



**CALIFORNIA FISH  
PASSAGE FORUM**

**Partnership Accomplishment Report, Work Plan and Proposed Projects Guidance and Template  
FY26 NFHP Project Funding Cycle**

Fish Habitat Partnership: California Fish Passage Forum

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## **General Instructions**

1. All FHP's must provide a cover letter summarizing the purpose of the Partnership and stating your request for NFHP funds for FY2026.
2. If requesting **NFHP FHP operational support**, complete Section 2 and Section 3, and enter "operations" project into the NFHP Project Tracking Database (enter projects through FHP specific dashboard).
3. If requesting **NFHP funding for projects**, review Section 4 and enter proposed projects (including a project for operations) into the NFHP Project Tracking Database. Projects must be entered and submitted no later than **11:59 pm local time, March 31, 2025**.
4. Email one electronic PDF copy of this completed report by 11:59 pm local time, **March 31, 2025** to Alex McOwen at [alex.mcowen@NOAA.gov](mailto:alex.mcowen@NOAA.gov), Kate Sherman at [ksherman@psmfc.org](mailto:ksherman@psmfc.org), and Jason Olive at [Jason\\_olive@fws.gov](mailto:Jason_olive@fws.gov).
5. Incomplete reports (including FHP's requesting NFHP funds for projects who do not enter them into the NFHP Project Tracking Database) will not be considered for funding. Information received after the submission deadline will not be considered.

## **Scoring**

1. Sections 2 and 3: 10 points (justification for proposed operational support)
2. Section 4: 70 points
3. A final 20 points will be assigned based on overall application (including cover letter), performance, partnership accomplishments, project status updates, and work plan.
4. A maximum total score of 100 points for those requesting operational support and NFHP funding for projects. A maximum total score of 70 points will be given to Partnerships requesting only NFHP funding for projects.

### **1. Cover Letter**

Submit a cover letter explaining what you are requesting and why, not to exceed two pages. Provide the following information:

- (1) Overview of the focus or purpose of the partnership, geographic boundaries (map), and a description of who will provide coordination and any other operational support for the partnership.
- (2) Summary statistics of proposed projects for FY26, including total number of projects, total NFHP funding requested (including operational support), total non-federal match, as well as leveraged funds (both federal and non-fed). Identify which National Conservation Priorities will be met with this project portfolio (does not need to be broken down by project).
- (3) A **brief description** of how the projects that are being proposed fit into the larger context of the partnership's work, including but not limited to the FHPs strategic plan or annual work plan
- (4) A brief, general description of the coordination efforts that **will be undertaken** by your FHP during FY26, including your role as coordinator and other coordination expenses, including contracted personnel, meetings, travel, etc. This can be complimentary to the more specific information in the budget narrative section of the Project Tracking Database.

The California Fish Passage Forum brings together federal and state agencies, an interstate fisheries commission, and fisheries and environmental nonprofits to advance our mission to protect and revitalize anadromous fish populations in California by restoring connectivity of freshwater habitats throughout their historic range. The Forum advances that mission through seven strategic objectives: 1) Remediate barriers to effective fish migration. 2) Facilitate coordination, collaboration, and communication among agencies, agency staff, and other entities that may propose, review, or promulgate fish passage projects within California. 3) Coordinate funding mechanisms to remove fish passage barriers. 4) Support state and federal permit coordination and efficiencies. 5) Facilitate plans to monitor fish passage restoration effectiveness. 6) Encourage existing state/national policy and actions that support fish passage improvement in California. and 7) Implement education and outreach activities, targeting the public and fish passage practitioners.

The California Fish Passage Forum coordination is provided by Natural Resources Consultants (NRC), which also provides coordinators for the Pacific Marine and Estuary Partnership (PMEP) and the Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative (PLCI), creating efficiencies through collaboration between FHPs with overlaps in objectives and geographic scope. Forum operational support is provided by the coordinator, the Forum fiscal agent, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC), and efforts extended by the Forum membership as overseen by the Forum Governance Committee and guided by the Forum Strategic Framework.

The Forum requests \$439,424.44 in NFHP funds for FY2026, including \$125,000 for coordination and operational funds. The six proposed projects include operational support, a novel statewide fish passage structure durability and effectiveness assessment, two barrier removal projects, and one monitoring project. These projects represent a diverse investment in assessing, monitoring, and undertaking construction to the benefit of anadromous fishes of California, and are recommended for funding based on their benefits to target species and habitats, technical merit, sponsor expertise, and alignment with the Forum's Objectives and National Conservation Priorities. These projects include an expected \$1.28 million in non-federal match and \$212,705 in federal leveraged funds. With an overall match ratio of 5:1, this proposal exceeds the 1:1 match requirement of the ACE Act.

Outcomes of the six recommended projects will help meet five National Conservation Priorities: 2) Conserve hydrologic conditions for fish, 3) Conserve physical and living habitats and features that



support viable and sustainable species and/or populations in impacted or at-risk systems, 4) Reconnect fragmented fish habitats, 6) Support structure and function of FHPs, and 7) Enhance recreational, commercial, subsistence, and traditional fishing opportunities when conducting projects that conserve fish habitat.

As part of an ongoing strategic development effort, reflected in the 5-year strategic plan and annual work plan, the Forum is focused on maintaining diverse support for fish passage improvement that goes beyond the removal of barriers. Projects recommended in FY26 include research, assessment and monitoring, as well as operational support for workshops, technical support and continued organizational development and inclusion of additional partners. The Forum recognizes that achieving effective fish passage improvement at scale requires strategic collaboration centered around science-based assessment, best practices in engineering design, and monitoring to examine effectiveness.

In FY26, the Forum coordinator will structure their efforts through the Forum's annual work plan, which outlines the nature, timeline, and funding source of each task undertaken that year to support the Forum's seven strategic objectives. The FY26 work plan will be developed over 2025 and finalized by all Forum signatories at the annual Forum meeting in Yreka in December 2025. Coordination and operational work in FY26 may include facilitating one or more workshops on assessment, barrier removal or monitoring techniques, supporting and developing the PAD, hosting our annual meeting and an associated outreach event, and finalizing and publishing the CA Statewide Effectiveness Assessment, and inviting additional signatories to the Forum. These and other tasks taken on by the Forum subcommittees will continue to strengthen and grow the Forum membership and support our mission to protect and revitalize anadromous fish populations in California by restoring connectivity of freshwater habitats throughout their historic range.

## **2. Accomplishments by Fiscal Year**

### **Section a. Communications and Outreach efforts of the Partnership.**

#### **Outreach Events and Materials for the California Passage Assessment Database (PAD)**

In FY24, the coordinator continued work from 2022 hosting webinars to outreach and advance the effort to review and update all records in the PAD. These webinars introduce regional fish passage experts to the Forum, outreach the PAD database, and provide a forum for discussion of regional fish passage issues and projects. Approximately 50 individuals joined each webinar, for a reach of up to 300 fish passage practitioners 2022-2024. In FY25, the Forum Education and Outreach Committee will finalize a 3-panel about the PAD, which was developed in collaboration with PSMFC, CDFW and CalTrans, and will be printed and distributed at relevant conferences in FY25 and 26.

#### **Forum Informational Poster at SRF and AFS Conferences**

In 2024, the coordinator developed an informational poster showcasing the Forum. The poster was attended by Forum members at the poster sessions at the Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference, and American Fisheries Society California Nevada chapter meeting in 2024. The Forum continues to track and strategize Forum presence at events through our Outreach Calendar.

#### **Forum Steering Committee Meetings**

In FY24, the Steering Committee, which comprises the entire Forum membership, met virtually in October 2024 and via hybrid meeting in Sacramento in December 2024. The Sacramento meeting brought together Forum signatories and funded project practitioners to highlight outcomes of Forum supported projects, the accomplishments of Forum committees, and provided working time for organizational development including a SWOT analysis, review of work plan and strategic plan, and a suite of field tours.

#### **Nominating Projects for Waters2Watch**

In 2024 the Forum-supported project Jenny Creek Barrier Removal, which will remove the last obstacle to high quality rearing habitat for Chinook and Coho and Steelhead above the newly removed Iron Gate Dam on the Klamath River was selected for the Waters2Watch campaign. The Forum will continue to nominate projects in FY25 and FY26.

#### **Case Study Series on the Project Permitting Experience**

In FY24, the Forum Policy and Permitting Committee partnered with Sustainable Conservation to develop a suite of case studies exploring the cost, time and experience obtaining permits for barrier removal and restoration projects. The candidate list was developed, and the first interview and draft completed in FY24. In FY25, the committee will process, publish, and distribute the first case study and produce 2-3 more.

#### **Partnership with American Rivers for prioritization schema**

American Rivers joined the Forum as a signatory in FY24. In FY25, the Forum membership will partner with American Rivers to host stakeholder meetings examining how synergies within California organization prioritization of barriers for removal can identify and elevate key projects to advance the speed and scope of barrier removals.

### **Section b. Describe Scientific efforts of the Partnership**

#### **Support the State of California's Passage Assessment Database (PAD)- PAD Plan 2.0**

The forum has been instrumental in the creation and maintenance of the Passage Assessment Database (PAD), a statewide repository of barriers to fish passage. In FY24, work was completed on a multi-year effort to review and update records of fish passage barriers in California – with focused reviews by the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regions. In FY25 and 26, Forum focus will include support of rapid assessment data input into the PAD and explore options for how other data such as fish passage or effectiveness monitoring can continue to be integrated and used with the PAD.

### **Rapid Assessment Protocol Workshop**

In FY24, the Forum identified the goal to host at least one annual workshop, focusing on a variety of topics including assessment, monitoring, engineering best practices, permitting, or others based on the estimate of demand and expertise of Forum members. In FY25, the Forum contracted Ross Taylor and Associates to lead a workshop on utilizing the Forum-developed AOP Rapid Assessment Field Form to assess the passability of barriers in the field, with a classroom and field portion at the SRF conference in Santa Cruz.

### **AOP Rapid Assessment Field Form & Mobile Application:**

In FY24, the Forum started the review and revision process for the Aquatic Organism Passage Rapid Assessment Field Form (Formerly known as First Pass Rapid Assessment Form). These edits will be finalized into a new version in 2025 and include updates to form fields, definitions, pacific lamprey information, and changes resulting from a consistency and digital accessibility review. The accompanying mobile app hosted on Survey123 will be reviewed and revised in FY25 and 26.

### **Developing a Statewide Effectiveness Assessment**

After development and outside review of the work plan and proposal in FY24, lead entity California Trout is moving forward in FY25 with the statewide effectiveness assessment of as-built fish passage structures with Forum technical assistance. The Forum has assembled a diverse Technical Advisory Committee from Forum steering committee fish passage experts, which will assist the project contractor in developing the project. CalTrout has submitted the projects for multiple funding sources, and the Forum recommends the project for NFHP funding in FY26.

## **Section c. Describe Conservation efforts of the Partnership**

In FY24, four projects supported by the Forum were completed. These projects advanced the Forums mission, and National Conservation priorities, and provided direct benefit to species including Coho salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead/rainbow trout, Pacific Lamprey, Coastal cutthroat trout, White sturgeon, and Threespine stickleback. Projects completed in 2024 comprise:

- One culvert removal and bridge installation to open 0.5 miles of habitat to juvenile coho salmon, steelhead, and coastal cutthroat trout along the estuary of the Smith River (Lower Stotenburg Creek Fish Passage Project, Smith River Alliance).
- Two culvert removals and bridge replacements and installation of 16 habitat structures and riparian planting on a major tributary of the South Fork Eel River, opening 1 mile of habitat to coho salmon and steelhead (Little Case Fish Passage Project, Eel River Watershed Improvement Group).
- One culvert removal and replacement to resolve a major passage barrier to coho and steelhead in tributary to Ryan Creek (North Fork Ryan Creek Fish Passage Design, Eel River Watershed Improvement Group).
- One continuation of a white sturgeon telemetry project in the San Joaquin River, procuring and

maintaining receivers and acoustic tags, tagging sturgeon and tracking their movements through the eastside bypass control structure and greater Mormon Slough area (Designing for Sturgeon Passage in San Joaquin Eastside Bypass, US Fish and Wildlife Service)

**Section d.** Describe Operational efforts of the Partnership that were not described in above sections.

#### **2024**

- Drafted, reviewed and finalized 2025 work plan by December 2024
- Hosted “Funding and Resources for Fish Passage Projects” webinar, with 100 participants.
- Invited and incorporated four new signatories to the Forum: American Rivers, Sustainable Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Board and Environmental Policy Innovation Center.
- Use the Forum shared Outreach Calendar to maximize engagement with Forum materials at events.
- Coordinated with SARP on inclusion of PAD data into National Barrier Prioritization Tool, and on their process for gathering, processing and including data in the tool.
- Engaged with NFHP Policy committee and Action Plan Revision Committee.

#### **2025-2026**

- Draft, review and finalized 2026 work plan by December 2024
- Maintain engagement and progress the work plan through regular meetings which include diverse signatory perspectives and regular participation.
- Vote on changes to Forum bylaws moving to a rotating chair structure, and host elections for new Forum chair and Vice Chair.
- Continue strategic planning effort to assess organizational function and best utilize our resources and partnerships to meet goals and objectives.
- Invite federal agency signatories to the Forum, including National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation, FEMA and US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Use the Forum shared outreach calendar to maximize engagement with Forum materials at events.
- Draft and publish StoryMap to Forum website, supported by MFHP MSCG funding.
- 2025 Annual Meeting in Yreka
- Engage with NFHP committees at the direction of the Forum Governance Committee.

**Section e.** Describe the biggest challenge that your FHP is facing or will face in the coming fiscal year.

As a result of increased operations funding and increased engagement of signatories in 2024 and 2025, the Forum has identified several options for organizational growth through special projects. These projects, such as the SRF Rapid Assessment Protocols workshop and other workshops, the Statewide Effectiveness Assessment, development of case studies and other outreach materials require commitment from Forum signatories in addition to the work for the Forum coordinator. As the signatories’ time is volunteered to the California Fish Passage Forum, limitations in capacity from federal or state agencies and nonprofits budgets could affect their ability to engage, affecting the Forum’s ability to progress those projects.

**3. NFHP Funded Project Status**

<b>NFHP Project ID</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>FY Funded</b>	<b>Project Status</b>	<b>NCP</b>	<b>Project Products</b> (e.g. links, press releases, websites, etc)
2807	Lawrence Creek Off-Channel Habitat Connectivity Project, Phase III	2021	Complete (12/22)	1,2,3	<a href="#">YouTube Video-Saving Coho Salmon</a>
2949	Fish Passage Media Acquisition Effort	2021	Complete (11/23)	1,2,3,6	<a href="#">Forum Website and Outreach Materials</a>
2951	Mid Klamath Creek Mouth Enhancement Project	2021	Complete (9/22)	1,2,3,4	<a href="#">Mid-Klamath Watershed Council website</a>
2952	Ross Valley Sanitary District Shady Lane Abandoned Sewer and Barrier Removal Project	2021	Complete (10/21)	3	<a href="#">Sanitary District Completed Projects Page</a>
2953	Wildcat Creek Fish Passage and Community Engagement Project (Phase 1)	2021	Complete (09/22)	2,3	<a href="#">Project Website</a>
2738	Montague-Grenada Weir Retrofit and Barrier Removal	2021	Complete (10/23)	2,3	<a href="#">Project website</a>
86	CFPF Coordination & Operational Support	2022	Complete (9/22)	6	<a href="#">Forum website</a>
nfhp_2022_11	CFPF Data Stewardship & GIS Support	2022	Complete (09/22)	6	<a href="#">Forum website and Data Materials</a>
nfhp_2022_10	Hosie Low Water Crossing	2022	Complete (10/23)	1,3,4	<a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
2350	Lower Stotenburg Creek Fish Passage Project	2022	Completed (9/24)	2, 3	<a href="#">Smith River Alliance website</a> , <a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
nfhp_2022_9	Wildcat Creek Fish Passage & Community Engagement Project- Phase 2	2022	Complete (10/23)	2, 3	<a href="#">Project Website</a>
nfhp_2022_11	CFPF Coordination & Operational Support	2023	Complete (9/23)	6	<a href="#">Forum website</a>
NFHP_2023_8	Little Case Fish Passage Project	2023	Complete (9/24)	2,3	<a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
NFHP_2023_9	Mid-Klamath Tributary Fish Passage Improvement Project	2023	Complete (10/23)	2,3	<a href="#">Mid-Klamath Watershed Council website</a>
NFHP_2023_10	Native Fish Passage in San Joaquin River at Eastside Bypass Control Structure	2023	Complete 10/23	2,3	<a href="#">USFWS Lodi field office website</a>
NFHP_2023_10	North Fork Ryan Creek Fish Passage Design	2023	Complete 10/24	2,3	<a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
NFHP_2023_12	Designing for Sturgeon Passage in San Joaquin Eastside Bypass	2023	Complete 10/23	2,3	<a href="#">USFWS Lodi field office website</a>



## FY 26 Accomplishment Report, Work Plan and Proposed Projects Template

nfhp_2024_95	CFPF Coordination & Operational Support	2024	Complete	6	<a href="#">Forum website</a>
nfhp_2024_97	Designing for Sturgeon Passage in the San Joaquin River at Eastside Bypass Control Structure	2024	Complete 10/24	2,3	<a href="#">USFWS Lodi field office website</a>
nfhp_2024_99	Jenny Creek Man-made Barrier Removal	2024	Active	2,3	<a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
nfhp_2024_102	Weaver Basin Fish Passage Assessments	2024	Active	2,3	<a href="#">Prior project on organization website</a> <a href="#">Project page on Forum website</a>
nfhp_2024_104	Wildcat Creek Fish Passage and Community Engagement Project (Phase 3)	2024	Active	1,2,3	<a href="#">Project Website</a>
nfhp_2025_59	CFPF Coordination & Operational Support	2025	awaiting funding	6	<a href="#">Forum website</a>
nfhp_2025_51	Adobe Creek Barrier Assessment, Design and Permitting	2025	awaiting funding	2,3	
nfhp_2025_53	Dutch Bill Creek Market Street Weir Repair Fish Passage Improvement Project	2025	awaiting funding	2,3	
nfhp_2025_55	Mid-Klamath Rearing Habitat Assessment and Enhancement Project	2025	awaiting funding	1,2,3,4	
nfhp_2025_56	Designing for Sturgeon Passage in the San Joaquin River at Eastside Bypass Control Structure	2025	awaiting funding	2,3	
nfhp_2025_57	Angel Creek Fish Barrier Removal Project	2025	awaiting funding	2,3	
nfhp_2025_58	North Fork Schooner Gulch Culvert Replacement	2025	awaiting funding	2,3	

### 4. Proposed Projects (FY 2026) (70 points)

The goal of this section is to ensure that projects proposed for NFHP funds meet the requirements of Title II of the America's Conservation Enhancement Act (ACE Act), and address the NCPs approved by the NFHP Board.

**Complete the online form for EACH proposed project for which you are seeking FY26 NFHP project funds, including a project to request FHP operational funds.**

**A separate email with login information for the online system to access the form and training dates for how to use the form will be provided. For technical support or questions about the online form for proposed projects, please contact Kate Sherman, [ksherman@psmfc.org](mailto:ksherman@psmfc.org), 503-595-3156.**

**You will be evaluated on the extent to which each project meets the following elements as described in the ACE Act:**

**“Hard” Project Criteria**

***All proposed projects must meet these criteria. These criteria will be more strongly weighted in the score for this section.***

1. Non-federal financial match (1:1) - matching funds may be in the form of in-kind support from non-federal sources and must be spent during the project period. [Database form: use the section, “Organization Roles and Financial Contributions” to add all organizations contributing financially to the project, and the type of funding (organization type, funding contribution type, cash or in-kind)].
2. Identifies biological, ecological, or other benefits of the project (*database form: Biological or ecological benefits, habitats, and species*)
3. Provides measurable project goals and objectives (*database form: metrics*)
4. Summary of FHP evaluation of the project (*database form: FHP Evaluation Summary*). Considerations for this summary include:
  - a. Why the project was selected for NFHP funding by the Partnership? More specifically, how will the requested funding serve to further the FHPs purpose and fit into ongoing workplans.
  - b. The capabilities and experience of project sponsor to successfully implement the project (*database form: “Expertise of project sponsor”*)
  - c. See attached summaries for an examples.

**“Soft” Project Criteria**

***All proposed projects may meet some of these criteria, and identify the extent to which they meet these criteria. These criteria will be less strongly weighted in the score for this section. Projects are required to meet at least 6 of the soft project criteria.***

5. Fulfills a local or regional priority that is directly linked to the strategic plan of the Partnership (*database form: FHP Priorities*)
6. Addresses (at least one of) the national conservation priorities (NCP’s) established by the Board. (*database form: NFHP Priorities*)
7. Identifies monitoring and evaluation measures and criteria (*database form: Monitoring Plan*)
8. Provides sound methods and approaches to the character and design of the project (*database form: Project methods and design*)
9. Provides well defined budget linked to deliverables and outcomes (*database form: budget narrative and/or attach budget in “project report and documents” section*). See attached examples.
10. Leverages other funds to implement the project (*database form: organizations and financial contributions*)
11. Address the causes and processes behind the decline of fish populations or fish habitats (*database form: threats*)
12. Includes a local or regional outreach or educational component (*database form: outreach, education, and results dissemination*)
13. Will increase fish populations in a manner that leads to recreational fishing opportunities for the public. (*database form: recreational fishing opportunities*)

14. Increases public access to land or water for fish and wildlife dependent recreation (*database form: public access*)
15. Advances conservation under management or conservation plans, or state or federal law, such as (*database form: Conservation Plans*):
  - a. Advances the conservation of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) as designated by State agencies
  - b. Advances the conservation of fish and fish habitat under Magnuson Act
  - c. Advances the conservation of fish and fish habitat under other relevant Federal law and State wildlife action plans
16. Will be carried out through a cooperative agreement among Federal, State, and local governments, Indian Tribes, and/or private entities (*database form: organizations*)
17. Project implemented (i.e. project sponsor/lead) by a Tribe or implemented with tribal funds (*database form: organizations*)