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**RESOURCE PARTNERSHIPS FLOW TOGETHER THROUGH  
ONLINE PRESENCE AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

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**ABSTRACT:** Water resource managers face a fast moving world of information technology. Interactive websites, social media, mobile device applications, streaming video, and many other new tools are available in addition to more traditional communications tools. Determining how to communicate well and which approaches to use is not easy. It requires a strategic approach to analyze the situation, define desired responses from key stakeholders, create key messages, and position them to elicit effective actions. Communications can be an up-to-the-moment two-way street that broadens the opportunity for full participation by numerous stakeholders and improves accountability and transparency. Building an evaluation process into the strategy up front provides an opportunity to test the tools and modify them for more effective impact in the specific context that defines a particular partnership. In order to thrive, diverse coalitions for water resource management must communicate clear and compelling messages to their stakeholders and interact effectively with a broad range of partners to ensure that on-the-ground projects are prioritized, produced and evaluated in a collaborative environment. Online web presence and other communications tools can serve a number of purposes to achieve these goals, such as: displaying a recognizable brand and coordinating consistent messages; increasing awareness and legitimacy from key partners; actively engaging local and regional stakeholder groups across a broad geographic area and from multiple social and scientific disciplines; enabling access to data; soliciting project proposals; showing how and when to use habitat conservation techniques; and informing key audiences of project successes and partnership opportunities. As an example, the National Fish Habitat Action Plan guides voluntary coalitions that have come together to focus on fish species (Western Native Trout Initiative), habitat types (Midwest Glacial Lakes) or geographic areas (Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership) to boost fish populations by forming strong local and regional partnerships for protecting key aquatic habitats. Web design and electronic tools built for existing fish habitat partnerships and related natural resource management organizations will demonstrate how these communications tools can meet a number of the challenges faced by any water resource management partnership.

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