



**National Fish Habitat Board
FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP APPLICATION**

Date: January 10, 2014

PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

Partnership Name: Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership (SEAKFHP)

Partnership web site: <http://www.seakfhp.org/>

Mission / Vision statement:

SEAKFHP Vision

Our partners share a common vision to ensure healthy, thriving habitats that support all life stages of resident, anadromous, estuarine and marine dependent fishes across their historical range in Southeast Alaska.

SEAKFHP Mission

We work to support cooperative fish habitat conservation, restoration and management across Southeast Alaska with consideration of economic, social, and cultural interests of local communities in our endeavors.

ABSTRACT

Describe the need or problem the partnership was formed to address.

Southeast Alaska (Southeast), the largest contiguous mature coastal temperate rainforest in the nation, has largely undisturbed landscape and is a unique place filled with small, geographically isolated communities each relying on local highly productive fishery resources. While salmon and other freshwater and marine fish populations remain strong here, compartmental decision making, multiple land use priorities, localized declines in fish abundance and areas facing habitat degradation spurred the formation of the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership (SEAKFHP).

How will a strategic approach supported by a broad partnership help to meet the need or solve the problem?

To date, regional habitat restoration efforts have been conducted by large organizations such as the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) or through small collaborative efforts with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working with single agency partners. It is believed a broader partnership can build upon these efforts and increase benefits as multiple partners come together to share resources, strengthen interagency cooperation and build greater public awareness to improve fish habitat conservation efforts in the region.

Identify major species and/or biological communities that will benefit from habitat conservation by the partnership.

Our partnership formed to support cooperative fish habitat conservation in freshwater, estuarine and nearshore-marine ecosystems across Southeast Alaska. Expertise and focus of SEAKFHP partners are on populations of resident and anadromous salmonid species. As our partner expertise expands, other targeted fish, marine habitats, and invertebrate species may be considered.

What benefits will accrue to fish and aquatic habitat and to public use of affected resources?

Our partners desire outcomes from healthy fish habitats that contribute to robust fisheries, healthy communities, and productive economies throughout the region. Specific benefits our partners hope to gain through participation with SEAKFHP are:

- improved inter-agency coordination,
- aligned priorities and management practices among landowners,
- greater public awareness regarding the value habitat protection and restoration offers our region,
- improved funding opportunities, and
- successful on-the-ground projects that lead to maintaining and improving fish habitat, local fishery resources and community economies.

How will the National Fish Habitat Action Plan help to achieve the partnership's conservation goals and objectives, and how will the partnership help to achieve the goals and objectives of the Action Plan?

SEAKFHP has benefited from the National Fish Habitat Board (Board) directed guidelines, attended the National Fish Habitat Excellence Workshop, and has proceeded consistent with goals and objectives addressed in the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP). SEAKFHP has shared the NFHAP mission and goals as part of its emerging efforts helping to provide greater regional awareness to this national initiative. Additionally, SEAKFHP has benefited from the recognized network of fish habitat partnerships (FHPs) and the close working nature of these partnerships operating in Alaska and Pacific Coast. This can be seen in our progress to develop organizationally and through success we have experienced in involving stakeholders, participating in FHP efforts such as the Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, and in leveraging local funding sources to initiate the partnership. We have been afforded the opportunity to build upon successes of other FHPs, taken direct advantage of work accomplished under NFHAP and have been able to incorporate national conservation strategies in development of our strategic action plan.

SEAKFHP believes we can be a strong asset to the NFHP. SEAKFHP can add greatly to efforts initiated under NFHAP as our unique geographic area as a salmon producing temperate rainforest archipelago, enterprising partnership model, and through our unique provision of professional collaboration services to our members. Through our connections to NFHAP we can add to the national call for cooperation, investment and stewardship of our nation's fish habitats.

(Note SEAKFHP Factsheet provided under Attachment A.1 and reference to SEAKFHP participation as a Coastal FHP in Attachment A.2)

HISTORY

When was the partnership formed? Describe the history of the partnership before its association with the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (if applicable).

SEAKFHP began formal organization through local working group efforts initiated in 2010. Representatives from Trout Unlimited (TU), TNC, NOAA, USFWS, USFS, and ADF&G met several times in 2010 to discuss the efficacy of forming a FHP for Southeast. The partnership concept was not new to the region; however, previous efforts had lost momentum over the years and success of NFHAP was beginning to resonate spurring renewed interest among representatives from these organizations as they came together and initiated broader discussions. Following a Session on “*Fish Habitat Partnerships in Alaska*” at the Alaska Chapter American Fisheries Society meeting in Juneau in November of 2010, 40 people representing a variety of NGOs and agency interests gathered to discuss fish habitat issues. The attendees voiced broad support for a Southeast Alaska FHP to coordinate fish habitat conservation efforts in the region and they recommended a letter be submitted to the Board requesting status as a Candidate FHP.

Describe significant accomplishments of the partnership to date (if applicable). What financial resources has the partnership used to support its operations?

Shortly after receiving candidacy recognition from the Board in August of 2011, SEAKFHP successfully leveraged local funding sources through competitive application to the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund. Matching funds were secured through TU. As a result more than \$110,000 in combined support became available to support initial operational costs for the partnership including funding a part-time coordinator. The SEAKFHP coordinator was hired in May of 2012 and over this past year and half the partnership advanced its accomplishments through convening a steering committee and formalizing a governance structure, operational framework, active science and data committee and robust website.

SEAKFHP accomplishments include progress on developing regional conservation strategies and key services to regional stakeholders. Since SEAKFHP has no formal NFHAP project money to fund projects, the partnership has prioritized providing partner services to regional stakeholders. In its early

stages of development partners recognized SEAKFHP could benefit the region through facilitating activities and events that would promote increased participation by stakeholders and improve regional communication and information sharing. Examples of services provided to date include coordinated regional teleconferences on key projects of interest and facilitated discussions regarding regional funding opportunities. It is important to note that despite having no direct NFHAP funds, there are many projects being supported by others in the region and the partnership works to leverage those resources when possible while providing increased awareness of these projects within the region. Recently, SEAKFHP co-hosted the 2013 Southeast Alaska Watershed Symposium bringing over 40 presenters and 170 attendees together to discuss topics on fish distribution and abundance; habitat inventory, assessment and prioritization; information tools and approaches; and emerging research in the region. Additionally, SEAKFHP convened a formal science and data committee and has made significant progress on identifying, aggregating and archiving regional assessment information which is adding to a growing archive on the SEAKFHP website. SEAKFHP has endorsed two important regional projects; each received substantial stakeholder review as a result of the emerging SEAKFHP endorsement process.

Additional financial resources leveraged by SEAKFHP include:

- Working group in-kind support (pre-candidacy, estimated value \$15,000) – symposia, planning services, grant proposal preparation
- USFWS Coastal Program (grant award: \$35,000) – coordinator travel, symposia planning, support services
- In-kind support (estimated value \$20,000) – TU (fiscal sponsor, event sponsor), USFWS (WebEx and teleconference services), TNC (event sponsor), ADF&G (coordinator travel), and Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition (symposia co-sponsor)

Moving forward the partnership will seek additional funding sources for dedicated coordination services and support of on-the-ground projects which NFHP funding may help fulfill.

(Note: detailed SEAKFHP formation history can be found in Appendix B.1, a detailed summary of SEAKFHP activities including examples of SEAKFHP services can be found in Attachment B.2, and a detailed accounting of financial resources leveraged by SEAKFHP is included as Attachment B.3)

STRONG AND DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS

Short answers

1. Describe the “community of interest” around which the partnership is organized.

The “community of interest” surrounding the formation of SEAKFHP includes a diverse set of stakeholders with a shared interest to work collaboratively to sustain Southeast Alaska’s fish habitat, its fisheries, and its traditional way of life. From the onset and as reflected in the SEAKFHP bylaws (included in Appendix D), the partnership is comprised of representatives of local, state, and federal governments, tribal entities and other organizations providing a broad regional representation of stakeholders interested in fish habitat conservation in Southeast Alaska that is also consistent with guidelines established by the National Fish Habitat Board.

2. Describe the governance structure and the decision-making protocol used by the management board and subsidiary committees (e.g. consensus, majority vote).

SEAKFHP is governed by an 11-member steering committee; this committee is a voluntary, self-directed group of individuals representing a broad array of SEAKFHP organizations comprised of both dedicated and non-dedicated organizational seats. Steering Committee members seek to make decisions by consensus with intent for unanimous agreement by all members and without objections to block decisions. Specific details regarding the steering committee structure and decision making process can be found in section 1 and 8 of Article VIII in the SEAKFHP bylaws included in Appendix D.

CATEGORIES OF PARTNERS INVOLVED (Check all that apply)	
State Agencies	√
Native American Tribes / Alaska Native Communities	√
Federal Agencies	√
Local Governments	√
Conservation NGO’s	√
Watershed Coalitions	√
Industry Groups	√
Corporations and Other Businesses	PENDING
Other: Universities and affiliates	√
Other: Local Science Centers	PENDING

STRONG AND DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS

Narrative

Describe the range of your partners' associations, including jurisdictional and land/water ownership types, and their interests in conserving fish habitat. How have you engaged State agencies, Native American governments, FWS, NOAA, and other Federal agencies with fisheries responsibilities?

SEAKFHP mirrors the community engaged in the National Fish Habitat Partnership and specifically represents the broad range of landowners and jurisdictional authorities operating in Southeast Alaska including the diverse matrix of stakeholders who maintain an active interest in local fisheries and habitat conservation. This can be seen in formation of the SEAKFHP through provisions of its bylaws and structure, through progress to provide an open and transparent strategic planning process, and in development of a robust and service-focused website and electronic list serve.

Natural resources and associated human activities are managed across this region by a combination of federal, state and municipal agencies, authorized by a complex network of state constitutional provisions and federal and state laws, and implemented through various management plans and conservation strategies. Many agency representatives (USFWS, USFS, NOAA, ADF&G, and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)) engaged early in the development of the SEAKFHP and dedicated seats were provided for them on the partnership's steering committee. Additionally, Alaska Native tribes, served through specific native councils and corporations convened under authorities of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, have upland and tideland management responsibilities for tribal owned land in Alaska. Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) holds the dedicated tribal steering committee seat facilitating broader participation through the network of tribes they serve.

How have you engaged local communities and organizations, landowners, and non-traditional partners in your efforts? Describe the roles and responsibilities of various partner organizations within the governance structure. How does the governance structure promote joint strategic planning and decision-making by the partnership? What capabilities are in place for communicating with partners and for recruiting additional partners?

Southeast is characterized by numerous geographically isolated communities with Juneau, the capitol of Alaska, serving as a regional hub and center for federal and state agencies. Providing outreach and connection to these smaller communities is a challenge for the SEAKFHP and USFS, CCTHITA and the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition (SAWC) aide our ability to involve these communities. SAWC is a coalition of watershed associations committed to strategic conservation and promotion of aquatic, natural, and cultural resources for communities throughout Southeast. SAWC holds a dedicated seat on the SEAKFHP steering committee and provides information sharing and improved connections for communities. Additionally, SEAKFHP has a dedicated municipal steering committee seat, currently held by the City and Borough of Yakutat, our most northern community served.

A strong conservation community serves Southeast Alaska with a number of NGOs focused on protecting and restoring fish habitat in the region. Additionally, many industry associations representing various fishery and natural resource related sectors are active. SEAKFHP has two dedicated NGO seats on the steering committee currently held by Trout Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy. A last seat is an at-large seat currently held by K. Koski, fisheries/habitat biologist recently retired from NOAA and a key individual involved in initiating the SEAKFHP.

In early strategic planning efforts representatives recognized the importance of growing and diversifying participation of the partnership to provide greater depth to a strategic action plan as well as creating more sound regional support. The result is a dedicated core function for the partnership to focus on increased outreach to specific stakeholders, including tribal corporations, industry and user group associations.

STRONG AND DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS

Supporting documentation

1. Provide a list of entities that serve on the partnership's management board and subsidiary committees.

SEAKFHP Partner Organizations serving in a management or committee capacity (note entities serving on the SEAKFHP Steering Committee are noted with an *; and entities serving on the SEAKFHP Science and Data Committee are noted with an ^s), supporting documentation is provided in the contact lists provided in Appendix C.1:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service, Juneau Field Office *^s
- NOAA NMFS Alaska Region, Office of Habitat Conservation *^s
- NOAA NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center ^s
- USFS Tongass National Forest *^s
- USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station , Juneau Forestry Sciences Laboratory ^s
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game *^s
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation *^s
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska *
- City and Borough of Yakutat *
- Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition *
- Takshanuk Watershed Council ^s
- Trout Unlimited *
- The Nature Conservancy *^s
- Sitka Conservation Society ^s
- Alaska Coastal Rainforest Center ^s
- University of Alaska Fairbanks, Juneau School of Fisheries and Marine Sciences ^s
- University of Alaska Southeast GIS Library ^s

2. Provide a list of partners that have demonstrated their support of the partnership, but do not serve in the governance structure.

Other SEAKFHP Partners include:

- Juneau Watershed Partnership
- Taiya Inlet Watershed Council
- Prince of Wales Watershed Association
- Members of Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (T&H)
 - Anchorage (Anchorage T&H Community Council)
 - Angoon (Angoon T&H Community Council)
 - Craig (Craig T&H Community Council)
 - Haines (Haines T&H Community Council)
 - Hoonah (Hoonah T&H Community Council)
 - Hydaburg (Hydaburg T&H Community Council)

- Juneau (Juneau T&H Community Council)
- Kake (Kake T&H Community Council)
- Kasaan (Kasaan T&H Community Council)
- Ketchikan (Ketchikan T&H Community Council)
- Klawock (Klawock T&H Community Council)
- Klukwan (Klukwan T&H Community Council)
- Metlakatla (Metlakatla T&H Community Council)
- Pelican (Pelican T&H Community Council)
- Petersburg (Petersburg T&H Community Council)
- San Francisco (San Francisco T&H Community Council)
- Saxman (Saxman T&H Community Council)
- Seattle (Washington Chapter - Seattle T&H Community Council)
- Sitka (Sitka T&H Community Council)
- Wrangell (Wrangell T&H Community Council)
- Yakutat (Yakutat T&H Community Council)

Entities participating on SEAKFHP's Regional List Serve:

Non-Governmental Organizations

- Southeast Alaska Land Trust
- The Conservation Fund
- Alaska Conservation Foundation
- Southeast Alaska Conservation Coalition
- Discovery Southeast
- Audubon, Alaska Chapter
- Pacific Joint Venture
- Ducks Unlimited
- Southeast Alaska Soil and Water Conservation District
- Transboundary Watershed Alliance
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Juneau Economic Development Council
- Sitka Science Center
- Rivers Without Borders

User Group Associations

- United Fishermen of Alaska
- Petersburg Vessel Owners Association
- Alaska Gillnetter's Association
- Alaska Troller's Association
- Douglas Island Pink and Chum
- Southeast Alaska Regional Aquaculture Association
- Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance
- Purse Seine Vessel Owner's Association

Industry

- Kai Environmental
- Icicle Seafoods
- Taku Smokeries
- Alaska Glacier Seafoods
- Silver Bay Seafoods
- Alaskan Brewing Co.

Federal Agencies

- U.S.D.A Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
- U.S. Geological Services
- National Park Service, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
- ShoreZone Partnership

Alaska Native Organizations and Corporations

- Douglas Indian Association
- Craig Community Association
- Klawock Cooperative Association
- Chilkat Indian Association
- Metlakatla Indian Association
- Petersburg Indian Association
- Skaqua Traditional Council
- Organized Village of Kasaan
- Angoon Community Association
- Chilkoot Indian Association
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- Wrangell Cooperative Association
- Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
- Hydaburg Cooperative Association
- Hoonah Indian Association
- Organized Village of Kake
- Ketchikan Indian Association
- Village of Saxman
- Sealaska Corporation
- Haa Aani Community Development Fund, Inc.
- Goldbelt Corporation
- Haida Corporation
- Kake Tribal Corporation
- Cape Fox Corporation
- Kootznoowoo, Inc.
- Huna Totem Corporation
- Kavilco, Inc.

- Yak-Tat Kwaan, Inc.
- Shee Atika, Inc.
- Klukwan, Inc.
- Klawock Heenya Corporation

State of Alaska Agencies

- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Department of Commerce and Economic Development

Municipalities

- Haines Borough
- City of Skagway
- City of Gustavus
- City of Hoonah
- City and Borough of Juneau
- City and Borough of Ketchikan
- City of Sitka
- City of Petersburg
- City of Wrangell
- City of Thorne Bay
- City of Kake
- City of Coffman Cove
- City of Angoon
- City of Klawock
- City of Tenakee Springs
- Southeast Conference

Universities

- Alaska Sea Grant
- Oregon State University
- Michigan State University

3. Provide copies of letters and/or other documentation indicating the level of support and commitment shown by partners, regional Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and similar entities.

Summary of documentation of SEAKFHP Partners and others expressing support, documentation provided as noted in Appendix C:

- Signed SEAKFHP Partnership letters (Appendix C.2)
- Letters of support for SEAKHFP application to Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund (Appendix C.3)
- Letter of support from the WAFWA Inland Fisheries Committee along with minutes from June 2013 Inland Marine Fisheries Committee documenting SEAKFHP presentation by Roger Harding and supporting action of the

committee to support SEAKFHP application for recognition to the NFH Board (Appendix C.4)

- Letter of support from the Western Native Trout Initiative (WINTI), only overlapping fish habitat partnership covering Southeast Alaska (pending, Appendix C.5)
- Letters of support from adjacent fish habitat partnerships – Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership, Mat-Su Salmon Habitat Partnership, Southwest Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership (Appendix C.6)

4. Provide documentation that demonstrates outreach to State agencies and Native American governments that have fisheries and fish habitat responsibilities within the geographic area of the Partnership, as well as appropriate offices of FWS, NOAA, and other Federal agencies with fisheries responsibilities.

Summary of outreach from the SEAKFHP to entities with fisheries related authority and responsibilities in Southeast Alaska, documentation provided as noted in Appendix C:

- Outreach letters to federal entities NOAA, USFWS and USFS (Appendix C.7)
- Outreach letters to state entities ADF&G and ADEC (Appendix C.8)
- Outreach letter to CCTHITA (Appendix C.9)

5. Provide copies of governance documents (e.g. charter, memorandum of understanding, other).

Summary of SEAKFHP governance documents; documentation provided as noted in Appendix D:

- SEAKFHP Bylaws (Appendix D.1)
- SEAKFHP Organizational Framework (Appendix D.2)
- SEAKFHP Science and Data Operational Framework (Appendix D.3)
- SEAKFHP Steering Committee meeting agendas/summaries can be found on the SEAKFHP web site at: <http://www.seakfhp.org/seakfhp-documents/>
- SEAKFHP Science and Data Committee agendas/summaries can be found on the SEAKFHP website at: <http://www.seakfhp.org/seakfhp-documents/>

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Short answers

1. What are the geographic boundaries of the partnership?

The geographic scope of the SEAKFHP encompasses the lands, freshwaters, estuaries, marine ecosystems and communities of Southeast Alaska. The partnership follows the ADF&G management area of Southeast Alaska and is defined as extending from Dixon Entrance at the South, to Cape Suckling in the North, eastward to the U.S. border, and includes all associated lands, freshwater and marine waters in between; a distance of about 525 miles consisting mostly of a narrow 120 mile strip of land and mountains on the mainland and over a thousand islands – collectively known as the Alexander Archipelago.

2. What is the approximate area covered by the partnership (square miles)?

This region, as defined by our boundaries, encompasses nearly 45,000 mi², including nearly 12,000 mi² of marine waters, and a shoreline length in excess of 16,000 miles. Freshwater habitats abound in the area, including over 20,000 freshwater lakes and ponds covering nearly 400 mi² in area, and countless streams and rivers in excess of 35,000 miles of fluvial habitat. The region is defined by rainforests, glacial fiords, myriad rivers and streams, estuaries, mountains, and glaciers and ranks as one of the largest, most complex, and intact estuarine and temperate rainforest systems on earth.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Narrative

Describe how the geographic boundaries of the partnership were determined.

Southeast Alaska and the Alexander Archipelago encompass the majority of the North American coastal temperate rainforest that extends from Northern California in the south, through British Columbia (B.C.), and north and westward to Prince William Sound. Southeast Alaska, in its entirety, is commonly equated with coastal temperate rainforest; political boundaries (e.g., U.S./B.C. border) and significant geographic features (Cape Suckling; continental shelf) provide further distinction and demarcation across the entire distribution associated with this global ecoregion. These facts were taken into consideration during initial strategic planning activities as the steering committee strived to identify the geographic scope of the partnership.

Why are these boundaries considered to be most appropriate to achieve effective regional prioritization of habitat needs and to demonstrate success in strategically addressing those needs?

Our partner agency and stakeholder jurisdictional extent is constrained by state or country boundaries (or finer scale) and therefore limiting the eastward and southward limit to the U.S./B.C. boundary was a logical option. The fact that the largest mainland watersheds in Southeast Alaska originate in British Columbia or Yukon Territories was given considerable attention, but ultimately we felt this boundary represented a balance between ecological, logistical, and jurisdictional issues that would promote effective regional prioritization of fish habitat needs.

How and why is the scope of issues and priorities addressed by the partnership considered to be nationally significant?

For many, Alaska represents the last stronghold of Pacific salmon, and the coastal rainforest of Southeast Alaska includes a largely undisturbed landscape compared to other areas along the Pacific Coast where salmon populations have been significantly reduced from historic levels. Economic and cultural health of Southeast Alaska is tied to abundant salmon populations. Recent evaluations suggest salmonid fisheries in Southeast Alaska account for nearly 10% of all jobs and total salmon related economic output was estimated at nearly \$986 million in 2007 (Final Report, prepared for Trout Unlimited 2010).

People from all over the world travel to Southeast Alaska to recreate, including fishing for salmon and other species of native fish. The economic impact of Alaska's healthy fishery is nationally significant, both in terms of export to other countries (estimated at \$536 million annually; Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, 2004) and movement of goods within the US.

Do the partnership's boundaries overlap with other Fish Habitat Partnerships or Candidates? If so, how have you coordinated with those partnerships?

The North American Salmon Stronghold (NASSP) candidate Partnership and one recognized partnership (Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI)) include Southeast Alaska as part of their geographic area. NASSP's current focus is on large salmon watersheds, conservation of genetically distinct wild stocks, and salmon harvest management. Although salmon is an important species in Southeast Alaska, the region does not appear to be a focal area for NASSP at this time. WNTI's focus is limited to trout, char, Arctic grayling, and kokanee species, specifically excluding salmon. Thus, while there are overlaps between WNTI's areas of conservation interest and those of the SEAKFHP, WNTI's scope is more limited than the multi-species, watershed-to-estuary approach SEAKFHP envisions pursuing. Collectively, WNTI and SEAKFHP form a valuable relationship and any action taken by either partnership to protect or restore fish habitat is a great opportunity for collaboration that benefits all species and both partnerships.

SEAKFHP maintains close relationships with three existing Alaska-based 'recognized' Partnerships (Matanuska-Susitna, Kenai Peninsula, and Southwest) and the newly recognized Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership (PMEP). Thus, focus areas, species limitations and geographic scope of other active FHP efforts in and adjacent to Southeast Alaska have prompted formation of the SEAKFHP as a necessary new partnership to help conserve fish habitat in this region.

(Note: Letters of support for the SEAKFHP by neighboring FHPs can be found in Appendix C.5 and C.6.)

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Supporting documentation

1. Provide a map and a GIS shape file that clearly illustrates the geographic boundaries of the FHP.

Please refer to Figure 1 for a map delineating the extent and geographic boundaries of the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership. A GIS shapefile (NAD83, FIPS5001 projection) is included in this application package (file: SEAK-FHP_Geographic Boundary.shp). Figure 2 helps to illustrate the extent of the Alaskan landscape and includes the boundaries of the Alaska based FHPs.

2. Provide a list of major landowners and/or maps showing major land holdings by category within the geographic scope of the FHP. For example, this may include very large private holdings, National Forests, and State wildlife lands. Identify the major landowners or land/water management agencies that are members of the partnership.

The most significant landowner within Southeast Alaska is the USFS (Tongass National Forest). The Tongass National Forest is the nation's largest national forest and encompasses the vast majority of the Southeast Alaska landscape and geographic focus of this partnership. Other significant landowners include the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, State of Alaska, and regional and local native corporations. A map displaying major land holdings by these entities is provided in Figure 3.

Summary of major landowners and land/water management agencies that are SEAKFHP Partners:

- U.S. Forest Service
- NOAA
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
- Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- City and Borough of Yakutat

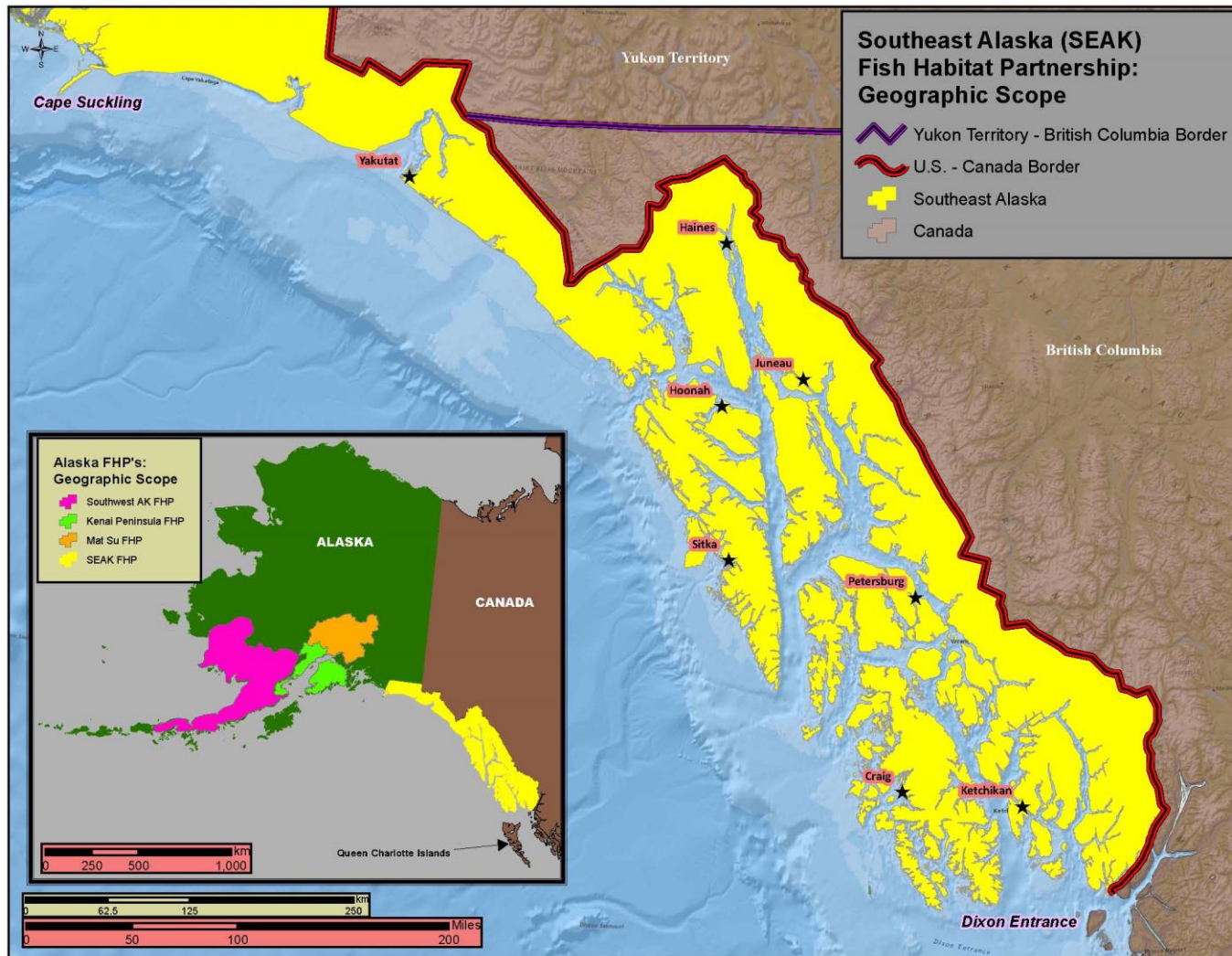


Figure 1. Geographic Scope of the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership in Alaska.

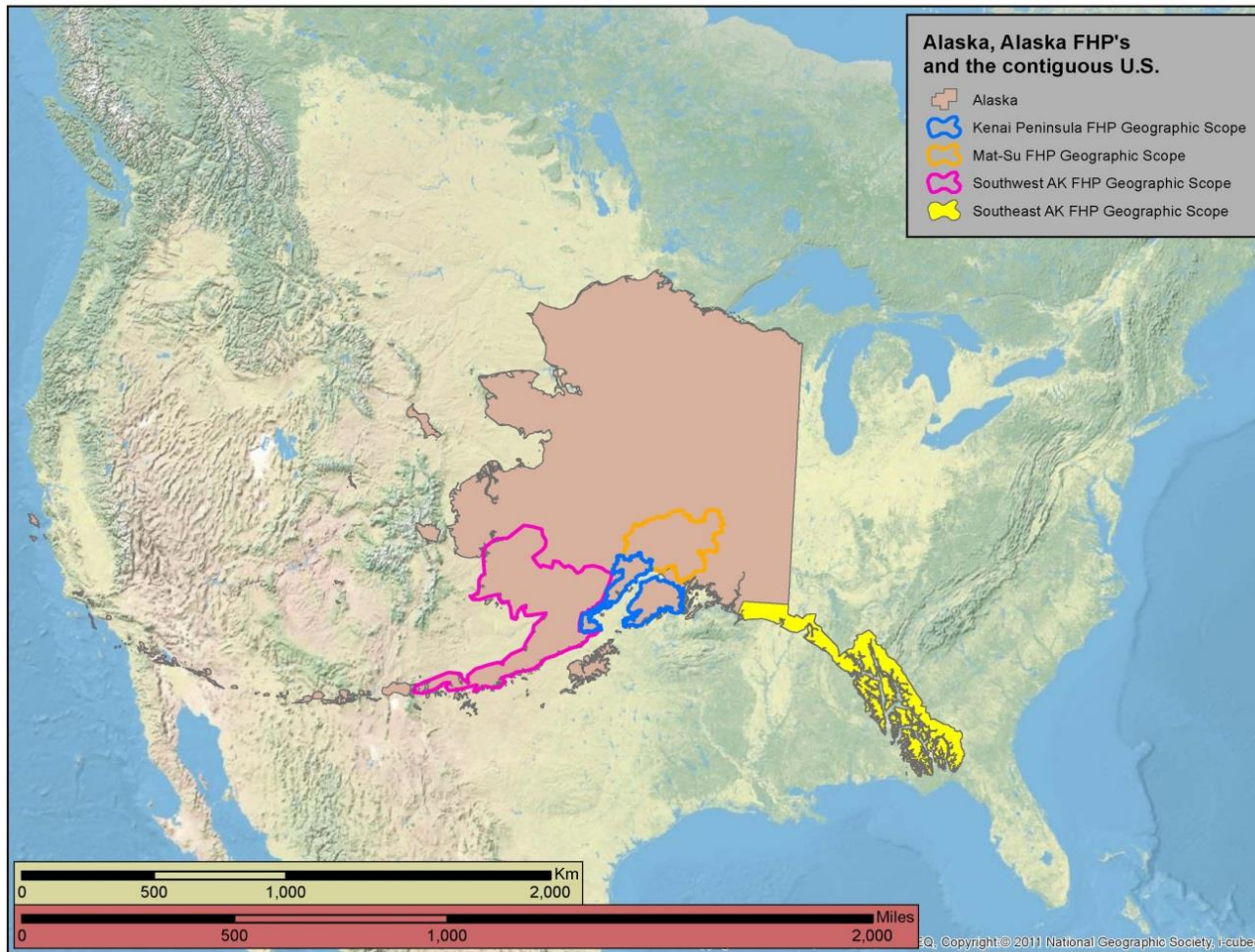


Figure 2. Alaska and Alaska based fish habitat partnerships set across the U.S. continental landscape.

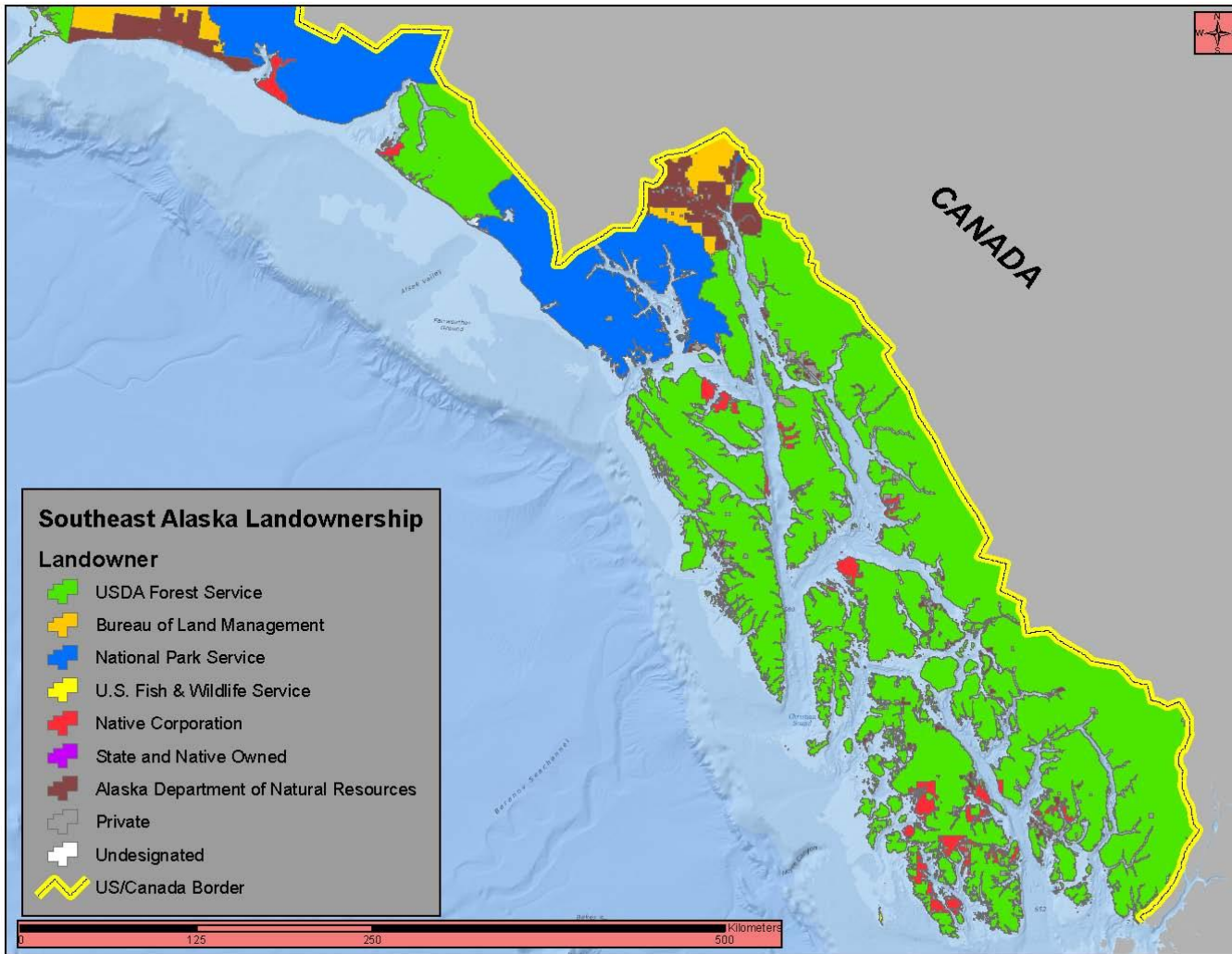


Figure 3. Significant landownership within Southeast Alaska.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Short answers

1. What is the status of the partnership's strategic plan? If not complete, when will the strategic plan be completed?

SEAKFHP is in the process of completing its strategic action plan; a draft plan was released for regional review in conjunction with the 2013 Southeast Alaska Watershed Symposium held this past November (Nov 4-6, 213) in Juneau. The draft attached to this application, included in Appendix E, is a result of continued progress and inclusion of regional review received as a result of the distribution at the symposium and through broader feedback provided in an accompanying online survey. A final plan is expected in early 2014, at a time when feedback from review by the National Fish Habitat Board can be included.

2. What steps need to occur before the strategic plan is complete?

The SEAKFHP Strategic Plan will be finalized per comments and input via review from the National Fish Habitat Board.

STRATEGIC PLANNING CHECKLIST (Check all that apply)	
Strategic plan links to one or more goals and objectives of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan	√ (protection/ restoration primary linkages)
Strategic plan identifies desired outcomes in terms of habitat conditions and/or fish and aquatic community conditions	√
Strategic plan identifies strategic priorities in the form of geographic focus areas or key stressors or impairments	√
Strategic plan links priorities of the partnership to state wildlife action plans, watershed plans, recovery plans, land and water use plans, or other regional-scale plans	√ (links to these resources are available on the SEAKFHP website)
Strategic plan identifies information gaps and priorities for filling gaps	√
Strategic plan includes specific, measurable, achievable, time-bound goals and objectives	√
Strategic plan identifies conservation actions needed to address strategic priorities and achieve desired outcomes	√

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Narrative

Describe the process used to identify strategic priorities and to develop a strategic plan.

SEAKFHP Steering Committee members have embraced a combination of strategic planning processes, including SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis, and elements of TNC's Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process (a standard planning practice endorsed by international conservation organizations and being utilized by a growing number of agencies as well as embraced by other Alaska based FHPs) to complete its initial strategic action plan. Through large and small work group efforts committee members and others have come together to identify strategic priorities and conservation strategies the partnership can use to build collaboration in the region and make a difference for fish and habitat resources in Southeast Alaska.

Summarize the strategic priorities of the partnership, i.e. geographic focus areas or key stressors or impairments. Which goals and objectives of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan are addressed by the strategic priorities? Are the priorities of the partnership also identified as priorities in state wildlife action plans, watershed plans, recovery plans, or other regional-scale land and water use plans?

Current expertise and the focus of SEAKFHP partners are on populations of resident and anadromous salmonid species in freshwater, estuarine, and nearshore/marine habitats. As the partnership matures, focus may expand to other fish and invertebrate species or key stressors that are noted in our strategic plan. With the guidance of this expertise and focus four strategic priorities, referenced as core functions in our plan, have been identified:

- grow diversity and capacity of the SEAKFHP linking natural resource science and management with regional interests, local and traditional values and community needs;
- build organizational strength & perseverance of the SEAKFHP for long-term sustainability and functionality;
- provide services to partners that foster regional cooperation and understanding and result in improved on-the-grounds conservation efforts across Southeast; and
- facilitate regionally relevant fish habitat conservation strategies (protect fish habitat and maintain water quality and quantity across Southeast, and

restore and enhance fragmented and degraded fish habitats in impacted areas).

We have discussed several categories of human activities potentially posing threats to fish habitats in Southeast. Several of these activities in the past have left a legacy of habitat degradation that requires restoration to achieve functional habitat and/or pose threats to existing intact areas. A few of these activities include: urban and community development, coastal shoreline dredge and fill activities, mining operations (past and present), logging practices (past and present), road construction, and hydropower development. These activities have either impacted habitat in the past or are a new potential threat to fisheries by affecting fish passage, riparian habitat, instream habitat, freshwater wetlands, salt marshes and estuaries, and water quantity and quality. In addition, stressors associated with climate change, invasive species, fluctuating protection laws and regulations, and the availability of new decision tools are being considered to help define how SEAKFHP can be most strategic and cost effective.

Audubon and TNC joined forces to compile scientific information and evaluate ecological priorities for conservation in Southeast. These efforts along with the work of federal and state agencies through wildlife action plans and watershed-based assessment and management plans are aiding SEAKFHP's strategic planning development. In addition, there are specific funding mechanisms in the region (AKSSF, Pacific Salmon Commission's Northern Fund, and various Tongass National Forest resources) that include congruent habitat-based priorities and objectives; not only are these helping to shape SEAKFHP priorities but additionally they are anticipated to contribute the funding necessary to begin putting implementing the SEAKFHP strategic.

Due to the abundance of intact fish habitat and the nature of degradation threats in the region, the goals and objectives of the SEAKFHP strategic plan focus primarily on the shared NFHP goals of protection and restoration. While enhancement may be necessary in some localized areas in Southeast specific conservation priorities under consideration are to:

- protect fish habitat in freshwater systems, estuaries, and nearshore/marine areas;
- maintain water quality and quantity in those areas; and
- restore and enhance fragmented and degraded fish habitats in impacted areas

How will the strategic priorities be addressed through conservation action (assuming availability of funds)? How will the strategic plan be used to prioritize conservation projects, and who will make that decision?

As noted earlier, SEAKFHP has not developed under an assumption that NFHAP project funds would be available immediately and is a major reason our strategic plan focuses on growing the partnership, securing long-term funding sources and maintaining relevance in the region through providing directed partner and stakeholder services through actions of the partnership's committees and coordinator. If additional funding does become available for use to fund regional conservation projects, the SEAKFHP Strategic Plan will guide any support for regional on-the-ground projects or assessment efforts needed in the region. The Steering Committee will develop an appendix to the plan to address the use of a prioritization process and will be responsible for any associated decision making.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Supporting documentation

1. Provide a copy of the partnership's draft or final strategic plan.

The SEAKFHP strategic plan can be found in Appendix E; a copy can also be found on our website at: <http://www.seakfhp.org/seakfhp-documents/>

CAPABILITIES FOR SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT

Narrative

What capabilities have partner organizations made available through the partnership to measure baseline conditions and progress in habitat conservation?

SEAKFHP partners have numerous capabilities and resources available to inform baseline conditions of fish habitat in Southeast Alaska. Examples of resources our partnership has, and can continue to leverage, are the baseline national hydrologic datasets (NHD) collected and managed by the collaborative Southeast Alaska Hydrography Database (SEAK Hydro) project, USFS's Watershed Condition framework and numerous watershed assessments on the Tongass National Forest, ADF&G's anadromous waters catalog, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's (ADEC) impaired water bodies listing, NOAA's Nearshore Fish Atlas of Alaska and previous agency-led assessment work conducted for Southeast Alaska included in the National Fish Habitat Assessment completed in 2010. Additionally, USFS is committing staff time and resources to restoration effectiveness monitoring across the Tongass, an effort our partnership will be able to use and elevate within the region. Additionally, resources from many sources (federal, state, local and NGO) are helping build community capacity across the region. This effort involves engaging local citizens in data collection and landscape stewardship training and respecting local and traditional knowledge in data collection efforts.

In addition to agency-led baseline assessments and resources, Audubon and TNC's systematic assessment of watersheds completed in 2008 for Southeast provides an excellent template for which our partnership can use to advance conservation needs and priorities for the entire region. TNC followed this effort with a conservation action plan for estuarine ecosystems and our partnership relied heavily on both of these to build our strategic plan.

How has the partnership organized itself and its information systems to make use of partners' data and other data to help set habitat conservation priorities?

The resources identified above in addition to many others were identified through partner asset assessments conducted last year and through efforts to specifically identify and archive regional assessment information on our website. SEAKFHP is working with the University of Alaska Southeast GIS Library and other partners to link these resources to a stronger web-based platform promoting use of

regional geospatial data and applications to further research in the region.

How will the partnership link its assessment activities to the *Framework for Assessing the Nation's Fish Habitat*?

SEAKFHP embraces the NFHAP science and data strategy recognizing importance of identifying causative factors for declining fish populations and degradations to habitat as well as working at a landscape level to improve connectivity of 'ridge to reef' systems, as upstream and downstream systems are referred to in our region. We have outreached to the National Science and Data Committee and colleagues working at Michigan State University, helping to facilitate communication with regional practitioners and linking regional resources directly to national data collection efforts.

What technical and financial resources does the partnership currently have to support its assessment work?

Previous sections above highlight our technical capacity to support assessment work. In regards to financial resources, SEAKHFP has organizational funding available through fall 2014 to facilitate dialog needed to inform regional assessment gaps but does not have dedicated funding to perform assessment work. Having finalized our priorities in our strategic plan we can now outreach to regional project funding sources to help fill these gaps.

Describe the types of metrics that will be used by the partnership to report progress.

Metrics for assessing the outreach and service functions of the partnership are being considered and we have included time bound actions in our strategic action plan to assist with meeting bench marks for these activities. If funding for projects becomes available, metrics we will use to report our progress may include focus on 'net loss to intact and healthy systems' (as a measure of success for protection effort) and 'net gain to impacted habitat area repaired or reconnected' (as a measure of success for restoration effort).

CAPABILITIES FOR SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT

Supporting documentation

1. Provide documentation or examples of how the partnership manages information that is provided by partners or other sources.

SEAKFHP currently manages two distinct types of information, one is information on organization operation and governance for the partnership and the second is regional science and data information provided either by partners or from other sources – both of these types of information are archived on the SEAKFHP website. In addition SEAKFHP is working with the University of Alaska GIS Library on ways to improve data management and link to their web-based map viewing capabilities, a more robust and searchable archiving platform, please see their letter of support included in Appendix C.2.

Examples of how this information is archived currently on the SEAKFHP website can be seen below in Figures 4 and 5 or through these links to our website:

SEAKFHP organization documentation: <http://www.seakfhp.org/seakfhp-documents/>

Regional information and data resources:
<http://www.seakfhp.org/resources/regional-data-sources/>

2. Provide documentation of resource assessments conducted by the partnership.

SEAKFHP has initiated a significant regional effort to identify, aggregate and archive resource assessments conducted in the region and these are currently archived on the SEAKFHP website: <http://www.seakfhp.org/resources/regional-data-sources/> (Figure 5). As we continue to make progress in aggregating regional assessments we can apply a gap analysis and be strategic in applying the limited resources of the partnership. This online tool is the only of its kind in Southeast Alaska.



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Organizational Documents at www.seakfhp.org

Documents

Home → Documents

- SEAKFHP Fact Sheets and Overview Presentations
- SEAKFHP Governance Documents
- SEAKFHP Steering Committee Meeting Agendas and Summaries

SEAKFHP Steering Committee Meeting Agendas and Summaries

- May 2012 SC Agenda
- June 2012 SC Agenda
- August 2012 SC Agenda
- September 2012 SC Agenda
- October 2012 SC Agenda
- November 2012 SC Agenda
- December 2012 SC Agenda
- January 2013 SC Agenda
- February 2013 SC Agenda
- May 2013 SC Agenda (draft pending review)
- June 2013 SC Agenda
- May 2012 SC Summary
- June 2012 SC Summary
- August 2012 SC Summary
- September 2012 SC Summary
- October 2012 SC Summary
- November 2012 SC Summary
- December 2012 SC Summary
- January 2012 SC Summary
- February 2013 SC Summary
- May 2013 SC Summary (draft pending review)

SEAKFHP Subcommittee Documents and Meeting Summaries

National Fish Habitat Board Correspondence

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Figure 4. Organizational documents archived on the SEAKFHP website.



Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership

Web Site and Resources Archive at www.seakfhp.org

Regional Data Repositories and Resource Providers

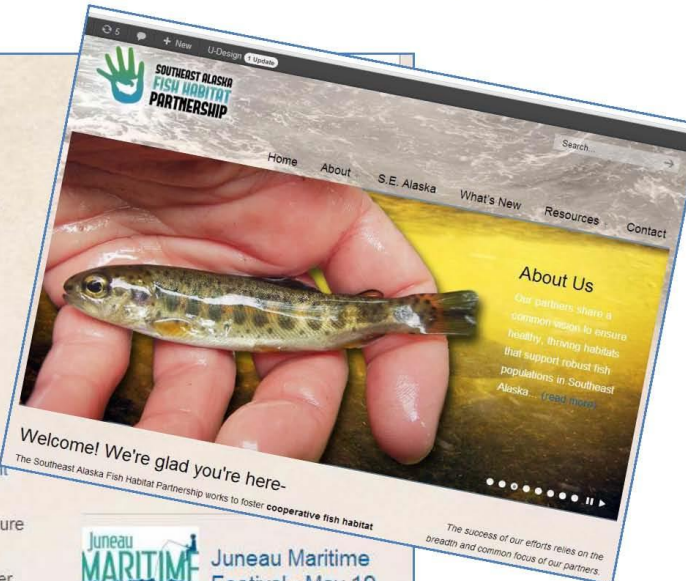
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Anadromous Waters Catalog
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's – Alaska's Clean Water Actions (Impaired water bodies/waters to watch)
- Alaska Fish Passage Studies and Resources - provided by ARLIS (Alaska Resources Library and Information Services)
- NOAA's Essential Fish Habitat Mapper
- ShoreZone- Alaska Coastal Inventory and Mapping Project
- Alaska Coastal Rainforest Center
- University of Alaska GIS Library
- North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Habitat Assessment Resources

- US Forest Service National Watershed Condition Framework
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Alaska fish passage inventory and assessment database
- Coastal Forests and Mountains Ecoregion Assessment for Southeast Alaska (The Nature Conservancy/Audubon Society)
- Assessment of Southeast Alaska's Estuarine and Coastal Ecosystems - Katharine Miller, NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center
- An Estuarine Habitat Classification for a Complex Fjordal Island Archipelago - Schoch et al. 2013 Estuaries and Coasts
- A Conservation Action Plan for Estuarine Ecosystems of Southeastern Alaska - The Nature Conservancy, 2011

Assessment Protocols and Agency Guidance Documents

- A user guide for performing stream habitat surveys in Southeast Alaska (Alaska Department of Fish and Game)
- Surface-water data manual for ADF&G's statewide aquatic resources coordination unit (Alaska Department of Fish and Game)



Juneau Maritime
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Celebrate Juneau's
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Salmon Production
from the Tongass
National Forest

Figure 5. Regional data and resource archive on the SEAKFHP website.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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(Note – SEAKFHP Partnership Directory and Contact Information is provided for in Appendix C.1)