



2023 AFS Joint Management Committee and Governing Board Meeting

Saturday and Sunday, August 19 and 20, 2023
Amway Grand Hotel, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Executive Summary

- President Elect Cecil Jennings Plan of Work for 2023-2024 was approved.
- The AFS member and nonmember survey was sent to the Governing Board and reviewed as part of a pre-meeting webinar. Key messages from the survey were identified and it will continue to be used by various committees and leadership in the months to come.
- The Governing Board approved the establishment of proxies for the Management Committee members, and this will now go to the membership at the Business meeting on Wednesday.
- The Governing Board approved the establishment of a standing committee on Development, and this will also go before the membership at the Business meeting.
- Approval of the transfer of \$19,000 to the Obligated Reserve fund.
- Initial results of Program Reviews for Hutton and Books were presented to the Board for discussion and comment.
- AFS has experienced its 2nd consecutive year of financial of positive net change, excluding investment income. However, CY 2023 is expected to be negative due to the impact of the Latin American Conference underperforming expectations.

Participants

Governing Board Members

Society Officers

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

Division Officers

Western Division President	Laurie Earley
Western Division President Elect	Eric Fetherman
Southern Division President	<i>Not present</i>
Southern Division President Elect	Mark Rogers
North Central Division President	Brian Nerbonne
North Central Division President Elect	Sara Thomas

Northeastern Division President
Northeastern Division President Elect

Susan Cushman
Heather Stewart

Section Presidents

Bioengineering	Patrick O'Rourke
Canadian Aquatic Resources	Craig Purchase
Cooperative Research with Stakeholders	Lee Benaka
Early Life History	<i>Not present</i>
Education	Melissa Wuellner
Student and Early Career Prof. Subsection	Carrienne (Carrie) Pershyn
Estuaries	Justin Stevens
Equal Opportunities	Lian Guo, Proxy, for Sam Betances
Fish Culture	Jeff Heindel
Fish Habitat	David Thorne
Fish Health	<i>Not present</i>
Fish History	<i>Inactive</i>
Fisheries Administration	Lynn Quattro, Proxy for Gary Whelan
Fisheries Information and Technology	Tiffany Hopper
Fisheries Law	<i>Inactive</i>
Fisheries Management	Julie Carter
Genetics	Garrett McKinney
Imperiled Aquatic Species Section	<i>Not present</i>
International Fisheries	<i>Not present</i>
Invasive and Introduced Fisheries	<i>Not present</i>
Marine Fisheries	Jessica Miller
Native Peoples Fisheries	<i>Inactive</i>
Physiology	<i>Not present</i>
Science Communications	Karen Murchie
Socioeconomics	<i>Not present</i>
Water Quality	Brian Alford, President Elect, Proxy for Paul Kuznierz

Proxies

1. Water Quality Section: Brian Alford for Paul Kusnierz
2. Student and Early Career Professionals: Carrienne (Carrie) Pershyn for Taylor Heckman
3. Fisheries Administration Section – Lynn Quattro for Gary Whelan

Emerging Leaders

Kyler Hecke, Southern Division
Matt Wipf, Western Division
Drew Holloway, North Central Division

Guests

Margaret Murphy – 2nd Vice President elect
Matt Wipf – President Elect, Fish Culture Section
Jeff Kopaska, member Strategic Positioning Committee and Chair, Nominating Committee
Joe Conroy, Co-Chair, Strategic Positioning Committee
Marlis Douglas, Co-Chair, Strategic Positioning Committee
Troy Brandt, Chair, Financial Planning and Procedures Committee

AFS Staff

Dan Cassidy
Beth Beard
Jenna Hanks
Kelly Kotche
Debby Lehman
Rachel Bruce
Lauren Maza
Kurt West
Laura Hendee

Minutes of the Governing Board Meeting

1. **Welcome** – The meeting called to order by President Croxton at 8:17 a.m.
2. **Determination of Quorum** - Randy Schultz stated that a quorum has been established with proxies listed below.
3. **Approval of Agenda**- President Croxton reviewed the agenda with short explanations of each topic. No additions were presented. Motion to approve agenda by Gary Whelan; 2nd by Cecil Jennings. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.
4. **Approval of minutes of the midyear Governing Board meeting.**
President Croxton reviewed key actions from the midyear meeting. No edits or other corrections were offered. Motion to accept the minutes by Laurie Early; 2nd by Leanne Roulson. The minutes were accepted by unanimous consent. If any member does find errors, they are asked to submit them to Executive Director Doug Austen. Key items included:
 - A. Re-established the AFS Development Committee
 - B. Proxy issue for Management Committee
 - C. Nominating Committee modification of timeline so that timing of actions are better aligned with the needs to find candidates and use the annual meeting for individual conversations and recruitment. Also established a vice-chair for the committee.
 - D. Updates on Program Reviews.
 - E. Update on the AFS proposed sale of the Bethesda building and possible options for use of proceeds from sale. This will be given much further discussion in future meetings as the process of the possible sale moves forward.
5. **Review of actions by the Management Committee and Officer Meeting** – President Croxton and Executive Director Austen provided a quick review of the recent meetings of the Management Committee in July and August as well as the recent Officer meeting on Friday afternoon, August 18 (immediately prior to this joint meeting). Key items included:
 - A. Prepare final votes on MC Proxy and Development Committee for action by GB and, if approved, move to full vote of membership at the Business meeting.
 - B. Updated Fellows Committee guidance and revisions to the Presidential Fisheries Conservation Award.

- C. Discussed AFS officer visits to chapter and division meetings. This includes a goal of having an officer attend each chapter meeting over the course of three years. A schedule is being developed by the officers and they will work with the chapters to ensure that the visit works with their schedule. The general guidance is that the officers will cover travel to the meeting and they will ask for meeting registration and room coverage, if possible.
- D. Approved establishment of a standing AFS Development Committee.
- E. Established a special committee on renewal of the publisher contract for AFS journals. This is co- led by Laura Hendee and Steve Midway.

6. Exercise 1: 'Visioning' - What is AFS to you? What do you want AFS to be? (Attachment A)

Goal: Focus Group develop 'Elevator Speeches' for current + future AFS

- A. What is AFS for me now?
- B. What do I want AFS to be in the future?

Purpose: Canvass GB, so AFS goals can be identified (not core values)

Process: Break-out Groups (random assignment) with facilitator

- Introduction to Exercise ~ 15min
- Break-out 30min
- GB Reporting 30min
- Debrief 15min

Deliverable: Records of 'What is' and 'What will be' from each Group

- C. Format: Elevator Speech, Bulleted List, Drawing

Rules: Facilitator guides 'brainstorming' discussion

- D. Respect in all aspects (tone, tact, delivery, active listening)
- E. Everybody contributes, nobody dominates
- F. No echo-chambers – the goal is innovation, not regurgitation.
- G. Prioritize (maximum 3 key goals, no laundry-lists)

Notes from this exercise and later sessions on this topic are available from the Strategic Positioning Committee (Marlis Douglas and Joe Conroy)

7. Membership survey observations and discussion – What messages did you receive? (Please see Appendix 1 and 2; results of the Member and Non-member survey. These are available from the AFS office). This was a follow-up to the webinar provided to the Governing Board by the Membership committee. The Powerpoint presentations were also sent to the Governing Board members. Question 1 – What was the biggest surprise in the membership survey? What was your first reaction to the survey findings? General reactions included:

1. No large surprises but policy involvement scored somewhat low and impressive that over 800 nonmembers responded.
2. Surprised at the relatively low number of members who completed the survey, particularly when compared to the large number of nonmembers. Also, the demography of nonmembers was substantially different from members. Nonmembers were more diverse and included more consultants and private industry. Surprised that some people were shocked about asking questions to better understand diversity characteristics. People may have not understood the purpose of the survey, which was to better understand why people are members or do not become members.
3. Not surprised that networking was identified as a key part of membership. Corollary was that others (e.g. nonmembers) must not see membership as important for their networking.
4. On the policy/advocacy issue, did we look at the person's employer to explore if their support or lack of support for policy work by AFS was related to employer restrictions.

5. The advocacy involvement was noted as not supported in some areas but in other questions it was identified as being highly important.
6. The survey did raise some issues that could benefit from more detailed exploration through small focus groups or other tools to allow for better understanding of the issues and positions of members/nonmembers. This might be particularly important for better understanding students and early career professionals.
7. International students identified cost of membership and meeting participation as being a significant issue for their involvement.
8. It was clear that the various demographic groups in AFS frequently had very different needs and values.
9. We are losing memberships in the Early Career Professionals (ECP) category. It was suggested that this is because this group doesn't get the support provided to students yet are low on the priority list within their agencies to get support or travel approval. There is a feeling of greater isolation by ECP's since they often cannot attend events due to travel restrictions.
10. Cost of membership was identified as a barrier for some, particularly in minority groups and non-traditional categories who we would like to see be more represented.
11. It was noted that some questions construction may have resulted in some hesitancy or even objection to the survey. This was specifically suggested for some questions that addressed diversity issues. This may have been expressed more in questions pertaining to the amount of time and effort expended by AFS on diversity issues.
12. Individual comments that raised concerns about diversity were a relatively minor amount of the overall responses.
13. It was suggested that many people simply don't understand the value of membership. We need to change our messaging about membership. For example, access to journals is not a defining reason for membership like it used to be 5 to 10 years ago.
14. We should not be surprised that there is some pushback on diversity since this is being seen in the larger public. Also, we are seeing better acceptance among younger members than we are in older members. The North Central Division is doing a survey of their members to better understand this issue with focus on students and ECP's.

8. **Presidential Plan of Work for Cecil Jennings** – Approval and Discussion ([Attachment B](#))

Move to accept Presidential Plan of Work by Cecil Jennings by Laurie Earley; 2nd by Brian Nerbonne. Accepted by unanimous consent.

General comments by Cecil Jennings (see Attachment B for Powerpoint presentation)

1. Much of Jennings POW is related to the issues just discussed about membership.
2. POW has five main objectives that form the basis of his work for the year.
3. Objective 1 (support science) focuses on the Honolulu annual meeting and traditional ecological knowledge and knowledge co-production. This also includes supporting the growth of the relatively new Pacific Islands AFS chapter, the World Fisheries Congress, support and involvement in CASS, and a variety of other issues.
4. Objective 2 (society messaging) – need to better understand how young professionals and employers view AFS. AFS needs to better message the value of AFS and be more inclusive in what it means to be a fisheries professional. Think of fisheries as “everything the water touches”.
5. Objective 3 (standard operating procedures, leadership transition) – Better identify primary and secondary duties, explore restructuring the Executive Director (ED) position as appropriate,

recruitment of new ED. This also includes working with the Strategic Positioning Committee and evaluate our current strategic planning process. Possibly see strategic positioning and visioning as part of an overall strategic planning process. Create an ED search committee and selection rubric for reviewing candidates. Also need to better manage transition through record and data management.

6. Objective 4 (improve internal AFS communications) – this will increase efficiency and information exchange across the large and diverse AFS family. Review and implement previous presidents’ communications plans. Support and promote AFS policy efforts.
7. Objective 5 (maintain and improve diversity) – better communicate the benefits of DEIJA efforts, support Hutton, improve outreach to HBCU/HIS/Tribal colleges and other minority institutions. Develop plenary session at Honolulu meeting focusing on traditional ecological knowledge, particularly that local to the Pacific Islands.

Discussion:

1. Can we continue to support student involvement from Minority Serving Institutions at AFS meetings? This is important and Cecil suggested that this will continue where possible.

9. Executive Director POW (Attachment C)

- A. Austen emphasized that his transition to a new Executive Director will be as seamless as possible, and he will support the new person as best as possible.
- B. Austen’s POW is built off of the AFS Strategic Plan and the President’s Plan of Work.
- C. Key program areas that will be focused include: AFS Publications and the publisher contract re-bidding, the Professional Development workshop will be key to the future of that program, DEI, CASS and key partnerships will also be the focus for specific work in the next year.
- D. Financial health continues to be a critical area of work. This is closely related to the Program Reviews that AFS is undertaking and will be discussed in the next agenda item.

Discussion:

- A. Will there be overlap in the transition from Austen retirement and the new hire. Response was that this is being considered during the process. Finances will play a part but Austen has committed to assisting with the transition.
- B. AFS could explore establishing more focused meetings on specific topics that would help AFS future direction. These would be topics such as publications that relevant and timely but that could benefit from new growth directions.

2. Introduction to Program Reviews – Introduction to review process, FPPC Guidance, Initial definition of AFS Programs.

A. Introduction to AFS Program Reviews (Attachment D)

1. Austen reviewed the origin and the current process developed for implementation of the Program Reviews that are targeted to 12 key AFS program areas. The full program review documents for Hutton and Books are available from AFS staff but are not included in these minutes due to the length and complexity of the documents.

2. Program Reviews were initially proposed and accepted as part of the revision of the AFS financial guidance as included in the AFS Procedures Manual.
- B. Hutton Program Review** – Presented by Lauren Maza ([Attachments E](#))
- a. Program was started in 2001 as an 8-week mentorship program for high school students from underrepresented backgrounds.
 - b. Hutton Summit was introduced in 2021 to gather students in one central location
 - c. Hutton is largely funded by grants and agreements with state and federal agencies
 - d. Major questions within Hutton include:
 - i. Are we reaching our target audience?
 - ii. Is it the best format to reach this goal?
 - iii. Does Hutton fit with the mission of AFS and industry needs?
 - iv. How can we track Hutton alumni and program impact?
 - e. Question from the audience regarding the \$1,000 administrative fee and whether that is enough to cover our overhead.
 - i. Program review needs to clarify that some program partners provide additional funding that goes towards administrative fees
 - f. Question regarding the availability and diversity of the mentors
 - g. Question regarding what happens to the students who do not get accepted to the program? Do they apply again or are they discouraged?
 - i. Can provide emails of students not selected do they can receive info about applying to other organizations or universities
 - h. Question regarding the amount of money allocated to each student for traveling to the Hutton Summit
 - i. Hutton pools the \$1,000 and applies that towards all summit related costs
 - ii. Issues related to gathering information about minors and any legal implications around that are important to better understand.

Discussion

- i. Administrative costs need to be fully researched to ensure that the current program allocation of \$1000/student is accurate.
- ii. Are we looking at Hutton as a recruitment program for the profession? Students are often first introduced to the profession through Hutton, whereas some others seem to know that fisheries is already interested and somewhat committed to college programs in fisheries. This needs to be revisited to ensure that the program goal is still appropriate.
- iii. Mentors – Do we have diversity in mentors and do we have any problems finding mentors? Response was that we do get plenty of mentor applications, but they are often not geographically in the right locations relevant to Hutton applicants.
- iv. How do we provide some support or services to the many Hutton applicants who are not selected for the program? AFS does provide lists of Hutton students to universities as part of their recruitment process.
- v. Summit funding – Does the \$1,000 budgeted for travel to the Hutton summit cover expenses. Is the allocation the same for everyone or is it dependent upon travel costs? Response is that the funding is an average budgeted amount but the actual expenditure is specific to each student's travel situation.
- vi. Hutton students in Canada – Caleb Hasler noted that he has applied twice for Hutton students but has not been provided with a student. This needs to be further explored.

C. **Books Program Review** – Laura Hendee (Attachment F)

1. Began in 1948 with *A List of Common and Scientific Names of the Better Known Fishes of the U.S. and Canada*
 - a) 222 products developed over the history of the program
 - b) 91 symposia
 - c) 9 monographs
 - d) 37 special publications
 - e) 80 professional and trade books
 - f) 3 software
 - g) 2 outside publications
2. Titles are priced to be affordable to members and the public, members receive a 30% discount. About half of the books are available in e-pub format. All books have been assigned Digital Object Identified (DOI) codes.
3. Publish unique titles with low sales potential as a benefit to members and an outlet for their research.
4. AFS retains the majority of profit through sales but also has some royalty programs with supporting AFS units or authors.
5. Goals through 2024 include:
 - a) Increasing net sales with targeted sales of titles. Develop specific efforts to get titles out for sale to a larger audience
 - b) Create a marketing plan for select titles
 - c) Review the pricing structure
 - d) Digitize remaining book titles and provide PDF all titles
 - e) Review and possibly expand the Book Review Editor position
 - f) Reengage the Book Editorial Advisory Committee and consider expansion
6. Historically has been a revenue generating source for AFS, but in recent years there has been a decline, some of that may be attributed to COVID
7. Books in the professional and trade category make up the majority of sales. However, sales of even the most popular books rarely exceed several hundred copies.
8. Hard copy sales consistently exceed digital sales. Surprisingly, e-book sales are relatively minor and sale of individual chapters is minor to nonexistent.
9. Competitors – No other professional societies in our field have in-house publishing shops. Self-publishing is becoming more popular but larger publishing houses are not seen as competition due to the limited market for many AFS titles.
10. Objectives and Plans:
 - a) Minimally be at least self-sustaining. Need to revisit pricing, enhance marketing, evaluate types of books published, modernize online bookstore, evaluate fulfillment center options, offer royalties to attract authors.
 - b) Actively solicit titles/authors from AFS Units
 - c) Outreach more actively to Books Subscription Members
 - d) Advertise University policy to get more books to students and faculty

Discussion and Questions:

1. The AFS royalty program seems to have changed. The Fisheries Management Section has supported development of books through financial support but there have been no royalty payments in recent years and this has negatively impacted the Section. This has also been an issue for the Education Section, which has previously provided seed money (example was the first Standard Sampling book edited by Scott Bonar). AFS staff will follow up on this and report back to the Governing Board on royalties. Dan Cassidy did report that AFS has been making some royalty payments and he will review this with Sections. Jeff Kopaska noted that they have received some payments but that they are substantially lower than in the past.
2. Fisheries Education program is supporting the Inland Fisheries Management in North American revision that is currently in progress. One of their key points was to provide for a lower cost option for students. This will include a different price point for students relative to professionals.
3. It was noted that many AFS products have a very narrow audience (e.g., symposium proceedings) and that it is important for AFS to address these needs. This can also be provided through special sections of AFS journals such as in North American Journal of Fisheries Management.
4. What is the “lifetime” of some AFS books such as multiple revisions of key titles vs. one-time books that will never be updated or revised. It was noted that there is a mix of these titles in the portfolio.

Next steps: Were the presentations today appropriate for the Governing Board discussions? Were these reviews helpful?

- a) The history of the programs was helpful. Possibly a shifting of goals has occurred since the program origin but this needs to be further explored.
- b) Layering of programs and how they impact other areas of AFS activity. For example, does program from one program impact others.
- c) Are programs that are not profitable deemed to be essential to AFS? The program evaluations need to provide some thoughts on this issue (e.g., is the program mission critical and should be maintained regardless of financial status. This will be part of the final program review submission.
- d) As the Governing Board defines questions and staff and committees provide responses, there needs to be a preview by the GB to ensure that they have time to consider the information.
- e) Has there been an evaluation of AFS membership to better understand their needs for AFS services. For example, many universities support rental of textbooks rather than purchase, and we need to follow the market demand for various services. This topic and selected others may need additional more focused research to better understand the potential market changes.
- f) Governing Board liaison establishment – Austen will be asking 2-3 GB members to self-assign themselves to each of the program reviews to provide additional insight into the process.

3. Financial update – Key points

A. Audit Report 2022 was reviewed (*For the complete audit report, please contact the AFS offices. This will also be placed on the AFS website.*)

1. CY2022 was the second consecutive year of positive net change, excluding investment income. This included JASM2 income and federal employee retention fund revenue. But even excluding these income sources, AFS operations were net positive.
 2. End of year 2022 total net assets were lower than 2021 but this was primarily due to substantial stock market decline at the end of 2022 that impacted AFS funds.
- B. As of June 2023, operating net revenue is tracking ahead of 2022. Staff and office expenses have been reduced and this has had positive impacts upon the financial position.
 - C. Latin American Congress, while programmatically successful, was a net loss of about \$153,000 (direct cost basis).
 - D. It is anticipated that final 2023 finances for AFS will be net negative operationally, but investment results will dictate overall situation.
 - E. All AFS programs and other expenses are tracked through specific cost codes and this allows AFS to effectively calculate AFS expenses and revenues on a specific program basis.
 - F. Obligated reserve – AFS has not yet reached the goal of the obligated reserve attaining 6-months of operating expenses.
- 4. AFS Bethesda Office Building** – Options and considerations on sale of the Bethesda offices.
- A. AFS owns approximately 5000 square feet of the Bethesda Glascock building. The other three tenants are all actively moving to a fully remote working situation and seeking to sell their part of the building.
 - B. The sale needs to be preceded by a zoning change by Montgomery County. This has been problematic due to the need to work with and obtain support from the surrounding HOA.
 - C. The current real estate situation in the region is highly unfavorable to commercial sales at this time due to the covid response. There is a significant amount of excess office space available resulting in lower prices, demand, and opportunity for sale.
 - D. Staff are working to develop new operational protocols for engagement and maintenance of interaction and corporate continuity. This is being incorporated into future budgets to support offsite retreats, social activities, more involvement in AFS meetings, and other activities. AFS will save about \$60,000 - \$80,000/year in office expenses and some of this can be reprogrammed to support staff activities. We need to be concerned about staff interactions, maintaining creative engagement, and be cognizant of the many challenges of staff geographic dispersion.
 - E. AFS is still exploring some other smaller office options, such as shared space with other science societies, but there has been no progress. AFS continues to talk with TWS and others to find options and determine viability.
 - F. Next steps – AFS has retained a commercial broker and is working with a law firm on rezoning. If we are successful in getting the county to approve rezoning, the real estate agent will initiate marketing and we will simply need to wait for and evaluate options. AFS will need to work with leadership to finalize the approval process that is streamlined and efficient due to the time sensitive nature of real estate transactions. AFS staff need to explore any guidance in AFS Constitution, Rules, or Procedures. The Governing Board did approve authorization for staff to pursue sale options but any actual sale will need to have leadership approval at a currently undefined level.
 1. Final sale decision should include consultation with the FPPC to ensure that they are aware of financial ramifications.
 2. Authorization should at least include the Management Committee but needs to include the full suite of issues such as use of any proceeds, tax implications, and other issues. Leadership should have in mind a spending plan for proceeds that includes such options as obligated

reserve, program development or support, and other activities.

5. Executive Director Review – President Croxton stated that she will be sending a questionnaire to the GB as part of the collection of comments on performance. She will also be talking with staff to collect comments. As part of the transition, leadership will talk with Austen to refine thinking about strengths and weaknesses and how they can be addressed in the search for a new Executive Director. Please also see Attachment G and H for Austen’s reports.

- A. Austen briefly reviewed his annual accomplishments and challenges over the course of 2023.
- B. Search Team development for new ED replacement will be initiated and Austen will provide support as appropriate and requested.
- C. The Latin America Conference was a tough learning experience for AFS. The funding and support situation was substantially different in Mexico. Most U.S. based agencies were unable to provide support and with the meeting being a first-ever event, we had difficulties in getting private industry to be engaged.
- D. Transition issues, challenges, and planning will be an increasingly important activity as we move into 2024.
- E. GB went into *in-camera* session to further discuss performance.

6. Constitutional Consultant Report - (Randy Schultz)

- A. Management Committee proxy establishment (Attachment I)
Motion to accept by Gary Whelan; 2nd by Cecil Jennings. Accepted by unanimous consent.
Comments/Questions: Section presidents can select a proxy from among their leadership. In fact, this was encouraged to develop future leadership.
- B. Establishment of the Development Committee as a Standing Committee (Attachment J)
Motion to accept by Laurie Earley; 2nd by Eric Fethermen. Accepted by unanimous consent.
- C. Financial Planning and Procedures Committee motion to move funds to the Obligated Reserve (Attachment K)
Motion: The FPPC moves that the Management Committee task AFS Deputy Director Daniel Cassidy to transfer \$19,000 from the Publications Endowment Fund to the Obligated Reserve in 2023 as a good-faith gesture to rebuilding that Reserve.
Moved by Laurie Earley; 2nd by Leanne Roulson. Accepted by unanimous consent.

7. Report by President April Croxton

- A. This is a retrospective time for April as she finishes her term as AFS president, and it is important to celebrate and acknowledge accomplishments.
- B. The tables below provide a short and necessarily incomplete review of accomplishments.

2022-2023 AFS Management Committee Highlights

- Held **10** meetings from September 2022-August 2023
- Made **11** decisions impacting Society operations, including:
 - Approval of 2023 dues schedule (12% increase)
 - Approval of Officer travel (hosting and participation) at Division and Chapter meetings
 - Approval to use Publication Endowment Funds to host a Journals Retreat
 - Approval of registration rates for Grand Rapids
 - Approval of CASS MOU language and authorization to sign delegation
 - Approval to explore future AFS/TWS joint meetings, and potential AFS/CASS JASM 202X)
 - Approval of revised AFS Fellows Language
 - Approval of revised Presidential Fisheries Conservation Award language
 - Approval to start the formal process to establish the Development Committee to the AFS Rules and Procedures
 - Approval for AFS HQ to develop a contract with a commercial realtor to explore building sale/lease options
 - Approval to establish proxies to join MC calls
- Approved **6** bylaws revisions for AFS Units
 - Auburn University Subunit of Alabama Chapter
 - Western Division
 - North Central Division
 - Idaho Chapter
 - University of Maryland Student Subunit of Tidewater Chapter
 - University of North Texas Student Subunit

2022-2023 Governing Board Highlights

- Held **3** meetings (January, June, August 2023)
- Discussed and provided feedback to the MC on numerous topics including:
 - Proxies for MC calls
 - Cecil's draft POW
 - Visioning training for Units
 - Joint meetings with TWS and CASS (JASM 3)
 - AFS Building Overview
 - Working with a realtor on the potential sale of the AFS building
 - Snake River Dam removal policy adoption
 - Nominating Committee timing for committee establishment and at-large members
 - Latin American and Caribbean Fisheries Conference and next steps
 - Programs Review and Strategic Planning
 - If passed today, sending two motions to the membership for a vote (MC Proxies and establishment of the Development Committee)

8. Exercise 2A: 'Goals-Priming' – If AFS could do anything, what would it be?

- **Goal:** Think beyond status quo
- **Purpose:** Practice 'brainstorming' – go where fisheries has not gone yet
- **Process:** 'Facilitator Magnets' or Informal Groups
 - Join to discuss ideas over drinks+nibbles (Reception, Dinner...)
- **Deliverable:** Short SITREPs at beginning of Sunday
- Report worthwhile ideas to entire group (Moderator calls)

- **Rules:** It's brainstorming – let it happen organically. The GB members then divided into smaller groups to complete the exercise that will be reported on in the morning.
- Marlis Douglas informed the Governing Board about an upcoming workshop at the Southern

SDAFS 2024 – Workshop ‘Futurecasting’

Futurecasting — An AFS-wide Adaptive Planning Framework for a Successful Future

WHY: The future is uncertain and cannot be predicted, but future outcomes can be shaped by guiding actions through adaptive planning. The Futurecasting framework helps identifying strategic goals, guides decisions and ensures actions progress towards targets, while also adjusting to unforeseen challenges. AFS is adopting Futurecasting to align unit activities at all levels with the AFS strategic vision and improve communication within AFS.

Futurecasting complements traditional SWOT analysis by emphasizing future targets as drivers, promoting long-term pro-active perspectives over short-term reactive efforts, and relies on adaptive planning to optimize decisions and action plans.

WHAT: This 4-hr workshop will first cover a short introduction to Futurecasting. Participants then will apply Futurecasting in small break-out groups to identify (1) specific goals for the Southern Division units that align with the AFS vision, (2) resources needed, and (3) strategic actions for SDAFS units to succeed. Ideas from each group will be discussed and summarized to share with SDAFS leadership, units and members.

WHO: SDAFS members at any career stage, from students to chapter officers, are invited. Broad participation is essential to ensure diverse perspectives and creative solutions.

The workshop is organized by the AFS Strategic Positioning Committee in an effort to introduce the Futurecasting framework to all units, and train unit leaders at all levels in adaptive planning.

HOW: The workshop is based on active-learning principles, with participants absorbing preparatory materials pre-workshop (~1 h), minimizing lecture time. Emphasis is on experiential learning during small-group activities, followed by whole-group interactive discussions to share and synthesize ideas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Participants will learn how to (1) adaptively plan to deal with uncertainty, (2) confidently articulate ideas, (3) be receptive to diverse opinions and needs, and (4) effectively communicate visionary goals and strategic actions.

The workshop also will serve as a ‘train-the-trainers’ event, helping leaders to conduct similar Futurecasting visioning exercises for their units.

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 30 participants

DURATION: 4 hours (Half-day)

WORKSHOP COST: free

Sunday Session, August 20, 2023

Meeting called to order by President April Croxton

Roll call of attendees and quorum determination by Randy Schultz

9. Exercise 2B: 'Goal – SITREPs– If AFS could do anything, what would it be?'

(Facilitated by Marlis Douglas)

- A. Goal: Share 'Big Ideas' to re-energize the group
 - B. Purpose: Open minds to possibilities – (reality check in Exercise 3)
 - C. Process: Moderator calls on individuals that want to offer 1 BIG IDEA
 - D. Rules: One idea/ speaker, Concise description (30sec limit), Briefly provide WHAT – WHY-HOW
 - E. Feedback from the groups based upon their work from the previous evening.
1. Group 2 –
 - a) AFS should be the organization that anyone involved with water should be a member. The “go-to” for Congressional staff and members for information on fish and fisheries.
 2. Group 7 –
 - a) Recruitment of students who bring in new values
 - b) Better retain early career professionals
 - c) Better define what fisheries covers in a new, larger, more inclusive manner. This should be shared through a video series that more effectively communicates to this audience.
 3. Group 6 -
 - a) Develop a fisheries innovation award to identify new technologies
 - b) Develop an agency license for AFS where agencies can purchase group membership and group access to AFS services.
 4. Group 5 –
 - a) Engagement – AFS should be the sought after resource for environmental judgement and “all things water”.
 - b) TV shows and podcasts should be an important tool for AFS to communicate information.
 - c) The name “American Fisheries Society” continues to be a bit of a narrowing characterization of what the society engages in and should be reviewed as a limiting our possible membership. The importance of name and how it is interpreted needs to be better understood. Different groups will make widely varying interpretations and we need to be upon to better understanding wide and unexpected perspectives. Some think of “fisheries” as being more inclusive, while others see it as limiting. Fisheries could be interpreted as fish, people, and habitat, but that is not widely understood.
 - d) Canadian perspective is that the name is somewhat limited. A more inclusive option would be North American Fisheries Society. Also, fisheries is itself may be limiting. Many people work on fish but not fisheries, by this meaning that they work on fish physiology but not on the human exploitation aspect of fisheries. It was noted that the Canadian professional societies that created the Society for Canadian Aquatic Sciences took about two years of debate to arrive on their new name.
 - e) It will be difficult to find a name and core focus that is engaging and inclusive without also diluting AFS into an undefinable, unfocused entity.
 - f) Also, it was noted that translating the name AFS into French was difficult because there was no direct equivalent.

- g) Suggestion is that AFS should better define what it wants to be and the main area of focus and then consider the name challenge.

5. Group 4 -

- a) By 2030 have 10,000 AFS members of which 25% are international

6. Group 3 –

- a) How we meet as a society is important. This was experienced in Spokane with the fish release that created interaction opportunities that were impactful.
- b) We meet in wonderful locations but often have little interaction with the local resources or people. A good example was the Baltimore annual meeting where a visit to the Black History Museum was hosted and AFS worked with the organization, Blacks of the Chesapeake.
- c) Find new ways to build interactive experiences. Create more leadership building opportunities, particularly for early career professionals.
- d) Encourage AFS Sections to work together more actively to create joint events for attendees.

7. Group 1 –

- a) AFS should be seen as a policy advisor to Congressional members and staff on policy issues.
- b) Develop a better career pipeline for young people interested in fisheries. AFS should be seen as the place for people to explore fisheries conservation careers.
- c) Workshops and other training opportunities are an area of growth and meet an important need.

8. Online Group –

- a) AFS should be the “standard-setter” and source of information on fisheries. This embraces a broad swath of issues but people should think of AFS as the leading source of information.
- b) AFS needs to be recognized brand for fisheries.

9. ELMA Summary of which of these ideas are the most exciting –

- a) AFS as a source of help and support in career development of young professionals through training, mentorship, video links, etc. to get people involved.
- b) Make AFS the aquatic society that embraces all things water.
- c) Get people to AFS meetings. These are so important for developing professional contacts.

- 10. Jeff Kopaska summary – AFS should be seen as a brand. It doesn't matter what the letters stand for, but AFS should be seen as a brand to reflect fisheries in the broadest sense.

10. Committee/unit update from reports.

- A. Climate committee report (see Appendix 3 for the full report)
- B. Highlights of AFS unit activities from the previous year was shared from all attendees.

11. Exercise 3: 'Program Assessment' – Is Program Mission Critical?

- **Goal:** Combine visioning of future AFS with current activities/foci
- **Purpose:** Apply 'thinking' learned on Day 1 to specific AFS issues
 - **Step 1: What is?** (Facts, information from Program Review)
 - **Step 2: What can be?** (Program fit with goals of Future AFS)
- **Process:** Break-out Groups with facilitator (same as Day 1)
 - Introduction to Exercise ~ 5min
 - Break-out 30min
 - GB Reporting 15min
 - Summary / Next Steps 10min
- **Deliverable:** Record of discussion points (bulleted notes, ABT)

- Score: green, yellow, or red? (must continue to abandon)
- Short explanation of score (e.g., program is..., but should be; fabulous idea, but not financially sustainable; not relevant for future AFS, because....)
- For full report of these exercises, please contact Marlis Douglas or Joe Conroy.
- **Rules:** same as Exercise 1, but be mindful of each other's background
 - long-term members: familiar with program specifics + history
 - newer members: less familiar, but also unbiased by 'what was'
- In support of these discussions, Marlis Douglas and Joe Conroy have worked with the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee to incorporate financial thinking into the discussions. As the group engages in this conversation, there should be consideration given to financial performance of



Strategic Positioning Committee of the American Fisheries Society

Financial realities of AFS programs (from FPPC/Troy Brandt)

- Programs balance member benefits and costs
 - Not all programs need to generate net revenue
- Programs generate revenue **and** expenses
 - Many programs lose money
 - Some formerly profitable programs now lose money (*visioning*)
- In general, AFS must generate new & expand current revenue
- **Actions**
 - Current programs: Review
 - New: on-hold until reviews complete; include business plan

the programs, future financial goals, and other benefits to AFS. It is understood that some programs are profitable while other are considered important but may not be revenue generating activities. Both are acceptable but we need to understand and accept the trade-offs.

- **Key outputs from the discussions**

- Hutton Program Review Thoughts

- 500 applications are too many, streamline guidance to only allow rising seniors to apply (no graduating seniors and rising juniors are too young). Need to continue to streamline the application process to make it more manageable.
- Survey Hutton Scholars after their year to better understand how the experience has impacted their choices and interests.
- Are we introducing Hutton Scholars with student subsections? Building their network.
- Find additional outside funding to support more Hutton Scholars (industry, etc.)
- Find additional mentors, possibly explore with the Student Conservation Association to learn how they find mentors.
- Collect testimonials or stories from Hutton Scholars and build out these on the website.
- The Hutton Program is a positive for AFS and should be continued.

- Continue a mixture of Hutton students including those who are committed to fisheries/aquatics with those who are exploring.
- Explore a “reunion” of Hutton Scholars, possibly at a Division or Annual meeting.
- Build out more social media to keep the community of Hutton together after completion of the program.
- Encourage non-traditional interests in Hutton such as those interested in engineering or computer science.
- Funding models to explore: (1) use portion of Bethesda building sale proceeds to create a Hutton endowment or (2) rather than award the student the Hutton funding but provide it to the mentor agency so that they can possibly match or otherwise increase the funding to impact more students. Creating a more solid, continual funding basis for Hutton (corporate donations to create an endowment), would ease burden on staff.
- Better understand how Hutton fits into AFS. Does it add to the lifetime involvement in AFS? Build a database of alumni. Better understand the long term impacts of Hutton on the students and the mentors.
- Need to better define the measure of success for Hutton. Where do we want to go with the Hutton program.
- Develop a clearer focus of Hutton – targeted students, age, interests.
- Consider what AFS can do at other student levels, from grade school through high school.
- Develop a “Hutton light” or other shorter-term program to engage students and mentors who are unable to work in the current 8-week program commitment. This could even be a weekend, one week, regional or state-based program.
- Hutton is a “donor magnet” with interest in supporting the program’s growth.
- Essays as part of the application are less useful than ever due to the use of AI in drafting their submission.
- Some students use Hutton simply as a resume builder rather than an opportunity to explore career options.
- Explore shortening the Hutton program to 4 or 6 weeks to be less of a burden on mentors and students. Need to better understand if this is a limitation or not. However, for many mentors there is a desire to maintain the current program length to allow for development of projects for the students and to get a diversity of experiences.

Books Program

- Traditional hard-copy books don’t seem to be acceptable to younger readers.
- Need to ensure that ebook technology is current.
- Books are important, even essential, for AFS but we need to be cognizant of technology changes and reader preferences. Continuing an AFS books program was noted by several breakout groups.
- Need to recognize that Books will not be the revenue generator that it has traditionally provided.
- Need to better understand our client base – Who are books targeted towards? What are their needs? Are there new funding sources that we should explore? Do books need to be published in traditional manners or is the content better delivered via video, web tools, etc.
- AFS needs to continue to be seen as the leader in publishing fisheries information.
- Explore partnering with universities or others in publishing efforts (even if it mean sharing of revenues).
- Better define a decision process for accepting books, determining form of production, and pricing.

- Get more early career professionals involved to help understand their book needs and format.
- From the academic perspective, there is great uncertainty on the future of books in the university setting. Many are moving to video format, rentals, excerpts (e.g., scanned chapters), but few are using traditional, hard-copy books. There also is a possible differential between entry level undergrad classes versus upper level and graduate classes where books might be more important. However, this is highly variable.
- As more people go to remote, often home office, working situations, space for books is even more challenging and is a limitation.
- Audio books should be explored and could be an option that AFS should attempt for some books that are appropriate for that format.

12. Additional old business – None

13. New Business

- A. Professional Development Retreat update. Austen reported that the workshop is scheduled for April 15-17, 2024, in Tysons Corner, Virginia. The organizers will invite a cross section of AFS members and partners who are actively involved in continuing education. Contact Lauren Maza, Heidi Blazius, or Austen to get more information.
- B. Special Presidential committee on Publisher Contract Review and Rebidding. This committee includes: April Croxton, Steve Midway, Steve Cooke, Dan Daugherty, Laura Hendee and Doug Austen. The current contract with Wiley expires 12/31/2024 and there is a need to get this new contract in place about 90 months prior to the end of the current contract. Please contact any of the committee members if you have comments or suggestions.
- C. Fall GB call and Midyear GB meeting dates TBD.
- D. Incoming Governing Board meeting Thursday morning needs to be attended by all new GB members. Key actions will include determination of the Management Committee members for 2023-2024, Nominating Committee members, Mote Scholarship fund committee (two people from AFS Section), and Program Review involvement of GB members.
- E. Committee involvement should be encouraged from all of AFS membership. This is a great opportunity for people to get more involved in AFS.

14. Review of accomplishments, follow-up assignments, closing comments

- A. April conveyed to the Governing Board her sincere thanks to all of the AFS units and members who she has had the opportunity to visit and engage with over the past year.
- B. Governing Board members are seen as AFS leaders and April encourages you all to continue in whatever capacity is available.
- C. Two items will be moved to the Business meeting: Management Committee proxy and establishment of the Development committee as a standing committee.
- D. Thanks offered to the Grand Rapids planning committee for all of their excellent work.

15. Adjournment

Attachment A – Introduction to Strategic Positioning

AFS
American Fisheries Society

Strategic Positioning Committee of the American Fisheries Society

Plans are worthless, but planning is everything
Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957

Strategic Plan (= static)

- Fixed, inflexible, reactive
 - current context

Y1 Y2 Y3 Y4 Y5

Strategic Positioning (= dynamic)

- Process, adaptive, proactive
 - envisions the future

AFS
American Fisheries Society

Strategic Positioning Committee of the American Fisheries Society

Effective planning requires specific goals to guide an adaptive process informed through engagement
AFS Strategic Positioning Committee, 2022

Goal:
*Establish **framework that guides AFS activities** to progress towards goals while adapting to emerging challenges.*

Workshop - Strategic Positioning (SP)

Goal: Learn SP Framework through applying

Exercise 1: Vision – AFS Now → AFS Future

Exercise 2: Goals – 'Big, Bold Ideas'

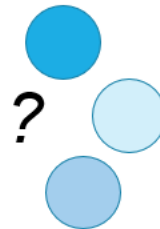
Exercise 3: Adaptive process – Programs ↔ Big Ideas

Exercise 1 - Visioning

Goal: Groups develop 'Elevator Speech' for current + future AFS

Questions:

- 1) *What is AFS for me now?*
- 2) *What do I want AFS to be in the future?*

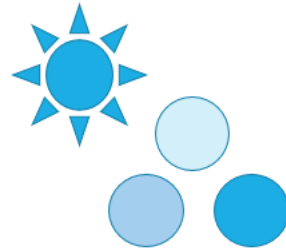


Exercise 2 - Goals

Goal: Think beyond status quo

Questions: If AFS could do 'anything' – what would it be?

'brainstorming'
– go where fisheries has not gone
(yet)

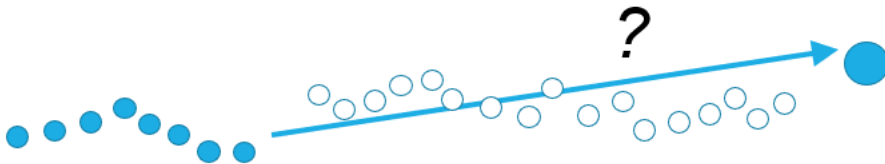


Exercise 3 – Adaptive Planning

Goal: Combine visioning with current activities/foci

Purpose: Apply 'futurecasting thinking' to specific AFS issues

- Step 1: **What is?** (Facts, information from Program Review)
- Step 2: **What can be?** (Program fit with goals of Future AFS)



Attachment B – Presidential Plan of Work for Cecil Jennings

Presidential Plan of Work

Cecil A. Jennings

August 2023 – September 2024

Life is what happens when you are busy making plans. Anonymous

During my tenure as President of this Society, I plan to focus my efforts on five specific objectives that I hope will maintain and perhaps enhance the Society's effectiveness as a world leader in fisheries conservation. Those objectives include ongoing initiatives of previous presidents as well as a few new areas of emphasis I have identified as beneficial to the Society. These objectives are listed below:

- 1. Continue to advance and enhance Fisheries Science, including engagement with other aquatic societies.**
- 2. Evaluate how Society messaging is perceived by young professionals who are nonmembers and their potential employers and adjust messaging breadth, as appropriate.**
- 3. Prepare/update standard operation procedures for: recruiting an Executive Director under planned and unplanned scenarios and for preparation of strategic plans.**
- 4. Increase efficiency of communications about unit activities among AFS units at all levels and better convey the value of the Society to its members and their employers.**
- 5. Build on strong foundation of diversity initiatives within the Society as well as improve message to membership about the value of diversity of all kinds.**

These objectives are consistent with the Society's mission, goals, and objectives. My approach to achieving these objectives and my rationale for these approaches are outlined below.

I intend to work effectively with fellow officers, the Executive Director, and AFS staff to achieve the Society's mission, which is:

To improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries knowledge and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

The Society pursues its mission by setting specific goals as outlined in its [Vision Statement](#) of being a global leader in fisheries conservation, training the next generation of fisheries professionals, and providing value-added services to its members. The Society's current (2020-2024) [strategic plan](#) outlines five specific objectives to achieve the its goals and by extension, its overall mission. Those specific objectives are to:

1. Advance fisheries disciplines, conservation, and management.
2. Develop fisheries professionals
3. Communicate the importance of both the science and the value of fisheries discipline.
4. Increase diversity among fisheries professionals and promote an inclusive environment in AFS.
5. Provide effective governance of AFS and high-quality service to AFS's members.

My draft plan of work addresses aspects of these objectives (as well as the Society's goals and mission) in the context of previous and ongoing efforts toward the same. My plan also complements the plans of previous presidents, as necessary, and develops a few new initiatives to address emerging challenges. The specifics of my plan are presented in *italics* below.

1. Continue/enhance advancement of fisheries science, including engagement with other aquatic science societies (CASS) - This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 1.

Advance fisheries science, conservation, and management - Annual conferences at the Society, regional, and local level provide great opportunities information exchange, collaboration, accessing and providing mentoring opportunities, and rekindling or creating new collegial relationships among fishery professionals.

In conjunction with the Pacific Islands chapter and the Western Division, plan the 2024 annual meeting, which will be held in Honolulu in September 2024. Meeting planning include identifying plenary themes and speakers to highlight the unique natural history, biological, and cultural history of the region.

Facilitate the rebuilding of a new Pacific Islands (formerly Hawai'i) Chapter to serve fishery professionals and increase the Society's presence and influence in the area.

Represent the Society at the World Fisheries Congress to be held Seattle WA in the spring of 2024. Collaborate with and support the Executive Director in the hosting of the World Fisheries Congress, as appropriate.

Collaborate with and support the Executive Director and AFS staff on myriad Society activities and new initiatives as appropriate.

Engagement with other aquatic sciences societies – Fisheries professionals work in or collaborate with scientists in related disciplines who engage in the conservation and

management of aquatic resources. Collectively, we face similar challenges and opportunities in pursuit of respective missions, and progress on both can be enhanced by working collectively where possible. The Consortium of Aquatic Scientific Societies (CASS) was formed to facilitate this collaboration.

Continue to engage with CASS on the future of the organization, including organizational structure, business model, and planning future joint meetings.

Explore the feasibility and willingness of smaller CASS societies joining AFS and becoming their own unit.

2. Evaluate Society messaging, especially among younger fisheries professionals who may come from nontraditional backgrounds or who have a limited view of what a “fisheries professional” does. This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 2.

Recruit and retain young fisheries professionals – Perception is reality, and how others perceive AFS may not be how we perceive ourselves. In an era with changing population demographics (age and career objectives), AFS should ensure that its messaging is appealing to young professionals whose career objectives are consistent with the Society’s mission but who may not be receiving the Society’s messaging as it was intended.

Ascertain how young professionals and their potential employers perceive AFS and its role in fisheries conservation and management and determine if that perception is consistent with what the Society intends.

Develop and market, as appropriate, a narrative of the Society’s mission that is appealing to young professionals and their potential employers. This messaging should include broadening the perception of what is considered “fisheries” work and who is a “fisheries” professional.

3. Prepare standard operating procedures for recruiting an Executive Director under planned and unplanned scenarios and for preparing strategic plans - This focus area addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 5.

Planned and unplanned transitions - Previous unplanned transitions were challenging for seamless governance of the Society. However, the pending retirement of the current Executive Director presents an opportunity to formalize the Society’s procedures for transitions and eases potential disruptions to the Society’s operations when they occur.

Work with current Executive Director, who is retiring within 3 years, to identify primary and secondary duties associated with the position as well as evaluate opportunities to restructuring job duties as appropriate.

Develop a practical position description that can be used effectively to solicit potential candidates for the vacant position.

Develop an advertisement strategy, including hiring an executive search firm, to identify potential candidates for the vacant position as well as establishing a timeline for recruiting, evaluating, and hiring the next Executive Director.

Create a search committee to evaluate candidates as well as an assessment rubric for consistency in comparing and scoring the dossiers of the potential candidates.

Establish procedures for records and data management to ensure accessibility of appropriate personnel and financial files to the leadership team (Executive Director, Deputy Director, others?) to ensure a seamless transition between Executive Directors. These procedures should include periodic audits with corrective actions as needed.

Strategic planning, visioning, and positioning – The Society’s current strategic plan expires at the end of 2024, and a new strategic plan will be needed for the next 5 years. Strategic plans, though useful for long-term planning, can be inadequate to effectively address spontaneous or emerging challenges (e.g., COVID pandemic) and may limit an organization response options. Strategic visioning/positioning is method for increasing organizational flexibility to respond to emerging challenges and still achieve goals foundational to the overall strategic plan.

Work with the current Strategic Visioning Committee (Marlis Douglas, Joe Conroy: Co-chairs) to evaluate our current strategic planning process. Do we need one? Are the goals identified therein adequate? Can strategic positioning be a more effective approach to achieving the Society’s mission?

Work with Strategic Visioning Committee to ascertain who we were, who we are, who we want to be, and how we get there.

Work with Executive Director and Strategic Visioning Committee and others to create a new strategic plan/strategic positioning strategy, as appropriate, for 2025-2029.

4. Increase communication efficiency – This focus area addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 3. It continues previous efforts to improve communication efficiency between staff and units and among units as well as starts a new initiative on improving communication efficiency to outside partners and stakeholders.

Internal unit communications - The Society has many units (divisions, chapters, and sections) working towards fulfilling the Society’s overall mission and goals. In some instances, these efforts are redundant among some units because of inefficient communication about or lack of coordination among units engaged in similar projects. I intent to continue previous efforts to:

Evaluate results of membership surveys or inquiries to Units and AFS staff aimed at identifying gaps in internal communication efforts.

Evaluate efficacy of communication strategy proposed or implemented by previous presidents to ensure that it is relevant, flexible, and continues to promote forward-thinking approaches to sharing information with and among Society units.

Continue to support and promote AFS Policy efforts through targeted Unit engagement.

External communications with partners and stakeholders – Society membership numbers have been flat or declining for some time. Agency organizational culture is an important factor in whether employees join AFS (Lauber et al. 2011), and young current and former AFS members believe their employers value chapter membership more than Society membership (Hamel et al. 2018). Further, many of these young AFS members are unaware that chapter membership does not constitute Society-level membership. Clearly, not all agencies and young fisheries professionals seem to appreciate the Society's value to them in fulfilling their mission and career aspirations. I intend to:

Initial surveys of partner agencies (e.g., USGS, USFWS, state agencies) to determine how they view the services provided by AFS and identify opportunities to better serve both constituents.

Devise communication strategies to remediate any misconceptions about what AFS does and better inform partners about the value the Society provides to the agencies and their employees.

5. Build on strong foundation of diversity initiatives within the Society as well as improve message to membership about the value of diversity of all kinds. This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 4.

Provide equal access and a welcoming environment to all – AFS has long acknowledged that its membership diversity is not representative of the diversity of American society and has been proactive trying to remedy this situation. Though targeted efforts by past AFS presidents and AFS staff, the Society has exhibited dramatic improvement in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment but achieved only moderate gains in the diversity of underrepresented groups among the Society's memberships. Undoubtedly, much work remains toward achieving membership diversity. I will continue to pursue ongoing initiatives of recent past presidents, evaluate the efficacy of various programs, and continue seeking opportunities and partners with whom to make this important objective a reality.

Communicate with membership on the links between DEIA and the benefits of reflecting societal diversity in the fisheries profession and the Society's management staff and programs.

Continue collaboration between the Hutton Program and university fisheries programs (e.g., through the Education Section and NAUFWP) to provide information to all Hutton applicants regarding university fisheries programs and careers in fisheries science.

Continue targeted outreach to students and faculty of minority serving institutions (e.g., Historically Black Colleges and University, Tribal Colleges and University, and Hispanic Serving Institutions) based on availability of underrepresented populations local to a meeting or other Society event site. Honolulu (2024) presents a great opportunity to realize this objective.

Promote and encourage this outreach among all Society units.

Organize a plenary session about Hawaiian Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TED) in the management of regional fisheries resources for the 2024 annual meeting in Honolulu.

Seek opportunities to partner with other organization (e.g., CASS partners) on DEIA initiatives.

Literature Cited

Lauber, T. B., E. J. Taylor, and B. A. Knuth. 2011. Factors influencing membership of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Geological Survey biologists in the American Fisheries Society. <https://doi.org/10.1577/1548-8446-34.1.9>

Hamel, M. J., M. T. Porath, and L. Pierce. 2018. Young professional survey results: member and non-member perspective on decision to join the American Fisheries Society. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fsh.10066>

Attachment C – Executive Director Plan of Work

2023-2024 Executive Director Proposed Annual Work Plan

Working Draft – August 13, 2023

Activity	Target or Goal	Relevant Presidential Plan of Work (see below) or Strategic Plan reference	Comments
Transition Related Activities			
ED transition	Support AFS leadership and special committee to develop plans for transition and ensure that processes are developed and implemented to ensure continuity of leadership.	PPOW#3	
ED document organization and transfer	Complete organization of all AFS records, files, relevant emails, and other information in a logical and understandable manner to transfer to new ED	PPOW#3	
Staff preparations	Ensure that staff records are updated, meet with staff about transition support and documentation	PPOW#3	
Key Programs			
Publications – planning for the future	Support and participate in the Publications Retreat to select new publisher contract and ensure that a strong implementation plan is developed.	SP Objective 3, Strategy 3.3	
Professional Development	Complete PD retreat resulting in development of strategic and tactical plan for professional development program	SP Objective 2, Strategy 2.1	
Annual meeting planning	Support WFC 2024, and ensure that Honolulu (2024) is effectively planned. Build foundation for San Antonio (2025). Develop proposals for joint AFS-TWS meeting and 3 rd JASM	SP Objective 1, Strategy 1.1	
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	Support the development of a DEI strategic plan, implementation plan, and measurable goals and objectives.	PPOW#5	Will require high level of coordination with DEI Committee, EOS, leadership and staff

	Full involvement of AFS in the two NSF-LEAPS projects.		
Support CASS evolving roles and organization	Support CASS initiative to create new partnership model that builds on the nine societies mutual challenges and opportunities	PPOW#1	
Enhance relationship with partners	Enhance relationship and better engage state agency leadership, universities through NAUFWP, and federal agencies.	SP Objective 3, Strategy 3.2 PPOW#4	Need to build relationships with SEAFWA and WAFWA where AFS has had little presence. Review and re-energize NAUFWP relationship
Membership expansion and outreach	Work with Membership Committee and staff, communications committee, and staff, and AFS units to enhance messaging to current and past members but to purposefully identify new opportunities in non-traditional areas. Work with the membership committee and AFS leadership implementing the membership survey recommendations and ensure the data is shared helping guide planning throughout the society.	PPOW#2	
Financial and Administrative			
Program Reviews (PR)	Complete PR's for all defined AFS program areas, present to FPPC, Committees, and Governing Board for review and approval. Revise as needed and work with staff, committees, and others on implementation plans	SP Objective 5, Strategy 5.1	Staff workloads are not sustainable. PR's will need to identify areas that either will be dropped or for which new funding can be targeted to provide additional support
Continue financial health initiative	Continue to budget for positive operational result and build out Obligated Reserve fund as best as possible to meet 6-month target. Work with staff identifying necessary improvements and capital requirements for upgrading website, membership database and financial systems.		
AFS Development Program	Work with staff, leadership, to fully activity the newly approved Development committee and act as emissary for AFS to engage with donors and other potential funders to build AFS donor base and funding		
Glascocock Building Sale/Lease and AFS HQ transition	Continue to work with real estate broker, legal team, and condominium partners to progress with building sale. Identify new options for storage and possible AFS space.		

AFS annual meeting review and design	Support Meetings Oversight Committee to review hybrid meeting design and support AFS review of overall meetings support	SP Objective 1, Strategy 1.1	

AFS President Cecil Jennings’s Presidential Plan of Work - Key Objectives

1. Continue/enhance advancement of fisheries science, including engagement with other aquatic science societies (CASS) - This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 1.
2. Evaluate Society messaging, especially among younger fisheries professionals who may come from nontraditional backgrounds or who have a limited view of what a “fisheries professional” does. This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 2.
3. Prepare standard operating procedures for recruiting an Executive Director under planned and unplanned scenarios and for preparing strategic plans - This focus area addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 5.
4. Increase communication efficiency – This focus area addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 3. It continues previous efforts to improve communication efficiency between staff and units and among units as well as starts a new initiative on improving communication efficiency to outside partners and stakeholders.
5. Build on strong foundation of diversity initiatives within the Society as well as improve message to membership about the value of diversity of all kinds. This focus area is foundational to our core mission and addresses Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Objective 4.

Attachment D – Program Review Introduction



AFS Program Reviews 101

Background, approach, and timetable for Program Reviews

AFS Joint MC-GB Workshop
August 19, 2023, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Goals for today

- **Develop an understanding of why we're doing Program Reviews**
 - Why are they needed?
 - Who is the audience?
 - What is the ultimate output or utilization of the PR's?
- **What constitutes a PR? (see the PR Template)**
 - Information content – purpose, goals, objectives, financial and personnel
 - SWOT
 - Future-casting

Goals for today

- **What are the AFS Programs?**
 - How are they defined, bounded
 - Leads for each program
 - Updating the PR list as we better understand the process
- **How will we develop PR's (and who will do that work?)**
 - Team-based approach with focus on program manager and staff
 - Includes relevant committee, FPPC, MC, and GB
- **Craft a timeline for PR development and next steps**

Guidance in the AFS Procedures Manual

Budgeting, Program Planning, and Evaluation

- The American Fisheries Society supports many programs that provide benefits to society members. Whereas some programs generate revenue, other programs cost more to maintain than the revenue the programs generate. The American Fisheries Society and the FPPC will institute the following guidelines.
- The executive director (ED) shall create a list of all programs and activities for budget tracking and expense allocations. The ED shall provide the program list to the FPPC during the annual development of the AFS operating budget. This information shall be summarized in an Excel spreadsheet that AFS shall maintain on the FPPC's Google drive.

Guidance in the AFS Procedures Manual

- Every 3 years, the FPPC shall evaluate one-third of the programs and work with the associated AFS committee, if any, to assess financial performance relative to the program's goals. The FPPC shall provide narrative comments regarding the programs' performances.
- The ED shall maintain an inventory of programs and corresponding financial results and provide them to the FPPC and Management Committee. The Management Committee and the FPPC shall make recommendations to the ED on budget trends and adjustments to meet financial targets. The ED shall act on those recommendations or explain in writing why he/she cannot do so.

Begin with the End in Mind (what should PR's help us to accomplish?)

1. Review programs financially, operationally, and alignment with AFS mission
2. Identify areas of growth and areas for AFS to release **or restructure**
3. Committees –How do we more effectively engage committees to inform and provide thoughtful input into PR's? Reporting, Assessment, Charge development, etc. Need to define specific expectations.
4. We need to develop a repeatable annual operational planning process that establishes targets, reporting, assessment, and market positioning.

Begin with the End in Mind (what should PR's help us to accomplish?)

5. Evaluate AFS governance to ensure that it is best structured, positioned, and prepared to guide AFS. Does governance have the correct focus, structure, training, meeting design, working groups, etc.
6. Data and program information – What is needed and how can it be best presented to be of value?
7. Process development – annual cycle of activities (governance issues that regularly need to be addressed, financial planning, strategic thinking, etc.)

Defining Program Areas

What criteria do we use to define a Program Area?

1. Compact – all of the components are closely related.
2. Can define in a single statement.
3. Can't be so narrow that we have too many program areas to develop PR's.
4. Can't be so broad that they are complicated and difficult to develop.
 - Think of Goldilocks and the Three Bears
5. Not every activity needs to be in a Program Area and be subject to this process
 1. Minor, rare, and low time/funding activities (e.g., one-shot, short-term activities)
 2. Basic operational activities such as payroll, insurance, etc. These need to be regularly reviewed but would be through a separate administrative review process (e.g., review of contracts to ensure that they are the best deal for the greatest service)
6. What else should be considered?

Initial Program Areas (return to this later)

1. Communications
2. Hutton
3. DEIJA
4. Development/Sponsorship
5. Education/Professional Development (includes webinars)
6. Meetings
7. HR
8. Membership
9. Policy
10. Journals
11. Books
12. Governance and Unit Coordination/Services

Components of a PR (see template)

Section 1: Overview and Background Information:

1. Program description
2. Business model / value proposition: (how the program generates financial and/or member value)
3. Program goals (prospectively thru Dec 2024)
4. Financial/budget (2023 Budget; past 3 years financial results):
5. Metrics/ratios (past 3 years): such as gross/net profit margin; return on investment; renewal or resale %;
6. Sales data (past 3 years by product category/type):

Components of a PR (see template)

Section 2: Program Evaluation (see also SWOT & Matrix tables below):

- 1. Situation – where are we now?**
Market assessment; competitors; industry trends; economic factors; survey data;
- 2. Objectives – where do we want to be?**
Develop/revise program goals; Align with member/customer needs; key constituent input (exhibitors, agencies, units); AFS mission; needs of the profession;
- 3. Plan / Tactics – how do we get there?**
Operational plan; budget; marketing; outreach, interim goals, partnerships/joint ventures/acquisitions; resource requirements (technology, financial, staffing, member time commitment, *etc*)
- 4. Evaluation – did we get there?**
Progress against goals; financial results; sales trends; survey data; etc.
- 5. Questions and unresolved program issues** –What needs to be better defined about the program, including goals, targets, metrics, purpose.

Components of a PR (see template)

Section 3: Member / Non-member Survey Results:

- Key summary findings from recent surveys, focus groups and other data.
- Other information that might help understand how the program addresses member needs

Components of a PR (see template)

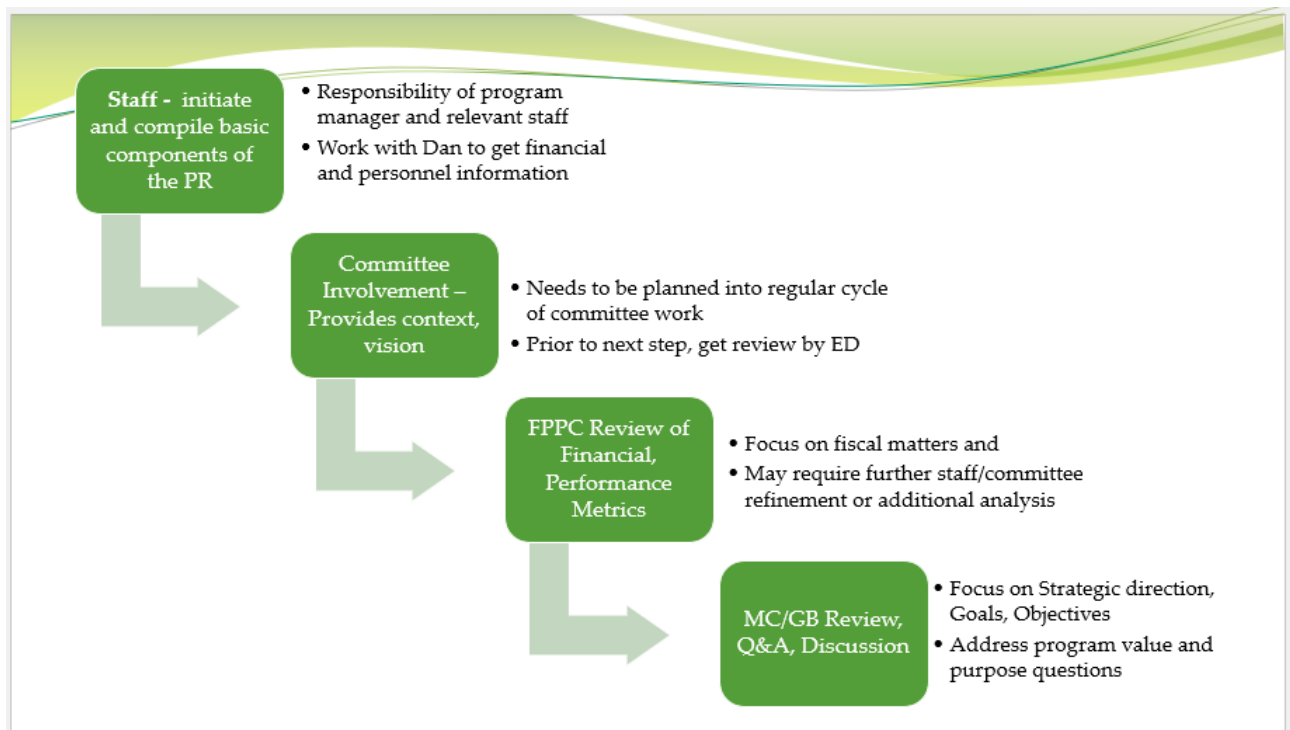
The Program	Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	S/O strategies (advancing)	W/O strategies (prospecting)
Threats	S/T strategies (defending)	W/T strategies (reducing)

Components of a PR (see template)

	Positive Net Revenue	Negative Net Revenue
Mission Critical Program (definition TBD but something along the lines of AFS must offer this program or, it has high member value or, is a top 3 market competitive program)	1.Retain this program and look to maintain/increase ROI and member value	1.Accept that this activity is important and worth doing: 2.Retain and look to maintain/increase member value and net revenue
Nonessential Program (not winning in this category or there is low strategic or member value)	1.Possibly retain this program or 2.Determine the opportunity cost of doing this program vs. another with higher member or strategic value	1.Phase out this program and shift resources elsewhere

PR Development – Who is involved?

- **Staff**
- **ED/DD**
- **Officers**
- **SPC**
- **Committees with Program Oversight**
- **FPPC**
- **MC/GB**
- **Membership**



PR Examples

- **Hutton – Lauren and Ashley**
- **Books – Laura, Kurt, and Debby**

Considerations:

- These are works in progress and, although very real, they are being used also as learning tools for all of us (so thank them for taking the lead!)
- These have been seen in preliminary versions by committee and FPPC
- Need to link to Strategic Visioning/Strategic Plan (still working on this phase)
- Based upon this work and your review, we can modify the template and the process as needed.

PR Examples

- **Hutton and Books – Comments, Thoughts, Suggestions**
- What worked well?
- What were the biggest challenges?
- What's missing?

Defining the Role of MC and GB

Breakout group challenge #1:

- i. Over the course of the next year, we will be reviewing all 12 PR's and seeking Governing Board approval. What are the top 3 questions pertaining to a PR that you feel are critical for the GB to address? (e.g., What is the financial impact of the program? How is it being evaluated? What are future projections for growth? How well does it meet the mission of AFS?) | (These can be generic to all PR's or specific to the two examples.)
- ii. Report the responses back to the larger group identify any consensus questions or approaches from the responses.

Defining the Role of MC and GB

Breakout group challenge #2 – Possibly do as a full group.

- i. Focus on what information needs to be provided to the GB to best prepare yourselves to consider these questions.
- ii. Pick a question and list the type of material (e.g., data, committee recommendation, surveys responses, etc.) that you would like to have in order to support your assessment. This may vary depending on the PR so you can use either Books or Hutton as an example. Also need to consider that the GB role is strategic rather than tactical/operational and how that plays into the reviews.

Defining the Role of MC and GB

Program Review Area	GB Member#1	GB Member#2	GB Member#3
1.Communications			
2.Hutton			
3.DEIJA			
4.Development/Sponsorship			
5.Education/Professional Development			
6.Meetings			
7.HR			
8.Membership			
9.Policy			
10.Journals			
11.Books			
12.Governance and Unit Coordination/Services			

Defining the Role of MC and GB

1. Each PR will have GB liaisons assigned
2. You are essentially “embedded” into the Program Review
3. Work with staff, committee, FPPC to be fully aware and informed of the PR process, but without responsibility to create content.
4. Ask questions, provide comments/suggestions, consider the final role of the GB in approving the PR.
5. Act as the ombudsman or ambassador of the PR to the GB

Attachment E – Draft Hutton Program Review

Program Review Example: Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program



Hutton Program Background

- Hutton Program was started in 2001
- Targets students from underrepresented backgrounds/communities in fisheries professions
- Eight-week, hands-on paid mentorship in fisheries & aquatic sciences
- Hutton Scholar Summit added in 2021
- 793 Hutton Scholars to date!



Business Model/Current Practices

- Over 97% of Hutton funding comes from grants/agreements with Federal & State Agencies and AFS Units
- Mentors are usually AFS members; volunteer their time
- Current rate to sponsor a student is \$5000
 - \$3000 to student
 - \$1000 allocated for Hutton Summit
 - \$1000 for administrative fees



Questions & Future Considerations

- Ideal size of Hutton class vs. available funding and staff resources
- Are we reaching the “right” students?
- Is the current format the “best” format?
- Does Hutton fit with AFS mission and industry needs?
- How do we track Hutton alumni and track program impact?



2023 Hutton Scholar Summit



University of Arkansas Pine Bluff



Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center

Insert pdf document here (Attachment F1).

Attachment F – Draft Books Program Review

AFS PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION BOOKS PROGRAM

Reflections on Forest Management: Can Fish and Fiber Coexist?
Robert A. Stepien, C. Arvin Dettliff, and Gordon H. Brown, editors
American Fisheries Society

Freshwater Fisheries in Canada: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Resources and Their Management
Cathy T. Huter, Jack G. Barth, Nicholas E. Mandrak, and Steven J. Cooke
American Fisheries Society

The Soft-Shell Clam, *Mus eremmitis*: Biology, Fisheries, and Mariculture
Vicki S. Kennedy and Brian F. Doel, editors
American Fisheries Society

Common and Scientific Names of Fishes from the United States, Canada, and Mexico
Eighth Edition
American Fisheries Society
Special Publication 37

AFS HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1948
A List of Common and Scientific Names of the Better Known Fishes of the United States and Canada is published, which became part of the **Special Publications** series

1976
Monograph series launches as a vehicle for lengthy papers on focused subjects
Professional and Trade category features unnumbered, nonserial books on a variety of topics

1987
Symposium series begins, publishing the proceedings of symposia from meetings



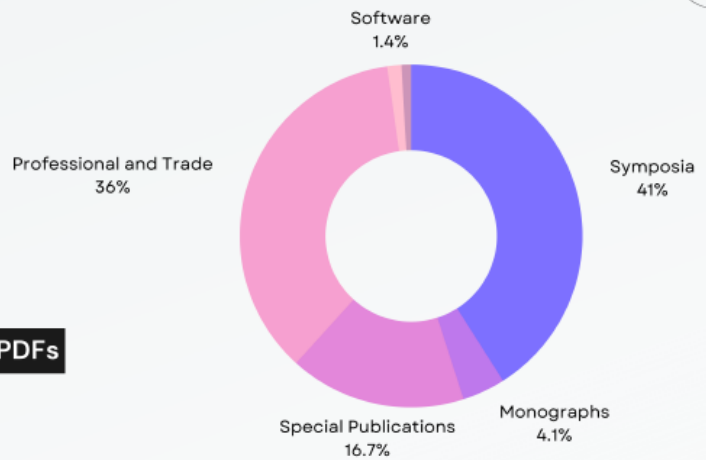
SUMMARY

222 products produced

- 91 Symposia
- 9 Monographs
- 37 Special Publications
- 80 Professional and Trade
- 3 Software
- 2 Outside Publications (Instream Flow Council)

Approximately half available as PDFs

8 titles available as e-books





BUSINESS MODEL/VALUE PROPOSITION



- Titles are priced to be affordable to AFS members and the public. AFS members receive a 30% discount.
- The program publishes many fisheries science titles that are of somewhat limited interest with fairly low sales potential. These titles would probably not be published elsewhere and one goal in publishing them is to provide a service to members and an outlet for their research.

- We also publish a handful of high-profile titles that are used in universities and by the larger fisheries community.
- AFS retains the majority of the profits from sales but does share revenue through a few royalty agreements.
- We receive subscription revenue from the Books Subscription Program. We also run special sales during the AFS annual meeting and offer an end-of-year discount of our older titles, which is increasingly popular.



GOALS THROUGH DEC 2024

- 01** Increase net sales, experiment with targeted sales of titles.
- 02** Create and execute an internal marketing plan for select full-price and discounted titles. Direct e-mail about new titles.
- 03** Review pricing structure.
- 04** Digitize remaining book inventory. Provide PDFs of all titles.
- 05** Evaluate the Book Review Editor position. Possibly expand.
- 06** Re-engage with Book Editorial Advisory Committee. Consider expansion.



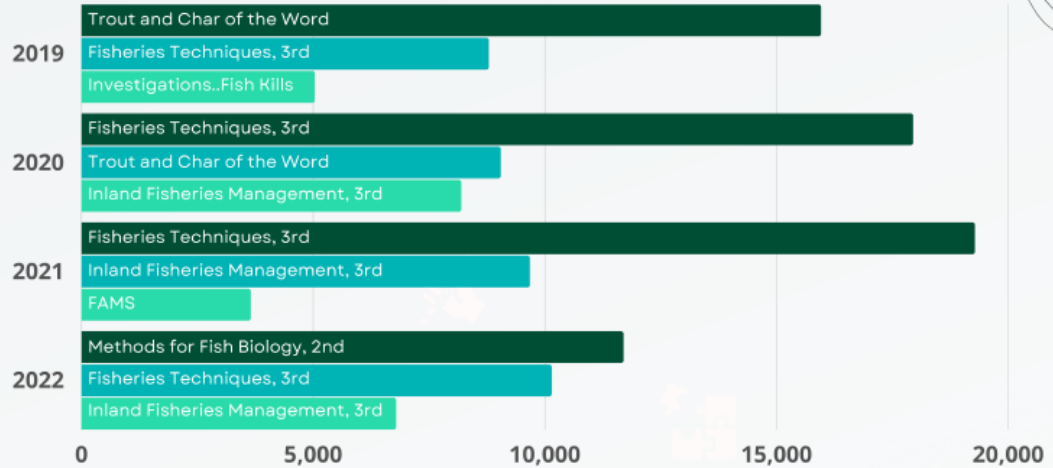
FINANCES

The AFS Books Program has historically been revenue-generating and, more recently, self-supporting; however, sales have continued to decline in recent years, with a larger decline during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, we are tracking an uptick in sales.

- **Revenue sources:** online sales, direct sales to the fulfillment center, Book Subscription Program, book grants, funding obtained by individual editors and authors.
- **Expenses:** staff time and benefits, production costs, contract editors and/or indexers.

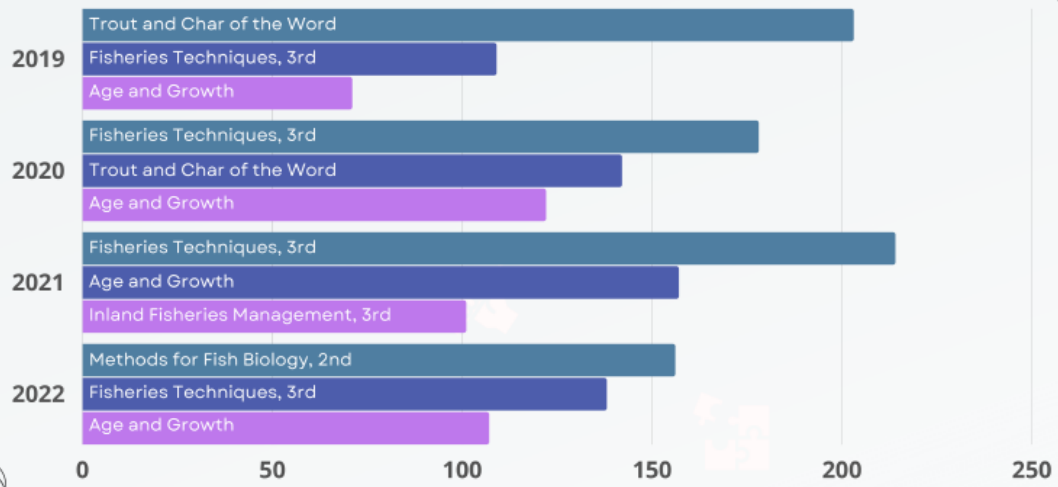


TOP SELLING PRODUCT BY DOLLAR



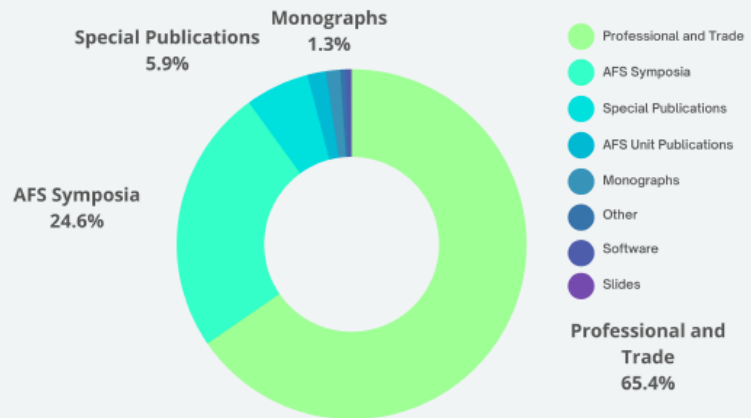


TOP SELLING PRODUCT BY NUMBER



METRICS/RATIOS (PAST 3 YEARS)

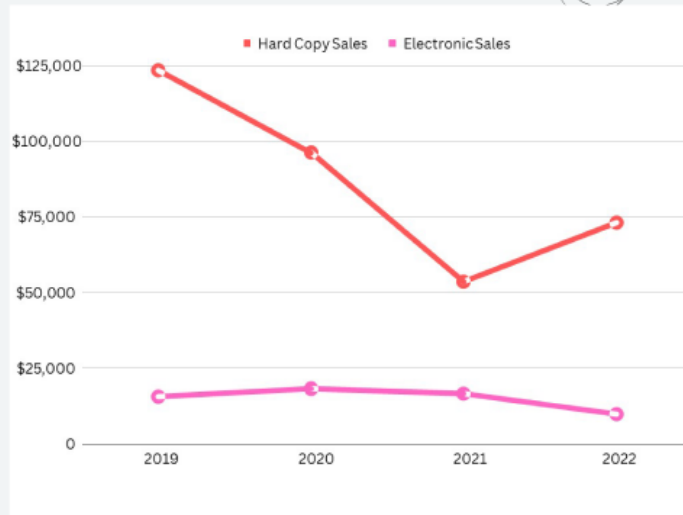
- Books in the “Professional and Trade” category (36% of stock) make up the majority of sales (65% in 2022)
- Hard copy sales consistently outperform digital sales (84.5% to 15.5%, respectively, in 2022).
- Of electronic sales, PDFs outperform epub or mobi sales, when available, by a large margin





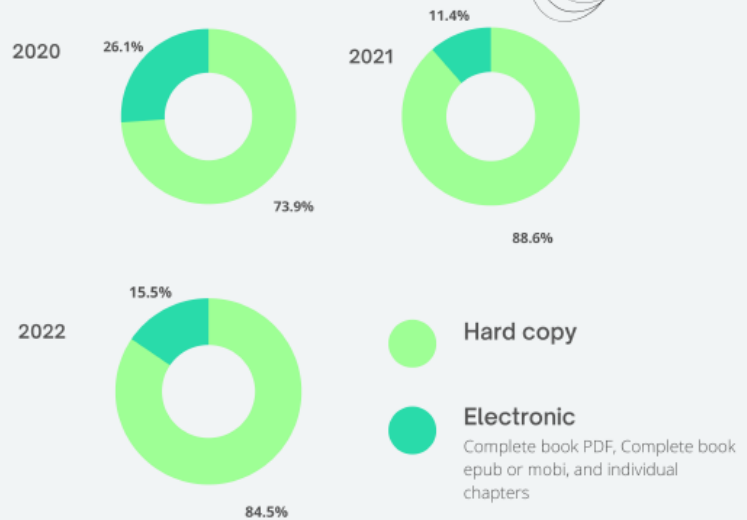
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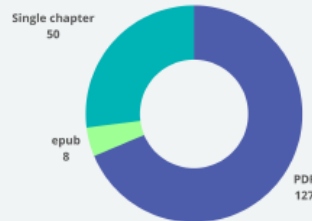


METRICS/RATIOS (PAST 3 YEARS)

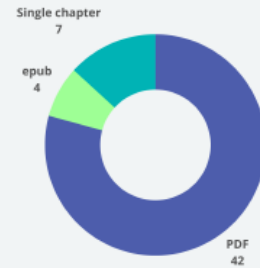
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- **Of electronic sales, PDFs outperform epub or mobi sales, when available, by a large margin**

ELECTRONIC SALES JAN 2020–JUN 2023

Fisheries Techniques, 3rd edition



Age and Growth of Fishes...



MARKET ASSESSMENT

COMPETITORS

- No comparable societies have in-house book publishing
- Authors or editors sometimes use mid-sized publishers (e.g., Island Press, Hopkins, etc.)
- Self-publishing
- AFS Divisions and Sections publishing independently



MARKET ASSESSMENT

INDUSTRY TRENDS

- Open access
- HTML publishing
- Self-publishing
- Royalties
- Digital usage restrictions on content
- IP protocols/control
- Google Scholar indexing/Altmetrics
- Low-income country pricing



MARKET ASSESSMENT

OBJECTIVES

At least be self-sustaining, with the goal to provide revenue for the society. To achieve this, we may need to

- o adjust pricing
- o enhance marketing, discoverability, and indexing of books
- o evaluate the types of books published
- o modernize (digital usage restrictions/IP protocols/online bookstore)
- o reconsider production. Publish some books online-only or print on demand
- o change fulfillment centers
- o offer royalties to attract authors



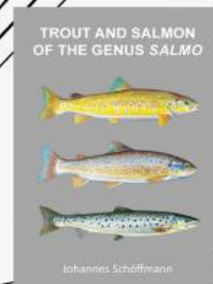
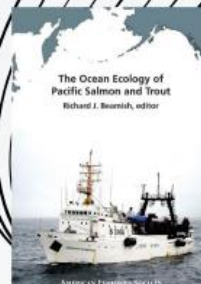
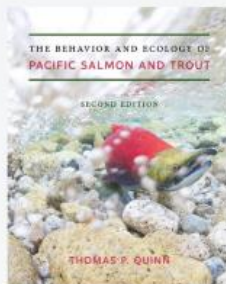
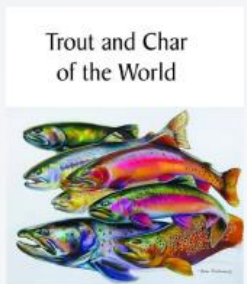
MARKET ASSESSMENT

PLAN/TACTICS

- Active solicitation of AFS Sections, Divisions, and Chapters
- Direct e-mails focused on books
- Outreach to Book Subscription Members. Make sure they are using the service so that they sign up again
- Advertise university policy to get books in classrooms
- Digitize the remainder of the back catalog
- Training for Books Staff



QUESTIONS?



Attachment G – Executive Director Accomplishments Report (for annual review)

Annual Accomplishments 2022-2023 Executive Director Plan of Work

Activity	Target or Goal	Status	Comments
AFS annual meeting review and design	Support Meetings Oversight Committee to review hybrid meeting design and support AFS review of overall meetings support	MOC not successfully reestablished	MOC is ready to get started but needs additional members to share workload. Two NSF-LEAPS grants will provide significant resources to evaluate and improve AFS meetings.
Annual meeting planning	Complete LACFC, support WFC 2024, and ensure that AFS Grand Rapids (2023) and Honolulu (2024) are effectively planned. Provide solid meeting scheduling for 2025-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LACFC completed with 380 registrants and significant positive result but with financial loss. Grand Rapids and Honolulu planning well organized. San Antonio activities emerging (e.g., Black Bass 2025). WFC2024 well underway with high engagement projected. Foundation laid for joint AFS-TWS meeting and 3rd JASM 	AFS role in developing and managing related meetings has mostly proven successful. JASM was strong performer for AFS and WFC2024 is projected to be highly successful. LACFC was financial loss and reflects the challenges of working outside of the U.S. with unfamiliar donor community.
Professional Development	Work with PDC and staff to better understand PD needs and position AFS to be an effective provider of training at all levels	Approval and initial organization developed for PD workshop modeled on Journals approach.	Ben West contracted as facilitator and two date options identified. Next steps include identifying participants.
Enhance relationship with partners	Enhance relationships and better engage state agency leadership, universities through NAUFWP, and federal agencies. Help CASS to define its future structure and purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with TWS reestablished with new ED. Continue to meet with AFWA leadership and regional associations. 	CASS struggling a bit without Drue Winter's leadership and the continued rotating door of society leaders, but will persevere. Need to expand engagement with SE and Western state leaders. NAUFWP needs more attention. Staffing shortages and financial position require careful travel planning.

Publications – planning for the future	Support and participate in the Publications Retreat and ensure that a strong implementation plan is developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications retreat highly successful thanks to Laura Hendee, Ben West, and strong publications team. • Special Committee on new publisher contract appointed by President Croxton and starting initial work on contract research. • Organized CASS publications discussion on open access and publisher contract experiences. 	This will continue to be a very high priority area for AFS throughout the entire period until a new contract is in place. Need to carefully evaluate impacts of open access on membership benefits.
AFS financial health	Work with FFPC, leadership, and staff to review and potentially restructure the AFS business model to enhance AFS financial health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 2nd year of operational positive financial result through continued reductions in expenses and efforts to increase revenue sources. • Designed and initiated the beginning of Program Reviews. • Secured \$340,000 of ERC funding bringing the total federal govt covid-related support to \$1,024,000. 	This will continue to be a high priority in all aspects of AFS. Need to fully translate program reviews into CY2024 budget process.
AFS Development Program	Work with staff, leadership, re-establish committee and act as emissary for AFS to engage with donors and other potential funders to build AFS donor base and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Development Director fully on-boarded and is performing very well. Federal grants well managed and new energy into SPP, 1870, and meeting fundraising 	Grand Rapids meeting exceeded fundraising goal. WFC fundraising organized with expanded team and prospects.
MSCG	Ensure that all MSCG are completed and funding, reports, and other project deliverables addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most projects extended due to covid are finishing in CY2023. • Three AFS involved proposal submitted for 2024. 	AFS could continue to utilize this program and could be a leader in organizing a more effective approach to identifying and developing proposals throughout the community, but this would take staff and volunteer commitment of time.
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	Support the development of a DEI strategic plan, implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully worked with multiple outside teams 	Need to continue to better coordinate internal

	plan, and measurable goals and objectives.	<p>to be fully engaged in two NSF-LEAPS grants that will provide AFS with substantial resources to better address DEI needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest Hutton application pool in history of the program (over 500), class of 42 and Hutton Summit in UA-Pine Bluffs with 29 participants. 	AFS DEI work, but many excellent efforts continue through member leadership, such as the solid set of events in Grand Rapids. Need to fully review Hutton program and the summit to evaluate investment and better assess impact.
ED transition	Support AFS leadership and special committee to develop plans for transition and ensure that processes are developed and implemented to ensure continuity of leadership.	Minimal activity by ED except for some organizational work on my documentation. April and Cecil have started discussions about ED search team.	I will do everything possible to ensure a smooth, seamless, and supportive transition to a new ED.
AFS office and working environment post-covid transition	Work with staff, AFS leadership and potential partners to redefine AFS office space needs and physical space. Develop new staff work environment to reflect remote workforce yet retain a sense of community and workplace culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a new working environment. • Held several all-staff sessions and a two-day retreat. • Continuity of existing programs with significantly fewer staff, partially supplemented by contractors. Maintained morale and cohesiveness despite mainly working remotely. 	This will need to receive continued focused attention, particularly through ED transition. Office building sale mired in zoning issues but new approaches being explored. Sale still very much unclear as to timing and fiscal impact.

Attachment H – Executive Director Self-Assessment (for annual review)

AFS Executive Director Self-assessment 2022-2023 AFS Performance Year

Submitted August 14, 2023



Note: This material is submitted for consideration by the AFS Management Committee and Governing Board as a component of the performance evaluation of the Executive Director (ED) by the Society's officers and leadership at the AFS 2023 Annual Meeting in August 2023.

This material is one component of the performance review of the Executive Director (ED) and responds to language in the ED employment contract with AFS.

“The Society's elected Officers will review the performance of the Executive each year during the Society's annual meeting. The Society's Immediate Past-President chairs this review and communicates the results to the Executive. This evaluation will be based upon performance criteria and goals provided at the beginning of the period under review. Additionally, the review of general performance by the Executive will be based upon the following job elements.

- *Effectively manage the Society's daily activities, business operations, and staff appointments as the Society's Business Manager;*
- *Accurately maintain the Society's official records and communications as the Society's Secretary;*
- *Exhibit a high degree of fiduciary responsibility in managing the Society's financial status and resources in the Executive's role as the Society's Treasurer;*
- *Engage in and promote responsible and timely communication and information transfer among units, the membership, staff, and other Society-sponsored entities; and*
- *Provide leadership in achievement of the Society's strategic direction according to existing strategic plans.*

Below are some general comments to provide context setting information as well as specific responses to the five “job elements” in the ED review. Appended to this report is my evaluation summary from last year (2021-2022). This report, compiled by Leanne Roulson, provides some excellent insight and recommendations for the recent year but also for the upcoming transition year.

General Comments:

Financial health was a primary focus of 2021-2022 with the result being a second year of operational revenues exceeding expenses (yet investments performed poorly). Sustainability and growth are the challenges ahead and will require concerted effort throughout AFS. The ramifications of the cost-cutting (e.g., reduced staff) do include increased workloads, program areas receiving reduced attention, and frustration. This needs to be addressed through either

programmatic reductions, new revenues, or some combination. We've come to a point where we need to focus on building new revenue areas, but yet staff are stymied by workloads that already exceed capacity. To compound this, it is apparent to most that volunteer time and capacity is decreasing. We see this in the challenge of finding reviewers for journal submissions, willingness to lead or be members of committees, and the constant burden of finding members to step up to be officers at the chapter and division level. Yet, AFS has some incredibly exciting programs and events, and the desire for members and others to build connections and meet with colleagues is without question. Finding ways to grow AFS in this challenging environment is critical to our future and will require new approaches and leadership in the years to come. I look forward to supporting the transition to a new ED in any way possible to help AFS be increasingly successful.

1. Effectively manage the Society's daily activities, business operations, and staff appointments as the Society's Business Manager;

Response:

Staffing has been relatively stable in 2022-2023 and this has allowed us to better support and develop program areas, rather than focus on job searches, the inevitable loss of program momentum, and training new staff. Sale or lease of the Glascock building has been slow and problematic. New approaches are being explored while staff prepare for the eventual movement of all AFS materials into storage and/or much smaller office space.

Areas for improvement:

The major challenges that AFS faces has not changed much in the past year:

- The fundamental issue of how to envision AFS business operations in the future needs full attention. Reliance upon traditional funding (membership and publications) will simply not support an active and engaged Society. We need to better define what our future should look like and I need to work towards supporting those critical discussions and decisions.
- The remote business model is still not mature and requires focused attention. Creating a working environment that somehow maintains some level of staff engagement while recognizing the strong advantages of remote work is a tricky balance but is necessary. What constitutes an effective working environment also varies substantially across staff with most finding remote work highly valuable while others relish the interaction that an office environment allowed.
- Office space management is still a major focus area, but no resolution has been completed and no singular option has been identified.

2. Accurately maintain the Society's official records and communications as the Society's Secretary;

Response:

AFS has been able to continue with a regular meeting cycle of MC and GB with in-person GB meetings now the norm while still fully supporting remote participants.

Areas for improvement:

- Finalize website updates that Beth has been developing with a working group, the Communications Committee and contractor Grant Price.
- Organize and develop an index of formal and informal actions at all MC and GB meetings during my tenure. Prepare this for easy transfer to the new ED.
- Management and storage of AFS historical items will become an important issue as we move towards possible sale of the building. AFS will need to supplement staff work with that of members, particularly those Knowledgeable and interested in history of the society.

3. Exhibit a high degree of fiduciary responsibility in managing the Society's financial status and resources in the Executive's role as the Society's Treasurer;

Response:

- 2022-2023 included the LACFC and Grand Rapids. The LACFC was a financial loss but Grand Rapids and the upcoming World Fisheries Congress should be strong events for AFS.
- Program Review processes have been developed and initiated for two key areas (Hutton and Books). These will be completed for those areas and the other 10 will be completed in 2023-2024.

Areas for improvement:

- Continue to implement Finance Planning and Procedures Committee (FPPC) recommendations for program assessment and better define obligated reserve contributions.
- Build financial reviews in coordination with FPPC and develop a more constructive quarterly financial reporting to the MC.
- Ensure that the AFS budget and the final financial result for 2023-2024 continue to be financially strong for the society.

4. Engage in and promote responsible and timely communication and information transfer among units, the membership, staff, and other Society-sponsored entities;

Response:

Improved communication across the AFS-sphere has always been challenging. The society is highly dispersed and has substantial challenges in finding common reporting and communications solutions. The bi-weekly newsletter and Fisheries continue to be key tools for communications, but they don't address all of our needs. Significant outreach expansion was accomplished in 2022-2023 with AFS displays at the Southern Division fisheries meetings, Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference, Northeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference, the SNEC/Governing Board meeting (Boston), and the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. Many of these events included meetings with agency directors and others in influential roles to share information about AFS activities and opportunities for partnerships.

Areas for improvement:

- Outreach to chapters would benefit from more focused attention. This will take place in 2023-2024 with a focused effort on getting AFS officers to all chapter meetings over a three-year period.
- Need to better engage state agency leaders in the Southeast and Western states.
- Need to better and more regularly work with NAUFWP and build more communications with the university department leadership.
- Student units need to receive much more attention in helping them to recognize the link to AFS and the value of student membership. We need to develop better contact information tracking, messaging materials, and students to act as emissaries across the spectrum of student chapters.

5. Provide leadership in achievement of the Society's strategic direction according to existing strategic plans.

Response:

The Strategic Positioning Committee is fully active and will be substantially involved in the Grand Rapids joint MC-GB meeting. This work, in conjunction with the Program Reviews and

the membership survey, will provide AFS with excellent tools and process for strategic planning.

Areas for improvement:

- Support the SPPC with my involvement and that of staff, as appropriate, to help it succeed to the greatest degree possible.
- Ensure that the SPPC and the Financial Planning Committee are aligned in their work and can be mutually supportive.

2021-2022 Executive Director Evaluation

In addition to the questions related to the Executive Director's performance, staff and Governing Board Members were asked to provide feedback on AFS operations with an emphasis on 201-2022. Comments related to the Covid period and shift to remote work were requested particularly from staff.

Staff and Governing Board members were asked to provide their feedback by email and/or phone and were assured that their responses would not be shared directly with anyone besides the President (Leanne Roulson). Though all were offered the opportunity to discuss Doug's performance and the rest of the questions by phone, only 2 respondents chose to do so. Staff were given approximately 30 days to complete the evaluation. The Governing Board was given approximately 5 days prior to the annual meeting to complete the survey. We received 9 responses from the 14 staff polled and 10 responses from about 34 governing board members. The 2 most recent hires, Mia Ferguson and Jenna Hanks were not polled because of their short term at AFS prior to the survey period.

Doug and Leanne discussed these summaries on September 9, 2022. A copy of the summary was provided to Doug and to the officers. Since Doug agreed to freeze his salary for the 2022-2023 season, we did not complete the ranking review stipulated in his contract. Doug said that this was acceptable to him. Therefore, this document encompasses the Executive Director review.

Leanne Roulson
Immediate Past-President

Responses are summarized below. (**Governing Board**, **Staff**, Multiple/ overlapping)

General Operations:

Questions asked of staff included:

1. *What changes in AFS operations do you think have IMPROVED your ability to get your work done and communicate with Doug and the rest of the AFS staff?*
2. *What was a challenging aspect of your work at AFS this year (can be related to Covid or just general operations)? Did you get support addressing this challenge from Doug?*
3. *How would you gauge your/your program area's performance this year? Is there anything the Executive Director could have done that would have increased your productivity in the past (or could increase your productivity going forward)?*
4. *What aspects of the move to working from home as the primary work mode at AFS did you LIKE/ PREFER?*
5. *What aspects of the move to working from home as the primary work mode at AFS were DIFFICULT/ PROBLEMATIC?*
6. *Do you have ideas for changes that would help the mix of virtual and in-person work better moving forward (can be for your individual situation or across the board)?*
7. *Is there anything you'd like to share with the officers related to the overall work environment or culture at AFS?*

Responses from Staff (summarized across all questions):

There were several recurring themes in the staff responses. Rather than parse these out for each question, the following summary covers these themes along with specific comments made.

Positives:

- More frequent meetings were helpful
- Doug is very supportive
- Having everyone remote was more inclusive
- Reducing commute time was cited by several people
- Ability to talk with Doug and his openness to staff needs, flexibility
- Pretty much everyone likes the remote work model, but a few people wondered about maintaining the rapport and connections of being in person

Challenges:

- Onboarding for new staff was difficult with full remote set up (assume this came from new staff)
- Multiple meetings (conferences- Baltimore/ JASM/ Spokane) stressed out staff
- Focus on conferences left other programs behind/ neglected
- Staff are concerned about the direction of the Society, its financial position, overcommitment to many programs, not setting timelines for achieving goals and the lack of cost analysis and funding considerations for new and existing programs.
- We need room to step back and breathe, and I hope we'll have a bit of that after the Spokane meeting. We have tasks we'd like to accomplish (folder structure reorg) and internal processes which we can and should improve, but right now, we just do not have time to do anything but try to keep up
- Sometimes I wonder if we are doing a million things averagely instead of doing a few things exceptionally.
- I do miss having the ability to drop into a colleague's office and chat about a solution to an issue or get a quick answer to a question. Using technology for this (email, phone/text, video call, and Google chat) helps but doesn't feel as fluid or spontaneous.

Suggestions for ED:

- Could be more stern and clear on directions and expectations
- Once a month in person meetings to maintain connectivity
- **Regular full or program specific calls to ensure communication across staff**
- Clarify each staff role and try to keep duties within that role. May have to say no to program additions or new initiatives if not enough staff have time to take on new/ changing program needs
- We don't have any staff messaging service, which makes communication difficult. It is challenging that the only way to ask someone a question was to email them. In the work from home life, that makes communication difficult.

SWOT

All those surveyed were asked to comment on the ED strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. ED Strengths:

- Welcoming and friendly. He really helped me feel a part of AFS as a new staff member.
- Strong leadership
- Multitasker
- Strong leader. He knows how to lead a group of people in an effective way and knows how to manage conversations within meetings
- Commitment to making AFS a leader in many areas, willingness to get involved in initiatives
- good communicator, actively works with staff and members, friendly, welcoming
- Motivator!
- Enthusiastic
- Really knows the AFS position with other groups
- Big believer in the mission of the society, past work in agencies allows him to understand our issues. Even-keeled personality that works well in situations of conflict.
- Doug is approachable, friendly, supportive, inclusive, and seems to be taking steps to ensure continued financial viability for AFS during challenging times.

ED Weaknesses/ threats to performance:

- Pulled in too many directions
- Remote model will require more intentional onboarding and staff integration
- Multiple new staff this year created a lot of increase in effort needed to get people integrated (a few folks mentioned it taking them a long time to get to know AFS structure and all staff)
- Not being in communication with staff, leaving staff in the dark as to priorities and objectives
- We are now down to zero support staff – no full-time office/administration manager, no accounting staff, no coordinator for the Units, and no interns aside from Policy. Many Accounting tasks have shifted to the Membership department, reduces time/energy for membership marketing

AFS Evaluation and Direction

All respondents were asked to assess AFS as an organization and to comment on any aspects of interactions among staff/ officers/ and Governing Board.

How do you view AFS's standing as a professional organization? Are we doing the right things and are we on a sustainable, upward path?

- I think we focus a lot on our older members. I would love to see us do a better job at developing resources and opportunities for students and early career professionals. We seem to be headed in that direction, but I would love to see us focus more on that.
- DEI work is not as organized as it could be. Would like to see more strategic direction in DEI initiatives. Current staffing is very homogeneous- not indicative of an effort to diversify.
- AFS needs to be relevant to the next generation of fisheries professionals, and the pandemic introduced additional challenges to connecting with students and young professionals. AFS needs to consider how to avoid a spiral of declining programming that causes a further decline in membership
- I am concerned as to where the path is leading the organization. I see a lot of value at the state chapter and division levels, but sometimes struggle to see the connection between these levels and the parent organization. I also sometimes wonder what the “typical” AFS member thinks about how the organization benefits them. Sorry, I don’t have any ideas to address any of these. They are just thoughts that I’ve been wrestling with.
- Our ED seems to be kept busy by the administrative work of running the society and putting on meetings. I do not hear as much from him about vision and strategic positioning for the society to remain relevant to people working in the field.
- Doug is the only person on staff with fisheries management and agency experience

Do you have any concerns/ compliments/ complaints related to AFS staff or your interactions with AFS as part of your work as a Unit leader?

- Although staffing falls within the purview of the executive director and operations manager, there seems to be a lack of communication about plans for staffing. Changes in staffing seem to happen without a mention to the GB in some cases, such as the Hutton program lead. There should be better updates to the GB about when there are changes in staffing and what the plan is in response, whether refilling the job or not, and how the duties are being covered during a vacancy.
- It would be good to recruit help from Sections for AFS initiatives. Use the Sections and GB more as a resource rather than just reporting to us what AFS is doing
- a little puzzled why we are not in a better financial position given the very lean current staff levels and the influx of very substantial funding from PPP, grants, and JASM management fees over the past couple of years.
- It would be good to have a roster with responsibilities of each staff member as that would reduce any confusion on whom to ask something.

- None. Staff have always been prompt, friendly, and competent in their responses to my queries, which have included helping with organizing a large meeting, amending our bylaws, and updating our membership list.
- would love to see our staff become more diverse. Obviously, we don't want to tokenize anyone, but we're not considering all angles if the only decision makers are straight, white, and (mostly) male.

Looking forward to the next ED:

This question is not part of the ED evaluation, but the information gleaned from responses highlights the excellent work Doug has done and reflects the aspects of his leadership that the GB and staff hope to see retained. It also points out some challenges we have and ideas for skills that may help us address these moving forward.

What qualities do you see as important in the next Executive Director at AFS?

- Understanding how to keep the society relevant to members (and potential members). Strategic thinking that allows the society to create programming that fills those needs.
- Executive Director should communicate effectively, exhibit passion for the fisheries profession, provide strong leadership and support for AFS staff members, and focus on the basic needs of AFS that keep it viable and allow it to grow in the future.
- we need someone who knows the ins and outs of the Society and links appropriate talent between staff and AFS units (committees, sections, and divisions).
- Approachability, honesty, open and clear communication, collaborative
- AFS should consider its ED come from the fisheries / science community for recognition and leveraging connections and insights as there are no other fisheries professionals on staff.
- Personable, organized, a great multitasker, active listener, long-term thinker.
- Balancing the financial footing and mission of any nonprofit is always going to be precarious. Any new ED should have a mind for both and seek to balance those two competing missions.

Attachment I –Establishment of Alternates (i.e., Proxies) for Management Committee Members

(Version July 10, 2023)

Issue:

The challenge of scheduling of Management Committee (MC) meetings has become increasingly difficult with some members simply unable to be able to participate due to unanticipated work schedules and other events. This has resulted in challenges in obtaining a quorum for voting and lack of representation of key AFS groups on the MC. Currently, MC members are not allowed to establish an alternate representative (proxy), but this is allowed for Governing Board members. In order to enhance representation and participation, it is proposed that AFS should consider allowing MC members to establish proxies when they cannot participate in an MC meeting.

Background:

The AFS Rules do not include any language about alternates (or proxies with these terms used interchangeably) for MC members, whereas AFS Rules are explicit about the establishment of alternates for GB members.

AFS Rules, Section 4.c.

Except for Society officers, voting members of the Governing Board may be represented at a Governing Board meeting by any past-president or a current elected officer of their respective unit, provided such alternates are designated in writing to the Executive Director before the meeting. Alternates have full voting powers, but may not be contemporary members of the Governing Board, and may represent only one voting member at each meeting.

A change in the AFS Rules to allow alternates for MC members would require approval of the MC and GB and then a vote of the membership.

The history of allowing proxies for the GB and not for the MC was to develop a more consistent and knowledgeable committee due to the fiduciary role of the MC and other actions that would require more regular participation in discussion. The regular presence of members would enhance their understanding of the issues and result in more informed decisions. This may be true but can also be addressed through additional measures as discussed and proposed.

Proposed Motion:

The AFS Management Committee recommend that the AFS Governing Board approve revisions to the AFS Rules as provided below (a new subsection inserted after the current 5.b) and to submit the revision to the AFS membership for a vote at the AFS Business meeting in Grand Rapids.

Language in **Red** below is from the midyear Governing Board meeting. It has been modified to address comments and concerns with the proposed language below in **Blue**

~~***5.c. Except for Society officers, voting members of the Management Committee may be represented at a Management Committee meeting by a single past-president or a current elected officer of their respective unit, provided such alternates are designated in writing to the Executive Director prior to the first Management Committee meeting after the AFS annual meeting. Alternates have full voting powers, but may not be contemporary members of the Governing Board, and may represent only one voting member at each meeting. Alternates are encouraged to attend all Management Committee meetings but only one vote is allowed for each unit.***~~

5.c. Except for Society officers, voting members of the Management Committee may establish a single alternate to represent them at Management Committee meetings when they are unable to participate. The alternate must be a current elected officer of the members' respective unit (Past President, President Elect or similar level of leadership) and not a current member of the Management Committee. The single alternate must be designated in writing to the Executive Director prior to the first Management Committee meeting after the AFS annual meeting. When the primary representative to the Management Committee is unable to participate, the alternate has full voting privileges.

A couple of notes of explanation:

The MC is made up of 13 people: 5 officers, 4 from Divisions, and 4 from the GB (Sections and Divisions). The 4 additional members from the GB can be from Sections and Divisions that have representatives currently on the Governing Board. There is nothing that precludes a Division from having two people on the MC (e.g., the WD currently has two representatives). When that does occur, both have full voting privileges.

- The proposed language clearly allows the designation of one alternate for each MC member, other than AFS officers. Further, the alternate persists for the entire year and must be designated before the first MC meeting of the year.
- This language is a bit squishy on the leadership level of the alternate in the unit (Past President, President Elect or similar level of leadership). I'm suggesting that it has to be in the leadership line, not the secretary or treasurer, but someone who was president or will become president.
- By also stating that the alternate cannot be a current member of the MC, this prevents Laurie from designating Eric as her alternate and the issue of Eric getting two votes (one as a member and one as an alternate).
- With the last sentence, I tried to clearly establish that there is only one vote per entity on the MC and that is held either by the primary representative or their alternate.

Notes from Boston GB Meeting and related emails

Proposed motion: Move that the AFS Governing Board approve a change to the AFS Rules and submit to the AFS membership a vote on the following addition to Section 5 as a new subsection inserted after the current 5.b

5.b. Except for Society officers, voting members of the Management Committee may be represented at a Management Committee meeting by a single past-president or a current elected officer of their respective unit, provided such alternates are designated in writing to the Executive Director prior to the first Management Committee meeting after the AFS annual meeting. Alternates have full voting powers, but may not be contemporary members of the Governing Board, and may represent only one voting member at each meeting. Alternates are encouraged to attend all Management Committee meetings but only one vote is allowed for each unit.

A. Motion by Gary Whelan, 2nd by Joe Margraf.

Question and Discussion:

1. When does the change go into effect? If passed by the membership, will it need to wait until the next annual meeting for it to go into effect. As written, this would be the situation. An amendment could be entertained that would provide for the language to go into effect and proxies be allowed as soon as it is approved by the membership.
2. If a Division has a President and President Elect on the Management Committee, would each person still receive a single vote. The second representative would have to be selected as a Management Committee representative from the Governing Board since the AFS Rules only provide for a single automatic representative from each Division. In this case, both members would retain their vote. However, each could designate a proxy based upon the proposed new Rule.
3. Student and Early Career Professionals (SECP) do not have a vote on the Governing Board or the Management Committee. To address this, it was suggested that providing SECP a vote, such as through a proxy designation, would be one option to consider.
4. The Management Committee has not allowed proxies because the continuity of the discussions was thought to be important, particularly with regard to financial issues. If an alternative (proxy) was allowed, there is a concern that the person would not have sufficient knowledge of the topics without regular attendance. To address this, if a MC member designates a proxy, they should be expected to participate as frequently as possible.
5. It is important to have people on the MC who are highly familiar with Society and MC issues rather than to expand representation across the AFS Sections. Knowledge and continuity of discussions is more important than having all units to be represented.
6. Dan Mosier proposed an amendment to the motion to allow the establishment of proxies to be authorized immediately upon approval of the motion. This was not provided a 2nd. Substantial additional discussion ensued that provided a series of potential options for consideration. Additional amendment language was also suggested but never moved to the point of receiving a second.
7. It was suggested that this issue has become more complicated than anticipated and would benefit from more discussion prior to an attempt to finalize the language. Constitutional Consultant Randy Schultz recommended that we vote negative on the motion and remand it to the Management Committee for further discussion and clarification of the language. The MC can then move approved language to the Governing Board for future consideration.
8. The motion was not approved, and it will be sent to the MC for further discussion.

Email on 1/31/2023 from Past President and former Constitutional Consultant John Boreman

Doug

Thanks for the minutes. Regarding proxies for MC members, the GB and EXCOM were against the idea when the MC was first established in its current form during Bill Fisher's administration (2012). I still am. The issue is "learning curve." Since the MC deals down in the weeds for budget, operations, and policy issues, we decided (at the time) that proxies would likely need to be brought up to speed on issues being discussed, which would be a waste of valuable MC time. Proxies would also lack the benefit of being privy to prior MC discussions on the issues.

-jb

Attachment J – Establishment of the Development Committee as an AFS Standing Committee

Development Committee Proposal Last edited: February 22, 2024

Purposes, Composition, and Duties of Development Committee

Purpose:

The Development Committee is appointed by and responsible to the Management Committee of AFS to assume the primary responsibility for guiding and executing fundraising efforts. The committee works with the staff to develop and execute the organization's fund development plan and goals. The committee will help educate and inform members about resources needed to realize the organization's mission. The committee will aid the organization in identifying, cultivating, and approaching donors as well as identifying alternative sources of revenue for other organizational commitments.

Composition:

Appointments of the Chair and members of the Development Committee will be made annually by the President, with terms spanning a two-year period. Care should be taken to obtain broad representation in committee membership. This is important so that, to the extent possible, committee perspectives reflect that of the Society. Geographic location, professional expertise, and employment sector are primary criteria for committee balancing.

Duties:

1. In partnership with AFS Staff, develop annual fundraising plan that will generate funds in support for the organization's goals.
2. Develop a plan for engaging and involving various volunteer leaders and members to make suggestions and insights into new funding sources.
3. Investigate new fundraising projects, activities, and ideas for possible use in the future.
4. Submit regular reports to the Management Committee on the progress of fund development activities.

Operational Guidelines:

1. The committee will meet at least once per quarter.
2. The committee and/or committee chair will oversee a compilation of suggested organizations and contacts to target.

3. The committee will host and attend one annual event recognizing the donors in conjunction with the AFS Annual Meeting.
4. The committee will assist in recognizing and stewarding donors and partners, by assisting staff in outreach efforts.

Attachment K – FPPC recommendation to move funds to the Obligated Reserve

Date: 18 October 2023

To: Cecil Jennings, *AFS President*

Subject: Amended Financial Planning and Procedures Committee motion

From: Troy Brandt, *Financial Planning and Procedures Committee Chair*

I. Context

This amended motion follows the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee’s (FPPC) 18 October 2023 meeting with AFS Deputy Director Daniel Cassidy and in response to Doug Austen’s opposition to our prior motion. The motion proposes to transfer board designated net assets to the Obligated Reserve to meet the AFS goal of rebuilding the Obligated Reserve portion of the AFS investment account.

As stated on page 103 in the 2019 AFS Procedures:

“The obligated reserve is a component of the unrestricted funds within the investment fund. The goal for the obligated reserve is to increase the obligated reserve’s value until it is equal to a one-year operating budget, which is based on the average operating budget over the preceding four years. The obligated reserve provides AFS with a financial buffer and serves as a source of stable investment income into the future. Because AFS has drawn down the unrestricted funds portion of the investment fund to support new and existing programs over the past five years, rebuilding the unrestricted funds to achieve the obligated reserve goal may take 5 years.”

Instead, in 2022, the AFS Management Committee reset that goal to one-half of the average of the four-year operating budget (annual budgets range from \$2-4 million/year). AFS’ unrestricted investments have declined from \$3.5 million in 2014 to \$1 million today. Although the Management Committee has proposed to plan how to rebuild the Obligated Reserve (a component of its unrestricted assets), the FPPC would like to see a good-faith example of doing so, in addition to planning how to do so.

In 2021, the Management Committee authorized the transfer of funds from two Board restricted funds to the AFS unrestricted assets. Currently, there is about \$345,000 in the Publications Endowment Fund, which yielded 5.56% year to date, or \$19,182.

II. Motion

The FPPC moves that the Management Committee task AFS Deputy Director Daniel Cassidy to transfer \$19,000 from the Publications Endowment Fund to the Obligated Reserve in 2023 as a good-faith gesture to rebuilding that Reserve.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Membership Survey – Members

Appendix 2 - Membership Survey – Non-Members

Appendix 3 – Climate Change Committee Communications Resources Survey