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Resolution 2013-01-06 Strengthening State Involvement in the National Fish Habitat National Partnership (NFHP) & Recognition of the 10-year Anniversary of AFWA Leading NFHP

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

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Resolution 2013-01-06

**STRENGTHENING STATE INVOLVEMENT IN THE
NATIONAL FISH HABITAT NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP (NFHP)
& RECOGNITION OF THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF AFWA LEADING NFHP**

WHEREAS, threats to fish habitats across the country still exist and fisheries resources remain at risk; and

WHEREAS, the National Fish Habitat Partnership is a state-led, action oriented, and science based partnership effort that is priority driven; is focused on achieving measurable outcomes; is collaborative in its conservation efforts; targets resources and funding where they will make a measurable difference; facilitates public-private partnerships; and, promotes monitoring and dissemination of conservation results. State-led conservation partnerships are unbiased and therefore create significant goodwill from the public; and

WHEREAS, from the beginning states have been essential to making the National Fish Habitat Partnership an effective force for fish habitat conservation. States had significant input in developing the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (2006) and the 2nd Edition of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (2012) and the 10-year anniversary of implementation of this state-led effort provides an opportunity for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and its member state agencies to reaffirm their commitment to leading the effort; and

WHEREAS, the unified, coordinated guidance and objectives of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan led to unprecedented cooperation and collaboration among federal, state, tribal, and conservation partners at a landscape-scale level to address threats to fish habitats and fisheries resources; and

WHEREAS, the activities of the National Fish Habitat Board and the eighteen (18) recognized Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) led to significant conservation actions targeting key fish habitats across the country. All 50 states are covered by the conservation efforts of one or more of the FHPs and state fish and wildlife agencies are key FHP partners; and

WHEREAS, in April 2012, the United States Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) underscoring their commitment to the National Fish Habitat Partnership and implementing the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The MOU focuses these agencies on collaborating to implement the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, committing resources to the National Fish Habitat Partnership and, reporting their activities annually to each department's Secretary.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOVED, that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and its member state agencies recognize the valuable accomplishments of the National Fish Habitat Partnership and continue to be committed to advancing the goals and objectives of the Action Plan, actively leading implementation of the Action Plan, and coordinating with the National Fish Habitat Board on reporting state contributions to the National Fish Habitat Partnership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that increased support for implementing the Action Plan will further conserve fish, wetland, and wildlife habitats and enhance fishing opportunities for the public and therefore build a stronger community of support for on the ground for fish habitat conservation, and thus state fish and wildlife agencies are encouraged to consider voluntary financial contributions as well as personnel contributions to the National Fish Habitat Partnership; and the Association will continue to provide the leadership role it has to the National Fish Habitat Board and its staff.

Submitted by the Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee