



# 2021 AFS Governing Board Meeting

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday, November 5, 2021

Marriott Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, MD

## Executive Summary and Key Tasks

1. Request the Publications Overview Committee to begin planning for the next full review of AFS journals and books. This should include a review of the adequacy of our journal offerings, journal names, and other aspects of AFS publications to ensure that they fully meet the needs of membership and the state of fisheries and aquatic conservation.
2. Affiliate working group of the Governing Board is to be appointed by AFS leadership and charged to continue to explore options for addressing affiliate member issue.
3. Extending the term of Governing Board members from one year to two year. Units are to take back to their leadership and discuss the proposal to have Sections identify a GB representative for a two- or three-year term.
4. Status of the USFWS-AFS MOU is to be reported back to the GB.
5. Move the approved motion to establish the FPPC as a full committee to a vote of the AFS membership.

### Summary of Discussions:

- The Governing Board (GB) addressed two key thematic challenges in an open discussion, both informed by a pre-meeting survey of the GB members to obtain baseline information. The survey findings emphasized the importance of networking and professional development as key reasons for joining AFS with participation in AFS meetings being a valued activity. Providing support for early career professionals, increasing diversity in the profession, student involvement, and professional development were all noted as of high importance.
- Governing Board members would be more involved if they were tasked with working on key issues as part of subgroups, received issue introduction/briefings by officers or others prior to decision discussions, and had the opportunity to learn more about the activities of other AFS units.
- The first discussion was an assessment of AFS strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) with breakout groups focusing on five key areas: Publications, Communications, Policy, Professional Development/CE, and Meetings
  - Publications – AFS has a strong reputation for high quality publications, but AFS needs to review and update its suite of publications to reflect current membership and profession needs. AFS needs to better market our publications, including the e-books and agency book purchase program.
  - Communications – AFS has a depth of knowledge to share with the profession and the public but does not have the staff or capacity to get information out at the level that is needed. Current societal trends of mis-information, alternative facts, and de-valuing of science make this challenge even greater. AFS needs to find new and better ways of communicating with a

- new generation of professionals, improve its branding, update the website, and work with partners to amplify and share our message.
- Policy Development – AFS has strong credibility and is engaged on Capital Hill but has the ability to focus on only a very narrow set of topics. We are challenged in developing solid policy recommendations, have little to no international policy presence, and lack a revenue source for policy expansion. There continues, and may always be, some reticent to be involved in policy due to local political constraints (state level political restrictions) or otherwise, but there is a strong demand for AFS policy relevancy.
  - Professional Development and Continuing Education – AFS has strong content including cutting-edge science to share among its membership as well as outside of the membership. CE opportunities are provided at all levels of the society, but we don't do a good job of sharing these offerings and building a community of practice. We need to have better interactions among CE leadership at the chapter and section levels.
  - Conferences and Meetings – Conferences and meetings are highly valued by AFS members and non-members. We are challenged with size and complexity of meetings with large meetings seemingly overwhelming to some while others find them energizing as well as financially positive. AFS needs to more closely evaluate the virtual components of its meetings to address needs but also to ensure that costs and revenue are appropriately balanced. AFS needs to regularly assess the needs of membership to better understand meeting design, costs, travel and approval restrictions, and ways to create greater engagement.
  - Second Breakout session focused on how AFS can better meet its mission and vision. Key points included
    - Continue to find new and more effective ways to share AFS information across generations. AFS has good messages but we are often no as effective as we need to be in conveying the information to those not already involved in AFS.
    - Professional development is a unique role for AFS and we need to continually reach out to members, agency leaders, and others to understand needs and develop appropriate offerings. Leadership development and other skills that AFS provides need to be shared with fisheries chiefs and others to help them understand the benefits of AFS involvement by their staff.
    - AFS is seen as a “niche non-profit” and is limited as a result of that. The society needs to become more interdisciplinary and attractive to an increasingly diverse conservation community.
    - Networking is a key benefit of AFS and we need to identify ways to enhance opportunities at all levels and in all activities.
    - Enhancing human diversity into the profession is one of the keys to the future of AFS and we need to continually work to make AFS more engaging, welcome, and seen as a professional home of a new generation of increasingly diverse professionals.

## **Participants (*needs to be verified with sign-in book*)**

### **Governing Board Members**

#### Society Officers

President	Leanne Roulson
President-Elect	April Croxton
First Vice President	Cecil Jennings
Second Vice President	Miguel Garcia Bermudez
Past President	Brian Murphy
Constitutional Consultant (non-voting)	Randy Schultz
Executive Director (non-voting)	Doug Austen

#### Division Officers

Western Division President	Dan Brauch
Western Division President Elect	Laurie Earley
Southern Division President	
Southern Division President Elect	Jason Olive
North Central Division President	Mark Fincel
North Central Division President Elect	Brian Nerbonne
Northeastern Division President	Patrick Shirey
Northeastern Division President Elect	Susan Cushman

#### Section Presidents

Bioengineering	Dan Giza
Canadian Aquatic Resources	
Cooperative Research with Stakeholders	Lee Benaka
Early Life History	
Education	Trent Sutton
Student and Early Career Prof. Subsection	
Estuaries	John Mohan
Equal Opportunities	Lian Guo
Fish Culture	Jeff Heindel
Fish Habitat	David Thorne
Fish Health	Gary Marty
Fish History	
Fisheries Administration	Gary Whelan
Fisheries Information and Technology	Paul Venturelli and Tiffany Hopper
Fisheries Law	
Fisheries Management	Jeff Koch
Genetics	Marlis Douglas
Imperiled Aquatic Species Section	
International Fisheries	
Invasive and Introduced Fisheries	Marybeth Brey
Marine Fisheries	Jessica Miller
Native Peoples Fisheries	
Physiology	
Science Communications	
Socioeconomics	Mackenzie Mazur
Water Quality	

### Emerging Leaders

Kaylyn Zipp  
Brian Gallagher  
Dan Mosier  
Christina Murphy

### Guests

### AFS Staff

Dan Cassidy  
Lauren Maza  
Shawn Cassidy  
Drue Winters  
Beth Beard  
Katrina Dunn

### Designated Proxies:

1. Lee Benaka for John Mohan, Estuaries Section

Photo of the online participants in the Governing Board meeting



### **Notes of the Meeting**

1. **Quorum establish** by Randy Schultz and the meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. (EST) by AFS President Leanne Roulson
2. **Agenda approved without changes.**
3. **Review of meeting minutes** from the August 2021 GB call meeting. Accepted with unanimous consent.

4. **AFS Leadership Listing** – Please send any updates to AFS leadership to Lauren Maza. If there are leadership changes to your unit, please report them on the Leadership Change form located with the Unit Leaders Manual on the website.
5. **Setting the Stage Survey Presentation and Review** (Attachment A; Leanne Roulson)
  - a. What are we going to do this morning? Think about where we are and where we want AFS to be. We'll spend time thinking about what AFS is doing to meet its mission statement – the activities we should continue with, those to consider discontinuing, and those that we need to build or expand.
  - b. Survey of the Governing Board was completed by 31 members. Key observations include:
    - i. Networking and being involved were consistently rated as the most important reasons for initially being involved and continuing with involvement. Personal interaction is important. Kaylyn Zipp commented that, based on experience from webinars among over 20 student units, young career professionals are seeking interactions with other young career professionals. This was highly successful and is a good model for future efforts.
6. **Breakout Exercise #1 - Strategic Positioning of AFS** - Initial warm-up SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). The exercise focused on five program areas listed below. Strengths and Weaknesses are generally internal while opportunities and threats are generally external.
  - Publications
  - Communications
  - Policy
  - Professional Development/CE
  - MeetingsReport out from each group are summarized in Attachment B
7. **Exercise #2** – What is AFS role in the Fisheries profession (still in small groups) Are we meeting that role? What should we be doing to better meet that role? Report out from each of the group are summarized in Attachment B
8. **AFS Financial update, Investment Committee Report, and Status of 2021 Budget** (Attachment C)
  - a. A full review of the AFS financial position and the discussions of the AFS Management Committee yesterday was provided by Dan Cassidy. This included a review of the five recommendations by the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee and the actions and recommendations from the Management Committee. A key component of this was the movement of several funds into an Obligated Reserve Fund that will, over time, be expanded to fully address the needs of AFS financial security.
  - b. Motion to accept the AFS Management Committee's recommendation to replace the current language in the AFS Rules for the AFS standing Investment Committee with the language below for a standing committee on Financial Planning and Procedures:

**FINANCIAL PLANNING & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE:** Reviews AFS financial trends and

provides recommendations to the Management Committee with the overall goal of ensuring financial sustainability.

Moved by Brian Murphy; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cecil Jennings. Motion passed with unanimous consent.

**9. Logo presentation and discussion** – How does it speak to our updated direction? Presented by Julie DeFilippi Simpson(**Attachment D**)

- a. Julie reviewed the history of the logo and brand revitalization effort including the contractual work with Potomac Communications Group (PCG)
- b. AFS utilized an outside source “99 Designs” that essentially crowd-sources logo development to graphic designers worldwide. This was deemed to be highly successful and allowed for work with the selected artist to incorporate final design modifications.

**10. Report by President Roulson (**Attachment E**)**

- a. The President’s Plan-of-work has been previously shared with the MC and GB but was summarized by Leanne with key points highlighted.
- b. Focus of the AFS Spokane annual meeting is “What do fish mean to us?” which engages a diverse perspective of viewpoints on fish with particularly emphasis on Native American and under-represented groups and their inclusion of fish and aquatic resources into their culture.

**11. Additional old business – None presented**

**12. New Business**

- a. Midyear GB meeting option is with the Southern Division meeting in Charleston, SC. The Governing Board would meet on Thursday and/or Friday, January 20 and 21, 2022.
- b. Affiliate membership – Leanne suggested that the Governing Board should develop a working group to continue to explore options for addressing affiliate membership.
- c. Role of the Governing Board compared with that of the Management Committee. The GB is positioned to be the “strategic planning body” of the society. However, this is challenged by the relatively short tenure of members on the GB with most being on for only one year. The approach of extending GB membership by having the GB member units assign a representative to be on for more than one year (2-3 years) was presented. This would create a GB that could develop a more extensive knowledge of topics of interest and allow for better development of corporate body of knowledge among the GB members. A good example of this is the challenge of getting the Management Committee or Governing Board informed sufficiently on financial matters to be able to effectively address their charge as the fiduciary to the society.
  - i. Some Sections (e.g. Invasive and Introduced Species) has a two-year presidential term and this was helpful in being an effective Governing Board member. The first year is, essentially, a learning year and the second year provides the opportunity to be a more effective member. This would apply to the GB and the MC.
  - ii. AFS by-laws would need to be reviewed but much of this would be addressed at the Unit level (Sections and Divisions). Each of them should take this charge back to their units and discuss the viability of this option.
  - iii. For Sections this could be addressed by identifying a GB representative with a charge to be on the GB for the 2- or 3-year term. For Divisions, they have a two-year term on the MC as well as rotating through two years on the GB as President Elect and President.
  - iv. If developed, some form of staggering terms would be helpful to ensure overlap of members tenure to ensure continuity.

- v. For the Management Committee selection of the four additional members, there would need to be appropriate modifications to the AFS by-laws to allow them to be on the MC for a two-year term. This could be addressed by voting in two new MC at-large members every year thus staggering the at-large memberships
- d. AFS-USFWS MOU – Austen was asked to research status of the MOU and report back to the GB.
- e. AFS is working with a diverse group of partners to develop the first Latin America and Caribbean Fisheries Congress set for May 2023 in Cancun, Mexico.

**13. Adjournment at 3:58 p.m. ET**



# Attachment A – Pre-survey

Governing Board 2021-2022

## Pre-Work Survey

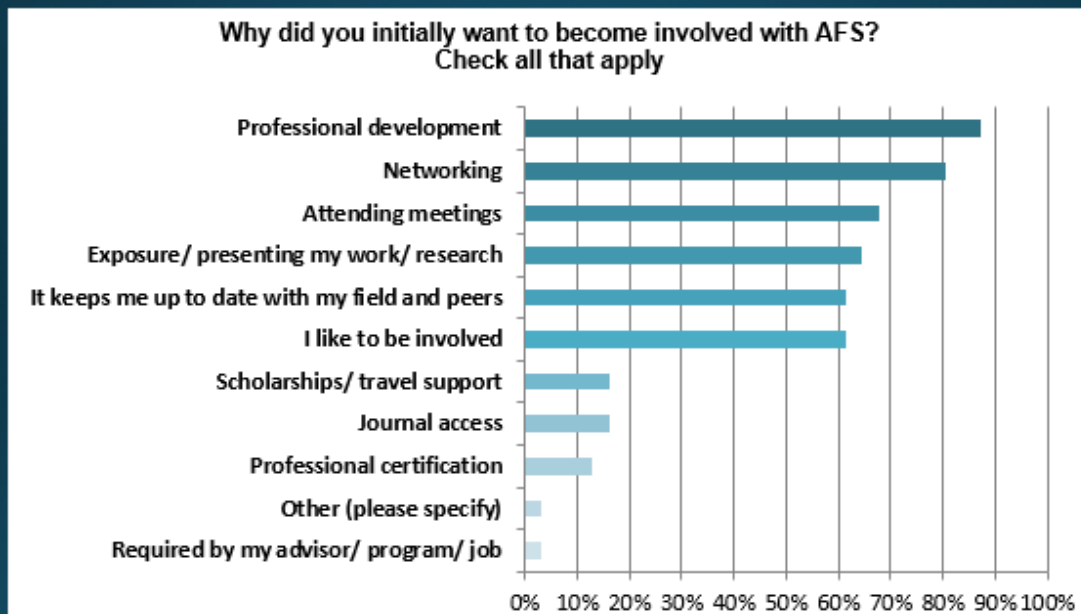
### This Morning

- Thinking forward
- Survey Results
- Breakouts- discussion of where we are
- Breakouts on what AFS is/ should strive for
- LUNCH
- Unit reports
- Financial information- also thinking forward

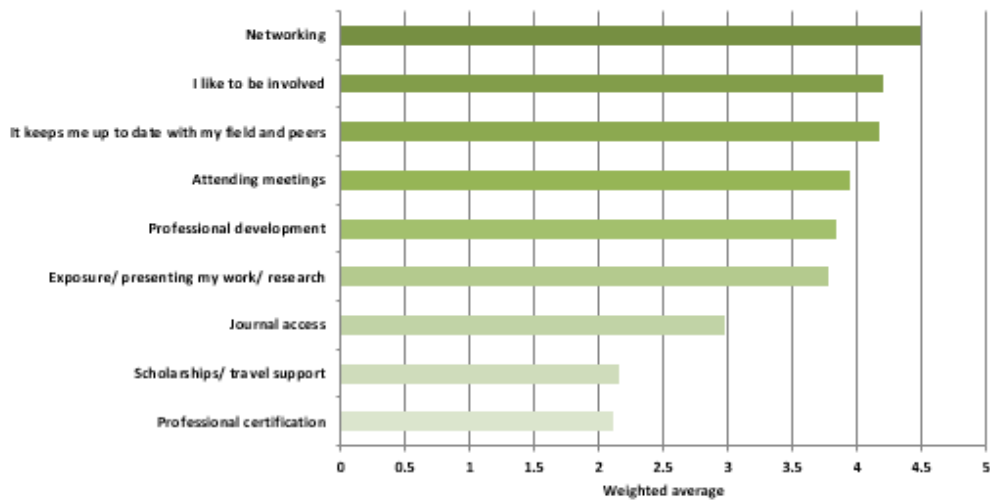


# Thinking Forward

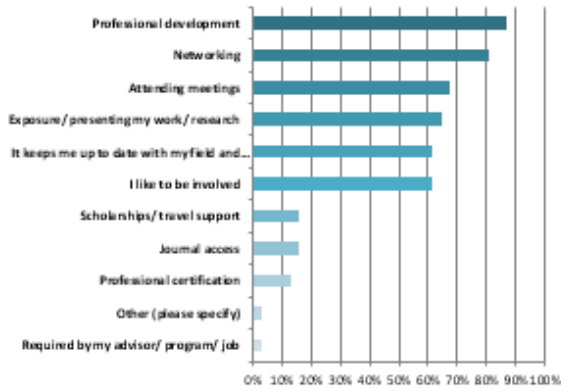
- 41 GB members
- 31 completed survey



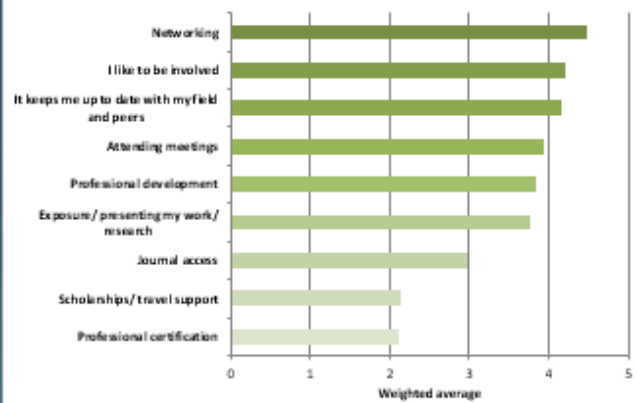
### What keeps you involved with AFS?



### Why did you initially want to become involved with AFS?



### What keeps you involved with AFS?



# Breakout Groups

- Small groups
- 1 officer / group

## SWOT #1

Groups of 4

Each group will focus on one of the five program areas.

1. Publications
2. Communications
3. Policy
4. Professional Development/Continuing Ed
5. Meetings

10 minutes of discussion- appoint a scribe

Report out from each group

# Report Out #1

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Publications                              | • Strengths     |
| 2. Communications                            | • Weaknesses    |
| 3. Policy                                    | • Opportunities |
| 4. Professional<br>Development/Continuing Ed | • Threats       |
| 5. Meetings                                  |                 |

## Breakout #2

Groups of 4

What is AFS's role in the Fisheries profession? (There may be more than 1, pick one for your group)

- What are ways we ARE meeting that role?
- What should/could we be doing to better meet that role?

10-15 minutes of discussion- appoint a scribe

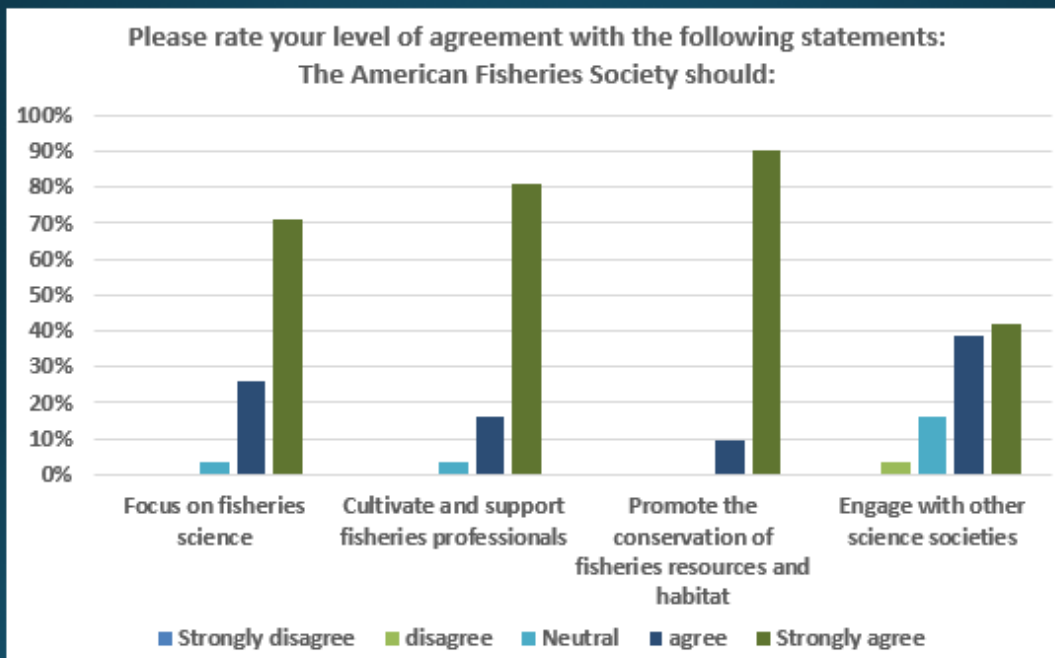
BREAK

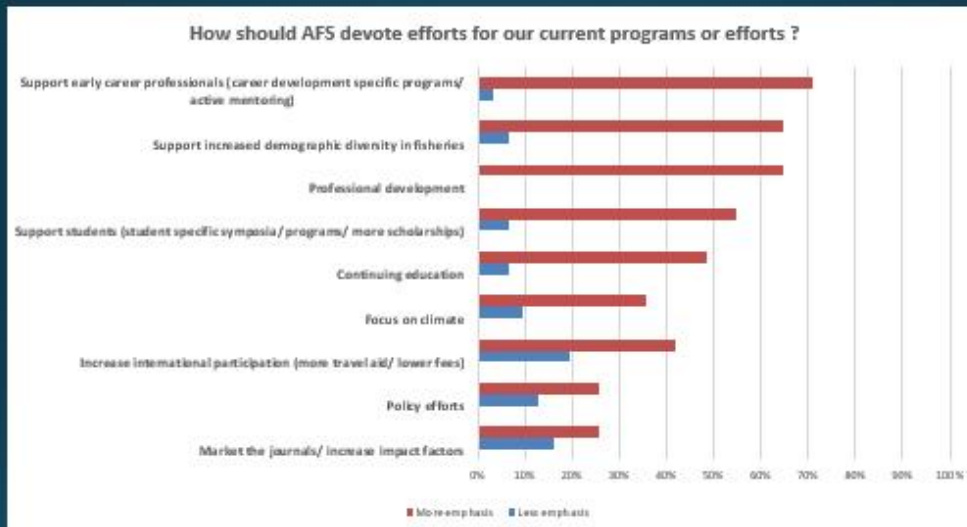
Report out from each group & discussion

# Report Out #2

What is AFS's role in the Fisheries profession?  
(Your group's focus)

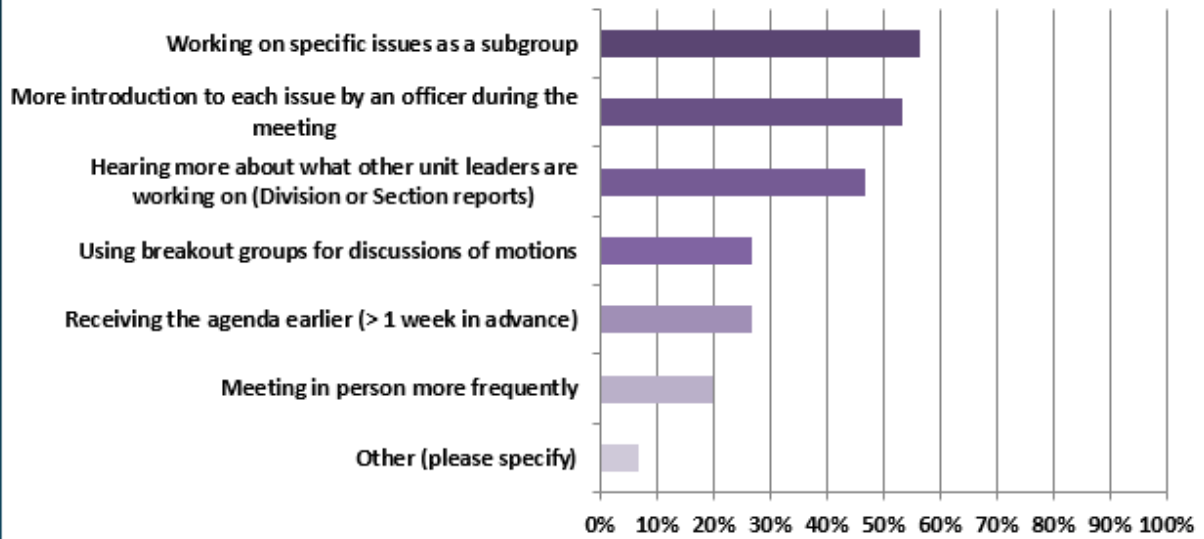
- What are ways we ARE meeting that role?
- What should/could we be doing to better meet that role?



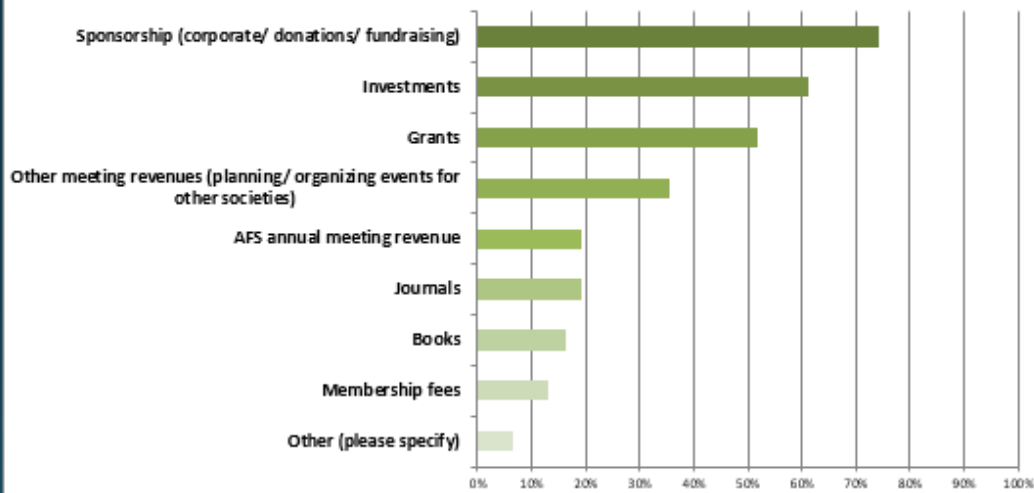


## Solutions & Possible Actions

### What would make you more likely to actively participate in GB meetings?



### Where should AFS look to obtain increased funding or new sources of funding? Please check up to 3 items you would prioritize as NEW or INCREASED funding sources)





# Attachment B – Reports from Breakout Groups

## SWOT Rapid Review of AFS Programs

- Publications
- Communications
- Policy
- Professional Development/CE
- Meetings

## Publications – Jason Olive

1. Strengths
  - A. #1 Publisher of fisheries science in the world. Noted the Reno publications retreat that reviewed and redesigned the approach to journals.
  - B. Textbooks come from AFS members – trusted and respected
  - C. Quality of publications is high
  - D. Quantity
  - E. Adapting and evolving
  - F. Some are open access
  - G. Appealing content to non-professionals
2. Weaknesses
  - A. Price – difficult balance
  - B. Time to publication
  - C. Marketing of publications is not adequate and needs to be improved. Wiley does not do enough to push AFS journals. Little international marketing.
  - D. Symposium books sell poorly
  - E. Lack of journal addressing conservation biology/ecology
  - F. Books
    1. Don't recognize the contribution to fisheries (marketing failure)
    2. Narrow audience
    3. Cost can be challenging to some to purchase
    4. Need to dedicate funds for authors doing review papers (hopefully with high impact)
3. Opportunities
  - A. Open access or not open
  - B. Linking communications and publications
  - C. Non-scientific potential audience – direct promotion of books program
  - D. Scale pricing of books for young professionals
  - E. Need to better promote the agency books subscription program
4. Threats
  - A. Other journals – “publication mills” lower quality journals are competing with AFS journals
  - B. Declining purchase of printed books (vs e-publications)

- C. Lowering standards. AFS should not lower its standards to be more competitive with these other journals.
- D. AFS publications might be seen as “old school” and too traditional . AFS should be actively exploring new journal needs and opportunities.

## **Communications – Gary Whelan**

Distinguished between publications and communications and focused on the information shared with the membership outside of journals

1. Clear issue is the challenge of information overload. There is simply an abundance of information available to anyone and getting the AFS message out there is difficult given the high level of noise.
2. Weakness
  - A. We don’t do a good job of telling the public (or even in the profession) what we do. Why become a member if you don’t know what we do?
  - B. Jargon laden communication causes the public to not understand our messaging
  - C. Other organizations don’t know about AFS or what we do, particular in fields not traditionally connected to fisheries or aquatic conservation (e.g. sociology, human dimensions, etc.)
  - D. Need to build better partnerships with other organizations – science and more general public (e.g. Trout Unlimited) to expand our messaging. AFS can provide amazing science but we don’t take advantage of the other outlets like we should or could.
  - E. AFS has amazing science (
3. Threats
  - A. Mis-information and subverting science (science disbelief)
  - B. People are valuing all sources equally and this is a major societal problem.
  - C. AFS doesn’t have sufficient communications capacity to address larger societal communications deficiencies. AFS doesn’t have public relations staff or anything like that to convey our messages to the larger public.
  - D. Need to develop better ways to communicating with an entirely new generation of professionals
  - E. Branding is important. We are inconsistent in our application of the AFS brand across the many units.
  - F. The AFS website is difficult to use (this is certainly not unique to AFS – many state agencies and universities have problems with website being well designed to allow users easy access to key information).

## **Communications (continued notes from Whelan)**

- How they communications and publications differ
  - Membership exchanges
  - Broadly
  - Outside of formal science
- More of it – Strength and weakness
  - Information overload issues
  - Focus information in smaller bits – Issue noted
  - Headline noted
- Do not do a good job telling the public what AFS does
  - Same issue with non-member professionals
  - Information is jargon laden
  - Many other organizations who have no knowledge
  - Need to get information out into the public – Have in the past

- Build partnerships with others who have ability to move to information and quick ebcasts on our work
- Much cool science for the science
- Turkey Tuesday/Thursday – Social media platform for hunters on turkey – NWTF website
- Jeff K. has a similar method
- Misinformation and science-disbelief – Social media issues
  - Blog posting
  - All sources valued equally
  - Random chance and
  - Science process unawareness
  - Large amount of information
- News Outlets – No PR outlet to them
  - Science is overwhelming to public – Training for staff on how to write
  - Many sessions at AFS and inventory of content to put in front of the public
- AFS relevant to a new generation – Mentoring opportunities as needed
  - Ask new generation on what they needed
  - Importance of mentoring not recognized
- Logo recognition
  - Many inconsistencies with logos
- Website issues noted with getting to information
  - Not function

## Policy Development

Group participants:

Trent Sutton (Education Section Past President),  
 Susan Cushman (NED President-Elect),  
 Brian Gallagher (ELMA for NED),  
 Miguel Toño Garcia (Second Vice President of AFS),  
 Patrick Shirey (scribe, NED President)

### Strengths

- Strong scientific credibility (element of trust for policymakers)
- Engagement on Capitol Hill
- Issue-specific engagement (engage on RAWA)

### Weaknesses

- Lack of international influence in the policy realm (no service to Mexico, Canada)
- Issue of identity –
  - Who are we?
  - Who are we serving?
  - Cross-collaboration internationally
- Lack of revenue generation (this is a value investment of the membership)
- Concept of policy vs politics (some people don't want to be a member of AFS because of politics of being a member with AFS; examples are land management in the west, advocating for action on climate change)

### Opportunities (internal/external)

- Pick “fights” – very issue specific (don’t get involved for just anything)
- Ways to generate revenue.
  - Policy endowment (in a way that doesn’t impact our credibility, which is our strength)
- Building capacity within membership to engage locally at the unit level, division level (perhaps efforts to train membership like Ecological Society of America – graduate student policy fellows) – we recognize the Climate Ambassadors Program as doing this for climate change engagement
- Encouraging people to do AAAS Science & Technology Policy (put communication out there that this opportunity exists) – identify opportunities for policy engagement external to AFS in which AFS members can participate
- Helping indigenous people and tribal agencies engage on policy and provide access/inclusion to participate (within U.S. and internationally) – comment from Andrea Reid during discussion

### Threats (internal/external)

- Cost by doing policy engagement, but also the cost of not doing policy engagement (being relevant to broader society)
- Diversity of thought within membership on specific issues presents a threat on controversial issues (fragmenting)
- Comments on “focus on the science” (DEI efforts as an example)
- Drue Winters: Challenge of development of new policy positions (skillset of membership), membership being willing, able, knowledgeable to engage
  - One challenge from membership perspective is making sure people get credit for participation (authorship) for policy writing, but also some organizations, agencies are going to prohibit employees from volunteer work on policy statements

### Additional comments –

The development of new policy. There are a few core groups that work well on existing efforts (e.g. RAWA) but we have a very hard time getting AFS coordinated in development of new policy positions. For example, coordinating the development of an AFS position on climate change has been difficult. Many members don’t have a background in policy and don’t understand the needs for effective policy development

## **Professional Development and CE – Marlis Douglas**

Noted that the structure of AFS with Sections and Chapters each being able to address topics from different perspectives.

### 1. Strengths

- A. Bring cutting-edge knowledge to the membership, particularly from post-docs and graduate students who are doing new research and developing innovative approaches.
- B. Sections provide knowledge from other meetings that they attend
- C. Training at Section meetings can be scaled down so that they are more workable for Chapter meetings.

### 2. Weaknesses

- A. Don’t have sufficient interaction among Sections and Chapters to help ensure that they share opportunities, don’t duplicate activities unnecessarily, and take advantage of programs developed in one area that can be used in other areas.

### 3. Opportunities

- A. Sections and Chapters could share educational videos on various topics that might be of interest to others

## Conferences/Meetings

– April Croxton, Jeff Heindel (may have notes from the breakout group)

1. Strengths –
  - A. Top four or five reasons for joining AFS involve meetings (networking, staying involved, sharing science.
  - B. Revenue source for units
  - C. Continuing education
  - D. Dedicated staff
  - E. Money available
  - F. In-person learning and networking
2. Weaknesses
  - A. The bigger the meeting the more difficult
  - B. Inclusivity and exclusivity are issues that constantly need to be addressed.
  - C. Large meetings can be overwhelming to some people
  - D. Inconsistency in addressing some support issues. For example, child care was provided at one meeting and then not at the next.
  - E. Access to archived content – catalog
  - F. Affiliate members can access offerings for free (need to develop better differentiation between member and non-member access)
  - G. Planning yearly offerings
  - H. Virtual meetings/events missing interpersonal connections
3. Opportunities
  - A. Virtual platform
  - B. Meetings can be a great recruiting tool
  - C. Opportunity to get involved
  - D. Money – meetings at all levels can be a revenue source for AFS.
  - E. Survey of members and fish chiefs
  - F. Charge to non-members (i.e., for access to AFS materials, content) – non-members need to pay for access to AFS content
4. Threats
  - A. Cost
  - B. Travel restrictions
  - C. Competition from other meetings and organizations
5. Lots of noise – many offerings from other organizations.

### Additional comments

Need to better understand what kind of CE should be presented at meetings. This could be done at AFWA meetings with Fish Chiefs and other leaders. Each unit should be asking their membership what types of training programs they would like to have presented.

CE and providing AFS members access to content is a tremendous opportunity. AFS has a tremendous wealth of content that members (and nonmembers) would value being able to access but it needs to be better catalogued (archived) for access.

## Breakout Session #2

### Introduction by Leanne (with discussion)

AFS has wonderful programs and content but doesn't do a good job of making the information available to members. What can we do to help our existing members know what AFS is doing? What can we do to inform non-members (and affiliates) about AFS activities and help them understand what the society is doing? This is a really important conversation. Andrea Reid noted that this is a critical discussion in the International Fisheries Section and IFS has recently expanded its outreach to indigenous fisheries professional to support involvement. Marybeth Brey noted that the flow of information throughout AFS has been challenging. For example, TWS has "Working Groups" that build upon multi-disciplinary topics. These could be part of AFS Sections or otherwise fit into existing the AFS structure. This might create greater opportunity for involvement and provide the Section with new opportunities for involvement.

Leanne charge to the breakout groups – How does AFS distinguish itself? What is our role? Why would a person become a member of AFS. What are the ways we are meeting that role to our members? What should/could we be doing to better met that role?

### **Group #1 (Kaylyn Zipp reporting)**

Aggregate and disseminate fisheries science and referred to the AFS constitution and the promotion the conservation of aquatic resources and develop the profession".

We are weak in the promotion

1. AFS aggregates and disseminates fisheries science  
We do this to "Promote the conservation of aquatic resources and the development of professionals", but we are weak on the "promotion" side of the mission
2. We are focused on North America
3. We advocate for aquatic conservation values based on science
4. Inertia and stabilize us but hinder progression
5. We aren't meeting the role: We track the larger world/ world demographics better. We're not engaging across the generations as well as we could
6. We are doing a lot of things well, introspective and ask these questions.
7. Lots of internal things well.

### **Group #2 (Gary Whelan reporting)**

- Focused on training opportunities. Young professionals have different needs than older professionals. One idea was to keep "past presidents" involved as mentors.
- AFS needs to encourage develop of networking throughout all units and demographics. Virtual meetings may have hindered this effort because of the challenges of making personal contacts in virtual events.
- AFS needs to continue to reach out to AFWA to better understand training needs of their staff
- AFS provides cheap and low risk leadership opportunities (whereas in an agency there is larger risk for failure). This includes development of agendas, leading discussions, and working with people.
- AFS has excellent content as well as opportunities for leadership involvement but we need to better development training and outreach to larger communities of partners (particularly industry partners)

### **Group #3 (Patrick Shirey reporting)**

Group participants include: Trent Sutton (Education Section Past President), Susan Cushman (NED President-Elect), Brian Gallagher (ELMA for NED), Miguel Toño Garcia (Second Vice President of AFS), Patrick Shirey (scribe, NED President)

The Society's objectives are to:

1. Promote the conservation, development, and wise use of the fisheries;
2. Promote and evaluate the development and advancement of all branches of fisheries science and practice;
3. Gather and disseminate to Society members and the general public scientific, technical, and other information about fisheries science and practice through publications, meetings, and other forms of communication; and
4. Encourage the teaching of fisheries science and practice in colleges and universities and the continuing education and development of fisheries professionals.

Strength of developing fisheries professionals in the field

Challenge of attracting members to attend our meetings and publish in our journals (some people who work on fish ecology and evolution attend other conferences like Ecology & Evolution, Conservation Biology, SFS, Ecological Society of America, George Wright Society might otherwise attend AFS if we connect more with basic science and conservation biology); also connecting with Social Science side (Lian Guo's comment during report out)

People publishing on conservation biology topics go to other journals because of scope, reach, impact factor (matters for career development)

AFS has been a niche non-profit and has potential to become more interdisciplinary and attractive to others who might attend meetings and publish in our journals (need to be relevant to those potential members from other professional societies)

Attract members from different disciplines (collaboration)

- JASM is a great opportunity for this (consider ASLO model which is more international in membership)
- Reno meeting with TWS
- But challenge of managing joint meetings, having appropriate location
- Making AFS more inclusive (Canada & Mexico, Indigenous communities)
- Can we invite people who are leaders in those other societies to public review articles in our journals?

Networking – are we doing well?

- People join as members because they are going to the meeting (bump for those attending annual meetings, especially regionally)
- Do we encourage networking outside of annual meetings?
  - Potential for incorporating technology (Slack) to help engage outside of annual meetings
- Are there ways that we can encourage networking outside of meetings?
- Being inclusive opens the society to individuals who might join other societies (make them feel that they belong)
  - Indigenous communities (connections to First Nations in Canada, tribes in U.S., Alaskan Native Communities)
  - Freshwaters Illustrated incorporates indigenous perspectives on the Pacific Coast (Reno)
  - NYC Chapter gives out a diversity award to individuals to attend conferences – can we duplicate that for member of our indigenous communities to include them in parent society meetings?



#### **Group #4 (Leanne Roulson, reporting)**

- AFS is the collector and disseminator of fisheries information. AFS has traditionally been seen as the key publisher of fundamental books (texts, journals, etc.) but the landscape has changed, and people now simply search the internet for answers. How can AFS be more active and effective in this arena.
- Relevance – can AFS become more active and present in areas of new interest such as aquatic conservation biology. Our current journals are not seen as very traditional and may not be the first options for many authors
- Do our journals match our membership needs? AFS needs to continually revisit and review the needs of membership and our current offering of journals and books.
- There are potential large opportunities to make AFS more relevant to new professional that might be hired through RAWA or other new federal legislation options.
- Professional networking is important and AFS needs to continue to expand our efforts.
- AFS identity – AFS needs to continually work on ensuring that professional know about AFS and the opportunities that it provides

#### **Group #5 (Lian Guo, reporting – online group)**

- AFS is the home for the development of fisheries professional (all levels – students, early career, full professionals).
- Although AFS has traditionally done a good job of embracing traditional fisheries interests, it has not been as open to newer interests and growing areas of the profession such as socioeconomics, human dimensions (also genetics, physiology, etc.). By not being as open to these groups we are missing out on opportunity for expansion but also diminishing the training opportunities to students

#### **Group #6 (Laurie Earley, reporting)**

- Networking was focus of conversation and recognize the importance of networking at all levels. In many areas AFS does a good job but there are areas in need of improvement.
- Mentoring regularly is provided but there is often little follow-up on discussions and effectiveness of the interactions.
- AFS should assess and evaluate its mentoring resources. Many AFS units have developed mentoring programs and it would be help for AFS to compile and review these programs to determine what works best and has been most effective. Example is speed mentoring – Has it worked? Are there best practices?
- Can AFS better engage tribal members and other groups in a more effective manner? Barriers may include travel funds and access to meetings.
- Virtual opportunities – AFS needs to continually review and refine how it engages its membership through innovative virtual tools.

#### **General Discussion**

- Leanne – AFS faces the challenge that we have a very diverse field that ranges from genetic, to mussel, to open ocean pelagic fisheries, to climate change. AFS cannot be the primary source in all of these fields so how do we figure out where we should focus our efforts.
- Building connections is a key role for AFS and it is an activity that we are mostly good at and that members value. Continuing to find better and innovative ways to do this in the future is critical. Ensuring that these efforts are open to all, particularly those with less resources to support involvement, is very important.
- Providing a professional development home for the fisheries and aquatic science field is a key role for AFS and one that is somewhat unique to professional societies. Other organizations do conservation and outreach but do not address the future of the profession. AFS needs to continue to better develop and expand offerings to address these needs.

- Creating a welcoming environment is important. For example, at Baltimore there is an expanded “first time at an AFS meeting” welcome that we hope will be a good way for new participants to learn about the meeting. The HBCU day is also a new and exciting event for AFS.
- Ensuring that all registrants feel that they are valued and can find AFS as a friendly environment. We need to practice being open and friendly and actively engage new participants (members, non-members, registrants) to the meeting.

Discussion Question: What would make you more likely to actively participate in Governing Board meetings?

1. Ensure that meeting notes are completed and shared as soon after the meeting as possible. This allows the units to share GB discussion topics and actions with their membership.
2. Gary Whelan suggested possible use of an “issue discussion form” that is a somewhat structured tool for each topic to be presented to the group.

Where do we go with the SWOT analysis? Key thoughts and comments from the GB members:

1. Mentoring and first-time attendee events will be part of the Spokane meeting planning. This is clearly an important aspect of our meeting design. Everyone should feel welcome and valued in attending the AFS meetings.
2. Inclusion of under-represented groups will be a special focus of the Spokane meeting with particular emphasis on Native Americans and First Nations.
3. Use **Fisheries** magazine more frequently as a vehicle to update membership about activities, events, and opportunities.
4. The blogs and other announcements for Fisheries are good places to include key items of interest about AFS. These get good circulation and are high impact.
5. Recruitment of new members is important, but we need to ensure that we approach this thoughtfully and deliberate. This needs to be done at the AFS, Division, Chapter and other levels. Much of the best work could very well be done at a more local level and we should develop better tools to support those efforts. AFS needs to better market itself to the larger fisheries community. We have a good product but don’t do a very effective job of selling AFS to others.
6. Gift membership option needs to be improved so that it is fully electronic and easy to use.
7. Assessment of why members leave AFS is important. The AFS Membership Committee is working on a survey that will go to members as well as lapsed and former members. This will go out in early 2022.
8. Affiliate membership –
  - a) Has there been consideration of re-activating the affiliate membership working group? This is currently not an active effort. The working group did actively explore the affiliate member issue and determined that any sort of removal of that option would be counter-productive at this time.
  - b) Brian Nerbonne (NCD President Elect) noted that in the NCD there are a large number of affiliate members and they are a good target for recruitment (e.g. low hanging fruit for recruitment). Cecil Jennings noted that in Georgia, many of the affiliate members simply did not see any value in AFS membership. Their perspective was that the only value that they found was in their local chapter and there was little interest in anything beyond their chapter. Susan Cushman (NED) has seen a high percentage of affiliate members in the NY chapter for the same reason as was described in Georgia – they see little value in the AFS membership. Most state agencies don’t pay for professional society membership and this has been an obstacle to them maintaining or becoming members. Others suggested that affiliates are not really “low hanging fruit” since they really don’t see value in the larger society membership. They would have to be convinced of the value of AFS membership.
  - c) Personal contact, personal recruitment is critical. It was suggested that most members become members because other members approached them and suggested that they become a member. The provision of free journals and other incentives is nice, but it was suggested that those are not nearly as effective as a personal outreach.

- d) Who are these affiliate members? It was suggested that, at least in NY and AR, that they may be either state and federal employees or people with only tangential interest in fisheries and are more likely associated with other professional societies.

# Attachment C – Financial Report and Recommendations from the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee

## AFS Financial Update

Management Committee Meeting  
November 4, 2021

### Topics

- September 2021 Financial Report
- 2021 year-end Forecast
- 2022 Budget Proposal
- I realized nonprofit structure and financial terms/practices are unique and may be unfamiliar to you.
- I'm available to chat if you ever have any questions or suggestions.
- FYI: there are two webinars on [fisheries.org](https://fisheries.org) on AFS governance structure and Financial orientation



## September 2021 YTD Financial Position

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- Assets stand at \$6,087,000
  - Much of the investments are comprised of restricted funds (awards, units)
- Higher by \$1,053,000 from 9/2020
- Financial Position supported by:
  - Program operations achieving ~breakeven
  - Investment account appreciation (don't forget markets swing both ways)
  - PPP Loan #2 \$303,000 received in March 2021
  - Bank credit line advance of \$125,000 August 2021



## September 2021 YTD Financial Results

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- Revenue higher on lower overall expenses
- Excluding gains, net revenue beats 2020
- Investment gains (\$344k), PPP #1 (\$381k) skews results
- Without balanced operations, stock market correction > impact

	2021 Actual	2020 Actual	Difference
Revenue	\$2,807,000	\$1,764,000	\$1,043,000
Expense	\$2,142,000	\$2,189,000	\$47,000
Net Revenue	\$665,000	(\$425,000)	\$1,090,000
Less: (Gains) Loss	(\$725,000)	\$187,000	\$912,000
Operating Net Rev	(\$60,000)	(\$238,000)	(\$177,000)



## 2021 Year-end Projection

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- With results as they stand now and pending PPP Loan2 \$303,000 forgiveness, AFS will end the year with positive net revenue ~\$150,000
- Separately, AFS likely will write off (take a charge to expenses) for additional books inventory, even after the summer book sale on many old titles. Wrote off ~\$200,000 in 2017



## 2022 Budget Development Process

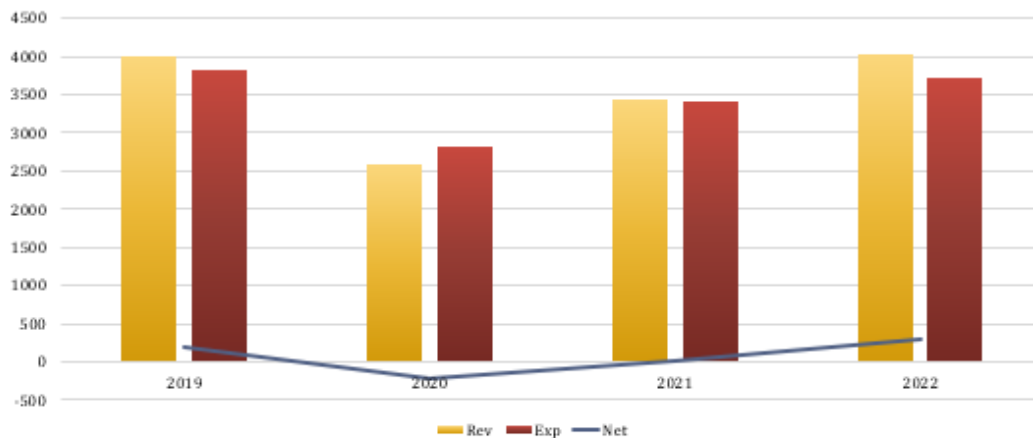
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- Conservative approach – “no stretch goals” except for Books
- With comparative actual financial results for 2020 and 2019
- Apart from JASM mgmt. fee and profit share, agency Co-op and conservation grants, most other programs little to no change
  - Somewhat business as usual ... CE offerings, jobs board, certification, publications
- Meetings budget prepared top-down (Reno), details after Baltimore
- The budget is a tool and reflection of the Society’s goals and activities
  - Other program areas budgeted in slightly more detail, but missing connection to organizational goals (further refine goals in certain areas)

## 2022 Budget Development Process

- Programs that are solely 'staff-time supported' and other activities not clearly reflected in Budget:
  - Policy portfolio, Committee charges, relationships with other Societies, etc.
- Ideally, all programs would have established targets, reasonableness of assumptions as part of a larger operational plan (President's and ED's Plans of Work).
- As examples, spend more time coordinating committee planning determining:
  - Hutton as part of broader strategy in high school student outreach
  - Career development opportunities that helps move more student members to early-career; and early-career to professional
  - Assessing books profitability; Increase publishing to leverage editorial infrastructure (staff, etc)
  - DEI ... What resources are needed for continuing ABC? Which programs should be scaled up/down?
  - and so on ... For consideration as part of GB strategic positioning discussions

## Revenue, Expense and Net 2019 – 2022 Budget







## Key 2022 Budget Assumptions

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- Many unknowns for 2022
  - Covid related impacts on membership, books sales and meeting attendance, federal agency travel
- **\*\* Biggest Changes: JASM 2022 mgmt fee \$250,000 and profit share \$53,000**
- Membership Dues - individual and organization (SPP) members flat
- Publications budget- Slight increase in journals revenue (from Wiley subscription fee increase); Books sales reflect new textbooks, eBooks
- Meeting- Spokane budget prepared top-down, benchmarked against Reno
- **Conservation Grants – 8 Grants extend into 2022 + new Hatchery Book project**



## Key 2022 Budget Assumptions

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- Conservation Grants – will provide \$150,000 of covered staff time and OH
- NOAA Coop – 5-year, \$748,000 agreement
  - Year 2 provides \$159,000 (\$142,000 remaining) of total support (half for Hutton and Meeting, Science Comm., Issues Briefings) with \$36,000 covering staff time and OH
  - Pending support- USGS coop agreement renewal
- Balanced budget without investment gains (though with 1x JASM \$)
- Net revenue = 7% for 2022; 3-5% 2021; (5%) 2020; and 10% 2019



## Key 2022 Budget Assumptions

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### Expense Budget:

- Baseline office administration expenses (equipment leases, internet, IT, utilities, etc not being used)
- Staff costs – 18 FT, 3% COLA (none given in 2021), 6% medical premium increase; lower than 2020 actuals
- Resume officer travel to domestic and international events
- Meeting expenses- to be refined after Baltimore and include a portion of staff time (\$250,000 ... similar to JASM mgmt. fee?)



## 2021 – 2022 Areas to Monitor

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- Cash flow- \$684k PPP funds, \$125k credit line has sustained us and from selling investments; 2022 dues renewal key (in process now)
- Office condo/building sale- potential \$1.5M condo + \$100k OH savings
- Downward trends publications & membership levels / affiliates
- Growing portfolio of MSCG, Agency co-ops, emphasis on external meetings management
- Capital investments – technology infrastructure due for upgrades or lacking
  - Website, iMIS membership database, Governing Board Reporting Tool (GBRT), Learning Management System (LMS), Bookstore (not integrated with iMIS)



## 2021 – 2022 Areas to Monitor

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- HR capacity- Increased program activities coordinated by fewer staff
- Strategy Considerations:
  - Important to link organizational directions and financial planning
  - Difficult to conduct program assessments, if programs don't have defined operational and longer-term goals
  - Develop processes that allow for questioning assumptions (budget and strategic), cultural practices (ex. cost benefit of annual meeting rotation) and risk assessments
- Governance model- insure planning, resource allocation and reviews occur across business lines and program activities, unit collaboration
- Beyond 2022- how does AFS sustain itself without JASM and PPP?



## 2021 – 2022 Areas to Monitor

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### Working with FPPC

- Inventory programs and activities
- Evaluate program financial results
  - Direct costs, staff time allocations, trends, costs not clearly reflected in the financial reports (unit support, journal page charge waivers, activities that require substantial staff time but no corresponding income)
- Assess new procedures implications, obligated reserve and other funds

# Attachment D – New AFS Logo

## What does the new logo say about AFS and who we are?

The American Fisheries Society has one connecting element within the society, and that is fish, yet as a society, we are a complex blend of disciplines and professions. All of these are expressed by this new logo.

The first prominent element of the new logo is a **fish**. It is a generic fish that is in motion—a nod to our science that is always moving forward toward better solutions.

The second element of the logo is the **water**. The power of water is seen in the environments it shapes. It also plays a central role in shaping the diverse array of perspectives, backgrounds, and vocations of all AFS members. Some of us specialize in water quality, several focus on climatic conditions, while still others specialize in data analysis. Whatever the focus, water connects the work of all of our members in some way.

The final element incorporated in the logo is color. Three distinct colors represent the extreme diversity of the ecosystems in which we work.



**A**

**Freshwater Ecosystems:** The darker blue signifies the range of **freshwater** systems that include streams, rivers, reservoirs, lakes, and ponds.

**F**

**Marine & Coastal Ecosystems:** The turquoise blue signifies the **saltwater environments** that span from the deep ocean to the transition zones of marshes and estuaries.

**S**

**Habitats:** The green signifies the **connection of land to water** and the linkages within our aquatic system—from headwaters to rivers, from springs to lakes, from wetlands to deltas, from coral reefs to the deep ocean.

American Fisheries Society  
Governing Board Meeting  
05 November 2021

# Brand Revitalization

## Brand Revitalization Overview

- Communications Committee – since 2017
  - Multiple presentations to Governing Board
- Report from PSG - December 2018
  - Showed membership support for a new log
- Communications Full Committee review - 2019
- Small Group Formation - 2020
  - Delays due to Covid
  - Beth Beard, Julie Claussen, Julie DeFilippi Simpson
- 99Designs Contest - 2021

# 99Designs Contest

- Brief submitted, initiated Gold level contest (05August2021)
- 331 designs received
- 6 designers chosen as finalists (first round)
- Survey of final design concepts
  - Governing Board
  - Communications Committee
  - Staff
- 2 designers chosen as finalists (second round)







## FISH

It is a generic fish that is in motion—a nod to our science that is always moving forward toward better solutions.



## WATER

The power of water is seen in the environments it shapes. It also plays a central role in shaping the diverse array of perspectives, backgrounds, and vocations of all AFS members. Water connects the work of all of our members in some way.





American Fisheries Society

#### COLOR

##### **Freshwater**

**Ecosystems:** The darker blue signifies the range of **freshwater** systems that include streams, rivers, reservoirs, lakes, and ponds.



American Fisheries Society

#### COLOR

##### **Marine & Coastal**

**Ecosystems:** The turquoise blue signifies the **saltwater environments** that span from the deep ocean to the transition zones of marshes and estuaries.



## COLOR

**Habitats:** The green signifies the **connection of land to water** and the linkages within our aquatic system—from headwaters to rivers, from springs to lakes, from wetlands to deltas, from coral reefs to the deep ocean.

## Next Steps

- Propagating the new logo throughout the AFS brand
- Develop guidelines for logo use
- Determine guidelines for logo use/incorporation at the Unit level

# Questions

Julie DeFilippi Simpson



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# Attachment E – Presidential Plan of Work presentation



## President's Plan of Work

**Leanne Roulson**

**2021-2022**

1. Policy work
2. DEI work
3. Science communication and outreach
4. Planning and strategy: Care and feeding of AFS

### Major points

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## Communication as a Common Thread

### POLICY

- CASS (Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies)
- Reinforce link between policy and fisheries sustainability
- Climate aware management and policy

### DEI

- Coordinate DEI committee/ EOS and other efforts
- Engage with HBCUs as part of Baltimore meeting and follow up
- Engage with Tribal Colleges as part of Spokane meeting planning
- Measurable metrics for AFS

## Communication as a Common Thread

### SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

- Complete Climate Ambassadors Program as a participant
- Charge CAP members to pursue outreach opportunities and report on training

### INTERSECTIONAL THINGS

- Plenary at Spokane on retention of diverse scientists in fisheries
- Replicate the Hutton “meet-up” from Murphy’s presidency

## Strategic Planning: Care and Feeding of AFS

### PROCEDURES MANUAL UPDATE

- Assess strategic direction and follow through with changes
- All updates will go through the MC/GB
- Make it more functional and helpful

### FINANCES

- Establish FPPC as standing committee
- Include financial planning in our strategic vision
- Address financial stability
- Plan for an operating reserve

Communication is important here also

Support JASM 2022

Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting

*Rapid Changes~ Collaborative Solutions*

Moving Forward

Double tap to add text



# JASM 2022

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, MAY 14 - 20

WHAT DO FISH MEAN TO US?



August 21-25

# Spokane 2022

Look for the call for  
Symposia in December



American Fisheries Society

Keep  
moving  
forward