

Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership
Science and Data Committee Working Group
Meeting Summary – January 9, 2013

SEAKFHP Steering Committee Members present:

- USFS –Sheila Jacobson
- ADF&G – Roger Harding and Jeff Nichols
- NOAA – Cindy Hartmann Moore and Erika Ammann
- USF&WS – Neil Stichert
- SEAKFHP Coordinator: Debbie Hart, meeting recorder

Introductions – Debbie convened the meeting and provided a brief summary of discussion items and tasks to be completed by the working group and reviewed the list of meeting materials that would be covered including the NFHP Science and Data Committee documents Cecil provided. She also relayed that David Wigglesworth will be sitting in as the USFWS adviser to the SEAKFHP Steering Committee and assist with any working group needs. Cecil will still remain in contact with the working group on NFHP Science and Data items as needed as he still retains his seat with that group and will help to relay items of importance to Alaska FHPs.

NFHP Science and Data Committee

- The working group reviewed summary documents on current efforts accomplished by the NFHP Science and Data Committee specifically the Committee's efforts to refine the 2010 National Fish Habitat Assessment for 2015 and their work to submit Multistate Conservation grants. Questions arose on proposal topics that the Committee creates and how each FHP may provide input to this process, are proposals to support all FHPs or can some proposals be regionally focused? Debbie offered to check into this more. The work group also reviewed the science and data priorities that the national group has outlined for 2013. The summary document outlines these priorities in two groups – one that includes dedicated resources already allocated and the second list notes those without current funding sources identified. Specific funded priorities that have impact in Alaska and may involve the SEAKFHP are the following:
 - The NFHP Science and Data Committee will catalog and review current Assessment activities underway by the Fish Habitat Partnerships. **Resources:** \$20,000 to support a single Science and Data Committee meeting to focus on FHP Assessment efforts and to review progress on the National Fish Habitat Assessment.
 - Develop mechanisms and document procedures to guide Fish Habitat Partnerships and partners in data management practices to improve data and information exchange that will facilitate collaborative science and data efforts across the National Fish Habitat Partnership. **Resources:** \$197,000 to support applications developer, metadata specialist, infrastructure maintenance and support – in kind from USGS, Core Science Analytics & Synthesis for FY2013
 - Catalogue science data products and assessments completed and underway within each of the established Fish Habitat Partnerships via the NFHP Data System. Dedicated workflow strategies will be developed to implement best practices in data management including data curation and preservation tasks to ensure data access and re-

use in the future. **Resources:** \$63,200 to provide dedicated data management support to catalog FHP data – in-kind from USGS, Core Science Analytics & Synthesis for FY13

- Refine the existing geospatial framework for estuaries in the contiguous United States and complete initial development of a geospatial framework for all estuaries across Alaska. A pilot project, illustrating the proposed new fish stressor methodology and regional assessment approach, will be conducted for estuaries in the Gulf of Mexico, including methodological refinements as necessary. Begin data collection and processing to support additional regional estuarine assessments, including datasets on fish/shellfish abundance and diversity, physical habitat, anthropogenic stress, and biological response. Explore methodologies to improve linkages between the inland and marine components of the National Assessment. **Resources:** \$220,000 to support continued core development of the Marine Assessment – in-kind from NOAA-Fisheries for FY2013. **Resources Needed:** \$60,000 for 1 FTE for 6 months to do GIS and coordination support with partners (AK FHPs and NMFS, FWS) to complete geospatial framework for Alaska estuaries.
- The working group also reviewed notes Cecil shared from a December 12th meeting the NFHP Science and Data Committee convened for all FHPs regarding updates on the national data system. At this meeting the Committee provided an overview of the process used in the 2010 National Fish Habitat Assessment, Jeff mentioned this may be the same PowerPoint presentation that was provided during last year's Water Resources meeting held in Juneau (Debbie will see if this is available on the web or a copy can be shared via email). The Committee report provided an overview of the inland assessment teams plan for the 2015 assessment and steps to improve the assessment in both Hawaii and Alaska. They also identified SE Alaska as the initial area of focus for these improvements. This was warmly received by members of the working group who are familiar with the 2010 deficiencies for Alaska. The work group spent a little time talking through these and both Jeff and Cindy offered to be contacts for the SEAKFHP Science and Data Committee and Debbie will relay a message to Cecil and Dana Infant, who is the NFHP S&D Committee representative identified to work on these improvements.

SEAKFHP S&D Committee Roles and Responsibilities

- The working group reviewed the draft set of SEAKFHP Science and Data Committee roles and responsibilities that were shared and updated by the SEAKFHP Steering Committee during their last meeting. In addition the group reviewed and compared duties created for the NFHP Science and Data Committee. Modifications were made to the SEAKFHP duties document including adding in a purpose statement, prioritizing two main lead duties for the committee (internal focus/NFHP focus) and adding in considerations for composition of the committee including suggested Partners to outreach to during the process of convening the committee.
- The group discussed timing and process for the committee formation and agreed that once the set of roles becomes final they can begin outreach efforts to build capacity on the committee.
- The work group discussed the utility of having a practitioner's directory or some form of cross-list of affiliations Partner members have. These lists may help inform capacity building for the committee. Neil and Jeff offered to help begin building these lists.

- Debbie will update the document and provide a copy to the SEAKFHP Steering Committee for consideration at their meeting planned for January 11th.

Interim Project Endorsement –This topic came up again during other discussions and the group agreed that rather than tabling it like had been suggested when this topic arose before that instead it needs to be considered by the SEAKFHP Steering Committee and they recommended to put it on the agenda for the January 11th Steering Committee meeting. Some questions arose about how certain funders may look at any endorsement by a candidate partnership and Debbie offered to check in with Tom regarding any insight or concerns he may see if the SEAKFHP decides to utilize an interim project endorsement process.

Wrap Up/Action Items:

- Debbie will confer with Cecil and Sue for more information on future plans of the NFHP Science and Data Committee to seek Multi-State Conservation Grant funds and inquire how FHPs help relay suggestions.
- Debbie will work to locate a copy of the NFHP 2010 National Fish Habitat Assessment Power Point presentation.
- Jeff and Cindy will be the lead contacts for the NFHP Science and Data Committee and Dana Infante's efforts on improving assessment information coming from SE Alaska; Debbie will relay a message to this effect.
- The working group will provide an update on this meeting at the SEAKFHP Steering Committee meeting on Jan 11th; specifically asking the Steering Committee to approve the amended set of Science and Data Committee roles (see attachment).
- Neil and Jeff will begin to build a "Practitioner's Director" for help in staffing the SEAKFHP Science and Data Committee.
- An agenda placeholder will be added for the SEAKFHP Steering Committee to discuss pros/cons for developing an interim project endorsement process.