

Fishers & Farmers Partnership Seeks Aquatic Habitat Project Proposals for 2017 funding cycle

Deadline October 3, 2016

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
- 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 & 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

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.

Priorities for FFP:

- Increase native fish/mussel populations – Focal fish/mussel species: smallmouth bass, Topeka shiner, American brook lamprey, blacknose dace, black redhorse, blackside darter, brook/brown trout, channel catfish, hornyhead chub, southern redbelly dace, Higgins' eye mussel, pink mucket, scaleshell, spectaclecase
- 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, improve connectivity
- Promote best management practices across the landscape
- Monitor effectiveness of conservation projects, then share our stories through outreach

Funding Amount:

Funding floor \$15,000
FFP receives approximately \$120-\$150K, split among 4-5 successful projects.

Cost sharing by partners:

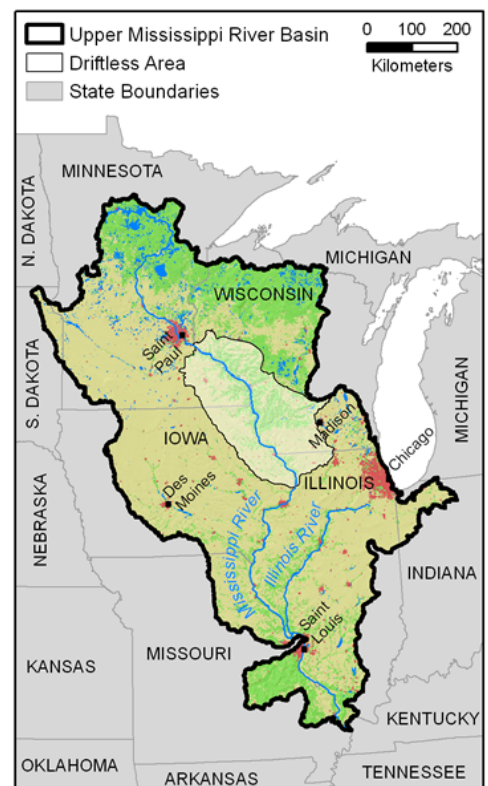
USFWS requires at least a 1:1 cost share. Cost share may be in-kind services such as time or cash. Cost share may include monitoring, farmer's time with project maintenance.

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/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, not farming equipment).
- (c) Earthwork (e.g., contracts for earth moving, planting, structure installation, other site preparation), materials (e.g. rock, gravel, plants and planting supplies, materials to construct habitat structures).
- (d) Short-term monitoring/evaluation. Funds may be used for pre-post project monitoring of NFHP projects to evaluate biological and/or physical response to project activities.
- (e) Outreach to advance conservation. Engaging farmers/landowners in farmer-led efforts, workshops/training.



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 such as preliminary design, surveys, and appraisals.

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

General Requirements:

Project Duration: Work is to be completed within 18 months

Terms of Funding: Funding must be spent within 24 months

Priority habitat: Outside Driftless Area (DA), but DA projects will be considered

Application Method/Submittal:

Project Proposals required to be submitted on an electronic form- 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 provides priority project list to FWS

Project funding available after U.S. Congress approves FY 2017 budget, spring\summer 2017

Jun Announcement of Awards to recipients

Jun/Jul Agreements due

Jul/Aug Funding available

Ranking Criteria:

Measureable Goals/Priorities: FWS, NFHP, FFP, Partners
State Wildlife Action Plans

Fish species (see list), priority areas – watersheds, COAs, etc.

Habitat issues: connectivity, climate change, sediment/nutrients

Addresses root cause of problem within watershed

Conservation actions produce desired outcomes, goals, obj.

Project follows design, collaborates with partners in watershed

Outlines anticipated benefits to larger restoration focus area

Explains pre/post project evaluation/monitoring (**required**)

Life expectancy – goals sustainable

Improves farms and fish habitat

Leverages maximum matching funds, cost-sharing

Reasonable budget

Priority Watersheds

Seven Mile Creek – Minnesota River, Minnesota

Cannon River Watershed, Minnesota

Root River, Minnesota

Kickapoo River, Wisconsin

Boone Watershed, Iowa

Rock Creek, Iowa

Indian Creek – Vermillion River, Illinois

Hutchins Creek, Illinois

Bourbeuse-Meramec, Missouri

Peno Creek – Salt River, Missouri

Spring Creek – Chariton River, Missouri

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.