

# Coastal Fish Habitat Partnerships

## Our Vision:

To help ensure coastal and nearshore marine environments are intact and have healthy fish habitats



PROTECTING, RESTORING, AND ENHANCING FISH HABITATS IN MARINE ENVIRONMENTS

## Coast to Coast . . . One Vision

Ten of the 18 nationally recognized (and one candidate) fish habitat partnerships (FHP) help to protect, restore, and enhance fish habitats in coastal marine environments through:

- Outreach to enhance understanding and support for fish habitat improvements in marine systems
- On-the-ground fish habitat restoration projects
- Scientific research
- Fish habitat assessments
- Securing, leveraging and distributing resources
- Coordinating projects at a variety of scales
- Developing decision support tools
- Sharing information

Coastal fish habitat partnerships seek to:

- Achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions 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.
- Communicate conservation outcomes as well as new opportunities and voluntary approaches for conserving fish habitat to the public and conservation partners.
- Broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by increasing fishing opportunities, fostering the participation of local communities 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.

- Conduct fish habitat assessments in coastal and nearshore marine environments to empower strategic conservation actions supported by broadly available scientific information.
- Integrate socio-economic data to improve people's lives consistent with fish habitat conservation goals.
- Work with partners that bring resources toward achieving shared goals of fish habitat conservation.

*The sea provides us with food and livelihoods along every coast of the United States and its territories.*

~ Marine Conservation Institute

## KENAI PENINSULA FHP

We create and foster effective collaborations to maintain healthy fish, people, habitats, and economics on the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

### Our Focal Areas:

- Partnership:** Ensure organizational capacity and effective operating systems are in place for the Partnership to make positive and lasting contributions to the protection and the restoration of fish and aquatic habitat.
- Biological Complexity:** Protect, restore and maintain the biological integrity of ecosystems that support healthy fish habitat.
- Water Quality and Quantity:** Ensure necessary water quality and quantity to support healthy fish communities and aquatic ecosystems.
- Science and Technology:** Facilitate and increase the use and availability of scientific knowledge to guide Partnership priorities, policy development and management decision making.
- Education:** Increase the awareness and knowledge of the goals and objectives of the Partnership for everyone that lives, works, recreates, visits, regulates or otherwise has an influence on the strategic issues of the Partnership.
- Policy:** Identify, prioritize and communicate the importance of adequate regulations, policies and planning processes to support the protection of fish habitat which are necessary to support self-sustaining fish populations.

<http://www.kenaifishpartnership.org>



Photo credit: Kenai River Alaska Fly Fishing Guides.



Kenai Peninsula FHP  
 Mat-Su Basin Salmon HP  
 Southeast Alaska FHP  
 Southwest Alaska Salmon HP

## MAT-SU BASIN SALMON FHP

We believe that thriving fish, healthy habitats, and vibrant communities can co-exist. Because wild salmon are central to life in Alaska and here in the Mat-Su, we work to ensure quality salmon habitat is safeguarded and restored.

The success of our partnership hinges on collaboration and cooperation to get results.

- Extending from North America's highest mountain to sea level at Cook Inlet, the Mat-Su Basin supports all 5 species of Pacific salmon, including the 4<sup>th</sup> largest Chinook salmon run in the State. It's also the fastest growing area in Alaska and some salmon populations are showing signs of stress.
- In 10 years, partners have improved habitat connectivity at 80+ sites where roads cross salmon streams. These projects restored access to well over 100 miles of historic spawning and rearing habitat.
- Partners have conserved over 7,000 acres of coastal wetlands, estuarine and nearshore habitats important for salmon migration and rearing through conservation easements and acquisitions.
- Our annual Salmon Science and Conservation Symposium brings together over 100 attendees annually and spans topics covering the Partnership's broad conservation goals: protecting salmon and their habitats in freshwater, nearshore, estuarine and marine waters of Mat-Su Basin and Upper Cook Inlet, mitigating threats, restoring connectivity, and increasing knowledge about salmon and their use of these habitats.

<http://www.matsusalmon.org>

## SOUTHEAST ALASKA FHP

We seek to ensure healthy, thriving habitats throughout Southeast Alaska that support all life stages of resident, anadromous, estuarine and marine dependent fishes across their historical range.

### Our Core Functions:

- Grow diversity and capacity of the partnership linking natural resource science and management with regional interests, local and traditional values and community needs.
- Build organizational strength & perseverance of the partnership for long-term sustainability and functionality.
- Provide services to partners that foster regional cooperation and understanding and result in improved on-the-ground conservation efforts across Southeast Alaska.
- Facilitate regionally relevant fish habitat conservation strategies across Southeast Alaska — specific conservation priorities are to protect intact and healthy freshwater systems and estuaries, maintain and restore water quality, restore hydrologic conditions and reconnect fragmented fish habitats for fish in fresh water headwaters and floodplain areas.

<http://www.seakfhp.org>

*The estuaries and nearshore marine waters provide the foundation of cultural and economic activities in Southeast Alaska.*



## SOUTHWEST ALASKA SALMON HP

We protect habitats that support the greatest wild salmon fishery remaining on earth.

### Our Core Functions:

The partnership prefers to acquire conservation easements on Native lands. Easements protect habitat while retaining Native ownership and preserving traditional use.

The partnership collected traditional ecological knowledge to help determine location of traditional use areas for conservation protection. Most of these areas are also important salmon habitat.

By protecting important salmon habitat from inappropriate development, the Southwest Alaska Salmon HP also protects:

- The local sportfishing economy
- The local commercial fishing economy
- And a traditional way of life

The partnership has raised over \$30 million in 10 years and protected thousands of acres of salmon habitat in Southwest Alaska.

<http://www.southwestsalmon.org>



*Photo credit: Camille Lieske, The Center for Alaska Native Health Research*



Photo credit: The Nature Conservancy.

## HAWAII FHP

**We seek to cooperatively develop and implement aquatic conservation projects in Hawaiian streams and estuaries through the support and participation of government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.**

- Cooperatively develop and implement conservation projects to benefit native aquatic life in streams, estuaries, and nearshore marine habitats throughout the main Hawaiian Islands.
- Reduce impacts of instream structures that pose barriers to native species migration.
- Plan and support conservation projects that link inland and nearshore marine ecosystems to protect, restore and maintain self-sustaining aquatic communities.
- Support research and monitoring to obtain data needed to guide conservation, management and recovery programs in stream, estuarine and nearshore marine waters.
- Establish partnerships with private landowners, government agencies, and community groups to implement effective aquatic conservation actions.

<http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands/hfhp.html>

## PACIFIC MARINE AND ESTUARINE FHP

**PMEP works with partners to protect, enhance, and restore ecological processes and habitats to sustain healthy native fish communities and support sustainable human uses that depend on healthy fish populations.**

**Our vision** is to provide for healthy native fish populations in functional, resilient estuarine and nearshore marine ecosystems in California, Oregon, and Washington.

**Our priorities** are to protect, restore, and enhance:

- juvenile fish habitat in nearshore marine and estuary habitats;
- tidal wetland-intertidal-subtidal-nearshore connectivity; and
- water quality and quantity in estuaries and nearshore marine environments.

Photo credit: Oregon Sea Grant.

We are conducting three Pacific Coast fish habitat assessments:

- A Nursery Habitat Assessment, focusing on nursery functions in estuaries for juvenile fish.
- An assessment of threats to habitats of recreationally and commercially important fish stocks (supporting the National Fish Habitat Plan National Estuary Assessment).
- A nearshore forage fish assessment, focusing on habitat-related changes over time in distribution and abundance of nine species of forage fish inhabiting estuary and nearshore habitats.

<http://www.pacificfishhabitat.org>



Photo credit: Oregon Sea Grant.











## CALIFORNIA FISH PASSAGE FORUM

**We protect and restore listed anadromous salmonid species, and other aquatic organisms, in California by promoting collaboration among public and private sectors for fish passage improvement projects and programs.**

**The goal** of the Forum is to restore connectivity of freshwater habitats throughout the historic range of anadromous fish.

### Forum Focus Areas:

-  Remediate barriers to effective fish migration.
-  Facilitate coordination and communication among agencies, agency staff, and other entities that may propose, review, or promulgate fish passage criteria within California.
-  Identify, assess and prioritize the removal of fish passage barriers.
-  Disseminate guidelines and design criteria for replacement of barriers.
-  Promote state and federal permit coordination and streamlining.
-  Facilitate plans to monitor and evaluate fish passage restoration effectiveness to ensure accountability.
-  Promote state and national policy and actions that support fish passage improvements in California.
-  Implement education and outreach activities, targeting both the general public and fish passage practitioners.

<http://www.cafishpassageforum.org>



*Photo credit: Five Counties Salmonid Conservation Program.*



*Photo credit: Joel Sartore (National Geographic) and Wade Fredenberg (USFWS).*

## WESTERN NATIVE TROUT INITIATIVE

**We seek to address trout habitat degradation, non-native species impacts, and emerging range-wide concerns of climate change, energy development, and urbanization.**

### WNTI Goals:

-  Protect, enhance, or restore western native trout populations and measure success in improving the status of western native trout.
-  Protect intact watersheds, and enhance or restore habitats that have been impacted by human activities or catastrophic natural events.
-  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, conservation and enhancement of western native trout.
-  Develop and implement effective communication, education and outreach programs as a tool to increase public awareness and encourage partnerships that benefit western native trout.





<http://www.westernnativetrout.org>



## SOUTHEAST AQUATIC RESOURCES PARTNERSHIP (SARP)

**We strengthen the management and conservation of aquatic resources, including estuarine and coastal habitats (more than 2,900 miles of coastline), in the southeastern United States.**





### Our Goals:

-  We work with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and Atlantic Coastal FHP to strengthen fish habitat efforts from “Whitewater to Bluewater” in 27 eastern and southern United States from Maine to Texas, in some of the most ecologically and economically significant watersheds and estuaries in the country.
-  SARP’s Aquatic Habitat Restoration Program provides funding to implement and monitor restoration projects benefitting marine and anadromous fish habitat in nine southeastern states.
-  Through its Southern Instream Flow Network (SIFN) SARP provides cutting edge instream flow science, communications and networking capabilities, positively informing the science and management of freshwater inflows to estuaries and coastal habitats.
-  We have supported more than 35 coastal habitat conservation projects since 2006.

<http://www.southeastaquatics.net>

## ATLANTIC COASTAL FHP (ACFHP)

**We accelerate the conservation, protection, restoration, and enhancement of habitat for native Atlantic coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fishes through partnerships between federal, tribal, state, local, and other entities.**

-  We work in areas from the headwaters of draining into the coastal regions to the edge of the continental shelf, with a focus in estuarine environments, to promote healthy, thriving habitats of sufficient quantity and quality to support all life stages of the aforementioned fish groups.
-  We developed a science-supported Species-Habitat Matrix that evaluates the relative importance of coastal, estuarine and freshwater habitat types to the major life stages of over 100 fish species from down east Maine to the Florida Keys.
-  In partnership with USFWS, we have funded projects in aquatic systems ranging from Maine to Florida, including improving fish passage, and restoration of submerged aquatic vegetation, salt marshes and oyster reefs.
-  Endorsement from ACFHP has provided assistance to aquatic habitat conservation projects seeking funding, ranging from a dam removal and riverine bottom habitat restoration project in New England to salt marsh, seagrass and mangrove restoration in southeast Florida.

<http://www.atlanticfishhabitat.org>



*Photo credit: Kelp-covered granite at low tide at Edgar M. Tennis Preserve, Deer Isle, Maine by Captain Albert E. Theberge, NOAA Corps (ret.).*