FRIENDS OF RESERVOIRS

Investing in Fish Habitat to Assure a Bright Future for America’s Anglers and the Fishing Industry
America's Reservoirs: Why be concerned?

Reservoirs are critically important to freshwater fishing and our nation's economy. Exclusive of the Great Lakes, over 84% of our nation's freshwater anglers (23 million) fish in reservoirs and lakes. These anglers have significant impact on our nation's economy; generating $22.8 billion in retail sales (USFWS 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation). As impressive as these numbers may be, angling participation in reservoirs and lakes has declined to about half of what it had been in 1985. Also, fishing participation in reservoirs and lakes continued to decline despite an 11% increase in total fishing participation in the US during 2010. There are many social causes of declining participation but habitat loss in reservoirs is believed to be a contributing factor.

Fish habitat: a problem that needs to be fixed!

Our nation's reservoirs are getting older and as they age, their fish habitats and fisheries decline. The heyday of reservoir construction occurred in the 1950s and '60s and rate of new reservoir construction has dramatically declined. As the median age of U.S. reservoirs now surpasses 60 years, the fish habitat in these systems is degrading and needs to be restored. Good fish habitat is the foundation for healthy aquatic life, clean water supplies, and quality fishing.

Let's take action now, before it's too late!

Make a tax-deductible donation today to restore fish habitat in our nation's aging reservoir systems. These problems have been identified and scientific methods are available to solve them. It will take people of all walks of life, working together, to solve these problems. Reservoirs were created by people and must be cared for by people. Help us preserve this angling legacy for future generations and the economic powerhouse that's tied to fishing in America's reservoirs.

www.waterhabitatlife.org
Donate to help make these state habitat projects a reality!

**Iowa: Rathbun Lake Shoreline Stabilization Project - $6,200,000**
Rathbun Lake is an 11,000-acre multipurpose flood control reservoir located in south-central Iowa that has sedimentation and shoreline erosion issues. Iowa DNR, and several other state and local agencies are working on soil conservation projects within the watershed, and specific in-lake restoration measures including shoreline reshaping and stabilization, rock reef habitat placement and large woody structure replacement have been identified by Iowa DNR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as needed to protect high-quality spawning and nursery habitat.

**Nebraska: Conestoga Reservoir Aquatic Rehabilitation Project - $3,900,000**
A once popular fishery, Conestoga suffers from high sediment and nutrient inputs, and extensive shoreline erosion. Nebraska Game Fish and Parks and a host of other partners plan to use innovative techniques to prevent shoreline erosion and restore healthy aquatic littoral zones. Examples from past projects include both simple and complex designs for off-shore breakwaters to establish fringe wetlands.

**New Mexico: Development of Fish Friendly Bulkheads - $250,000**
Bulkhead construction destroys shoreline habitat needed for fish production. The New Mexico B.A.S.S. Nation proposes to quantify the percent of shoreline affected by bulkheads in the nation's reservoirs and to develop Best Management Practices to convert those bulkheads into productive fish habitat. Results of this effort will be used to work toward federal/state requirements to use these techniques.

**North Carolina: Shoreline Stabilization on Islands in Lake Norman - $80,000**
The North Carolina Wildlife Federation proposes to construct offshore breakwaters, enhance shoreline fisheries habitat, and reshape eroded banks on islands in Lake Norman that provide important angling opportunities and serve as rookeries for wading birds.

**Oklahoma: Skiatook Lake Aquatic Vegetation Restoration Project - $40,000**
Skiatook Lake is a popular urban bass fishery in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area that receives much tournament bass fishing pressure. Aquatic vegetation is lacking in the reservoir and because of relatively stable water levels, Skiatook is a prime candidate for extensive vegetation restoration efforts in the upper reaches of the reservoir. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and local angling clubs propose to build a plant nursery and begin a vegetation establishment effort.

*Continued on back*
Pennsylvania: Lake Arthur Shoreline Stabilization & Fish Habitat Improvement - $11,000
Wave action is eroding shorelines at Lake Arthur, causing turbid water and reductions in fish habitat. Two state agencies, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, have proposed a plan to stabilize these shorelines, improve fish habitats and angler access. The partnering agencies will provide staff and equipment to implement the stabilization. Project funding is needed for the purchase of stone materials.

South Carolina: Reestablishing Native Vegetation in Lake Marion - $30,000
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to restore native aquatic plants in the upper Santee Cooper Reservoir System on the Santee National Wildlife Refuge by establishing founder colonies of native aquatic plants in areas where non-native hydrilla has been eradicated. Primary efforts will focus on near-shore planting of eelgrass at various depths to increase nursery and feeding habitat for a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Texas: Lake Houston Native Aquatic Plant Restoration - $7,500
Lake Houston provides fishing opportunities for millions of people who live in the Houston metropolitan area. This project seeks to restore native aquatic plant communities to improve fish habitat, fishing and water quality. Phase 1 of the project has been completed which included the construction of a native aquatic plant nursery. Funding for phase 2 will facilitate plantings of native aquatic plants. Project partners include the Lake Houston Sports and Recreation Foundation (a Friends of Reservoirs Chapter) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas: Possum Kingdom Reservoir Native Aquatic Plant Restoration and Structural Habitats - $7,000
Possum Kingdom Reservoir is an important fishery near the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. Shallow-water habitats have degraded with age and are in need of restoration. The goals are to improve the fishery and combat negative effects associated with golden alga blooms. This project includes the establishment of native aquatic plants, installations of cedar brush, and deployment of artificial reefs. Project partners include the Hells Gate Bass Club (a Friends of Reservoirs Chapter), Brazos River Authority and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas: A Native Aquatic Plant Nursery to Support Guadalupe River Reservoir Fisheries $8,200
A series of reservoirs on the Guadalupe River provide convenient fishing opportunities for millions of people in the San Antonio metropolitan area. These stable-water-level reservoirs would benefit from the addition of native aquatic plants to support fishing. Funding is needed to construct a native aquatic plant nursery to support multiple vegetation establishment projects on these reservoirs. Partners include Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, multiple Friends of Reservoirs Chapters, lakeside home owner groups, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Utah: Rockport Reservoir Vertical Habitat Structures - $25,000
Rockport Reservoir experiences annual water level fluctuations of around 30 feet and generally lacks shallow-water habitat complexity. This is thought to result in low survival of juvenile fish and poor recruitment of these fish to the sport fishery. Utah Department of Wildlife Resources, Utah State Parks, and Rocky Mountain Anglers (a Friends of Reservoirs Chapter) propose to install perpendicular log structures in an effort to improve yellow perch abundance in the reservoir.

www.waterhabitatlife.org
Known Fish Habitat Problems

A Strategy for Success:

The Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership (RFHP) is strategically positioned to address reservoir fish habitat problems that affect sport fishing quality in the United States. We have the full backing of the National Fish Habitat Partnership (www.fishhabitat.org) that was formed in 2007. The RFHP (www.reservoirpartnership.org) was established in 2009 and has signed agreements with at least 35 state fisheries agencies to advance fish habitat restoration goals in reservoirs. We bring these managing agencies together with like-minded citizens, organizations, and businesses to help solve these problems nationwide.

With approximately 10,000 reservoirs, larger than 250 acres in size, the task of restoring habitat in these systems is larger than any managing agency can accomplish alone. All reservoir users, anglers, boaters, municipalities, local business, and fishing industry, have a role in preserving and/or restoring healthy reservoir systems. To this end, the RFHP formed the Friends of Reservoirs Foundation (FOR: www.waterhabitatlife.org) to help raise public awareness, engage citizens, and raise tax-deductible donations to support local fish habitat improvement projects.

Projects funded in over 13 states
Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership has dispersed over $270,000 in habitat grants
Grants have been matched with $2.9 million in other federal, state, and local funds

All fish habitat project proposals are ranked on the basis of objective criteria with priority given to projects addressing regional habitat impairments identified in the national reservoir habitat assessment and projects focused on identifying best management practices. Proposals are scored by regional teams of senior state fish and wildlife agency staff.

Funded Projects

Native Aquatic Plant Restoration
Lake Conroe, Texas
The Seven Coves Bass Club, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the San Jacinto River Authority, and many other partners planted native aquatic plants to provide habitat for sport fishes. The project serves as a model for native vegetation enhancement nationwide and received a state Environmental Excellence Award in 2013. The RFHP provided $10,000 in funds to go with over $1 million in partnership funding.

Developing Habitat in a New Reservoir,
Fellsmere Water Management Area, Florida
The St. Johns River Water Management District and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission joined forces to build a new reservoir for fishing. Reservoir bottom areas were sculpted to improve fish habitat and fishing. The RFHP provided $10,000 in funds to go with the $1.3 million in partnership funding.

Stabilizing shorelines and adding structural habitat, Smithville Lake, Missouri
The Missouri Department of Conservation and numerous partners rocked more than 2,500 feet of degraded shoreline and created numerous large rock/brush piles within the Smithville lake basin. The RFHP provided $10,000 in funds that were matched by more than $160,000 in partnership funding.

And many more...
We ask for your support in the fight to preserve and maintain the quality angling that we currently enjoy. Please become a contributing sponsor at one of our suggested funding levels. You can choose to sponsor specific habitat projects in your local market or state.

**Sponsor benefits**

- Contributions to FOR are tax-deductible.
- Help fight habitat loss and preserve our angling legacy for future generations.
- Connect with customers who care about improving our aquatic environment.
- Receive recognition for your contributions through:
  - Local and national press releases
  - Postings and blogs on fishing websites
  - Listing on “Sponsor Page” on our website and our social media
  - Use of FOR branding on approved products and services
  - Signage recognizing your business at project sites

To become a sponsor or request more information contact:
Jeff Boxrucker, Coordinator, Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership
(405) 659-1797 or jboxrucker@sbcglobal.net

www.waterhabitatlife.org