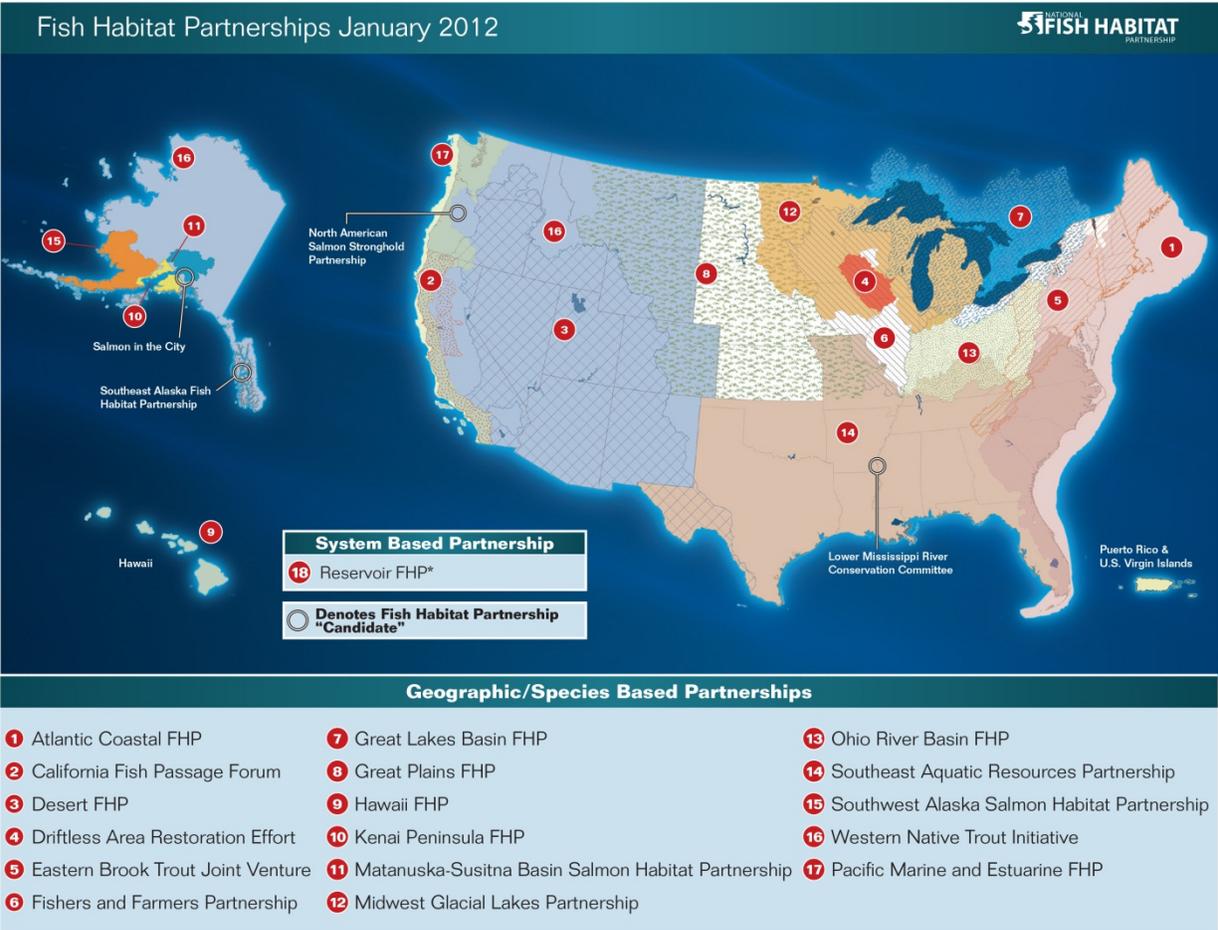


Figure 1. Eighteen fish habitat partnerships recognized by the National Fish Habitat Board and four candidate partnerships. (Source: <http://www.fishhabitat.org>)

The revised WNTI Strategic Plan contains four goals with various objectives associated with each goal (WNTI 2008). These include:

- Goal 1 – Protect, restore and enhance western native trout populations and measure success in improving the status of western native trout.
 - Identify and characterize conservation populations by 2015.
 - Utilize assessment data to protect, restore or enhance important native trout populations through focused actions.
 - Integrate the use of non-native salmonids with conservation needs of western native trout species in a manner that recognizes the biological, cultural and economic importance of each.
 - Support development of a western native trout database with common data fields and data descriptions

- Goal 2 – Protect intact watersheds, and enhance or restore habitats that have been impacted by human activities or catastrophic natural events.
 - Utilize habitat assessment data to identify, protect, restore or enhance existing native trout strongholds.
 - Encourage new research on native trout related to climate change, energy development, invasive species, and human encroachment or development in native trout habitats.
 - Support local and regional recommendations for western native trout habitat restoration and enhancement actions and seek additional funding from WNTI partners.

- Goal 3 – Develop collaborative approaches and partnerships among agencies and stakeholders that emphasize cooperation and shared effort, and increase funding to implement high-priority projects for the protection, restoration or enhancement of western native trout.
 - By 2015, support and assist in the completion of conservation agreements or recovery plans for all western native trout based on collaborative development and publication of realistic conservation strategies with priorities at the local and regional level.
 - Foster and support a diverse array of western native trout conservation actions based on public, private, and conservation organization partnerships. These efforts should be formed around distinct watersheds, species, or geographic areas, based on collaborative conservation or recovery plans.
 - Promote and foster new partnerships at all levels to increase funding and public support for identified needs.
 - Develop and recommend projects for funding.
 - Develop a long-term funding approach and plan to secure funding from NFHAP and alternative sources to fund both habitat and non-habitat WNTI Projects.

- Goal 4 – Develop and implement effective communication, education and outreach programs as a tool to increase public awareness and encourage partnerships that benefit western native trout.
 - Update the communications and outreach plan for WNTI by July 2011.
 - Annually develop communication products for WNTI partners, anglers and others.
 - Use the WNTI web site as a comprehensive source of information on western native trout species.
 - Serve as a clearinghouse and source of information about how to obtain funding for native trout projects recommended through the WNTI regional sub-committees.
 - Develop and promote western native trout educational opportunities through web page links to the various state, Tribal and NGO organizations that have native trout conservation and programs with educational materials about western native trout for use in schools and community-based events.

Operation of WNTI is guided by a steering committee, which consists of state members each representing one of the four geographical areas within the 12 states addressed by WNTI (i.e., Northwest, middle and northern Rockies, Great Basin, and Southwest); Federal agencies (i.e., USFWS, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management); tribal and conservation representatives; and a chair appointed by WAFWA's Fisheries Committee. Various species and regional working groups provided assessments of obstacles and opportunities for improving the status of native trout in the initial strategic plan, and some are presently active in conducting technical review and recommending potential restoration actions. One function of the steering committee is to annually recommend proposed restoration actions to the NFHB for approval of NFHAP funding from the USFWS.

Relationship to the Fisheries Program Strategic Plan

Implementation of this project demonstrates application of the Pacific Region's 2009-2013 Fisheries Program Strategic Plan. The following National goals (NG) and Regional objectives (RO) have been addressed by this project during FY2011 and FY2012 and brief descriptions are provided.

- NG1 Open, interactive communication between the Fisheries Program and its partners.
 - RO1.1 Develop and maintain relationships with partners throughout the Pacific Region.
 - Project entailed working with various partners (e.g., state and Federal natural resource agencies, conservation groups, watershed councils, and other USFWS programs) to develop and implement proposals selected for funding to support WNTI.

- NG2 America's streams, lakes, estuaries, and wetlands are functional ecosystems that support self-sustaining communities of fish and other aquatic resources.
 - RO2.1 Facilitate management of aquatic habitats on national and regional scales by working with Tribes, States, partners and other stakeholders.
 - Proposals addressed habitat restoration actions and assessments needed for the conservation of western native trout.

 - RO2.4 Expand opportunities to connect people with nature, engage citizen scientists and volunteers, and temporarily employ youth in the aquatic habitat conservation and monitoring programs and activities we lead or support.
 - Funded proposals included opportunities to engage students and the public in educational activities.

- NG3 Self-sustaining populations of native fish and other aquatic resources that maintain species diversity, provide recreational opportunities for the American public, and meet the needs of tribal communities.

- RO3.2 Maintain healthy, diverse, self-sustaining populations of fish and other aquatic resources
- Proposals addressed habitat restoration actions and assessments needed for the conservation of western native trout.

Approach

The CRFPO has been involved with implementing WNTI since 2006. This Progress Report describes the CRFPO activities related to WNTI during FY2011 and FY2012. The CRFPO has engaged in two general types of activities to support implementation of WNTI, compilation/review of proposals and implementing projects selected by the WNTI steering committee. The same process was used in FY2011 and FY2012 for both types of activities.

Compilation/review of Proposals

The general process for compiling and reviewing proposals was for the WNTI steering committee to request proposals during June or July by posting a notice (general information, selection considerations, application form—see Appendix) on their web site. By October, completed applications were sent to local USFWS Fisheries Offices where each proposal was entered into the Fisheries Operational Needs System (FONS). Each of the five USFWS Regions within the geographic scope of WNTI (i.e., Pacific-R1, Southwest-R2, Mountain-Prairie-R6, Alaska-R7, and Pacific Southwest-R8) conferred with the States to identify the top 10 proposals in each region. The WNTI steering committee reviewed the top proposals from all regions and selected a number, based on the anticipated amount of NFHAP funds available for WNTI projects (typically \$500,000-600,000), that were recommended to the NFHB for funding.

Specific to the CRFPO, the WNTI notice was distributed by CRFPO staff to an extensive list of internal and external partners and professional contacts throughout Oregon and southwest Washington with the offer to discuss questions about WNTI and assist with applications. Information from applications was entered into FONS by the CRFPO, the amount of WNTI funds requested was adjusted (i.e., 15% increase for CRFPO overhead), and the completed application forms and any supporting materials also were uploaded into the system. In addition, proposals that were appropriate for other funding sources at the CRFPO (e.g., National Fish Passage Program) were noted so that they could be considered by other programs. All proposals were ranked based on criteria developed by CRFPO staff (Table 1) that considered six attributes (action, primary species affected, geographic scope, cost-share, other actions, and relative effect). Proposed actions that were specifically identified in WNTI assessments or other plans, primarily affected listed species over a large area, had a relatively large cost-share, were necessary for other actions, and expected to have a large immediate effect were considered the highest priority. The proposals and their resulting ranks were discussed with CRFPO supervisors and management.

Table 1. Criteria used by CRFPO to rank proposals.

Attribute	Score ¹		
	1	2	3
Action	Specifically noted in WNTI assessment or recovery/management plans	Issue or category of action noted in assessment or plans	Not specifically addressed in assessment or plans
Primary species affected	Federal or stated listed	Special status	Other
Geographic scope	Range-wide or regional	Relevant to watershed or multiple populations of primary species	Reach or site specific
Cost-share	WNTI request < 0.33 total	WNTI request 0.34-0.66 total	WNTI request > 0.67 total
Other actions	Proposal is necessary for other actions	Proposal completes ongoing actions	Proposal is stand alone
Relative effect	Large immediate effect expected (species or habitat—e.g., expanding access to relatively large portion of available habitat, addressing highly limiting factor, etc.) or supports actions(s) with high confidence to have a large effect	Overall immediate effect likely to be modest	Considerable uncertainty of likely relative effect

¹ Scores were summed among attributes for each proposal, and proposals were then ranked in ascending order of their summed scores (lower scores considered higher priority). For ties in summed scores, proposals were ranked (in ascending order) by scores of individual attributes in the following order: relative effect, scope, cost-share, species, other actions, and action. Proposals that had identical scores for each attribute were ranked (in ascending order) base on the amount of funding requested from WNTI.

The CRFPO met with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Region 1 (R1) Fisheries to discuss proposals for actions in Oregon and their ranks. Because select areas of Washington are served by three Fisheries Offices, the CRFPO, Western Washington Office, and Mid-Columbia Office discussed proposals for actions in Washington and agreed upon their ranks. Region 1 Fisheries then requested Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to provide input on the proposals and their ranks. Upon receiving input from the Fisheries Offices and states, R1 Fisheries then identified the top 10 proposals from Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and provided the proposals and their ranks to the WNTI steering committee.

Implementing Projects

The CRFPO is responsible for projects selected by the WNTI steering committee in Oregon, excluding the Klamath River basin, and southwest Washington. The level of involvement by the CRFPO, and USFWS overall, in project implementation varies with the nature of an individual project (e.g., conducted solely by an external partner or with internal collaboration through the

Partners for Fish and Wildlife program). Activities by the CRFPO common to all WNTI projects include: establishing a funding mechanism (e.g., cooperative agreement with an external partner or authorization for internal partner to expend funds); ensuring that all applicable permit and environmental compliance requirements are met; ensuring that work is conducted according to agreements; and conducting close-out and accomplishment reporting. Although most projects selected by WNTI are intended to be completed in two years, construction schedules, unforeseen delays, or required monitoring may necessitate projects being active during more than two years.

Products

Compilation/review of Proposals

The CRFPO submitted 13 proposals (i.e., FONS entries and supporting materials) for consideration by WNTI in FY2011 and 10 proposals in FY2012 (Table 2). Some proposals had been previously submitted but were not selected for funding. At the request of our partners, some of these proposals were revised and subsequently submitted. Three proposals were funded in FY2011. Of these three, one proposal, Status of Coyote Lake Lahontan cutthroat trout (FONS 2009-155), was moved to the Lahontan National Fish Hatchery Complex for implementation because it was found eligible for and received funding from the Desert Terminal Lakes program. Another proposal, Genetic analysis of Great Basin redband trout (FONS 2009-147), was moved to Abernathy Fish Technology Center for implementation because the center would be conducting the analysis and it received funding from WNTI. The third proposal, Redband trout range-wide status assessment (FONS 2009-154), remained at the CRFPO and received funding from WNTI. One proposal was funded in FY2012—Mabel Creek resident cutthroat trout passage and habitat restoration (FONS 2011-186) received funding from WNTI. Therefore, the CRFPO received WNTI funding for two projects during FY2011-FY2012.

The first project, redband trout range-wide status assessment, enabled application of a consistent assessment approach to redband trout among six states (California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington), focusing only on areas outside the range of anadromous individuals (Figure 2). A series of geographically-focused workshops have been held with local biologists and managers to gather the best available information on redband trout and aquatic habitats. The completed project will develop a geo-referenced database with data relevant to status and conservation of redband populations (e.g., abundance, trends, habitat condition, genetic integrity, and threats) and produce a comprehensive status review including priority areas and actions for conservation. In addition to WNTI, resource agencies in each of the six states have contributed matching funds, as well as other Federal agencies. As of the end of FY2012, data was being entered into the database and summarized for the status review. The project is expected to be completed during summer 2013.

The second project, Mabel Creek resident cutthroat trout passage and habitat restoration, will improve habitat conditions and access for cutthroat trout in a drainage largely inaccessible by anadromous fish. Six fish passage barriers will be removed or modified to restore unimpeded access to one mile of stream (Figure 3), instream complexity will be improved to one mile, and almost a mile of road and associated fill will be removed from the floodplain. In addition to

three USFWS funding sources (i.e., Partners for Fish and Wildlife, National Fish Passage Program, and NFHAP-WNTI), a private industry, watershed council, state agency, and fish conservation organization are contributing to the project. As of the end of FY2012, a cooperative agreement between the Service and North Coast Watershed Council had been completed and on-the-ground work initiated. The project is expected to be completed during winter 2013.

Implementing Projects

Additional activities during FY2011-FY2012 consisted of required tracking and reporting on progress for ongoing projects submitted to WNTI during previous years. Although some projects were ultimately funded by sources other than WNTI, all are summarized here:

- ARRA Fish passage and screens at two diversions on Eagle Creek, Powder River (Accomplishment A248)—project originally submitted to WNTI but was not funded, received ARRA funding in FY2009 and later expanded (\$236,000 total). Final performance measures claimed in FY2012.
- Honey Creek diversion 2: Redband trout restoration and Warner sucker recovery (Accomplishment A249)—project submitted to WNTI and received funding in FY2009 (\$97,010). Final performance measures claimed in FY2012.
- Fish screen at Malheur NWR to protect redband trout and exclude invasive carp (Accomplishment A253)—project originally submitted to WNTI but was not funded, received NFPP funding in FY2010 (\$22,200). Final performance measures claimed in FY2012.
- Deep Creek and Crazy Creek fish passage and habitat restoration project (Accomplishment A254)—project submitted to WNTI and received funding in FY2010 (\$72,554). Anticipate final performance measures will be claimed in FY2013.

Table 2. Proposals compiled into FONS and submitted to R1 Fisheries during FY2011 and FY2012.

FONS number	Title	Primary species	Requested funds		Partners ⁵
			WNTI	Total	
<i>FY2011</i>					
2008-136	White Salmon River Watershed Fish Passage and Hazard Inventory for CCT, Washington	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$150,990	\$173,070	Underwood SWCD, Yakima Nation, WDFW, Spring Creek NFH
2008-137	Trout Lake Irrigation Efficiencies Feasibility Study for CCT, White Salmon River Watershed	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$93,520	\$300,427	Underwood SWCD, Klickitat County, Yakama Nation, Trout Lake irrigators, NRCS, WDFW
2009-147 ¹	Genetic Analysis of Great Basin Redband Trout, Oregon	Redband trout	\$70,140	\$120,416	ODFW, TU, NFWF
2009-150	Hunter Creek Habitat Restoration for Redband Trout (Malheur River, Oregon)	Redband trout	\$48,057	\$122,537	BPT, NRCS, BLM, BPA
2009-153	Middle McKenzie River Side Channel Enhancement Project for Bull Trout (Willamette River)	Bull trout	\$65,464	\$419,764	OWEB, Hood-Willamette River RAC, OGF, McKenzie River WC, USFS, McKenzie HS
2009-154 ²	Redband Trout Range-Wide Status Assessment	Redband trout	\$92,936	\$140,036	ODFW, IDFG, WDFW, MFWP, NDOW, CDFG, BLM, USFS
2009-155 ³	Status of Coyote Lake Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, Oregon	Lahontan cutthroat trout	\$88,184	\$254,604	ODFW, BLM, TU, NFWF
2010-176	Prioritizing Implementation of Bull Trout Habitat Projects in the Lewis River Basin, WA	Bull trout	\$48,631	\$76,431	Pacificorp, WDFW, USFS, Cowlitz Tribe, Olympic Resource Management, CRFPO
2010-178	Malheur NWR Fish Traps to Monitor and Protect Redband Trout and Reduce Carp Passage	Redband trout	\$68,095	\$3,362,345	Malheur NWR, Malheur Wildlife Associates, ODFW
2010-180	Fox Creek USACE Channel Restoration for Redband Trout, N. Fork John Day River, Oregon	Redband trout	\$68,645	\$161,522	Bella Vista Foundation, PFW

Table 2. Continued.

FONS number	Title	Primary species	Requested funds		Partners ⁵
			WNTI	Total	
2011-182	Lewis River Bull Trout Spawning Potentials, Washington	Bull trout	\$26,824	\$35,849	WDFW, Pacificcorp
2011-183	Owens Creek Coastal Cutthroat Trout Enhancement (Long Tom River watershed, Oregon)	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$187,012	\$320,787	BLM Siuslaw RAC, Finley NWR, OGF, Meyer Trust
2011-186	Upper Youngs River Passage and Habitat Restoration	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$81,830	\$240,430	NCWA, ODFW, OWEB, PFW, Campbell Group, TU
<i>FY2012</i>					
2008-137	Trout Lake Irrigation Efficiencies Feasibility Study for CCT, White Salmon River Watershed	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$93,518	\$300,425	Underwood SWCD, Klickitat County, Yakama Nation, Trout Lake irrigators, NRCS, WDFW, Trout Lake Community Council, TU, WDFW, WWT, WCC
2011-182	Lewis River Bull Trout Spawning Potentials, Washington	Bull trout	\$29,311	\$38,336	WDFW, Pacificcorp
2011-186 ⁴	Mabel Creek (Youngs River) Resident Cutthroat Trout Passage and Habitat Restoration	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$25,000	\$426,850	NCWA, ODFW, OWEB, PFW, Campbell Group, TU
2011-198	Effects of Non-native Brook Trout on Redband Trout in the Great Basin	Redband trout	\$75,330	\$178,932	ODFW, OSU
2011-199	Let's Make This Perfectly CLEAR (Habitat Restoration in Clear Creek for Bull Trout)	Bull trout	\$75,983	\$160,983	Eagle Valley SWCD, OWEB, PFW, Private landowners

Table 2. Continued.

FONS number	Title	Primary species	Requested funds		Partners ⁵
			WNTI	Total	
2011-200	Cusick Creek Going Back in Time! (Habitat Restoration for Redband Trout, Powder River)	Redband trout	\$75,983	\$380,237	Keating SWCD, OWEB, PFW, Private landowners
2011-201	Twentymile Creek Fish Passage and Screening for Redband Trout and Warner Sucker Recovery	Redband trout	\$116,897	\$361,397	Lake County Umbrella WC, BLM, PFW, Private landowners, Ruby Pipeline
2011-202	Chewaucan River Aquatic Habitat Restoration for Redband Trout – Phase 4 (2012 & 2013)	Redband trout	\$245,717	\$353,817	Lake County Umbrella WC, Private landowners, USFS
2011-203	Trout Creek Watershed (Deschutes) Habitat Improvement on Dick Creek for Redband Trout	Redband trout	\$58,449	\$118,449	USFS, PGE
2011-204	Cool Creek Fish Passage Improvement for Coastal Cutthroat Trout and Salmon	Coastal cutthroat trout	\$11,650	\$56,112	USFS, PWB, FFF, HS volunteers, MHCC, NW Steelheaders, PGE, FT, Sandy River Basin WC

¹ FONS moved to Abernathy Fish Technology Center and funded by WNTI FY2011.

² Funded by WNTI Fy2011.

³ FONS moved to Lahontan National Fish Hatchery Complex and funded by Desert Terminal Lakes Program FY2011.

⁴ Revised and funded by WNTI FY2012.

⁵ BLM-Bureau of Land Management, BPA-Bonneville Power Administration, BPT-Burns Paiute Tribe, CDFG-California Department of Fish and Game, CRFPO-Columbia River Fisheries Program Office, FFF-Fly Fisher's Foundation, FT-Freshwater Trust, HS-High School, IDFG-Idaho Department of Fish and Game, MFWP-Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, MHCC-Mount Hood Community College, NCWA-North Coast Watershed Association, NDOW-Nevada Department of Wildlife, NFH-National Fish Hatchery, NFWF-National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, NRCS-Natural Resources Conservation Service, NWR-National Wildlife Refuge, ODFW-Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, OGF-Oregon Governor's Fund, OSU-Oregon State University, OWEB-Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, PFW-Partner's for Fish and Wildlife, PGE-Portland General Electric, PWB-Portland Water Bureau, RAC-Resource Advisory Committee, SWCD-Soil and Water Conservation District, TU-Trout Unlimited, USFS-US Forest Service, WC-Watershed Council, WCC-Washington Conservation Commission, WDFW-Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, WWT-Washington Water Trust.

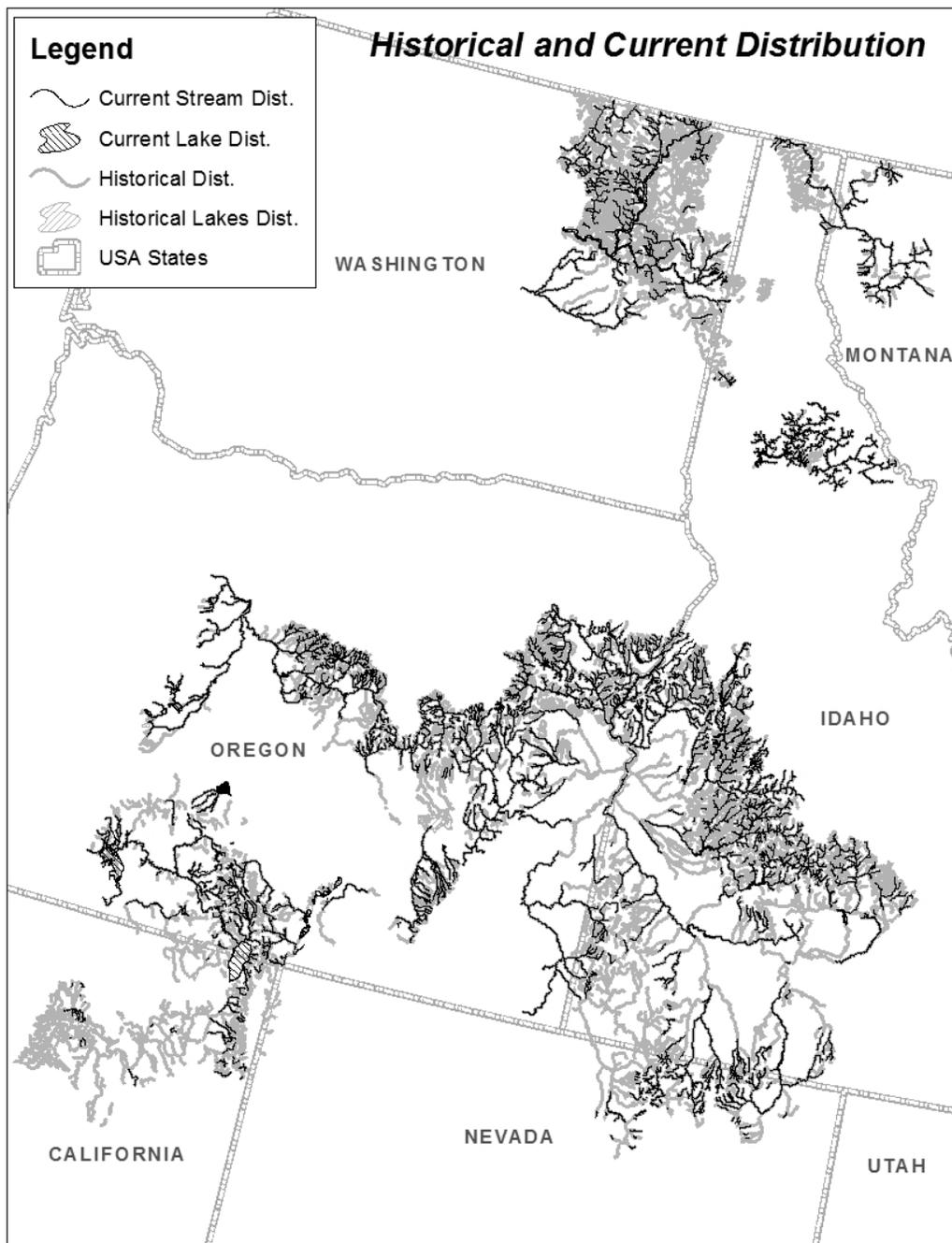


Figure 2. Distributional map of redband trout current distribution (dark) overlaying the historical distribution coverage (light) determined in 2012 (from May et al. 2012).



Figure 3. Tributary of Mabel Creek with culvert and road fill that will be removed from the floodplain to improve fish passage and stream habitat.

Conclusions

The CRFPO assisted with the implementation of WNTI during FY2011 and FY2012. Major activities included working with external and internal partners to generate project proposals; inputting proposals into FONS; participating with states, Fisheries Offices, and R1 Fisheries to rank proposals within a state; and assisting to implement projects selected by the WNTI steering committee. A project submitted by the CRFPO was selected by the WNTI steering committee for funding during each FY2011 and FY2012, which respectively will support conservation of interior redband trout (\$92,936) and improve habitat for coastal cutthroat trout (\$27,000). In the future, explicitly incorporating monitoring and associated funding to evaluate project effectiveness into the proposal review and selection process would improve the ability of selected projects to employ adaptive management (e.g., through the application of strategic habitat conservation).

Acknowledgements

The CRFPO gratefully thanks the numerous external and internal partners that have developed project proposals and applied for WNTI funding to conserve native trout and their habitats.

Literature Cited

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Appendix: WNTI Request for Proposals for 2011 and 2012

2011 Western Native Trout Initiative Project Application and Selection Process

The Western Native Trout Initiative is all about getting projects done that will help improve the abundance of western native trout across a variety of landscapes. WNTI, a collaborative effort of 12 western states including Alaska, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and many tribal and public or private conservation-minded organizations, annually solicits native trout conservation projects for funding.

WNTI's Goals and objectives are meant to gather project opportunities, funding, and partners together, to make a measurable impact on native trout populations and habitats. WNTI projects are and will be funded by many different entities and partners.

Each June or July, WNTI posts a project proposal request on its web-page that is sent to cooperators all across the west:

The Western Native Trout Initiative, a venture of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and a National Fish Habitat Partnership, is requesting the submittal of project proposals for the 2011 National Fish Habitat Action Plan 2010 funding cycle.

The Initiative, as in past years, requests that native trout conservation and recovery teams, local native trout support groups, and interested parties work with state, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and National Park Service biologists to review the various species needs, and submit project requests that address habitat or other management needs of the 20 fish species and sub-species served by WNTI.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service and WNTI maintain a list of projects that is over 4 years old, and is in constant need of revision as projects are completed or revised, and new projects are added. Also, one of the goals of the Initiative is to serve as a clearing house for matching projects to funding sources beyond just what is provided by the National Fish Habitat Board. The list of WNTI projects can also be helpful in seeking Congressional funding in the future.

The Western Native Trout Initiative works closely with the western states and 5 US Fish and Wildlife Service Regions to prioritize the project requests each year as funding becomes available. Decisions on what projects are moved forward for funding take place in late Fall, in accordance with the guidance provided by the National Fish Habitat Board.

The proposals are added to the US FWS "FONS" system, and then each FWS Regional office in the WNTI geographic area works with the states to determine the top 10 projects for their Region. The lists are completed by the end of November each year.

In December, the WNTI Steering Committee reviews these lists and determines which projects will be prioritized for a NFHAP funding allocation.

In order to help project proponents put forward the best possible projects, WNTI has a set of criteria by which projects are ranked and selected for funding. Project proponents should address these criteria in their project applications that are sent to the local or Regional Fish and Wildlife Service Western Native Trout Initiative coordinators for inclusion into the FWS FONS project system.

Criteria For Future Review of WNTI and NFHAP* Funded Projects

Goal: Provide the WNTI project applicants with some general guidelines and considerations that will be used to rank projects submitted through the WNTI system for funding

General considerations: (A yes is needed for the project to be ranked)

NFHAP/WNTI Related

- Is this a WNTI or NFHAP habitat conservation related priority eligible for NFHAP \$?
- Please specify which WNTI species and NFHAP habitat conservation objectives and strategies will be addressed by the project (see www.fishhabitat.org). Visit the WNTI website – www.westernnativetroutrout to see the WNTI Strategic Plan and WNTI species.

WNTI NON-NFHAP RELATED

- Is this proposal for another type of WNTI priority (eg. WNTI priorities that are not habitat conservation projects eligible for NFHAP \$).
 - If yes, specify which WNTI priorities will be achieved. (see WNTI Strategic Plan)

General Considerations

- Is the proposed project a priority need in a conservation or recovery plan, and what is the specific rank by the recovery/conservation Team?
 - If yes, what was its rank?
- Which NEPA, 404 or other state and federal permits are needed to execute the project and have they been acquired? If not, when will they be filed and obtained?
(Projects with completed NEPA/state permits will receive higher priority)
- Does the project have a high probability of being completed in the next 2 years if it is funded?
- What is the % of project funding needed from WNTI funding sources?
- Identify the types and amounts of Federal and non-federal match sources eg. direct monies and/or in kind services that are not already matched to other projects and how the match will be documented?

Specific considerations:

- Are the project success (eg biologic, physical and chemical) measurements described quantifiable and is there a clear description how they will be calculated and reported (eg stream miles, acres of habitat protected, restored or enhanced, fish population changes, etc. and repeatable)?

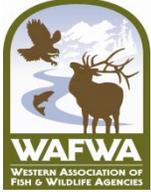
- Is the project described sufficiently to understand and evaluate the adequacy of its goals objectives, data collection methods, analyses, reporting requirements, resource needs, other outcomes, and its relationships or overall importance to the species or communities targeted?
- Is there sufficient information to assess whether the project goals and objectives can be accomplished at the costs and timelines identified?
- Is it clear why this funding source is being requested versus other funding source(s) or in addition to other funding sources?
- Did applicants apply to anyone else for funding for this project? Are the other funds considered duplicative, supplemental, or considered match?

Administrative Consideration

Which FWS Region? (1,2,6,7,8) _____

- Who are the various partners that will administer and participate in various administrative elements of the project and describe their roles?
- Who are the partners that will execute the project and report the findings. Describe their qualifications and roles?
- Did the partners provide adequate information to assess whether they have the experience and capacity to successfully achieve the goals and objectives as described in the proposal?
- Is there more than a single year of funding needed? If yes, specify.
- What are the various FWS administrative charges if those costs aren't included or already identified and described in the project proposal?
- Who is the responsible party for reporting requirements and the successful completion of this proposal and when will those outputs be delivered and who is a point of contact and what is the number we can call if our committee has questions on this project?

Please note that a project applicant may be asked to provide further information to the WNTI Steering Committee during the final ranking process.



Application for WNTI 2011 Funds

Application Deadline: September 1, 2010

Applicant Information

Organization (Grant Recipient): _____

Address: _____

Project Lead Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

FAX: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: _____

Location of Project: State : _____ Closest Town: _____

Lat: _____; Long: _____

Project Start Date: _____ Project Completion Date: _____

Applicant Signature:

Date

Amount of Funds Requested: \$ _____

Matching Contributions: \$ _____

Sources of Matching Contributions: _____

(List Partner names and Amounts) _____

Total Project Cost: \$ _____

NOTE: Funds for a project are processed through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Grants are paid on a reimbursable basis. A FWS project agreement will be completed with successful applicants by the appropriate FWS Regional contracts coordinator.

PROJECT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE:

I. Project Summary: *(A one paragraph description of what tasks will be accomplished.)*

II. Problem the Project addresses: *(A description of why the project is important to the resource and what WNTI and NFHAP objectives will be met)*

III. Project Objectives: *(What specifically will be accomplished)*

IV. Project Methodology: *(How will the project be completed, and who is responsible for actually doing the work)*

V. Project Monitoring/Evaluation of Success: *(How will the success of the project be assessed, and who is responsible for long-term maintenance and monitoring)*

VI. Partnerships for this Project

Project Location Map and Coordinates (*attach map*)

Latitude:

Longitude:

PROJECT BUDGET DESCRIPTION

Description of Service	Match Dollars	Grant Dollars

TOTAL BUDGET SUMMARY:

Total Budget:	Match:	WNTI Funds:
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PROJECT STAFF:

Signature of Applicant: *(An original signature page must be received with the application.)*

I certify that the above information is true and accurate,

Organization name: _____

By: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Western Native Trout Initiative 2012 Project Application and Selection Process

The Western Native Trout Initiative is all about getting projects done that will help improve the abundance of western native trout across a variety of landscapes. WNTI, a collaborative effort of 12 western states including Alaska, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and many tribal and public or private conservation-minded organizations, annually solicits native trout conservation projects for funding.

WNTI's Goals and objectives are meant to gather project opportunities, funding, and partners together, to make a measurable impact on native trout populations and habitats. WNTI projects are and will be funded by many different entities and partners, including funds made available through by the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP).

Each June or July, WNTI posts a project proposal request on its web-page that is sent to cooperators all across the west.

The NFHAP proposals are added to the US FWS "FONS" (Fisheries Operation Needs System) list, and then each FWS Regional office in the WNTI geographic area works with the states to determine the top 10 projects for their Region. These lists are completed by the end of November each year.

In December, the WNTI Steering Committee reviews the "top 10" lists, and determines which projects will be prioritized for a NFHAP funding allocation for fish habitat conservation. [In 2012, the amount of funding available to Fish Habitats is unknown due to 2012 U.S. Congress budget negotiations.](#)

In order to help project proponents put forward the best possible projects, WNTI has a set of criteria by which projects are evaluated for funding. Project proponents should address these criteria in their project applications that are sent to the local or Regional Fish and Wildlife Service Western Native Trout Initiative coordinators for inclusion into the FWS FONS project system.

Criteria For Future Review of WNTI and NFHAP* Funded Projects

Goal: Provide the WNTI project applicants with some general guidelines and considerations that will be used to rank projects submitted through the WNTI system for funding

General considerations: (A yes is needed for the project to be ranked)

NFHAP/WNTI Related

- Does the project address specific WNTI and NFHAP objectives?
 - Please specify which WNTI species and NFHAP habitat conservation objectives and strategies will be addressed by the project (see www.fishhabitat.org). Visit the WNTI website – www.westernnativetrout to see the WNTI Strategic Plan and WNTI species.

WNTI NON-NFHAP RELATED

- Is this proposal for another type of WNTI priority (eg. WNTI priorities that are not habitat conservation projects, but projects that will help define habitat priorities)?
 - If yes, specify which WNTI priorities will be achieved. (see WNTI Strategic Plan)

General Considerations

- Is the proposed project a priority need in a WNTI Species conservation or recovery plan, and what is the specific rank by the recovery/conservation Team?
 - If yes, what was its rank?
- Have NEPA, 404 or other state and federal permits are needed to execute the project been acquired? If not, when will they be filed and obtained?
(Projects with completed NEPA/state permits will receive higher priority)
- Does the project have a high probability of being completed in the next 2 years if it is funded?
- What is the % of project funding is needed from WNTI funding sources?
- Identify the types and amounts of Federal and non-federal match sources, eg. direct monies and/or in kind services that are not already matched to other projects and how the match will be documented?

Specific considerations:

- Are the project success (eg biologic, physical and chemical) measurements described quantifiable, and is there a clear description how they will be calculated and reported (eg stream miles, acres of habitat protected, restored or enhanced, fish population changes, etc. and repeatable)?
- Is the project described sufficiently to understand and evaluate the adequacy of its goals objectives, data collection methods, analyses, reporting requirements, resource needs, other outcomes, and its relationships or overall importance to the species or communities targeted?
- Is there sufficient information to assess whether the project objectives will be monitored over time and by whom the monitoring will be done?
- Is it clear why this funding source is being requested versus other funding source(s) or in addition to other funding sources?
- Did applicants apply to anyone else for funding for this project? Are the other funds considered duplicative, supplemental, or considered match?

Administrative Consideration

Which FWS Region? (1,2,6,7,8) _____

- Who are the various partners that will administer and participate in various administrative elements of the project and describe their roles?
 - Who are the partners that will execute the project and report the findings. Describe their qualifications and roles?
 - Did the partners provide adequate information to assess whether they have the experience and capacity to successfully achieve the goals and objectives as described in the proposal?
 - Is there more than a single year of funding needed? If yes, specify.
 - Who is the responsible party for reporting requirements and the successful completion of this proposal and when will those outputs be delivered and who is a point of contact and what is the number we can call if our committee has questions on this project?
-

Listed below are some guidelines from the FWS to the regional Fish Habitat Coordinators that should be taken into consideration when filling out the application:

Project narratives should state what entity will receive the funds and implement the project, i.e. the Service or a partner or a combination.

Projects should include a simple line item budget as an attachment to the FONS record so that reviewers can understand how Service and partner funds are proposed to be spent, especially for multi-year projects. Narratives should identify the targeted month and year for project completion.

Narratives should describe how projects relate to and support broader landscape issues and larger initiatives, e.g. watershed plans, recovery plans, and multi-year projects, in addition to linkages to the FHP strategic plans.

Narratives should clearly describe proposed methods and approach, and identify whether funds will be used for engineering/design work, for construction, or both. Projects that propose the use of potentially controversial techniques, such as bank hardening by installing rip-rap, should explain why those techniques are appropriate in the specific situation.

Space permitting, project descriptions should address how the project is a good investment of funds, using a quantitative approach where possible, and the recreational and/or economic value of the project in the “Additional Information” section of FONS.

Narratives should describe the long term benefit of the project and provide an estimate of the length of time the project is expected to be effective, if applicable. A plan for long term maintenance, if applicable, should also be prepared and identified.

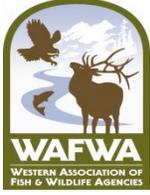
Placed-based projects should include the latitude and longitude of the project for mapping purposes in the FONS narrative.

Also – if available, the following documentation should be included:

- Permits already acquired
- Landowner consent forms
- Assessments
- Designs
- Site pictures

A project applicant may be asked to provide further information to the WNTI Steering Committee during the final ranking process if the Steering committee needs clarification on a particular item.

NOTE: Please send the completed application Form to your closest US Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries and Wildlife Management Assistance Office or the Regional Office for your state.



Application for WNTI 2012 NFHAP Funds

Application Deadline: September 15, 2011

Applicant Information

Organization (Grant Recipient): _____

Address: _____

Project Lead Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

FAX: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: _____

Location of Project: State : _____ Closest Town: _____

Lat: _____; Long: _____

Project Start Date: _____ Project Completion Date: _____

Applicant Signature:

Date

Fisheries Operational Needs (FONS) Entry Form

Project Title (100 Characters Max Including Spaces)

Proposed Accomplishment Summary (500 Characters Max Including Spaces)

This project will

Funding Sources

Total Service money requested from the USFWS...

Partners (List Partners in the project and amounts contributed [in kind as well as dollars]):

Primary and Secondary Species/Populations Benefited

1. (Example...Bonneville Cutthroat Trout)
2. Etc.

Description

Importance to the Resource (350 Characters Max Including Spaces)

State the *problem* and cause of the problem (350 Characters Max Including Spaces)

State the *objective* with reference to the problem (350 Characters Max Including Spaces)

Additional Text Information (1250 Characters Max Including Spaces)

State the *method* to accomplish the objective (350 Characters Max Including Spaces)

Additional Information Needed For Projects

Amount of funding requested and amount of partner match.

What are the Lat/Long for the project (in this form...Long -109.0000000, Lat 43.0000000)?

If Fish passage, how many miles of stream continuity will be restored by removing the obstruction?

If NFHAP how many miles of stream will be restored?

Are there any management plans, conservation agreements, status statements, etc. that cover the populations or the area in which the project is located? If so, please list.

Copies of the following if the project proponent has them:

- Permits already acquired
- Landowner consent forms
- Assessments
- Designs
- Site pictures

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Columbia River Fisheries Program Office
1211 SE Cardinal Court, Suite 100
Vancouver, WA 98683**



September 2013