

Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership

A Partnership within the National Fish Habitat Partnership



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Why Should We Care about Fish Habitat?

- ◆ Fish habitat improvement encompasses all aspects of improving water quality.
- ◆ Habitat loss/Poor Water Quality
 - ◆ Increase in water demands
 - ◆ Aging reservoirs
 - ◆ Declining water quality
 - ◆ Sedimentation
 - ◆ Shoreline alteration
 - ◆ Urbanization
 - ◆ Invasive species
 - ◆ Lack of quality aquatic vegetation
- ◆ Improving water quality will improve fish habitat and fish populations.



Help is needed!

- ◆ Biologists and lake owners can't fight these issues alone –we need help.
- ◆ Fish Habitat Partnerships, created under the **National Fish Habitat Partnership**, can help!
 - ◆ People uniting to tackle local projects.



What is the National Fish Habitat Partnership?

- ◆ A vision and plan for FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION in the United States. Yes, there is a plan.
- ◆ The mission of the National Fish Habitat Partnership 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.
- ◆ Currently funded by USFWS and partners - National Fish Habitat Conservation Act (Still needs funding)
- ◆ Driven by grass roots partners (Fish Habitat Partnerships)

Goals of the National Fish Habitat Partnership

- ◆ 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.

How to reach those goals...

National Fish Habitat Partnership



Agencies

People

Habitat Partnerships



Organizations

Industry



Implement Local Projects



**Healthier Habitats, More Fish,
Improved Water Quality**

National Fish Habitat Partnerships in Illinois

- ◆ Driftless Area Restoration Effort
- ◆ Fishers and Farmers Partnership
- ◆ Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat
- ◆ Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership
- ◆ Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership
- ◆ Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership



Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership

- ◆ Established in 2009.
- ◆ Focus is to improve fish habitat in Reservoir “systems”
- ◆ Unique structure allows for tax-exempt fundraising by Local “Chapters”
- ◆ Chapters would be covered by a 501 (c) (3) under the “Friends of Reservoirs” foundation



Friends of Reservoirs (FOR)

www.waterhabitatlife.org



Friends of Lake "X"

Friends of Lake "Y"

Friends of Lake "Z"

- ◆ Perfect for local organizations who want to raise funds to do fish habitat improvement projects
- ◆ Can use money as “match” to leverage additional funds from the partnership or other sources
- ◆ This allows local organizations to adopt a lake and take “ownership”. This increases volunteer participation.

Chapter Membership

- ◆ **Small groups direct work at individual reservoirs**
 - ◆ **Bass clubs**
 - ◆ **Lake Associations**
 - ◆ **Fishing/Hunting clubs**
 - ◆ **Start your own club – get a more diverse group**
- ◆ **\$25 annual fee**
 - ◆ **100% dedicated to project funding**

Affiliate Memberships

- ◆ **Organization**

- ◆ All benefits of Chapters, except financial and recognition awards
- ◆ \$100 annual fee

- ◆ **Individual**

- ◆ All benefits of Chapters, except financial and recognition awards
- ◆ \$25 annual fee

Partner Benefits from FOR

1. Financial Benefits

- ◆ eligibility to use FOR 501(c)(3) designation
- ◆ enhanced fundraising capacity by certification and public exposure; guidance and assistance; organization and capacity development
- ◆ banking services

2. Project Assistance

- ◆ eligibility for project funding by the RFHP – priority points (~\$100,000 available annually)
- ◆ grant writing/application assistance
- ◆ some grants require non-profit status (FOR)

Partner Benefits From FOR

3. Technical Support

- ◆ Web site and other services
- ◆ Educational forums and meetings
- ◆ Access to reservoir inventory and assessments
- ◆ Networking with others

4. Recognition

- ◆ FOR logo, bumper stickers and other materials
- ◆ Best project awards – State(\$500); Overall (\$1000)
- ◆ Club highlights on FOR website and newsletter

Partnership Benefits from within a Local Chapter

- ◆ A united local group can give support to projects.
 - ◆ A way to have government/lake owners working with citizens to improve water quality
- ◆ Increased fund raising
- ◆ Manpower for projects
- ◆ Diverse pool of knowledge and experience
- ◆ A method to utilize watershed plans
- ◆ It helps citizens to take “ownership” of a lake



Second meeting of FOE

Why do local clubs need a national partnership?

- ◆ **Money and Support**
 - ◆ We need a strong local base to partner together to increase funding and support at the state/national level. This is very important!
 - ◆ Have you heard of Pheasants Forever, Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl, or Whitetails Unlimited? Where is the national support for fish and water quality?
- ◆ **Networking**
 - ◆ Local clubs and biologists benefit by getting support from people around the country
- ◆ **National recognition for local efforts**





Friends of Reservoirs

Chapters in Illinois

- Friends of EverBloom
- Prairieland Anglers Association
- How about your lake/group?

Group Affiliates in Illinois

- Illinois Bass Federation
- ILMA???



For More Information:

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- ◆ National Fish Habitat Action Plan

<http://fishhabitat.org>

- ◆ Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership

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