



DESERT FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCES A CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

The [Desert Fish Habitat Partnership](#) (DFHP) is requesting submission of project proposals for the 2012 [National Fish Habitat Action Plan](#) (NFHAP) funding cycle and other potential funding sources. Projects should **directly address the habitat needs of desert fish**, specifically those identified in the DFHP [Framework for Strategic Conservation of Desert Fish](#). Projects which provide on-the-ground habitat conservation or restoration for desert fish in cooperation with multiple, diverse partners and matching resources will be given the highest priority.

The purpose of the DFHP is to conserve aquatic habitat in the arid west for desert fishes for the American people by protecting, restoring and enhancing these unique habitats in cooperation with and in support of, state fish and wildlife agencies, federal agencies, tribes, conservation organizations, local partners, and other stakeholders. The DFHP seeks to do this in part by matching proposed fish habitat projects to available funding sources. A funding opportunity for fish habitat projects is expected through the National Fish Habitat Board and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Spring 2012. To apply for funding from USFWS, including the NFHAP funding, the pre-proposal and supplemental information must be submitted by **1 September 2011**. Please carefully review the criteria which the DFHP will use to rank the proposals (Attachment 2). Projects which are not chosen for this round of funding but which meet the priorities of the DFHP will be considered for anticipated funding opportunities throughout the year in cooperation with project proponents. If additional information is required for a funding opportunity, proponents will be invited to submit a full proposal to fulfill the requirements of a specific RFP.

Proposals should be submitted in the attached format and include:

- A description of project support of the priorities as identified in the DFHP [Framework](#):
 1. Integrating [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) priorities with the [National Fish Habitat Action Plan](#) strategies to include the following:
 - Protect intact and healthy habitats.
 - Restore and maintain flow and water levels.
 - Restore connectivity, while protecting native populations at-risk from nonnative encroachment.
 - Remediate and minimize sediments and excessive input of nutrients to habitats supporting species at-risk.
 2. Implementing on-the-ground projects that focus actions to protect the most under-served, imperiled desert fish species identified in State Wildlife Action Plans to enhance their conservation status and prevent their extirpation and extinction.
 3. Prioritizing projects to conserve and restore habitat for the most under-served, imperiled desert fish species.
- Identification of the [DFHP species](#) served by the project, including the DFHP rank
- Identification of the [DFHP](#) region in which the project will occur
- Identification of the DFHP habitat type served by the project (see page 2 of the [Framework](#))

- Identification of how the project addresses [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), Multi-species Conservation Plan, Habitat Plan, or Recovery Plan priorities including a description of how the project will:
 - Protect, restore, or enhance a DFHP species
 - Address habitat factors that have imperiled DFHP species
 - Initiate or fit into larger conservation efforts
- Identification of partner support for the project from private landowners, non-governmental organizations, academia, and local, tribal, state, and federal agencies
- A budget that describes how all funds and match will be used to support the project's goals

Additional guidance from USFWS concerning funding for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/policy/717fw1.html> See the ranking criteria (Attachment 2) for more assistance.

Schedule

Pre-proposals will be accepted year round, to be matched with funding opportunities as they develop. To be considered for USFWS/NFHAP funding anticipated for 2012, pre-proposals and Attachment 1 should be submitted by **16 September 2011**. Full proposals may be requested for other funding opportunities as necessary.

Funding Limitations

Specific NFHAP funding has not yet been allocated to Partnerships. While identifying matching funds is not required for the pre-proposal, this may be required for specific funding opportunities that may come up over the course of our funding year, such as those solicited by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Therefore proposals that leverage other funding from multiple sources or in-kind resources are strongly encouraged. Most importantly, proposals should focus on desert fish species and habitats that are of the highest concern, as identified in the Framework.

Contact Information

Priorities and project questions should be addressed to the DFHP Regional Representative ([map](#)). **Completed pre-proposals must be submitted in electric format to the DFHP Coordinator.**

Desert Fish Habitat Partnership Coordinator

Kayla Barrett, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (928) 338-4288 kayla_barrett@fws.org

Lower Colorado River including Rio Yaqui, Rio de la Concepcion, and Rio Sonoyta

Jeremy Voeltz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (928) 338-4288 jeremy_voeltz@fws.gov

Upper Colorado River

Krissy Wilson, Utah Division Wildlife Resources, (801) 538-4756 krissywilson@utah.gov

Basin and Range

Jon Sjoberg, Nevada Department of Wildlife, (702) 486-5127 x3300 sjoberg@ndow.org

Rio Grande including Pecos River and Tularosa Basin

Megan Bean, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, (512) 754-6844 x221 megan.bean@tpwd.state.tx.us



Desert Fish Habitat Partnership – Project Pre-Proposal

Name of Project:

DFHP Sub-Region:

Project Latitude/Longitude:

Summary Description: (100 words max)

Anticipated Start/Completion Dates:

State Project Contact:

Local Project Contact:

Federal Project Contact:

Implementing Organization:

Individual and Organizational Partners:

Landowner Support Documentation: (attach letter)

Total Project Cost: **DFHP Funds Requested:** **Partner Match:**

In-Kind Contributions:

DFHP Strategic Priority Addressed: (see [Framework](#) page 10)

DFHP Habitat Type (s) Addressed: (bulleted, see [Framework](#) page 2)
Landownership:

DFHP Species Addressed: (bulleted with rank)

State Wildlife Action Plan, Multi-species Conservations Plans, Habitat Plans, or Recovery Plan Priorities Addressed: (cite states, bulleted)

NFHAP Strategic Priority Addressed (see [Action Plan](#) goals, page 5):

Need for Project: (250 words max)

Objectives: (250 words max)

Benefits/Expected Results: (250 words max)

Effectiveness Monitoring Plan and Reporting Schedule: (200 words max)

Methods/Schedule: (bulleted)

Budget: (indicate expenses such as salaries and equipment and amount of DFHP request and matching funds)

Cost Category	DFHP Request	Federal Match	Non-Federal Match	Total
Personnel				
Fringe Benefits				
Travel				
Equipment				
Supplies				
Contractual				
Construction				
Other				
Total Direct Charges				
Indirect Charges				
Totals				

Note: Please describe all sources of matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project. For equipment and supplies, provide details on what items are to be purchased or supplied.

Please attach photos of site habitat proposed for improvement:

IMPORTANT

NFHAP/USFWS Funding Information: For consideration for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding, including that identified for implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, please submit the following information using the guidance provided in Attachment 3.

USFWS Strategic Plan Objectives

Primary:

Secondary:

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	Year					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	



Desert Fish Habitat Partnership – Project Pre-Proposal Example

Name of Project: Red Rock Cienega Wetland Rehabilitation

DFHP Sub-Region: Lower Colorado

Latitude/Longitude: 32.6927 / -108.7257

Summary Description: Red Rock State Wildlife Area historically had a cienega habitat in the Lakes Pasture area. Recently the cienega has only been seasonal and nonnative *Tamarisk* sp. is invading the area. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) is proposing to actively remove *Tamarisk* from the lakes pasture area and excavate a cienega type pond and wetland area. Once this pond is constructed the Department will work with Arizona Department of Game and Fish and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish populations of two imperiled fish species, Gila topminnow *Poeciliopsis occidentalis* and Gila chub *Gila intermedia*, within the cienega. The cienega will also provide habitat birds and other wildlife that frequent the area.

Anticipated Start/Completion Dates: 2007-2009

State Project Contact: Stephanie Carman, NMDGF, 505 476-8092,
stephanie.carman@state.nm.us

Local/Other Project Contact: Yvette Paroz, NMDGF, 505 476-8092,
yvette.paroz@state.nm.us

Federal Project Contact: Jennifer Fowler-Propst, 505 555-9348,
Jennifer_FowlerPropst@fws.gov

Implementing Organization: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Partner Organizations: Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Landowner Support Documentation: (attach letter)

Total Project Cost: \$90,000 **DFHP Funds Requested:** \$60,000 **Partner Match:** \$30,000

In-Kind Contributions: USFWS and NMDGF have provided the planning (arch surveys, engineering, NEPA), Arizona Game and Fish Department is providing fish.

DFHP Strategic Priority Address: *Strategy 2: Restore and maintain flow and water levels*
A cienega is a permanently watered, spring-fed marshland found in mid-elevation (1000-2000 m) semidesert grasslands. As oases in the desert, cienegas have been subject to a great deal of development and degradation over the course of human history, to the extent that currently few functioning cienega habitats remain. By restoring this cienega to its natural state, this project

will assist in repairing the natural hydrological function of the Gila River basin. Additionally, it will provide habitat for two imperiled fish species unique to cienega habitat in the Gila River basin.

DFHP Habitat Addressed: Cienega
Landownership: New Mexico State Game Commission

DFHP Species Addressed: Gila topminnow (2.00)
Gila chub (2.11)

Wildlife Action Plan Priorities Addressed:

New Mexico Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy – Gila Watershed: Prioritized Conservation Actions (pg 293):

1. Collaborate with federal and state agencies and affected publics to re-establish perennial cienega habitats along riparian corridors.
2. Work with federal, state, and private agencies and institutions to remove non-native species and restore Gila topminnow in appropriate perennial spring habitats.
4. Collaborate with federal and state agencies and affects publics to create awareness and understanding of perennial marsh/cienega/spring/seep functions, services and values.
7. Collaborate with federal and state agencies and affected publics to implement the recovery plan for the Gila chub

NFHAP Strategic Priority Addressed: This project will *Increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species.*

Need for Project: Freshwater sites in the Chihuahuan desert region are relatively rare and often threatened by groundwater pumping, diversions, grazing and development. The Desert Fishes Habitat Partnership was formed to focus on the imperiled, unique aquatic habitats of deserts. Among those habitats specifically recognized by the Partnership as important are cienegas. The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico also identifies perennial marsh/spring/seep habitats, including cienegas, to have one of the highest risks of being adversely altered and in need of protection. The proposed project would enhance critical wetland habitat in the Gila River Basin, part of the lower Colorado River Basin. The lakes pasture area historically had permanently watered wetlands, which have recently become ephemeral due to a deepening water table aggravated by the presence of noxious weeds including *Tamarisk*, bull thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, and musk thistle *Carduus nutans*.

The proposed project would also aid in recovery efforts of two federally threatened species, Gila topminnow and Gila chub. The Gila topminnow has been extirpated from New Mexico, but resides in Arizona. The Gila chub is currently found in the Turkey Creek watershed within New Mexico, but recent wildfires in the upper reaches of Turkey Creek threaten this population. Establishment of additional populations of these species in New Mexico is a priority identified in state and federal recovery plans.

Objectives: The primary objective of the project is to restore the natural cienega at Red Rock State Wildlife Area. The Department has begun this process by working with engineers and

hydrologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service to draft designs of the cienega wetland. Topographical and archeological surveys, as well as NEPA documentation, including Section 7 reports, have been completed. Test holes have been dug revealing that the water table is less than three feet deep and soils appear to have high clay content, making the area a good location for a pond. The Department has water rights ample to augment the pond with water as needed from a pump site near the pasture.

The next step in restoring the cienega is to restore native vegetation in the area. This will involve removing noxious plants from the area, including *Tamarisk*, by mechanical and/or chemical methods. Native willows and cottonwoods will then be planted to provide replacement cover for those species currently using the *Tamarisk*. The cienega will then need to be deepened, creating a pond area approximately 5 to 7 acres with a variety of depths to create a diversity of habitats. An electric pump on a nearby water well will be used to supplement water to the wetland during dry seasons via an underground pipe.

Once the cienega area is established, the Department will collect Gila chub from the Turkey Creek population and work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Arizona Game and Fish Department to secure adequate stock of Gila topminnow for patriation. Public access would be developed to the area via an interpretive trail and viewing platform on the wetland to enhance visitor experiences to the area, particularly for bird watching.

Benefits: The proposed project would restore a permanently watered wetland/cienega in the lakes pasture area. As a result, Gila topminnow and Gila chub could be reared within the cienega on a permanent basis and not be threatened by dry conditions. The abundance of *Tamarisk*, bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), and musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*) would be reduced, which would promote the re-establishment of native vegetation. The abundance of native mesquite (*Panicum spp.*) would also be reduced in surrounding upland areas to enhance structural diversity. Overall, this would result in an increased use of the area by neo-tropical migrant birds, migratory waterfowl, and native resident wildlife such as mule deer and javelina.

Effectiveness Monitoring Plan: To document the success of the project, NMDGF will complete regular monitoring at the site. This will include at a minimum annual surveys of vegetation, fish and birds. Additionally, NMDGF will monitor the public use of the area as part of its Gaining Access Into Nature program which encourages nonconsumptive use of State Game Commission lands.

Schedule:

Completed

2006 – Site Visit

2007- Test Holes, Archeological Survey, Topographical Survey, NEPA Documentation

Anticipated

Spring 2008 – Soil Samples

Summer 2008 – Refine Pond Design – Begin Vegetation Control

Fall 2008 – Continue Vegetation Control

Winter 2008 – Construct Pond

Spring 2009 – Continue Vegetation Control/Plant Native Vegetation
 Summer/Fall 2009 – Stock Gila Topminnow and Gila Chub in Pond
 Continue Vegetation Control/ Native plant restoration

Progress reports will be submitted annually until project is completed.

Budget: This project will utilize funds as follows:

Cost Category	DFHP Request	Federal Match	Non-Federal Match	Total
Personnel		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000
Fringe Benefits				
Travel	\$5,000			\$5,000
Equipment	\$30,000			\$30,000
Supplies	\$10,000			\$10,000
Contractual	\$5,000			\$5,000
Construction	\$10,000			\$10,000
Other				
Total Direct Charges				
Indirect Charges				
Totals				\$90,000

Note: Please describe all sources of matching funds or in-kind contributions to the project. For equipment and supplies, provide details on what items are to be purchased or supplied.

Please attach photos of site habitat proposed for improvement:



NFHAP/USFWS Funding Information

USFWS Strategic Plan Objectives

Primary: Facilitate management of aquatic habitats on national and regional scales.

Secondary: None specified

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	Year					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
7.21.5.1	4	4				8
5.1.3.4		7				7



Desert Fish Habitat Partnership Proposal Evaluation and Criteria Form

The DFHP Regional Workgroups and Executive and Steering Committees will consider the following factors in selecting projects for funding:

	DFHP Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1.	<p>Project Objectives and Measurable Outcomes</p> <p>a. Does the proposal address an on-the-ground project to protect the most under-served, imperiled desert fish species identified in State Wildlife Action Plans to enhance their conservation status and prevent their extirpation and extinction?</p> <p>b. Does the proposal integrate State Wildlife Action Plan priorities with the National Fish Habitat Action Plan strategies to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect intact and healthy habitats. • Restore and maintain flow and water levels. • Restore connectivity, while protecting native populations at-risk from nonnative encroachment. • Remediate and minimize sediments and excessive input of nutrients to habitats supporting species at-risk. 	15
2.	<p>DFHP Habitat and Species Addressed</p> <p>a. Does the proposed project address an identified DFHP Habitat?</p> <p>b. Are DFHP species addressed?</p>	15
3.	<p>Technical Merit</p> <p>a. Is the proposal supported by sound and established scientific, hydrological and biological studies or principles?</p> <p>b. Will the project enhance or sustain species diversity, increase populations of target species, and maintain or increase aquatic ecosystem function?</p> <p>c. Does the project have a high likelihood to provide long-term benefits for DFHP priority species and habitats?</p>	15
4.	<p>Project Applicant Qualifications</p> <p>a. Does the project applicant and partners have sufficient technical qualifications to complete the project?</p> <p>b. Does the project have a high probability of being completed in the next 2 years if it is funded?</p>	10
5.	<p>Proposal format</p> <p>a. Did the project applicant provide all of the information required by the RFP and in the proper format?</p>	5
6.	<p>Partnerships/Community Support</p> <p>a. Does the project have multiple and diverse partners working in collaboration?</p> <p>b. Are there letters of support or signed documentation from approving officials and/or affected landowners stating their commitment to the proposed project?</p>	10

7.	Environmental and Regulatory Compliance (e.g., ESA, NEPA, 404 permits, or other permits as required) a. Has project applicant demonstrated adequate planning to ensure project implementation and completion? b. Which NEPA, 404 or other state and federal permits are needed to execute the project and have they been acquired? If not, when will they be filed and obtained? (Projects with completed NEPA/state permits will receive higher priority).	5
8.	Monitoring and Best Management Practices a. Does the proposal include a monitoring and maintenance plan with clear objectives for evaluating the success and goals of the project? b. Does the monitoring plan include both pre-and post-project monitoring activities? c. Do the Best Management Practices or conservation actions proposed include a description and timeline of the long-term maintenance responsibilities that assure the project will be successful and the results sustainable?	10
9.	Budget a. Are cost estimates appropriate, focused on actions linked to DFHP objectives, well justified and reasonable?	5
10.	Leverage of Other Funds a. Does the project provide an opportunity to leverage other government or private funding or in-kind resources? b. Is partner funding and/or resources an important element for project implementation? c. Does the project link to or add value to another existing or planned project?	10
TOTAL SCORE		100

Scores for each of the ten criteria can range from the maximum to the minimum using the following scale:

0-20% of the total points for little or no relevant response

21%-45% of the total points for a minimal relevant response

46%-70% of the total points for a well supported response

71%-100% of the total points for an exceptional response in which the Project Applicant gives evaluators the information they need and is clear and concise with documented support.

USFWS/NFHAP Funding Information

For consideration for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding, including that identified for implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, please use the following information to select the appropriate Strategic Plan Objectives and Performance Measure. For further guidance, please contact your USFWS Region Fish Habitat Representative.

USFWS Strategic Plan Objectives

1.1.1 Develop and improve long-term partnerships with States, Tribes, other Federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other Service Programs to develop collaborative conservation strategies for aquatic resources.

1.2.1 Develop and implement performance measures to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of Fisheries Program resource activities and financial accountability.

1.2.2 Manage Fisheries Program funding to maximize Program performance and to allocate and spend Program funds in a timely and responsible manner.

2.1.1 Facilitate management of aquatic habitats on national and regional scales.

2.1.2 Expand the use of Fisheries Program expertise to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts of habitat alteration on fish and other aquatic species.

2.1.3 Increase the quantity and improve the quality of aquatic and riparian habitat on Service lands.

3.1.1 Maintain diverse, self-sustaining fish and other aquatic resource populations.

3.1.2 Restore declining fish and other aquatic resource populations before they require listing under the Endangered Species Act.

3.1.3 Recover fish and other aquatic resource populations protected under the Endangered Species Act.

3.2.1 Prevent new introductions of aquatic nuisance species.

3.2.2 Minimize range expansion and population growth of established aquatic nuisance species.

3.3.1 Co-manage interjurisdictional fisheries.

3.3.2 Support, facilitate, and/or lead collaborative approaches to manage interjurisdictional fisheries.

4.1.1 Enhance recreational fishing opportunities on Service and Department of Defense lands.

4.1.2 Provide support to States, Tribes, and other partners to identify and meet shared or complementary recreational fishing and aquatic education and outreach objectives.

- 4.1.3 Recognize and promote the value and importance of recreational fishery objectives in implementation of other Service responsibilities.
- 4.2.1 Identify the mitigation responsibilities of Federal agencies related to water projects.
- 4.2.2 Meet the Service's responsibilities for mitigating fisheries.
- 4.2.3 Achieve full cost recovery from water project sponsors.
- 5.1.1 Provide technical assistance to Tribes.
- 5.1.2 Identify sources of funds to enhance Tribal resource management.
- 5.1.3 Provide fish for Tribal resource management.
- 5.1.4 Recognize and promote the Service's distinct obligations toward Tribes within the Fisheries Program.
- 6.1.1 Develop and share applied aquatic scientific and technologic tools with partners.
- 6.1.2 Utilize appropriate scientific and technologic tools in formulating and executing fishery management plans and policies.
- 7.1.1 Staff Fisheries Program field stations at levels adequate to effectively meet the Service's goals and objectives in fish and other aquatic resource conservation.
- 7.1.2 Provide employees with opportunities to maintain competencies in the expanding knowledge and technologies needed to improve opportunities for professional achievement, advancement and recognition.
- 7.1.3 Provide employees with access to facilities and equipment needed to effectively, efficiently, and safely perform their jobs.

USFWS Performance Measures

- 5.1.3 Number of habitat assessments completed (not acres)
- 5.1.4 Total number of miles of in-stream and shoreline habitat assessed
- 5.1.10 Total number of in-stream/shoreline miles restored in U.S
- 5.1.11 Total number of fish passage barriers removed or bypassed
- 5.1.12 Number of miles re-opened to fish passage-FWMA
- 5.1.13 Number of acres re-opened to fish passage
- 5.2.4 Total number of population assessments completed

5.3.1.1 Number of all tasks implemented, as prescribed in Fishery Management Plans

5.3.7 Number of applied aquatic scientific and technologic tools developed through publications

7.21.5.1 Number of Recovery Plan tasks implemented by the Fisheries Program

12.2.4 Number of activities conducted to support the management and control of aquatic invasive species

12.2.9 Number of risk assessments conducted to evaluate potentially invasive aquatic species-annual

12.2.11 Number of surveys conducted for aquatic invasive species baseline/trend information for aquatic invasive species

12.2.12 Number of surveys conducted for early detection and rapid response for aquatic invasive species

12.2.14 Number of invasive species partnerships established and maintained

15.4.1.1 Number of all mitigation tasks implemented as prescribed in approved plans

15.4.8 Number of aquatic outreach and education activities and/or events

15.4.12 Total number of visitors to USFWS Fisheries facilities

18.1.6 Number of training session to support Tribal fish and wildlife conservation

18.1.12 Number of consultations conducted to support Tribal fish and wildlife conservation

5.1.3.1 Number of acres of upland habitat assessed

5.1.3.2 Number of acres of wetland habitat assessed

12.2.12.2 Number of activities conducted for rapid response (Aquatic Nuisance Species)

12.2.4.1 Number of activities conducted to address priority pathways (Aquatic Nuisance Species)

12.2.7.1 Number of aquatic nuisance species related outreach/education activities conducted

5.1.10.2 Number of instream miles enhanced

5.1.10.1 Number of riparian miles enhanced

12.2.12.1 Number of surveys conducted for early detection (Aquatic Nuisance Species)

12.2.4.2 Number of technical assistance/coordination activities conducted (Aquatic Nuisance Species)

5.1.3.3 Number of upland acres restored/enhanced

5.1.3.4 Number of wetland acres restored/enhanced