



Fishers & Farmers Partnership Seeks Aquatic Habitat Project Proposals for 2015 funding cycle

Deadline October 3, 2014

Fishers & Farmers Partnership (FFP) for the Upper Mississippi River Basin, a fish habitat partnership, is seeking project proposals to benefit aquatic habitat in Mississippi River basin streams. Federal funding may be available under the National Fish Habitat Partnership through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fund the top ranked proposals.

About the Program:

[Fishers & Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#) is a self-directed group of non-governmental agricultural and conservation organizations, tribal organizations and state and federal agencies united to add value to farms while protecting, restoring, and enhancing the 30,700 miles of streams and rivers of the Upper Mississippi River Basin. It is a partnership of the [National Fish Habitat Partnership](#).

We Support the National Fish Habitat Partnership's Goals:

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

Fishers and Farmers Partnership's Vision:

The Partnership's vision of the future is one in which landowners work together with conservationists and scientists to address the needs of their own farms, local streams, and the fishes of the basin. Lessons learned are shared with neighbors, participating organizations, and others outside of the basin. Fish populations and habitats are monitored at project sites and downstream. The Partnership helps landowners showcase successful practices to neighbors and others. With a focus on mutual respect, dialog is cultivated between agricultural and environmental organizations throughout the Upper Mississippi River Basin. This leads to better use of resources, less duplication of effort, and measurable progress toward common goals.

Our Mission:

The mission of the Fishers & Farmers Partnership is to support locally-led conservation projects that add value to farms while restoring aquatic habitat and native fish populations.

Fishers & Farmers Partnership's Goals:

- Engage Farmers & Ranchers
- Support Fish Habitat Conservation Projects
- Continue Development of Long-Term Basin Scale Strategies
- Strengthen the Organization for Long-Term Action

Priorities for FFP:

- Increase native fish/mussel populations
- Improve instream habitat
- Work with farmers/landowners to protect/maintain healthy aquatic systems, or prevent further degradation
- Increase landowner engagement/farmer-led committees that drive conservation
- Reduce sedimentation, phosphorus and nitrogen runoff to stream habitats
- Improve floodplain habitat, enhance flow regimes
- Promote best management practices across the landscape
- Monitor effectiveness of conservation projects, then share our stories through outreach

Funding Amount:

Funding floor \$15,000

Funding ceiling \$40,000

Cost sharing by partners. USFWS requires at least a 1:1 cost share. Cost share may be in-kind services or cash. Cost share may include monitoring.

Applicant Eligibility:

Applicants can be federal, state, county, and non-government organizations in either natural resources or agriculture with the ultimate goal of adding value to farms while restoring aquatic habitat and native fish populations.

Managers and supervisors responsible for implementing fish habitat projects must document compliance with all applicable Federal laws and regulations (e.g. National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Rivers and Harbors Act). Fish habitat projects must also comply with any applicable State, local and tribal laws and regulations that do not conflict with, or are not preempted by, Federal laws and regulations.

Eligible expenditures. Expenditures of NFHP funds are appropriate for the following actions and activities:

(a) Time spent for project planning, directing project activities (e.g., earthwork, fence installation), site assessments, travel to and from project, and project oversight.

(b) Equipment (e.g. monitoring equipment).

(c) Earthwork (e.g., contracts for earth moving, planting, structure installation, or other site preparation), materials (e.g. rock, gravel, plants and planting supplies, materials to construct habitat structures).

(d) Monitoring/evaluation. Funds may be used for pre-post project monitoring of NFHP projects to evaluate biological and/or physical response to project activities. Long-term monitoring is not eligible for funding.

Ineligible expenditures. The following activities are **not** eligible for NFHP funding:

(a) Actions required by existing Federal or State regulatory programs. Fish habitat expenditures shall be in addition to, not in lieu of, other expenditures authorized or required from other entities under other agreements or provisions of law.

(b) Realty costs (e.g. lease or purchase interests in real property, or to make rental or other land use incentive payments to landowners).

(c) Pre-award costs associated with preliminary design, surveys, and appraisals.

(d) Operation and maintenance of facilities, structures, or other construction.

General Requirements:

Project Duration: Work is to be completed within 18-24 months

Terms of Funding: Funding must be spent within 24 months

FFP Map: Priority habitat is outside Driftless Area

Application Method/Submittal:

Project Proposals will be required to be submitted on an electronic form which will be available on the website:

<http://www.midwestfishhabitats.org/apply>

Timeline:

Aug Develop project proposals for National Fish Habitat Partnership funding consideration

Oct 3 Application/Proposal Deadline

Oct/Nov Projects will be evaluated/ranked by FFP Steering Committee

Early Nov FFP will provide a priority list of projects to the USFWS. Funding for projects will be available after the U.S. Congress approves the FY 2015 budget, likely in late winter/early spring 2015

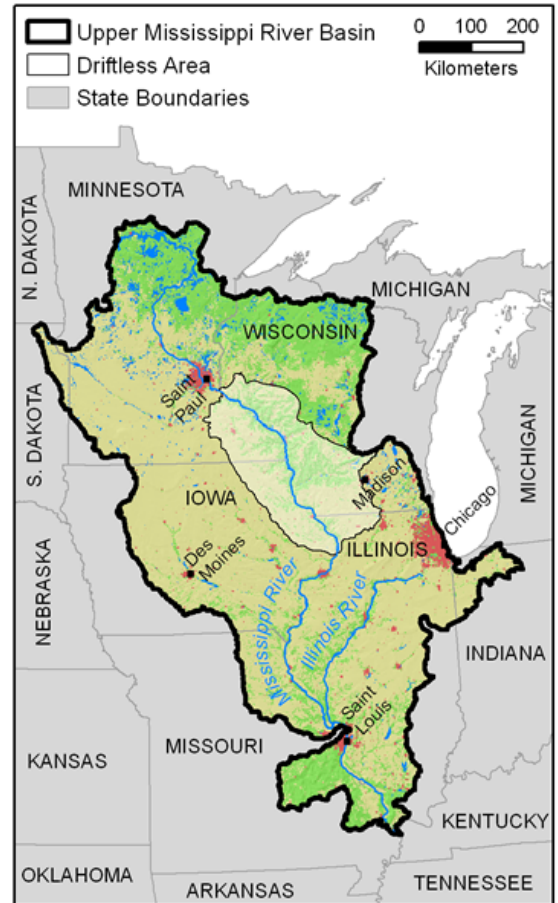
May/June Announcement of Awards to recipients

June/July Agreements due

July/Aug Funding available

Ranking Criteria:

- Addresses FFP & NFHP Goals/Priorities
- Addresses the root cause of the problem within the watershed
- Outlines anticipated benefits to the larger restoration focus area
- Explains pre and post project evaluation/monitoring **(required)**
- Generates the maximum in matching funds and cost-sharing contributions
- Incorporates climate change strategies
- Improves farms and fish habitat



Please address questions to:

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The National Fish Habitat Partnership's mission 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.

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan was approved for implementation by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on March 24, 2006, in Columbus, Ohio. In 2012, NFHAP changed its name to the National Fish Habitat Partnership. The Partnership is non-regulatory and voluntary, and relies upon the energies plus expertise of geographically-focused regional Fish Habitat Partnerships dedicated to protecting, restoring, and enhancing fish habitats.