

Off Channel Habitat Conceptual Ideas

TFW Policy Co-Chairs

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Please review the following with your individual caucuses as a potential framework for providing more clarity around how off channel habitat is addressed in the regulatory structure. This proposal is intended to use the Board Motion direction and the subsequent TFW Policy discussions to form proposals that are conducive to TFW Policy's established processes for decision making.

TFW Policy's review of the current rule process and field review revealed that:

- Off channel habitat should be and likely is being protected for all Type F waters regardless of interpretations associated with the crosswalk between the two water typing nomenclatures.
- Connectivity of the off channel habitat feature to the Type F water is the first fundamental component to establishing off channel habitat.
- Establishment of the outer edge of the off channel habitat feature is the second fundamental component to establishing off channel habitat.
- Areas outside the Type F channel that are connected via inundation at bank full depth of the Type F channel may be clearer way to define off channel habitat.

Option for moving forward:

- 1) Confirm our assumptions around how OCH is being addressed in FPAs; that it is being identified where it exists on all Type F streams and that when it is, the rules are being appropriately applied.
- 2) Concurrently, conduct a scientific evaluation of any proposals for changes to the existing regulatory structure.
- 3) Based on the results of both steps 1 and 2, follow the adaptive management process to either take or do not take action based on the results. If the recommendation is to take action, decide on what action(s) to take.

Assuming that there is consensus on the steps identified above, TFW Policy will need to:

- Decide on the entity to conduct the reviews.
- Decide the scope of the reviews.

Once the reviews are complete, TFW Policy will follow its normal process for deciding to take action, consistent with both the Board Motion and the Adaptive Management Program.