

For Immediate Release--

National Fish Habitat Board recognizes the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership.

(Washington, D.C.) The National Fish Habitat Board approved the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership's (MGLP) application to become a recognized Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP) at its March meeting. This is a significant milestone for the MGLP, a partnership of public and private entities from eight states (ND, SD, MN, IA, WI, IL, IN and MI), and indicates this group is well on its way to better conservation of fish habitat in natural lakes.

To receive recognition, FHPs need to meet the following requirements:

- **Strong and diverse partnership** of public and private partners that are focused on conservation of fish habitat;
- **Geographic focus** with defined boundaries addressing issues and priorities that are nationally significant;
- **Strategic planning** that identifies fish and aquatic habitat priorities for the partnership area in the form of geographic focus areas or key stressors or impairments to facilitate decision-making;
- **Capabilities for scientific assessment** to measure and demonstrate progress using science-based resource assessment, project evaluation, and reporting of outcomes.

Recognition makes the MGLP eligible for National Fish Habitat Action Plan project funds for local projects that benefit fish habitat. Last year, each of the six recognized FHPs received between \$100,000 and \$600,000 with money coming from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fund projects.

Beyond project dollars, recognition means that an outside group of fisheries experts believes the MGLP plan to conserve fish habitat in Midwestern lakes is a sound one. MGLP partners are collaborating, which has led to efficiencies in program sharing. For example, partners are working together to complete a Midwest assessment of glacial lakes, which will serve as a guide to where conservation dollars can best be invested.

The MGLP is the eighth FHP to receive this recognition. Two other FHPs were also recognized at the March Board meeting: the Desert Fish Habitat Partnership and Hawaii Fish Habitat Partnership. Currently, there are nine FHPs and eleven candidate FHPS. The Board plans to recognize at least 12 FHPS by 2010.

For more information about the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership, please contact Pat Rivers at pat.rivers@dnr.state.mn.us or visit www.MidwestGlacialLakes.org.

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