



River herring (alewife and blue back herring) range along the East Coast and have supported one of the oldest fisheries in the United States. Photo credit: Jerry Prezioso, NOAA

Coastal Fish Habitat Partnerships

Fall 2015 Newsletter

River Herring Partners Protect Habitats

In 2014, the [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#) (ACFHP) and [The Nature Conservancy](#) (TNC) received funding from the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) (NFWF) to develop habitat restoration priorities for river herring populations in select watersheds along the Atlantic Coast - the Chesapeake Bay, Gilbert Stuart (Narrow), Connecticut, Hudson, and Delaware rivers, and the Santee-Cooper river system. The [report](#) was recently finalized. General themes of restoration needs across all watersheds included addressing upstream and downstream fish passage barriers, water quality, water quantity and flow alteration, and excessive predation (especially related to passage barriers).

To gather information from river herring experts, the project team conducted a two-day in-person workshop (Chesapeake Bay); a webinar (Gilbert Stuart/Narrow River); a panel discussion at a regional fisheries conference (Santee-Cooper); individual outreach to state fisheries biologists, watershed councils, commissions, etc. (Connecticut and Delaware); and a review of current literature and reports (Hudson).

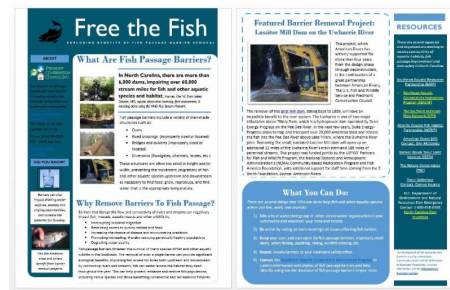
Because river herring spend the majority of their lives at sea, complementary strategies to address habitat and fishery impacts (both directed and incidental catches) in estuarine and marine portions of the range are equally important. Given the many threats that river herring face across their complex life cycle, ACFHP and TNC recommend that conservation must be holistic, and coordination essential. This is already starting to be addressed with combined efforts between the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association's Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG). The report was recently shared with the [TEWG](#), a group formed to coordinate a coastwide effort to proactively conserve river herring and address data gaps.

This grant helped to increase communication among river herring experts along the Atlantic coast, and the findings will be used to inform NFWF, ACFHP, and other stakeholders on restoration priorities for river herring in the future. For more information, contact [Lisa Havel](#).

SARP Promotes Fish Passage Through Symposium and Outreach

On Monday, November 2nd, the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) will host the, "[Building a Fish Passage Community of Practice Through Case Studies and Lessons Learned Symposium \(1-5 pm\)](#) at the [69th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies in Asheville, North Carolina](#).

This symposium aims to help develop a fish passage community of practice throughout the Southeast by highlighting successful dam removal projects, identify lessons learned and recommend key factors to maximize the number of successful dam removal projects. To learn more contact [Dr. Jessica Graham](#).

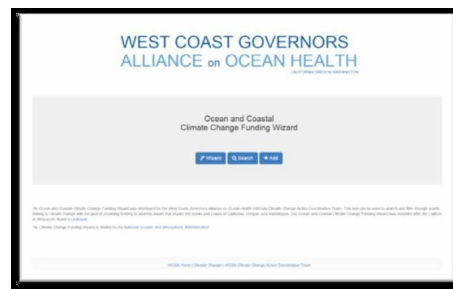


In support of fish passage education and outreach, SARP, the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (EBTJV) and the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) have developed an informational template on fish passage barrier removal. The demonstration version includes a featured project and resources for North Carolina. The template was created for conservation groups that have strong local level community connections to citizens, property owners, and smaller stream systems where many potential barriers exist. It can be used to raise awareness of impacts these barriers have on fish and other aquatics, and to help enlist the assistance of landowners, recreationalists, and citizen scientists in identifying and providing information about barriers that may not yet be documented. User groups have the ability to personalize portions of the template according to their specific target audiences, and the template can be used as an outreach tool to highlight key issues and projects. Complete with a section where specific calls to action can be identified to help empower stakeholders to take action and report potential barriers, the template will help the databases of the Southeast Aquatic Connectivity Assessment Program (SEACAP) and other programs grow and remain relevant, and can assist with the prioritization of dam removal and restoration projects.

Click [here](#) to access the fish passage barrier removal template and accompanying usage guidance.

WCGA Creates Ocean and Coastal Climate Change Funding "Wizard"

The [West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health](#) (WCGA) Climate Change Action Coordination Team, with support and funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Regional Ocean Partnership Funding Program, has developed a searchable resource to identify funding opportunities pertaining to climate change including sea-level rise, coastal hazards, and other pertinent issues. The [Ocean and Coastal Climate Change Funding Wizard](#) is now live and available. It allows users to filter their searches by using specific categories, showing only new funding opportunities, and even saving searches that are updated each time the site is visited. Individuals and organizations are also encouraged to submit funding opportunities via an 'add' feature.



Please contact [Kim McIntyre](#) if you have questions or would like to add funding sources to the Wizard.

PMEP Supports Removal of Collier Boat Ramp and Jetty

The [Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership](#) is providing financial support to the [Squaxin Island Tribe](#) to remove the final two

sediment barriers blocking lateral net shore-drift along 5.7 miles of Pickering Passage in South Puget Sound, Washington. Rated as a high priority restoration by the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project, removing the impediments to net shore-drift will increase spawning habitat for sandlance, surfsmelt and herring, all important food sources for Puget Sound salmonid species. Post-construction, [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) will monitor the site by measuring beach sediment loads up-drift, down-drift, and at the site.

Click [here](#) for more information on the project.



Demolition is underway at the Collier boat ramp and jetty site. Photo credit: Rich Carlson, USFWS

WNTI Launches Social Media Campaign

The [Western Native Trout Initiative](#) (WNTI) launched a [social media campaign](#) in September 2015 to raise the profile of native trout and build a subscriber/donor list.



The entry page to WNTI's new social media campaign.

The Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) is a public-private Fish Habitat Partnership that works collaboratively across 12 western states to conserve, protect, restore and recover 21 native trout and char species. Since its inception in 2006, the Western Native Trout Initiative has directed over \$4 million in federal fish habitat funds leveraged to \$14 million public and private matching dollars for 113 priority native trout conservation projects.

An Introduction to Alaska Fish Habitat Partnerships

Five of our nation's 19 fish habitat partnerships operate in Alaska. The [Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership](#) (Mat-Su Partnership), and [Southwest Alaska Salmon Habitat Partnership](#) (SWASHP) focus primarily on salmon habitat, while the [Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership](#) (KPFHP) and [Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership](#) (SEAKFHP) focus on conserving fish habitat for species that, at some point in their life cycle, depend on the freshwater, estuarine, and marine ecosystems within their respective geographic boundaries. And although not based in Alaska, the geographic range of the [Western Native Trout Initiative](#) (WNTI) encompasses all of Alaska and 11 other western states, and primarily focuses on native trout and char.



Click [here](#) for more information about the Alaska and WNTI fish habitat partnerships.

California Fish Passage Forum Recommends BMPs for Fish Passage Monitoring

A [2015 study](#) commissioned by the [California Fish Passage Forum](#) (Forum) has resulted in a set of recommendations for two types of fish passage monitoring methods and protocols for California. The Forum contracted with Ross Taylor and Associates (RTA) to:

- Summarize the current extent of fish passage



monitoring in California.

- Investigate and summarize fish passage monitoring methodologies in use.
- Develop or recommend methods for adoption by the Forum.

RTA conducted a survey to determine the extent of fish passage monitoring in California as well as different methodologies and protocols being used. A total of 36 fish passage projects were included in the survey results. In addition, RTA conducted a literature review to compile and document nine fish passage monitoring methods and protocols.

As a result of this study, the [Forum Science and Data Committee](#) is recommending two tiers of monitoring methods for California fish passage projects. The two tiers are based on project goals and monitoring resources available:

- The Tier 1 method includes [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Restoration Center's Fish Passage Barrier Removal Performance Measures and Monitoring Worksheet](#), which was developed to collect both pre-implementation and post-implementation information to assess fish passage project progress. The checklist is appropriate for projects in which the primary goal is to restore natural stream conditions and unrestricted migratory fish passage to upstream habitat.
- The Tier 2 method provides for project and adjacent stream channel evaluation as well as biological response of target fish species and age classes. This method requires resources and expertise beyond Tier 1 checklists. The Forum recommends that all Tier 2 monitoring programs include measurements of the channel profile and cross sections.

"Our goal in commissioning this study was to provide a peer-reviewed framework for people to select the best methods and protocols to monitor fish passage projects based on their goals and resources available," said Robin Carlson, Forum Science and Data Committee Co-Chair.

"We encourage people conducting fish passage work in California to use the suggested Tier 1 or Tier 2 methods and protocols for monitoring, and document their findings in the [Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership \(PNAMP\) database](#), so that everyone can learn from one another about the successes and challenges associated with fish passage projects."

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