



2023 NFHP Project Application and Selection Guide Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership (KPFHP)

I. Summary

This guidance includes information for preparing and submitting a funding request through the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership (KPFHP), a National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP). Projects will be considered that address the conservation activities and priorities identified in the [KPFHP Freshwater and Marine Conservation Action Plans](#). The KPFHP Steering Committee is seeking project requests from all partnership organizations. Project descriptions are due via [online submission](#) by **11:59 PM (AKST) on December 22nd, 2021**. The KPFHP Steering Committee will rank projects in early 2022, and the board of the NFHP will review and approve selected projects in June 2022. Projects that address the NFHP Conservation Priorities for FY23 will be the most competitive. These priorities are:

- Protect intact healthy waters
- Restore hydrologic conditions for fish habitat
- Reconnected fragmented fish habitats
- Restore water quality

Projects that address the highest rated potential threats to fish habitat identified in the KPFHP Conservation Action Plans will also be more competitive. These plans prioritize the following potential threats, including:

- Injurious aquatic invasive species (freshwater environment)
- Warming climate (freshwater environment)
- Incompatible road development (freshwater environment)
- Residential development in riparian areas (freshwater environment)
- Oil spill prevention (marine environment)
- Incompatible shoreline development (marine environment)
- Beach alteration (marine environment)

Interested applicants need to prepare and submit a project proposal request that describes their project and its benefits for fish habitat. A complete project request includes BOTH a Project Description (Section III), and a Budget Worksheet (Section IV).

All applicants should be aware that [America's Conservation Enhancement Act](#) (ACE Act) was passed on October 30, 2020, and introduces a number of new requirements to the NFHP and KPFHP. While the requirements of the ACE Act are interpreted by the NFHP staff and members, the KPFHP considers this RFP as part of a transitional year process, so please note the following changes:

- **1:1 non-federal match is required for all projects**
- **Special considerations for native tribes awaiting official language from national level, contact KPFHP Coordinator with questions**

II. Frequently Asked Questions

Who may apply for funding?

Project requests will be accepted from any member of the KPFHP or applicants that can demonstrate project support from a KPFHP member. All applicants must have the capacity to receive federal funds and satisfy funding reporting requirements.

What types of projects may be funded?

Habitat-based, cost-shared projects that protect, maintain, restore, or enhance fish and aquatic habitats or otherwise directly support habitat-related priorities of the KPFHP.

Eligible Expenditures:

- Time spent for project planning, directing project activities, site assessments, travel to and from the project, and project oversight
- Equipment (monitoring equipment)
- Earthwork (contracts for earth moving, planting, structure installation, or other site preparation) and materials (rock, gravel, plants and planting supplies, materials for habitat structures)
- Inventory and assessment projects and projects that develop intellectual material that supports the goal and objectives of the KPFHP strategic plan
- Monitoring and evaluation such as pre/post project monitoring to evaluate biological and/or physical response to project activities

Ineligible Expenditures:

- Actions required by existing federal or state regulatory programs (KPFHP 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)
- Realty costs (lease or purchase interests in real property, or to make rental or other land use incentive payments to landowners)
- Pre-award costs associated with preliminary design, surveys, and appraisals
- Operation and maintenance of facilities, structures, or other construction

- Programmatic actions that operate in perpetuity (long-term monitoring efforts with no end date)
- Research/assessment projects with no direct application to KPFHP plans and cannot demonstrate linkage to current or possible future restoration or conservation projects

Projects must comply with federal, tribal, state, and local laws and regulations:

Managers and supervisors responsible for implementing fish habitat projects must document compliance with [all applicable Federal laws and regulations](#) including the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and Rivers and Harbors Act. Fish habitat projects must also comply with any applicable state, local and tribal laws and regulations. Federal laws and regulations will default to supersede any state and or local laws.

What are the funding limits for a proposal?

The ACE Act authorizes an appropriation of \$7.2 million in NFHP funds for FY22 projects. However, the exact amount of funding available to KPFHP is unknown at this time. Historically five to seven projects were funded annually, ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 per request, for an annual project allocation of about \$250,000. A similar budget is anticipated for FY23 funding and there will be no minimum or maximum to project requests.

Are there cost sharing requirements for a proposal?

Yes. With the passing of the ACE Act, KPFHP projects are now required to have a **minimum 1:1 non-federal match** (if any project cannot meet 1:1 standards, contact branden@kenaiwatershed.org for possible assistance). Matching funds may be cash, time, goods, or other services. Applicants are encouraged to list all sources of project match, including federal sources, but are not required to do so in order to qualify for project funding.

What is the allowable project duration?

Funded projects must be completed within 18-36 months of receipt of agreement, and multi-year project applicants are encouraged to break their project into distinct phases by year for tasks, accomplishments, and budget.

When & how do I submit the application for KPFHP funding?

Submit the online form at kenaifishhabitat.org before **11:59 PM AKDT on December 22nd, 2021**. If your application is submitted successfully, you will receive a confirmation email. If you do not receive this email immediately after submission, contact branden@kenaiwatershed.org.

When will project selections be made?

- November 8th, 2021: Funding opportunity announced
- December 22nd, 2021: Application deadline for online submission of project proposal
- January 2022: KPFHP Steering Committee ranking and selections committee
- May 2022: KPFHP forwards selected projects to NFHP Board
- June 2022: NFHP Board review of projects
- June/July 2022: NFHP Board meeting for approval of projects for submittal to DOI
- July 1, 2022: FHP projects from NFHP submitted to DOI
- Summer/Fall 2022: KPFHP Steering Committee requests full proposal from selected applicants

- Fall 2022: Funding for projects expected to be announced by NFHP Board
- Early 2023: Funding expected to be made available to approved projects

*any changes in dates will be communicated to applicants

Is there a required format for a NFHP project proposal?

Yes. Please see Section III, Project Description, and Section IV, Budget Worksheet, for project formatting and submission guidelines. You are advised to draft your responses in the [Project Description Worksheet](#) and to copy/paste those responses into the application form at kenaifishpartnership.org/funding-opportunities/. **Please do not exceed character counts.** Budget tables, maps, drawings, and photos may be submitted as attachments in the online form.

What criteria are used to score proposals?

We will use the criteria in Section VI, Ranking Criteria. Projects must address the highest rated potential threats to fish habitat identified in our [Conservation Action Plan](#). These criteria may change as necessary to address national programmatic guidance.

How will proposals be selected?

Steering Committee members will rank the proposed projects using the ranking criteria (Section VI). Based on scores from the ranking criteria, the Steering Committee will recommend the top projects for funding. The NFHP Board will conduct a subsequent review of the top projects and provide recommendations to DOI for funding considerations.

Are there any reporting requirements?

Yes, there will be annual progress and financial status reports with each project approved. Performance milestones will also be established for all projects. Specific reporting requirements will be described in the cooperative agreement with the selected applicant. Successful project applicants are also expected to present updates on their work at Partnership events and as requested by the Steering Committee.

III. Project Description

Please use the [Project Description Worksheet](#) to pre-draft your responses to the RFP. When both the project description and budget worksheet (Section IV) are ready for submission, copy & paste project description responses into the [online submission form](#).

IV. Budget Worksheet

Please use the [budget worksheet](#) provided to create your project budget. In the budget worksheet, **you may only edit the fields highlighted in yellow.**

V. Additional Information

Please submit maps, charts, tables, design drawings, etc. as attachments in the field labeled “Additional Information” in the [online submission form](#).

VI. Ranking Criteria

Note: These criteria may change as necessary to address national programmatic guidance

Eligibility Must be able to answer "yes" to each of the following questions:

- Does project provide measurable benefits towards maintaining or restoring fish habitat?
- Does project provide measurable benefits towards improved fish habitat?
- Does project address one or more of the highest rated potential threats to fish habitat identified in our Conservation Action Plan?
- Is project submitted by or supported by an organizational member of the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership?

Scoring Criteria

1) Project Design (50 points maximum)

- Project description has clearly identified goals and objectives
- Objectives are realistic, measurable, and obtainable
- Methods are clearly defined and appropriate to meet stated objectives
- Does the project address cause/s of habitat degradation?
- Does the project propose any pre-post monitoring and or evaluation of biological and or physical response? Proponent has defined success and identified how the project will be monitored and evaluated to measure success
- Project will advance the science of aquatic habitat restoration/protection/enhancement
- Proposed project can be accomplished within 2-5 years (excluding monitoring)
- Project builds on or continues a previously funded KPFHP project

2) Project Cost (10 points maximum)

- Project budget is clearly defined and considered reasonable
- Administrative costs are considered reasonable
- Project demonstrates matching funds (in-kind as well as financial)

3) Applicant Abilities and Capacity (30 points maximum)

- Applicant clearly demonstrates their ability to conduct proposed project
- Applicant demonstrates their capacity to conduct proposed project

4) Education-Outreach (10 points maximum)

- Will the project provide an educational opportunity or serve as a demonstration project?
- Does the proposed project increase KPFHP member capacity?
- Proposal includes an education or outreach component to a defined target audience
- Proposal includes outreach to non-traditional partners (i.e. entities that don't address fish habitat as part of their normal activities)