



2023 AFS Governing Board Midyear Meeting

Monday, January 11, 2023
Hyatt Regency, Boston, Massachusetts

Executive Summary

- The establishment of proxies for Management Committee members, currently not allowed in the AFS Rules, was sent back to the MC for further discussion and refinement of the motion language. There was confusion about how and when to designate proxies.
- President Elect Cecil Jennings presented his draft plan of work (POW) for review and comment by the Governing Board. Members are asked to provide him any comments or thoughts that will be helpful in improving or implementing his POW.
- The AFS Nominating Committee was approved to be established at least three months prior to the annual meeting in order to allow the committee additional time for the selection of candidates for 2nd vice president.
- Strategic visioning exercise continued to move the GB forward on thinking about the future of AFS. This was more of a training experience but resulted in a substantial collection of ideas about future work of AFS to make the society more relevant and engaging.
- The AFS 2023 budget is essentially a “break even” budget. In the last three years (2019-2021), AFS has been performing substantially better than in 2016-2016, with recent years operating change and net change being either close to neutral or positive. The November 2022 financial position shows net assets substantially lower than last year primarily due to substantial investment loss. When investment loss is backed out, the actual adjusted change for 2022 is approximately \$95,000 positive.
- AFS staff was authorized to work with The Wildlife Society to plan a possible joint meeting in 2027-2029 and to work with CASS for a possible third Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting (JASM) in the same time period. All options will be presented to the Governing Board for review and adoption prior to making commitments with these societies.
- AFS staff was authorized to pursue engagement of a commercial realtor to move forward with placing the AFS condo of the Glascock building on the market for sale or lease. This process will take many months and is being done in conjunction with a zoning change by Montgomery County and an easement by the neighboring homeowners association. This does not approve a sale but simply initiates the process of working with a realtor to start the process. Further authorization from the GB would be needed to act upon any sale offers.
- Snake River dam removal policy was unanimously adopted (with four abstentions).

Tasks and Follow-ups:

1. AFS Rules language for establishment of proxy (alternate representatives) for the Management Committee was remanded to the Management Committee for further refinement. Once completed this will be brought back to the Governing Board for reconsideration.
2. Work with TWS and CASS to develop options for possible joint meetings and return recommendations to the Governing Board.
3. Develop contract with commercial realtor to explore building sale/lease options.
4. Establish the Nominating Committee with a target date of May 15, 2023. The four AFS Divisions will need to submit the names of their representatives and selection of the at-large members will need to be done prior to May 15.

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	Susan Cushman
Northeastern Division President Elect	Heather Stewart

Section Presidents

Bioengineering	Patrick O'Rourke
Canadian Aquatic Resources	Craig Purchase
Cooperative Research with Stakeholders	Lee Benaka
Early Life History	Stu Ludsin
Education	Melissa Wuellner
Student and Early Career Prof. Subsection	Taylor Heckman
Estuaries	Justin Stevens
Equal Opportunities	Sam Betances Lian Guo, Proxy, for Sam Betances
Fish Culture	Dan Mosier, Proxy for Jeff Heindel
Fish Habitat	David Thorne
Fish Health	Anita Kelly
Fish History	<i>Inactive</i>
Fisheries Administration	Lynn Quattro, Proxy for Gary Whelan

Fisheries Information and Technology	Patrick Cooney
Fisheries Law	<i>Inactive</i>
Fisheries Management	Julie Carter
Genetics	Garrett McKinney
Imperiled Aquatic Species Section	Marybeth Brey
International Fisheries	Beth Nyboer
Invasive and Introduced Fisheries	Marybeth Brey
Marine Fisheries	Joe Margraf
Native Peoples Fisheries	<i>Inactive</i>
Physiology	<i>Not present</i>
Science Communications	Karen Murchie
Socioeconomics	<i>Not present</i>
Water Quality	Paul Kuznierz

Proxies

1. FITS - Patrick Cooney (pcooney@smith-root.com) for Tiffany Hopper, President
2. FAS – Lynn Quattro (quattrol@dnr.sc.gov) for Gary Whelan, President
3. FCS – Dan Mosier (Dan.Mosier@ks.gov) for Jeff Heindel, President
4. IIFS – Marybeth Brey (mbrey@usgs.gov) for Wes Daniels, President

Emerging Leaders

Matt Mensinger
Tyler Plum

Guests

Jeff Kopaska, chair, Nominating Committee
Andrew Bade, Vice President, NED
Jocelyn Runnebaum, Cooperative Research With Stakeholders Section
Patrick Shirey, Past President, North Central Division
Jodi Whittier, Chair, Resource Policy Committee
Joe Conroy, Co-Chair, Strategic Positioning Committee
Marlis Douglas, Co-Chair, Strategic Positioning Committee

AFS Staff

Dan Cassidy
Drue Winters
Beth Beard
Shawn Johnston
Kelly Kotche
Rachel Bruce
Lauren Maza

Governing Board Meeting Minutes

1. **Welcome** – At 8:04 a.m. President April Croxton welcomed the Governing Board members and guest to the meeting. All participants were asked to introduce themselves with a short statement about their role on the Governing Board. Remote participants were asked to use the GoToMeeting “hand raise” function, in-person participants were asked to put their name tag in an upright position to be recognized. All were asked to state their name when they are recognized to speak.
2. **Determination of Quorum** - Randy Schultz stated that a quorum has been established with proxies listed below.
3. **Approval of Agenda**- No additions and approved by unanimous consent.
4. **Approval of minutes of the Governing Board meeting in Spokane, Washington.**
No edits or other corrections were offered, and the minutes were accepted by unanimous consent. If any member does find errors they are asked to submit them to Executive Director Doug Austen
5. **Constitutional Consultant Report** - (Randy Schultz)
 - a. Designating Proxies for the GB meetings (Attachment A). Motion on establishing proxies for the Management Committee. The AFS Rules (Section 4.c provide the following guidance for the Governing Board:

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.

See Attachment A for background and proposed motion for consideration

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.

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

Question and Discussion:

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.
- viii. The motion was not approved, and it will be sent to the MC for further discussion.

6. Cecil Jennings President Elect presentation of draft presidential plan of work (POW)

(Attachments B1 and B2). Jennings reviewed his proposed plan of work and requested that the GB members send him any comments or suggestions. In developing this POW, Cecil attempted to keep it simple and reasonable in order to better allow for accomplishment.

Discussion:

- a. The POW should work on inclusion as well as diversity as a fundamental component of any DEIJA effort. This is more completely addressed in the full written POW.

- b. AFS should work with CASS partner societies to explore options for consolidation or other ways of improving overall efficiency of operations.
- c. Motion by Joe Margraf to approve Jennings Plan of Work (no 2nd was provided and this motion was not further addressed).
- d. Using the AFS annual meeting to help the attendees develop a better understanding of the local environment is important and is valuable.
- e. Fully engaging the Chapters, Section, and Divisions is very important. Similarly, building connections with the local community that hosts AFS meeting is highly valuable and should be encouraged.
- f. Engaging HBCU, MSI, Tribal colleges and others is critical to our efforts to build an inclusive and engaged society.
- g. Positive statement that AFS needs to broaden the definition of what defines a fisheries professional. This has changed much over the years and AFS needs to recognize this evolution.

7. Strategic Visioning work session (Marlis Douglas and Joe Conroy; Attachment C1)

April Croxton introduced this session by stating that it is critically important for AFS to better understand our “North Star” and identify where we should be guiding the society. This is more than a traditional static strategic plan but is a dynamic process. This discussion actually started under the presidential term of Leanne Roulson and even before that with some work during Brian Murphy’s presidency. Joe Conroy and Marlis Douglas introduced themselves to the GB and then introduced the concept of Strategic Positioning and the exercise that they will do with the GB (Attachment C1). A summary of the results of the discussions are provided in Attachment C2.

General comments and discussion points

- a. Possibly consider exploring a longer time frame given that people’s careers often extend into 40+ years. Response was that many people also don’t stay in their career as long as they have in the past. Initially a 50-year time frame was proposed but that was seen as too long by AFS staff and leadership
- b. Presidential plan of work should be incorporated or linked into any strategic positioning effort.
- c. Marlis and Joe will be continuing this training with AFS staff and working with the chapters, divisions, and sections to expand this thinking and training throughout AFS.

8. Nominating Committee – modification of timeline for AFS 2nd Vice President

Nominations (Attachment D). Discussion was led by Jeff Kopaska, Chair, Nominating Committee.

- a. Kopaska reviewed the proposed motion and background information provided in Attachment D specifically focusing on the extremely short time frame provided for the committee to complete its work. The proposed motion is not a committee motion since it was not adopted by the committee. Rather, the language reflects the sentiment of the committee as interpreted by Kopaska and Austen and confirmed by Roulson.
- b. Motion by Susan Cushman; 2nd by Gary Whelan

Move to modify the AFS Procedures for the Nominating Committee as proposed below

(Attachment D) to reflect a process of fully establishing the committee membership approximately three months prior to the annual meeting.

- c. Discussion:
 - i. The current timeline for the committee also prevents the committee from meeting with and soliciting potential candidates at the annual meeting. This is seen to be a good opportunity and would be beneficial for the committee.
 - ii. It was suggested that the language “approximately three months” is not specific enough and the words “approximately” should be removed.
 - iii. The change to a two-year appointment was previously approved (*this needs to be confirmed in the minutes of the Management Committee*). The two-year term of appointment is problematic for the Western Division (WD) where the Nominating Committee representative is specified in their Procedures as the Past President. After discussion, the WD will review their options and consider modification of their Procedures.
 - iv. Need to ensure that any AFS Procedures and Rules language does not reflect binary gender roles. Also, suggestion was made to add Student and Early Career Professional member involvement in the Nominating Committee.
- d. Joe Margraf proposed an amendment to the motion that the word “approximately” be changed to “at least”. Second by Leanne Roulson. Amendment adopted with 18 YES votes.
- e. Vote on the amended motion passed. Abstention noted by Laurie Earley and Dan Fetherman but no objections.

9. **Annual Meeting** review and future considerations for possible joint meetings with TWS and participation in the next Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting (JASM3) (Attachment E).
 - a. Austen review Attachment E and the history of the joint meeting with TWS and the recent involvement with CASS on the next JASM meeting. The proposed motion is not to commit AFS to either of these meetings but, rather, to allow AFS staff to work with TWS and CASS to further explore these meeting options.
 - b. **Motion** on Joint meeting options with TWS and CASS/JASM (Attachment E). Moved by Laurie Earley; second by Gary Whelan.
 - i. Discussion focused on the challenge of multiple meetings in a year as was the situation with JASM. This does make for substantial additional work for staff and volunteers. It was noted with JASM there were members who had to make a choice between the two meetings.
 - ii. The question was asked about participation in JASM (May 2022 in Grand Rapids) versus the AFS annual meeting (Spokane in August 2022). This analysis was not done, and we don’t have any survey data to be able to discern competition.
 - iii. With the 2022 JASM meeting AFS was the meeting manager and received a \$250,000 fee for that service. AFS is in no way obligated or is even being asked to be in this role for future JASM events.
 - iv. If the motion is adopted, AFS will work with TWS and CASS to develop meeting proposals. These will be brought back to the Governing Board for approval of any joint meeting options.

- v. Comment was made that it has become increasingly complicated to find appropriate conference locations. However, a larger event with greater attendance does result in generally more favorable contracts for AFS. Canada does continue to be very expensive, but AFS staff will continue to explore options for future annual meetings in Canada.
- vi. Motion adopted by unanimous consent.

10. AFS Financial Report (Presented by Dan Cassidy). The October financial report (included in the minutes of the November 2022 meeting of the AFS Management Committee was sent as part of the preparatory materials for the Governing Board meeting. The final Auditors report for CY2021 was provided to the GB and can be found on the AFS website. Subsequently, the AFS Audit Committee provided a revision to their 2022 committee report (Attachment F2).

- a. Dan Cassidy presented an update on AFS finances (Attachment F1)
 - i. In the last three years (2019-2021), AFS has been performing substantially better than in 2016-2016, with recent years operating change and net change being either close to neutral or positive.
 - ii. AFS has benefited from somewhat regular large cash infusions over the years (e.g., publishing contract initial payment, PPP funds, sale of Sullivan building).
 - iii. AFS experienced some challenges with cash flow due to the cyclical nature of our funding streams. This has led to AFS needing to utilize its credit line to cover short term payments.
 - iv. The November 2022 financial position shows net assets substantially lower than last year primarily due to substantial investment loss. When investment loss is backed out, the actual adjusted change for 2022 is approximately \$95,000 positive.
 - v. The 2023 draft budget is essentially a “break-even” budget; however, this is predicated on a series of assumptions and expectations that will need to be monitored (e.g. membership renewal, annual meeting income, etc.). Other changes in the 2023 budget include staffing levels at 16FTE which is 7% lower than 2022.
- b. Austen provided (Attachment F3) a general context of the AFS budget and considerations for the next discussion on the AFS headquarters building.

11. AFS Glascock Office Condominium Sale Process – Motion for engaging Commercial Realtor, sales timeline, and office transition considerations (Attachments G1 and G2). Additional documentation on the property valuation and sale/lease options, proposed terms of agreement with potential realtor, and other background documents are available from the Executive Director.

- a. Motion offered by Laurie Earley, 2nd by Susan Cushman:
Authorize staff to pursue sale / lease of the Glascock office condo by contracting with a commercial real estate agent, working with other building tenants on readying the office suite and the building for sale, develop a plan and process for disposal of furniture and equipment by sale or other means, negotiate termination of equipment leases and service providers and, implement new employee policies and practices for transitioning to a remote work-WFH environment full-time.
- b. Discussion:
 - i. AFS currently pays over \$60,000 per year in maintenance, contractual services, and other costs to simply maintain the building despite that we have very little use of the facility.

- ii. The co-chairs of the Past Presidents Advisory Council (PPAC) have been vocal about challenging the sale of the building. Other members of PPAC have also provided commentary and various levels of support or provided questions for consideration on this decision. There was discussion about how to capture the PPAC comments, but no solution was adopted. It was noted that the PPAC is charged with providing the AFS leadership with advice and council, but that they have no authority on this decision.
 - iii. It was noted that most AFS members have never been to the AFS building and have little or no connection with the physical facility. Although it is very helpful and appreciated to have the guidance of the PPAC, it was suggested that we need to think about the future of AFS and the younger members who can benefit from programs and other financial advantages from the sale of the building.
 - iv. What is the procedure for authorizing the sale/lease of the building? Response is that there is little precedent for this type of action. The sale of the Sullivan building (about 2011-2013) was managed by the Executive Director, who informed leadership, but obtained no formal authorization. The current decision process will include the AFS officers, Management Committee and, ultimately, a request for final approval from the Governing Board. This will not be an issue that is brought to the full membership. This is at its core, a business decision that needs to be made by the leadership that is fully informed on the details and options being considered through a transparent process.
- c. Motion adopted by unanimous consent.

12. Snake River and other updates) (Attachment H)

- a. Proposed motion: To accept the policy statement (Attachment H) on removal of the four lower dams on the Snake River.
Motion to accept by Leanne Roulson, 2nd by Gary Whelan.
Abstentions by Craig Purchase, Paul Kusnierz, Laurie Earley, and Eric Fetherman.
 - i. The statement was presented to the Resource Policy Committee and obtained support. The Fisheries Information and Technology Section full endorses the statement. The Bioengineering Section (BES) also had a very robust discussion on endorsed the statement by a 2-to-1 vote. It was noted by BES that the statement did not contain information on the power generation trade-offs of hydroelectric vs. alternatives that would be needed to offset lost power. It was responded that the Western Division decided to base the statement solely on the biological implications of the dams and not to move into energy issues.
 - ii. Discussion on the lack of inclusion of more significant reference materials was considered. It was noted that Congressional staff clearly do not value references and will not make any decision based upon the volume of references supporting the statement.
 - iii. Motion passed without opposition.
- b. Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) – Drue reported on the disappointing outcome for the bill in the last Congress. We anticipate that it will be introduced in the next Congress, but new rules on spending may make the process more complicated and challenging.
 - c. The new final WOTUS rule (“durable rule”) is being reviewed and AFS and we may be providing some feedback to EPA. There is no formal comment opportunity. This is clearly

not the Obama rule but also not the Trump rule. It is much closer to the Obama than Trump rule. The rule relies heavily on the significant nexus test.

- d. Pebble Mine – waiting on a final veto of the 404c permit application which is expected by the end of January 2023. There is some suggestion that the veto may not be comprehensive, but the veto coupled with conservation easements in the proposed transportation corridor could likely mean the end for a Pebble Mine.
- e. AFS is working on the TRCP Aquatic Invasive Species Commission to develop new policy on invasive species. This is being reviewed by RPC and will likely be presented to the Governing Board for final adoption. We anticipate that there will be a Congressional briefing on this issue.

13. Additional topics:

- a. Website update - Planning continues on the website update and Beth would appreciate notifications of any concerns and will work to fix significant issues.
- b. Awards being solicited
 - i. Be sure to put in for awards with call coming out this month
 - ii. Criteria updates in progress and try to get more mid to early career.

14. Adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Attachment A - Establishment of Alternates (i.e., Proxies) for Management Committee Members

(Version December 27, 2022)

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 is unclear. It is presumed that because of the fiduciary role of the MC, 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.

Proposed Motion:

Move that the AFS Governing Board approve a change to the AFS Rules and move to the AFS for a membership vote 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.

Options for discussion:

1. Do nothing option: The default option is to do nothing. We just need to try better to find a date that works for everyone and simply accept that there are always going to be scheduling conflicts.
2. Defined alternates option: Of the 13 MC members, five are officers and there is no obvious alternative. However, it is somewhat rare for officers to not make MC calls and they have multiple other opportunities to be informed on AFS issues (e.g., monthly officer calls, officer retreats, direct dialogue with the ED and staff). Four of MC positions are held by Division representatives (President or President-Elect) for a two-year term. For these positions, the other division officer could be the alternate. Since they are also Governing Board members, they are somewhat informed and more regular interaction with the MC might be beneficial. The final four positions are held by Section Presidents which are elected from the Governing Board and serve one-year terms. Please recall that we are also exploring the issue of asking all Sections to establish GB representative for two-year terms. Section alternates could be the same as for the Governing Board (another officer) or otherwise elected or appointed.
3. Other options to be developed?

Attachment B1 – Draft 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 intend 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 implement 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 B2

President's Plan of Work (Proposed)

Cecil A. Jennings
August 2023 – September 2024

Governing Board Meeting: 10-11 January 2023

Life is what happens when you are busy making plans. (Anonymous - undated)

Messrs. Murphy and O'Toole.

Jennings POW: Objectives 1 – 3.

Advance and enhance Fisheries Science, including engagement with other aquatic societies.

Evaluate how Society messaging is perceived by agencies and potential members and adjust messaging breadth, as appropriate.

Prepare/update standard operation procedures for: recruiting an Executive Director under various (planned and unplanned) scenarios and for preparation of strategic plans.

Jennings POW: Objectives 4 – 5.

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.

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.

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 1
(Advance fisheries science)

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, biological, and cultural history of the region.

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

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 1)
advance fisheries science

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 1.
(Advance fisheries science)

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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 1)
advance fisheries science

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 1.
(Advance fisheries science)

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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 1)
advance fisheries science

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 2.
Evaluate Society messaging

Ascertain how young professionals and 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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 2)
develop fisheries professionals

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 3.
SOP admin/strategic transitions

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 viable 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.

**(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 5)
effective Society governance**

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 3.
SOP admin/strategic transitions

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 position 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.

**(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 5)
effective society governance**

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 3.
SOP admin/strategic transitions

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.*

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 5)
effective society governance

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 4.
Increase/improve communication

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 implement by previous presidents to ensure that it is relevant, flexible, and continues to promote forward-thinking approaches to sharing information with and among units of the Society.

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

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 3)
Communicate importance of fisheries

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 4.
Increase/improve communication

Initiate 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 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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 3)
Communicate importance of fisheries

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 5.
Maintain/improve diversity

Communicate with membership on the links between DEIA and the benefits of reflecting societal diversity in our fisheries research and management staff and programs.

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

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 4)
improve diversity of fisheries professionals

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 5.
Maintain/improve diversity

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 Institute students) 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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 4)
improve diversity of fisheries professionals

Jennings POW: Specifics – Objective 5.
Maintain/improve diversity

Organize a plenary session about Hawaiian Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) 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.

(2020-2024 Strategic Plan – Objective 4)
improve diversity of fisheries professionals



President's Plan of Work (Proposed)

Cecil A. Jennings
August 2023 – September 2024

Questions & Feedback Welcomed!!

Attachment C1 – Strategic Visioning Exercise



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
 - hampers response to changes
 - based on current context; not visionary
 - discrete; lacks continuous engagement
 - mismatch with transitional leadership

Strategic Positioning (= dynamic)

- Process, adaptive, proactive
 - promotes flexibility, changeable
 - envisions the future
 - continuous membership engagement
 - integrates with transitional leadership



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.

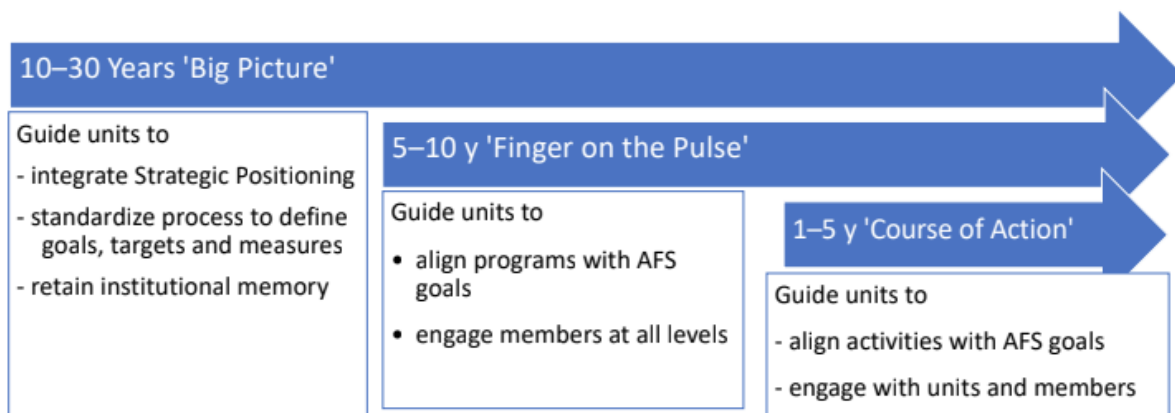
Objectives:

- Build process to guide decisions
- Develop framework to leverage input and engage members at all levels
- Identify and align goals & programs

Committee Structure and Functioning



Committee Charge and Functioning



Activities

- Nov'21: SWOT exercise
- Mar'22: GB Futurecasting exercise
- Aug'23: Official SPC Charge

Next Steps

- Dec'22: Officers Retreat
- Jan'23: GB Strategic Positioning
- Feb'23: SPC Member Recruitment
- Mar'23: Online Training Workshop



AFS – Governing Board - 11-January-2023

Strategic Positioning Committee

Goal:

- Clarify the process of Strategic Positioning/Futurecasting
- Demonstrate how AFS units can adopt and implement it

Objectives:

- Outline WHY/WHAT/HOW of Strategic Positioning and Futurecasting
- Clarify process and implementation through Q&A discussions
 - Apply the process through exercises in small-group breakout sessions

Purpose: Futurecasting is a framework that guides an adaptive planning process. It is a tool to identify strategic goals and actions to take to progress towards these targets, while also adjusting to unforeseen challenges.

WHY:

- The future is uncertain and cannot be predicted.
- But future outcomes can be shaped by taking actions to progress towards an envisioned future.
- Therefore, by adopting futurecasting society wide, AFS will be able to coordinate communication and adaptive planning across all units.



Exercise: Futurecasting **AFS 2030**

Futurecasting: What does AFS look like in 2030?

The future cannot be predicted, but future outcomes can be shaped through the process of adaptive planning.

3-Steps: **Envision AFS in 2030**

1. What specific aspect to you want? → **1 GOAL**
2. What do you need to get there? → **TOOLS + PEOPLE**
3. What actions will get you there? → **TASKS**

WHAT: Futurecasting outlines the process as a sequence of 3 key steps. Participants will learn the process in exercises.

HOW: Exercise to learn, adopt, and integrate the process.

AFS_SPC Agenda: 11-Jan-2023 09:30-Noon

- 09:30 Introduction of the AFS Strategic Positioning Committee
- 09:45 Explanation and Q+A of exercises
- 10:00 Exercise 1: Breakout groups apply Futurecasting (topic decided within each group)
- 10:30 Discussion of Exercise 1
- 10:50 Break
- 11:00 Exercise 2: Breakout groups apply Futurecasting to specified topic
- 11:20 Summary of Exercise 2 and wrap-up
- 12:00 End of AFS_SPC session

More information on futurecasting:

Book: The Future You by B.D. Johnson

<https://www.amazon.com/Future-You-Break-Through-Build/dp/0062965069>

Podcast: Concise 1-hour summary of Future Casting with B. D. Johnson (guest)

<https://www.artofmanliness.com/character/advice/futurists-guide-to-building-the-life-you-want/>

EXERCISE 1: Identify 1 strategic goal for your AFS unit using futurecasting

1) STEP 1 = What does SUCCESS look like? = You need a destination to find your way

Question 1: What specific goal of a future AFS (10 years) do you want?

- each member identifies 1 specific goal/target; they may be the same for each member
- the goal should be very specific
- It might be easier to identify what you DON'T want; this eliminates certain goals

2) STEP 2 = What do you NEED to succeed? = Outline your strategy to get to the goal

Question 2: What resources to you need to achieve this goal?

- 'resources' can be people, technologies, expertise, workflows, funding

3) STEP 3: How do you succeed? = Identify milestones and tasks to achieve your goal

Question 3: What actions will get to this goal?

- identify milestones that are steps towards the goal
- specify a timeline for each step
- identify 1 task you can take next Monday to get to the first milestone?

EXERCISE 2: Apply the same process to achieve 1 AFS-wide goal within your unit

Repeat steps 1–3 to specify how this AFS-wide goal applies to your unit and how your unit can implement it

Attachment C2 – Results of Strategic Positioning Exercise Idea Generation



Exercise: Futurecasting **AFS 2030**

Futurecasting: What does AFS look like in 2030?

The future cannot be predicted, but future outcomes can be shaped through the process of adaptive planning.

3-Steps: **Envision AFS in 2030**

1. What specific aspect to you want? → **1 GOAL**
2. What do you need to get there? → **TOOLS + PEOPLE**
3. What actions will get you there? → **TASKS**

EXERCISE 1: Identify 1 strategic goal for your AFS unit using futurecasting

1) STEP 1 = What does SUCCESS look like? = You need a destination to find your way

Breakout Session #1

Question 1: What specific goal of a future AFS (10 years) do you want? Focus on identifying a specific action for your Section, Division, or other AFS group:

In-person group #1:

- Increase engagement with Canadians by holding an annual meeting in Canada
 - Differential registration fee schedule based on cross border or distance
- Increase membership by having all Chapters to encourage 20 of their affiliates as parent society members
- Support annual meeting attendance by cooperative partners and becoming members
 - Financial resources needed and will need to partner with others including industry groups
- Increase submissions to AFS journals and grey literature tool
- Redo awards process to redefine awards to target mid-career professionals instead of fossils
- At minimum, 75% of all fisheries professionals worldwide are AFS members by 2030.
 - Define a fisheries professional
 - Use world bank terms
- Membership fees based on income

- Develop a fee schedule based on income range

In-person group #2

- Communication – how can we be more effective with communications by providing more focused messaging about units and other activities

Online group #1

- Goal to engage and increase representation of indigenous people in AFS. Harmonize AFS strategic visioning with the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Reactivate the AFS Section on Indigenous Peoples
- For the AFS meeting, talk with the organizers about reaching out to indigenous groups within the area. Ensure that they are contacted early in the planning process, include a session or information about the historical context of the meeting from perspective of indigenous peoples

Online Group #2

- Communication – The Marine Fisheries Section does not broadcast their newsletter and they aren't even sure if they have a newsletter. The MFS needs to move away from a formal newsletter and replace it with a monthly "broadcast" about activities in marine fisheries that would include news relevant to MFS members. Form of the broadcast was not clarified

Online Group #3

- Increase Section engagement overall by a certain percentage over a time period. Need to find ways to measure engagement and measures of success
- Focus on tactics, messaging, providing in-person and remote options, focus on recruitment and engagement
- Section leaders should be at chapter meetings to share information about section activities. Explore joint meetings.

Online Group #4

- Fish Habitat Section and Fish Management Section having problems finding a volunteer to manage newsletter, social media, website and other communications channels. Challenge with finding the best way to communicate with members in a way that is relevant and timely. The messaging often seems like it is of little value and not of interest.
- Possibly work with the AFS Communications Committee or Science Communications Section to explore better ways of making messaging relevant.
- Seek ways to make the sections themselves more relevant. What can they be doing that will be of value to the members?

Online Group #5

- Membership questions and particularly the affiliate member issue was discussed.
- Why are affiliate members part of the local chapter but not parent society.
- What services can parent society develop that would attract affiliate members? This could also include student and early career professionals
- Mentorship is not as widespread as it should be and would be helpful.
 - AFS should develop training, talking points, or a script to help with these activities.

Breakout Session #2 – How do we make these happen? What can I do “next Monday” to move these efforts forward?

Focus on the key challenge of why and how should AFS be the society to join? Specific tasks that can be done “next Monday”

Online Group #5

- Networking and having the ability to speak to those outside of your local agency/community about fisheries issues
- Ability to have ownership or some title in AFS that boosts ability to be marketable and strengthens resume. AFS needs to provide opportunities for young professionals to advance through AFS and gain skills

Online Group #4

- Professional development training opportunities beyond what happens at the annual meeting. Also
- Need to develop a better process for annual meeting training to be identified and approved. More interest from international members to have training opportunities to AFS
- Funding and support needed to help international students have access to training. Also for any member who doesn't have funding support. Find Sections or others who can provide support.
- Work throughout AFS to identify training opportunities.
- Develop a training calendar on the AFS website to allow members to find any training opportunities.

Online Group #3

- Networking is important and AFS offers this opportunity.
- AFS allows members to get engaged at many different levels.
- Ability to influence policy in D.C. but also at the state level. This gives AFS the ability to represent members who are not allowed to be engaged through their employer.

Online Group #2

- Stress the importance of being able to have an opinion and share on policy issues. This is often difficult for many people due to local/state political challenges.
- AFS policy relevancy is important for many members because they often don't have that ability on their own.
- AFS can work across societies in an effective way with CASS involvement being a good example.
- The ability of AFS to bring national issues to the local level and vica-versa is important. For example, a district fisheries biologist needs to recognize that governmental policies and legislation established at the state and national level impacts their ability to do their job. A way for them to be aware of and support good policies is to be involved in AFS.

Online Group #1

- Having a sense of community and belonging and providing valuable resources is important.
- Encouraging involvement of chapter members in the Society is critical.
- Better communicate the value of membership in the parent society, mine existing membership survey to better understand what potential members and existing members need.

In-Person Group #2

- Community is important – AFS is a large-enough tent that anyone can find others to be engaged with, but not so large that a person gets lost.
- “One-stop shopping for anything fisheries”
- To support unit involvement, work with Fisheries magazine to allow every unit to provide a short article/update on their activities. This could be done through a calendar scheduling the articles.

In-Person Group #1

- Improve our awards process to be more inclusive. Build role models for why people should engage with AFS. Allow the key award winners to be plenary speakers and talk about their AFS involvement
- Better engagement of Canadian members. Include them better in unit decision-making to ensure that they feel as a key part of AFS
- Fisheries articles on “fisheries fails” somewhat as a fun but learning series of articles.
- Affiliate membership challenge – booklet of quotes on why members found AFS to be an important part of their professional development.
- Emphasize exchange of ideas and networking to expand involvement (e.g. NOAA science seminar series.
- Short testimonial statements by AFS members that can be shared with non-members and potential members
- Make us known as the “doing” entity for fish and associated aquatic resources that makes a difference for our resources and are a large tent with disciplines for all. We want to be inclusive, can use the old Uncle Sam/Salmon-Like “We want you for the fishes and shellfishes poster” Sticker
- Start by broadcasting that AFS exists and whom we are – Using targeted social media, YouTube videos, and traditional advertising means
- Access to AFS journals and grey literature is the reason to join
- Message - Fisheries managers not taking advantage is wasting resources
- What can AFS do tomorrow? – Outreach on key science and how used
 - Benefits on submitting and use them
 - Messaging – AFS is your home
 - Emphasize the exchange of ideas and networking at meetings
 - Tomorrow – April science seminar – NOAA – Her journey and activity plan with meeting preview
 - Short testimony statements from shareholders – How AFS is valuable to them
 - Move through networks
 - Increase AFS through affiliate members
 - Better info and clarity on webpages
 - Booklet of quotes from Chapter members on why and how they benefit from AFS
 - Short Term - Email Chapter Presidents – Gather info on affiliate members and ask non-members on motivating to be members
 - Need to read literature
 - Building stronger relationships with Canadian groups – Low recognition

- CARS is happy on their own but needs more input
- Sections and areas are included in Unit decision making
- Fisheries Fails – Learn and have a bit of fun
- Awards
 - Building role models on why
 - Australia awards – Plenary speaker – They know them and talked about career and society
 - Research difference made clear by society
 - Awards criteria development
 - Better software
 - Nomination portal and outreach for awards – March Fisheries Teaching workshops as a training core

Attachment D- Revision of the Establishment Process for the AFS Nominating Committee

Issue: The Nominating Committee is provided with a very short time window for completing the challenging process of selecting two nominees for 2nd Vice President. Based on current AFS Procedures this starts at the Incoming Governing Board meeting at the annual meeting where four nominating committee members are selected by the Governing Board from AFS membership, and four others identified by the Divisions. With appropriate planning and AFS bylaw changes, this can take place earlier in the year thus allowing the committee more time to work and the use of the annual meeting to meet with and discuss nominations with potential candidates.

Motion Proposed: Move to modify the AFS Procedures for the Nominating Committee as proposed below to reflect a process of fully establishing the committee membership approximately three months prior to the annual meeting.

Background: The current selection of Nominating Committee members takes place at the annual meeting, typically scheduled in August but which also may take place in September or even later in years where AFS meets jointly with other societies. This starts the process of identifying potential candidates, determining who will be contacted for consideration, making initial calls and emails, responding to questions, and selecting the final two candidates for election. This process is challenging, often requires substantial consideration and reflection by the candidates (including check with employers and family), discussion with colleagues, and personal outreach. The time allowed is short relative to the importance of the task and completely misses the use of the annual meeting as a recruitment opportunity. By advancing the time for the Nominating Committee membership to be finalized, this gives the committee much more time to complete their task without undue rush.

Downsides: This proposal would ask the Divisions to identify their representatives earlier in the year, which will require a modification of their timelines and priorities. Further, the Governing Board would need to address this in their late Spring-early summer call. This would be somewhat more difficult since it is not an in-person meeting. The GB would be asked, prior to the call, to be identifying potential nominating committee candidates and be ready to submit their names and provide a summary of compelling reasons why that person should be on the Nominating Committee. Nomination could be called for prior to the GB meeting through an instructional email and additional names could be offered during the call. None of these issues seem insurmountable.

Proposed Changes to the AFS Procedures Manual

Nominating Committee

Purpose:

Prepares a slate of candidates for the Society offices of Second Vice President, First Vice President, and President-elect according to procedures approved by the Governing Board. It must name at least two candidates for Second Vice President.

Composition:

Eleven members as follows: Chair and Vice Chair, appointed by the AFS President Elect; one person selected by each Division (four in total); four persons elected by the Governing Board ~~at the Annual Meeting~~ approximately at least three months prior to the annual meeting; and the AFS President (forthcoming Immediate Past-President of the Society). Each of the four Division Presidents should inform the ~~incoming~~ AFS President Elect of the name of the Division's selected representative to the Nominating Committee ~~prior to the Annual Meeting~~ approximately at least three months prior to the annual meeting. Members serve for two-year terms, thus the Northeastern Division and Western Division representatives will cycle on/off in odd numbered years, and the North Central and Southern Division representatives will follow suit in even numbered years. The Governing Board will elect two new members to the Nominating Committee annually, with the other two continuing from the previous year. The Vice Chair will serve as Chair in the second year of service. The ~~newly installed~~ AFS President Elect needs to have the Division representative names so they can be eliminated from consideration when the Governing Board elects its four members to the Nominating Committee ~~during the Incoming Governing Board Meeting held following the Annual Business Meeting.~~

Duties:

The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall direct the nomination and voting procedure and tally the votes as outlined in the following steps. ~~In order to comply with the specific and rigid timelines detailed in these procedures, the chair must contact the committee immediately after the AFS Annual Meeting and hold committee members to the timetable.~~

1. All eleven members of the Committee, including the Chair, may nominate one or two candidates for Second Vice President. Accordingly, the number of candidates in any given year may be as many as twenty-two.
2. Each Committee member shall vote on five of the candidates by assigning five points to the first preference, four points for second choice, etc.--one point for fifth choice. The Chair may vote only if their signed ballot is mailed to the AFS Executive Director or President at the same time as ballots are mailed to the other Nominating Committee members.
3. Votes will be evaluated by the Chair who determines the top two candidates on the basis of the highest point total.
4. Total point ties for first and second, or second and third positions, go to the candidate with the greatest number of first place votes (5's). If a tie cannot be resolved by this procedure, then a second vote will be required. In this case only the

tied candidates are voted upon. If a tie still remains after the second vote, the AFS President will cast the tie-breaking vote.

5. Written results of the nomination and vote, including the ballots, shall be forwarded to the Executive Director or the AFS President for audit as soon as the two candidates for Second Vice President have been determined by vote. The Executive Director and the AFS President shall review the results before they are announced.

6. The candidate in third place following the vote of the Committee and the candidate in second place after the general membership vote for Second Vice President, shall automatically be considered as possible nominees by the Nominating Committee for the following year. This last stipulation mandates forwarding the names and biographical information of those individuals to the Vice Chair and the Unit Services Coordinator at Headquarters for transmission to use by the Committee ~~Chair~~ for the following year.

7. This is a confidential process; Committee members may not discuss the individuals on the list or the rankings with anyone other than other Committee members.

Operational Guidelines:

The duties are to be implemented as follows and with a timeline mutually developed between the Nominating Committee chair and the Executive Director. With the consent of all committee members, all written materials including ballots may be exchanged among committee members electronically.

1. A biographical sketch (background), some comments on the state of the Society (AFS involvement), and some steps that might be undertaken as AFS President to address major issues (Vision Statement) should be prepared by each candidate and forwarded ~~by November 15~~ to the member of the Committee advancing the candidate's name for consideration. The statement should be no more than two type-written pages. Each Committee member shall inform his/her candidate(s) that the Committee does not encourage or appreciate receiving any additional vote solicitation contact or information.

2. Each Committee member should submit the name(s) of his/her candidate(s), the biographical sketches, and comments to the Chair ~~by November 20~~.

3. The biographical sketches and comments by nominating committee members for all candidates will be forwarded with a ballot to all members of the Committee ~~by December 1~~.

4. Ballots should be returned to the Chair ~~by December 15~~. The Committee Chair will communicate the results to the President and Executive Director immediately.

5. The Committee Chair shall notify the first- and second-ranked candidates as soon as he/she has been informed by the AFS President or Executive Director that they have audited the Committee Chair's tally of the votes and have approved. The Committee Chair shall let

the remaining candidates know ~~who placed~~ that they did not place first, second, ~~and~~ or third and will forward the third-ranked candidate's file to the Vice Chair.

6. When notifying the winning candidates, the Chair will request that they update or revise, if they wish, their biographical sketches and vision statements for AFS and send them to the Chair with a photograph ~~by January 5~~.

7. The Chair will forward these materials to the Fisheries editor ~~of~~ so that the nominees will be announced before election ballots are sent to the AFS membership.

Attachment E – Annual Meeting Guidance

AFS Annual Meeting Guidance for 2026-2028 and Partnership Options

Issue: Annual meeting site and location selection typically rotates among the four AFS Divisions (Table 1) with an additional desire to meet in Canada at least once every 10 years. Actual location has not been unequally distributed and participation and revenue vary widely among the meeting locations (see [AFS Meeting Analysis](#) for full review). AFS has also recently held a joint meeting (2019 with TWS in Reno) and participated in JASM2022. AFS has the opportunity to participate in these joint events again and guidance is requested from the Governing Board on how to proceed. AFS also needs to schedule an annual conference at a location in Canada with 2027 as a target date. All these options need to be explored and a proposed conference schedule needs to be provided to the GB for review and approval.

Motion Proposed: AFS staff is directed to work with TWS and CASS to provide the GB with a recommended schedule of meetings for the period of 2027-2029. This needs to include a meeting in Canada at the earliest possible date, preferably in 2027, as well as a joint meeting with TWS and inclusion in the next JASM.

Background: AFS has traditionally met separately from other societies as a stand-alone event. However, recent experiences and partnership opportunities (e.g., TWS and JASM) have been exceedingly positive and have resulted in new opportunities for the future. However, these do come with challenges of scheduling, management, and developing an appropriate business model.

Discussion Questions:

1. TWS is interested in scheduling another joint meeting like the Reno 2019 event. This could be an option for 2026 in Columbus but the AFS date (August 30- September 3, 2026) is not inline with TWS typical meeting time (generally October to early November). If 2026 is not viable, there are possible options in 2027 or 2028 including Canadian cities given cost-effective solutions are available.
2. JASM2022 (May in Grand Rapids, MI) was scheduled separately from the AFS annual meeting (August in Spokane). Timing of JASM and the desire to have a distinct and traditional AFS meeting were the deciding factors in keeping them separate. Although we have no confirming data, it is thought that there was little conflict (e.g., diminished participation) between the two conferences. A future JASM, however, could be positioned as an AFS annual meeting. Other societies (e.g., SFS) used JASM2022 for their annual meeting. Several challenges exist. Timing is undetermined for the next JASM. If it is scheduled for May (year unknown), this will be far outside of the traditional AFS timing. Complexity of having JASM as the AFS annual meeting would make event participation challenging. The addition to JASM of the many AFS activities typically held at an annual meeting (Officer, Management Committee, Governing Board, Business Meeting, Section Meetings, etc.) will be difficult to schedule in conjunction with the many JASM/CASS events. The conference with these associated events would be exceedingly long and AFS leadership would have to sacrifice participation in JASM/CASS activities to address AFS

activities. However, creative scheduling, movement of MC/GB meetings to other times, opening of Section meetings to other societies, and other solutions could be explored to make the even viable and possibly even groundbreaking..

Table 1. AFS Annual Meeting Location and Division Distribution

	City	WD	NCD	NED	SD
2029	TBD				
2028	TBD				
2027	TBD				
2026	Columbus, OH		X		
2025	San Antonio, TX				X
2024	Honolulu, HI	X			
2023	Grand Rapids, MI		X		
2022	Spokane WA	X			
2021	Baltimore, MD			X	X
2020	Virtual 2020				
2019	Reno, NV (w/TWS)	X			
2018	Atlantic City, NJ			X	
2017	Tampa, FL				X
2016	Kansas City, MO		X		
2015	Portland, OR	X			
2014	Quebec City, Canada			X	
2013	Little Rock, AR				X
2012	St Paul, MN		X		
2011	Seattle, WA	X			
2010	Pittsburgh, PA			X	
2009	Nashville, TN				X
2008	Ottawa, ON		X		
2007	San Francisco, CA	X			
2006	Lake Placid, NY			X	
2005	Anchorage, AK	X			
2004	Madison, WI		X		
2003	Quebec City, Canada			X	
2002	Baltimore, MD				X
2001	Phoenix, AZ	X			

2000	St. Louis, MO		X		
	TOTALS	8	7	5.5	5.5
	2021 AFS Membership	2872	1418	951	1937

Attachment F1 – Financial Reports

AFS Financial Report

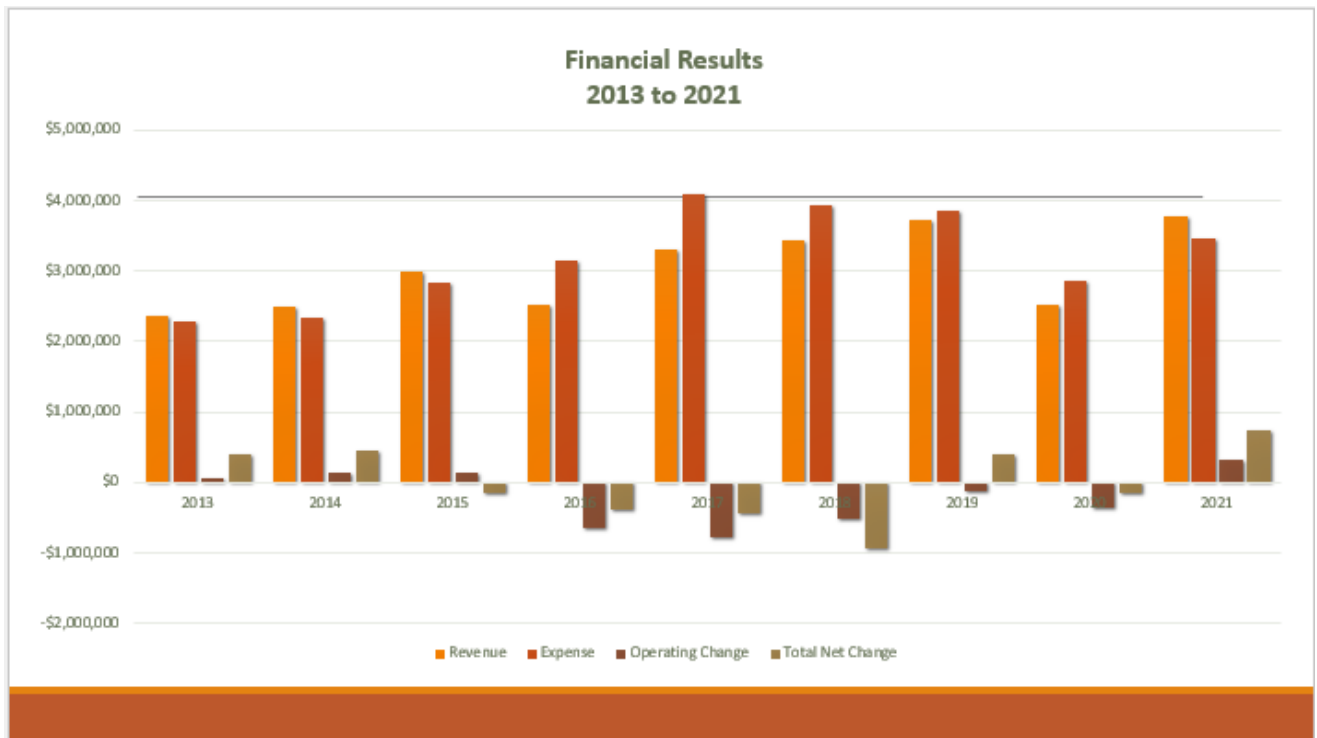
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

JANUARY 11, 2023

BOSTON MA

Agenda

- Financial Trends through 2021
- November 2022 Reports
- 2023 Cash Flow Projection
- 2023 Budget Assumptions



Key Footnotes

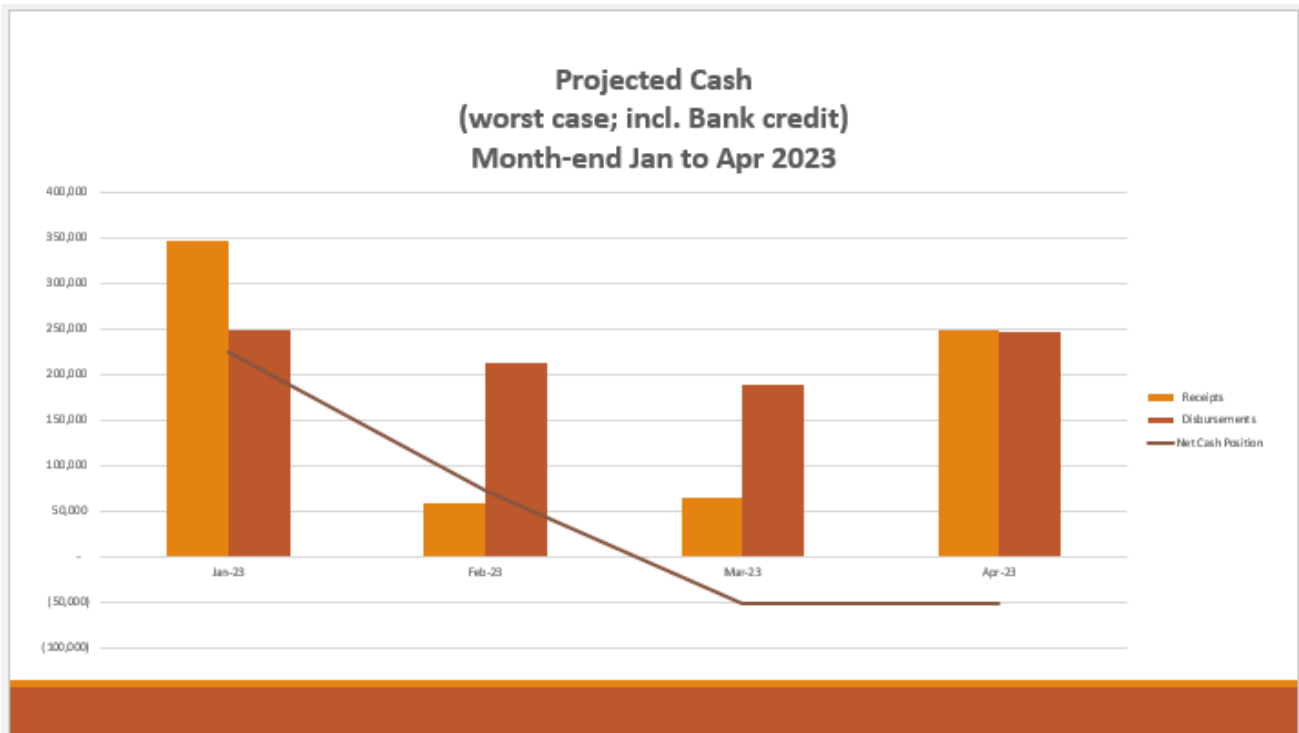
- 2013/2014 – AFS bank account balance = \$1M+
- 2015 on – began adding new programs and staff
- 2017 expenses - books inventory write off \$243,000
- 2018 expenses – similar to 2017 w/o write off
- 2021 income - includes \$684,000 PPP income

Transaction	Year	Amount	Notes
Taylor & Francis advance	2011	\$1,000,000	
Office condo sale	2014	\$450,000	initially invested
Wiley Royalty Advance	2017	\$900,000	
PPP Loan 1	2020	\$381,012	Loan forgiveness
PPP Loan 2	2021	\$303,617	Loan forgiveness
Total Cash Receipts		\$3,034,629	

**Non-recurring Cash Receipts
(excludes bank credit)**

Cash Flow Activities

Activities	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5-year Summary
Cash Beginning	227,660	743,619	105,426	210,630	172,955	227,660
Operations	587,885	(537,232)	(88,542)	(283,789)	(189,457)	(511,135)
Investing	(71,926)	(100,961)	193,746	(134,898)	(158,538)	(272,577)
Financing	-	-	-	381,012	428,617	809,629
Cash Ending	743,619	105,426	210,630	172,955	253,577	253,577



Cash Flow

Receipts:

1. Receipts based on membership dues renewals pattern from 2022 and guaranteed Journal royalties only
2. AFS typically sells books, receives job board fees and collects other sales regularly. These receipts are difficult to predict
3. Latin Congress and Grand Rapids meetings active
4. 2022 receivables from agencies/units due AFS
5. Grant project draw downs as cash source

Cash Flow

Disbursements:

1. Monthly staff, admin and recurring program costs = \$180,000
2. Latin meeting deposit (final \$58,000), software license fees (\$22,000), both in the forecast for Q1 2023
3. Grant and other contractor payments are coming due soon
4. Forecast omits Board, officer and staff travel and other upcoming program disbursements

Bank Credit Line

1. AFS has drawn \$350,000 of its \$500,000 bank credit line
2. Loan balance this time last year was \$125,000 and has been used almost every year (rather than sell investments) since eff. 2017
3. Carries a rate of prime + 1% or roughly 8% now
4. Loan must be paid off at least once per year, but callable by the bank at its discretion
5. Collateral is \$670,000 segregated investment account

Financial Position Summary

	Nov-22	Nov-21	Variance
Current Assets	\$414,977	\$639,491	(\$224,514)
Other Assets	\$4,996,654	\$5,546,057	(\$549,404)
Total Assets	\$5,411,630	\$6,185,548	(\$773,918)
Liabilities	\$1,442,784	\$1,779,533	(\$336,749)
Net Assets	\$3,968,846	\$4,406,016	(\$437,169)
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$5,411,630	\$6,185,548	(\$773,918)

Reconciliation of Operating Results	Nov 2022	Nov 2021
Operating Net Change (w investments)	(605,606)	646,958
Investments Gain (Loss)	(701,541)	416,744
Net Change w/o investments	95,935	230,214
Paycheck Protection Income	0	381,012
Adjusted Net Change	95,935	(150,798)

Notes: 2022 with JASM meeting; 2021 without PPP income

November 2022 Notes

- Biggest impact on Assets are investment performance and cash position (account is 70% equities; track benchmark with < risk)
 - FPPC meets with the investment advisor next week
- Liabilities higher this time last year with Balt meeting unpaid costs
- A few 2022 receivables collectible in 2023
- Cash receipts this time of year mainly are journals royalties and dues renewals; disbursements are admin and staffing costs

November 2022 Notes

- Income
 - **MSCG grants** drawdowns current, several projects extended into 2023
 - **Dues-** Individuals on par; SPP lower
 - 2023 Indiv. renewals in Dec was 8% lower than 2022; in Jan slightly lower; income higher with dues increase; SPP renewals tracking higher (low bar)
 - 2023 renewals are < 50% of 2019 renewals
 - **Meetings-** Spokane profit sharing payments issued in Dec
 - Biggest drag on income is investment decline
 - Jobs board performing well; books much less so

November 2022 Notes

- Expenses
 - **Admin expenses** higher with replacement of accounting staff with contractors and transition ramp-up
 - Staffing **costs** on par with last year (includes transition and vacation payouts)
 - Timing differences for Board, Grants, Journals (editors' payments)
- Overall, 2022 operating income ahead of 2021 (but before full inclusion of PPP funds last year)

2023 Budget Comments

- Proposing a breakeven budget in these difficult economic conditions
 - Income = \$3,474,000 Expense = \$3,479,000
< Not looking for budget approval today >
- Working towards positive net revenue from aggressive marketing of membership, publications and meetings
- Clearly, member preferences are changing, perhaps accelerated by covid, and AFS's business model remains under pressure

2023 Budget Comments

- Been challenging for staff managing multiple major meetings, new grants and other activities
 - Supplementing declines in traditional key income sources; at potential opportunity loss to existing programs
- The components-procedures exist for conversations on nearer-term committee work plans, priorities, alignment with member/constituent needs
- Need to identify income sources to support org. goals as current path is >challenging

2023 Budget Assumptions

Annual Meeting

1. 1,650 total, in-person attendance plus additional 10% virtually
2. Member-early fee increase of 5% from \$595 to \$625; student-early \$260 to \$375 and early-career \$450 to 470
3. Ambitious sponsorship (\$125,000) and exhibit (\$90,000) or about 50% higher than Atlantic City actuals
4. \$30,000 incentives and rebates

2023 Budget Assumptions

Annual Meeting cont'd

1. Catering costs of \$300pp with student event capped at \$25pp (any additional support to be covered by fundraising)
2. Continued use of XCD attendee-abstract system (\$76,000)
3. Meeting and program contractor support (\$32,000)
4. Net revenue goal of \$242,000 (or 20%) after staff costs (\$150,000) and with unit profit sharing of 20% (\$48,000)

2023 Budget Assumptions

Latin America Congress:

1. Ideally this event's income covers expenses
2. Baseline meeting costs are \$255,000 (center fees \$138k; AV \$67K; XCD \$25k; travel/translation/other \$25k)
3. Final meeting room needs due this Friday
4. Fundraising to date = \$10,750; Exhibits to date = \$1,000 (3 total)
5. Registration is open

2023 Budget Assumptions

Membership:

1. Goal to meet 2022 individual member levels (with the additional income from 15% dues increase)
2. Organizational / SPP members same budget goal (looking to grow levels above last year, which were down from 2021)

Publications:

1. Journals income = guaranteed min royalty + editorial support indexed for 2023 (Wiley meeting this week to discuss finances)

2023 Budget Assumptions

Publications:

1. Journals income = guaranteed min royalty + editorial support indexed for 2023 (Wiley meeting this week to discuss finances)
2. Book sales budget \$50,000 vs. \$74,000 in 2021 (strong efforts underway to promote eBook subscriptions which would be additional budget \$)

Hutton = 32 students with student summit again this year

2023 Budget Assumptions

Expenses:

1. Staffing 16 FTE and budget about 7% lower than 2022
 - a) Benefit plan increases range from 5% to 10%
2. Administration costs lower by \$54,000 (discontinuing condo % utilities and reserve payments)
 - a) Have eliminated many office services / costs
 - b) Still paying for internet (\$700/mon) ; office equipment leases (\$1000/mon), property insurance (\$1200/year)
3. Other expense line items generally in line with 2022

In Summary

- 2023 will be a challenging year
- The economy may impact AFS programs
- AFS is doing the same amount of work with fewer staff, partially offset by contractors
- Cash position will remain problematic
- Unless the LA meeting is very successful, there are no non-recurring cash-windfalls until possibly WCFS meeting or condo sale.

Attachment F2 – Audit Committee Updated Report

To: April Croxton, *President*

From: Tim Copeland, *Audit Committee Chair*

Date: December 10, 2022

Subject: Addendum to 2022 Audit Committee Report

I. Motion Report

A) **Recommended Motion:** The independent auditor's work on the 2021 financial statements has been finalized. The Audit Committee moves that the Governing Board untable the previous motion on the 2022 audit findings and accept them.

B) **Minority View:** NA

C) **Background for Motion:** See Activity Report.

II. Activity Report

A) **Charge or Annual Program of Work** The Audit Committee is established as a standing committee in AFS Constitution Article X.14.b.2. The AFS Procedures Manual elaborates that the Audit Committee: 1) conducts a review of Society finances to address Congressional concerns regarding nonprofit organizations where the Executive Director is also the financial officer and 2) provides recommendations to the Executive Director and AFS President concerning Society financial affairs.

B) **Annual Financial Report** (*where appropriate*) NA- The Audit Committee did not collect, use, or disburse any funds.

C) **Summary of Outcomes and Accomplishments** (*based on 2020-2025 Strategic Plan*)

In August 2022, the Audit Committee submitted a report based on preliminary numbers because the independent auditors work for the year ending December 31, 2021 was still in progress at that time. The audit work was finished and the findings finalized on November 22, 2022. The Audit Committee received the final report from Deputy Director Dan Cassidy on November 30. This report is an addendum to the August report with the objective to correct the preliminary numbers reported. Although the numbers have changed, the interpretations are very similar; thus, the Committee is submitting an addendum rather than a revised report.

The audit was conducted by the firm of Jones, Maresca & McQuade, which also conducted the 2021 audit. The Committee finds the audit was conducted fairly and cooperatively. The audit report contains a summary of the financial statements, a letter to the AFS Governing Board, and a management letter. In general, the auditor issued a clean opinion regarding financial position, changes in net assets and cash flows, and the materials submitted to the auditor. The auditor identified some accounting issues, which were resolved with the cooperation of AFS staff. The issues had to do with proper assignment of editorial revenue and liabilities from the 2021 annual meeting. As a consequence, the auditor identified a material weakness and recommended management change some of the accounting procedures.

Some of the values given in the August report were revised. Net assets at the end of 2021 declined 19% from 2020 (Figure 1). The income from the hybrid 2021 annual meeting was \$692,556. This was much better than the revenue from the virtual 2020 annual meeting (\$292,250), but not as good as a fully attended in-person meeting. Total liabilities at the end of 2021 decreased 6% over those in

2020 largely because AFS’s second Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan from the federal government was forgiven. The Committee also notes that AFS carried debt on its line of credit at MFT Bank to the amount of \$125,000, whereas no debt had been carried in the 2020 accounting.

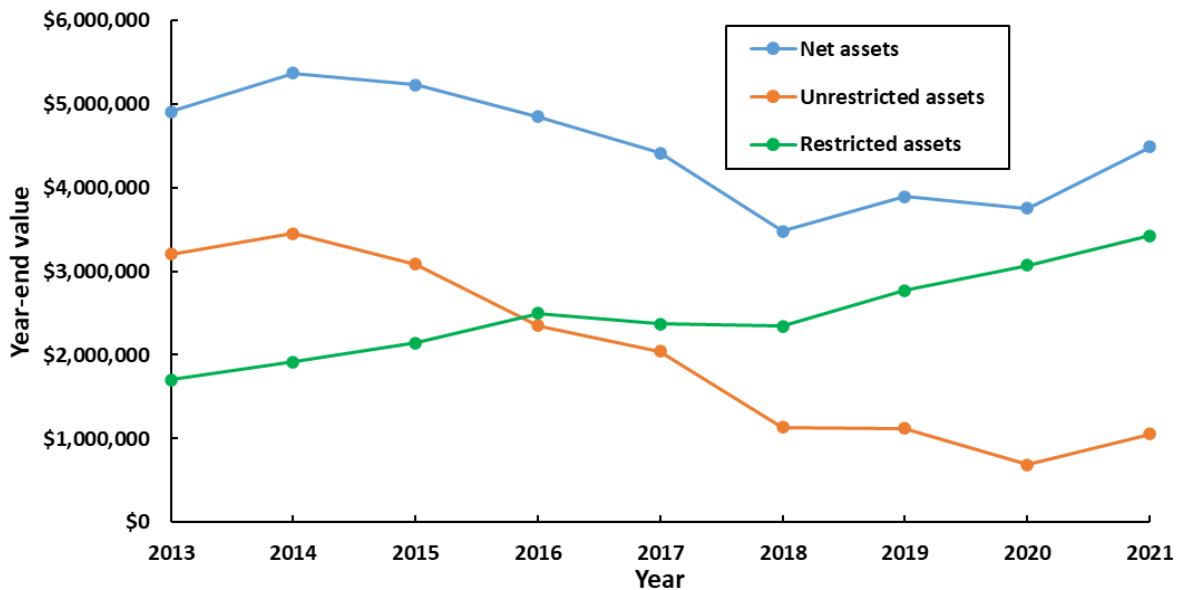


Figure 1. Trends of year-end values of AFS assets in recent years using the final 2021 audit numbers. Net assets are the total of unrestricted and restricted assets.

The ratio of unrestricted to restricted assets is a concern but is different from the August 2022 report. The current percentage of net assets that are unrestricted is 24%, which is better than 2020 but well short of the desired ratio of 50% (Figure 1). That is because the value of restricted assets increased 54% over 2020, while the increase in unrestricted assets was only 12%. The current value of unrestricted assets is slightly less than in 2018 and 2019, even though inflation has raised the costs of goods and services since those years. In other words, the ability for AFS to respond to financial crises is more limited than it seemed in August.

Assessment of the AFS revenue streams previously reported also changed somewhat. The percentage of the top traditional top four revenue sources (the annual meeting, the journal contract, membership dues, and book publications) was 64% of total revenue, as opposed to 83% before the COVID pandemic. Note that forgiveness of the second PPP loan comprised 18% of total revenue in 2021. This is a windfall that will not happen again. After accounting revisions, revenue from external grants and contracts comprised 13% of total revenues.

Recommendations and Suggestions

After considering the revised values mentioned in this report addendum, the Audit Committee finds that net assets are better than thought in August but that the overall assessment of AFS’s financial status is still the same. The Committee re-emphasizes that AFS leadership needs to make financial sustainability a priority and stands by the recommendations in the August report.

Attachment F3 – Positioning of Budget, Building, and AFS Challenges



Property, assets, and the future of AFS headquarters

Governing Board Meeting
Boston, MA
January 11, 2023

Issues to address and separate

- **Challenges to the fundamental nature of AFS**
- **AFS budget and financial health**
- **Operations and staff**
- **Bricks and mortar**

Challenges

- Evolving nature of AFS
- Membership
 - Being involved and engaged
 - Time, busy-ness, willing
- Competition
- Societal changes
- What is the role of a science society – How can we position AFS to be relevant?

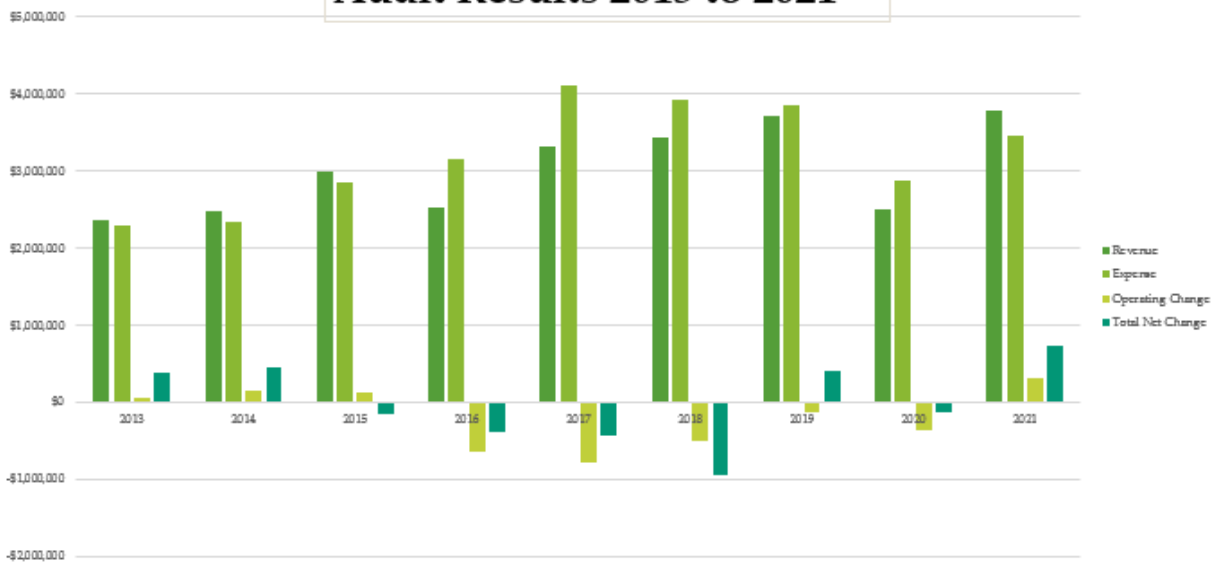
Meeting the challenges

- AFS has seen cycles of financial stability and challenges. We've also experienced time where AFS was programmatically deficient. We continue to face relevancy challenges.
- With Board support, AFS built programs:
 - Policy
 - Communications
 - Contractual – MSCG, CASC, NSE, Agency agreements
 - Unit support – financial, meetings, taxes, insurance, tools
 - Updated annual meeting management
 - Upgraded systems and addressed staff needs (non-competitive salaries)
 - Publishing – EIC's, additional staff
- But Response (financial, membership) did not compensate
- Moved into project/grant income (CSC, MSCG) and Meetings Mgmt to make up shortfall while not addressing underlying program challenges

Financial health

- **Budget report- Program Operations don't generate positive cash flow and haven't since before 2013**
 - AFS has survived through large, nonrecurring cash receipts from Publishing advances, Sullivan condo sale, govt PPP Funds, Bank credit
- **Income dynamics**
 - **Membership stable or declining (after dues increases)**
 - As of Dec 21, [2023](#) Dues Renewals are 47% of 2019 / pre-covid levels
 - **Publishing declining and uncertain**
 - Fewer new book titles and increased competition
 - **Contracting, federal funding uncertain**
 - **What are best future funding streams**
 - Ex. Challenges with webinars weakening AFS Prof Develop programs

Audit Results 2013 to 2021



Extraordinary Cash Transactions Timeline

(this table lists the sources of nonrecurring cash receipts AFS benefited from)

Transactions *	Year	Amount	Notes
Taylor & Francis advance	2011	\$1,000,000	
Office condo sale	2014	\$450,000	initially invested
Wiley Royalty Advance	2017	\$900,000	
PPP Loan 1	2020	\$381,012	Loan forgiveness
PPP Loan 2	2021	\$303,617	Loan forgiveness
Total Extra. Cash Receipts		\$3,034,629	

* these activities exclude grants, agreements and JASM which AFS has undertaken to advance the profession but also increase revenues. Also omits Bank Credit financing

Operations and staff

- Staff complement has evolved
 - Current staff down to 16 from 20+ FTE
 - Administrative staff streamlined
- Nature of workforce
 - Staff from outside metro DC area
 - Challenges of hiring (location, salary, expertise, availability)
 - Commute and lifestyle challenges
 - Effectiveness of work-from-home
 - Office needs not aligned with current structure

This is not the workforce that most of us grew up with and we need to stop managing it like it is.

Operational and Business Planning

- We need to review and update operational plans for our key program areas
 - Publications, Prof Development, Meetings, Policy, Development, Membership, Project Management, Diversity (& similar programs)
- Bringing the same energy and insights as we're having around the office Condo
- Establish timeline to have this information available by Grand Rapids GB meeting
- Some information is available from recent GB SWOT discussions (flip chart notes)

Bricks and Mortar





Bricks and Mortar

- **What is an asset?**
 - Cash, investments, equipment, inventory and property
 - Assets liquidity
 - Usefulness of assets – they need to serve a purpose
- **AFS condo is simply an asset**
- **The purpose of the condo does not meet AFS's needs**
- **The condo is actually a liability and is preventing AFS from evolving into what it needs to be.**

Attachment G – Glascock Office Building

American Fisheries Society

Glascock Condo Suite Sale Proposal and Associated Office Transition Plan

v. 1.5.2023

Staff submit the following proposal in anticipation of listing the Glascock condo, comprised of two office suites totaling approximately 5,062 square feet, and transitioning the office to fully remote / Work from Home (WFH) environment.

Motion: *Authorize staff to pursue sale / lease of the Glascock office condo by contracting with a commercial real estate agent, working with other building tenants on readying the office suite and the building for sale, develop a plan and process for disposal of furniture and equipment by sale or other means, negotiate termination of equipment leases and service providers and, implement new employee policies and practices for transitioning to a remote work-WFH environment full-time.*

Background:

Process for Readyng the Office for Sale / Lease:

The process for evaluating and authorizing a potential sale / lease of the AFS condominium is proposed to proceed in several steps with each step involving review, request for authorization, and action.

1. Engage a commercial real estate firm and broker to continue guiding the Glascock Board and individual tenant Societies on preparations for listing the property for sale / lease. This is the motion being proposed (above) at the mid-year Governing Board meeting in Boston.
2. Develop internal communications and technology systems and human resources (e.g. staff management) guidance for a remote-WFH environment. This will also include developing plans for addressing office equipment, AFS records and historical documents and items, and other matters associated with physical aspects of AFS. We will also be exploring alternative options such as leasing and retaining some office space in the DC metro area including shared space with other partners.
3. Listing and sales options (proposed for officer authorization) – Listing will take place once re-zoning is approved and HOA agreements in place to allow formal listing and showing of the condo. Other condo owners will be proceeding independently although the option of a full building sale will be available. This step will also include updating the August 2022 market sales analysis report and marketing plans (Attachments F2 and F3) with a proposed listing price and initial range of negotiation options.
4. Final sale/lease authorization – This step will require full GB approval and will provide authorization for the executive director to enter into a contract for sale/lease. This will also include approval for the use of proceeds from the condominium sale (e.g., investment in the Obligated Reserve, addressing upgrade needs such as iMIS, etc.)

The AFS condominium units:

AFS owns two suites in the Glascock Building (see below for history). The lower-level suite (3,800 sf) houses administrative and program staff other than publications. The upper-level suite (1,200 sf) houses the publications staff. AFS owns the condominium and is part of a condo association that handles contracts for maintenance, cleaning, HVAC, all utilities, and other costs associated with owning and maintaining an office

building. Payment by each tenant to the association is prorated based upon square foot ownership. Annually, AFS pays about \$55,000 to the association. In addition, AFS independently pays for copier and mail equipment leases, internet and other telecommunications, network server, and other office services. The total annual cost to maintain the office is approximately \$75,000.

Staff have been participating in conversations with the other three building tenants (The Wildlife Society, The Nature Conservancy-MD/DC Office and, American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing) and the Glascock condo board, of which AFS is a member, about the potential building sale. All tenants are actively moving towards listing their respective suites for sale or have already signed a listing agreement.

AFS staff and remote work transition:

AFS staff have been working nearly entirely remotely since the pandemic began in March 2020 and via an established telework policy before then. Staff work effectively from their homes and have indicated they no longer wish to return to the office due to commuting, productivity, and quality of life concerns. AFS has conducted several staff assessments of the work environment through surveys and in-person work sessions. All have consistently concluded that a traditional office setting is simply neither desired nor practical. Over the past year, AFS has been hiring employees from outside the Washington, DC region, and currently have three staff considered substantively remote; Beth Beard (Wisconsin), Jenna Hanks (North Carolina), Ashely Berniche, (Richmond, Virginia). Other staff have widely ranging commutes including Annapolis, Baltimore, downtown D.C., Northern Virginia, and Frederick, MD, with only a few staff within 30 minutes or less commute to the office. As one might expect, Washington metro traffic can easily make a 30–60-minute commute into 90 minutes or more without notice.

To guide the transition to a fully remote work environment, staff have been working on a set of teams that address key issues:

1. Furniture Inventory
2. Engagement and community (Social) team
3. Telecom / Messaging / Conferencing serv.
4. Equipment and computers
5. Storage facility
6. File Management
7. Office and HR Policies
8. History / Art
9. Customer / Member Service

Commercial Broker Listing Agreement

- Exclusive designation and appointment with Brian Coakley, EVP www.Donohoe.com (this individual / firm are being considered or already under agreement with other building tenants)
- Sale option: 7% commission on the individual condo or pro-rata portion of the total building sales price.
- Rental option: 4% of aggregate base rent with 50% due upon lease execution and 50% at lease commencement.
 - o For example, \$30 rental fee per sf x 5,062 sf = \$151,860 for 5 years = \$759,300
 - o \$759,300 x 4% = \$30,372 commission (due by lease commencement)

Office Leasing Considerations

Leasing the office space in lieu of selling it is certainly an option and one that carries with it important considerations and responsibilities (see also [Attachment F3](#)). The proposed commercial broker agreement does include terms and commission schedule for leasing the office suite. Taking on a landlord role should be given careful thought as it may require considerable costs, legal involvement and staff time managing leasing activities. AFS would have to engage service contractors to address office maintenance and repair issues as they arise and maintain property insurance and other policies covering the property. While leasing may be an option for AFS, the other Glascock building tenants have indicated their intentions to list their office space for sale. Being the sole tenant pursuing leasing may impact the attractiveness and overall marketability of the entire building and impact the other current tenants' sales efforts. Finally, leasing not only spreads out the potential income over the term of any lease, but it also carries upfront costs for tenant improvements, commission fees and other negotiated lease provisions such as rent allowances that might be in the \$10s of thousands of dollars. The commercial broker whose proposal is under consideration and is presently guiding the Glascock Board through the rezoning and listing process would be contractually obligated to bring forward all buyers and potential lessees to AFS and the other tenants but is also not recommending aggressively pursuing leasing space at this time. Still, it is important to note the following initial list of key office leasing considerations:

- May require tenant concessions such as:
 - o Reduced or waived security deposit
 - o Rent allowances
 - o Tenant improvement allowances for buildout, painting, and improvements
 - o Move in allowance and lower annual rent escalation increases
- Being a landlord requires staff oversight for tenant relations and contractors
- Legal costs to review agreements, potential rent collections or other matters
- Contractor agreements to maintain, clean and repair office systems
- Insurance premiums for property coverage

Possible shared office approach

AFS has had initial discussions with TWS, TNC, and NWF about the potential for rental of a relatively small office space with storage and access to conference rooms and other facilities. We have previously contacted other organizations (AFWA, TRCP) that responded with no space rental options. This possibility is being explored to allow for some storage of key documents and historic items, provide limited office space for staff on an as-needed basis, and maintain some sense of physical partnerships with other organizations. Although this option is being explored, there is no expectation that we will be able to develop a workable solution.

Works in Progress to Support Transition

Furniture Disposition

- Staff are inventorying furniture and other personal property for potential sale or donation.
- Some items may be offered to staff for use in home office setting or for sale if for personal use.

Information Technology and Telecommunications

- Computer equipment is inventoried, obsolete items segregated for disposal
- File server and related equipment will be retired
- Telephone equipment will be retired
- Implement Microsoft Office 365 (Teams, Sharepoint, etc) replacing hybrid Google-Microsoft approach Spring 2023
- Restructure online file maintenance system
- Security System (owned by Glascock but housed in AFS office) to convey to new owner
- Relations with the current outsourced IT support firm shall continue

Administrative Services

- Postal equipment lease continues through December 31, 2023
- Copier lease TBD
- Accounting and Technology contractual service providers will continue
- Corporate Responsibilities
 - o Registered Agent (AFS is a DC incorporated organization and maintains a legal presence there through the law firm Howe Anderson)
 - o Address Maryland state legal address and state presence
- Eventually, AFS will need a Post Office box for receiving registered and general mail
- Office supplies
 - o AFS has relationship supply company and has setup up online ordering

File Storage and Records Management

- Develop control, retention, and storage access for files, supplies and materials and confidential records and corporate documents.

Historical Information and Art

- All AFS art, posters, awards, and other memorabilia are being inventoried for storage or release.
- Storage needs (e.g. climate controlled, shelf or box, etc.) and pricing will be estimated

Human Resources / Office Policies

- Revise existing telework policies and include information on work schedule, equipment, services and furniture AFS may offer employees and travel expense reimbursements to staff meetings.

Budget Considerations:

	Item	Description	Favorable (Unfav) Monthly Amount	Annual Amount
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1	Building utilities and reserve contribution	Monthly contribution to building maintenance	\$4,553	\$54,636
2	Comcast internet	Communications services	\$693	\$8,316
3	Reduced insurance premiums	Property insurance coverage removed	\$	
	Total Annual Savings			\$62,952
	office equipment leases expire Dec 2023 and thereafter, savings of \$1,000 month. AFS would occasionally need printing / copier services at addl cost.			
	Additional Items			
4	Implement Microsoft Office 365	IT implementation	(\$8,730)	
5	File server system	Savings from retiring server and moving to remote file maintenance	\$TBD	
6	Provision for staff equipment and furniture	Minimal costs for printers and furniture	\$ TBD	
	Offsite file storage costs	Store meeting materials, perm files and other artifacts	\$ TBD	
7	Equity accrual gain	Book value basis = \$300,000	Sales price – basis = accrual net income	

Brief background of the AFS Offices

Excerpted from Moffitt et al. 2020. AFS Adapts and remains relevant in the digital world. *Fisheries* 45(4): 185-193.

The initial impact of AFS was limited by the rotation of officers and locations for operations without a permanent location for Society records and operations. To address this problem, the Society first opened an office in Washington, D.C. in 1962 and hired Mary Frye as office staff. Mary worked for the Society until her retirement in 1993 and her influence for those formative 3 decades was noteworthy. She set the tone for highly professional office operations and AFS governance. The AFS hired its first salaried Executive Secretary, Robert Hutton, in 1965, and he operated the office in Washington, D.C. through 1969. Beginning in the 1970s, Executive Director Richard Wade and AFS leadership worked with the Society of American Foresters (SAF), American Geophysical Union, The Wildlife Society, and other natural resource professional associations to consider co-locating offices. These interactions led to the establishment of the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation (RNRF) with these associations as partners to garner funding to purchase a 35-acre property in Bethesda, Maryland. The property had been used as a summer home by Gilbert Grosvenor, then editor of *National Geographic*. In 1975, the AFS headquarters moved to a renovated carriage house on the Bethesda property, at 5410 Grosvenor Lane. In 1981, AFS operations, except journals and books, moved into the newly completed Glascock Building, named for Hardin Glascock, the SAF Executive Officer during the formation of the RNRF. Journal operations remained in the basement of the home of Bob and Sally Kendall in Columbia, Maryland. In 1987, a second addition to the Bethesda campus was completed and the journals and books operations moved to offices in that building joining the other AFS departments. This second building was named in honor of longtime AFS Executive Director Carl Sullivan in 1990.

In 1996, 20 members were part of the RNRF association, including AFS. In the last 15 years, the membership and relationships among the founders of the RNRF regarding the Bethesda campus property changed in light of economic pressures on several of the partner societies and the growth of different partnerships. The property values of this natural park-like island within an area of dense urban development increased the pressure for further development. In 2007, the entire property was proposed for sale by the SAF and the RNRF to be developed into a private school, but the project re-zone was opposed by nearby Bethesda residents and property owners, especially because the Grosvenor Mansion and Carriage House were historically important. In 2015, a portion of the property was sold, including the Sullivan Building, and recently redeveloped into 142 new townhomes now named Grosvenor Heights. The AFS office address was changed to 425 Barlow Place, and all publication operations were moved to the Glascock Building. The SAF still owns and operates the historic mansion and carriage house on the property but they are for sale as of this writing.

In December 2019, AFS and Glascock building tenants celebrated local county recognition of significant energy efficiency improvements and related savings in the Glascock Building, currently occupied by four conservation organizations—The Nature Conservancy, The Wildlife Society, AFS, and the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing.

Attachment H – Proposed Snake River Dam Removal Policy Statement

Statement of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) and the Western Division AFS (WDAFS)
About the Need to Breach the Four Dams on the Lower Snake River

Formally adopted by WDAFS December 2022 and awaiting AFS approval

The Columbia River ecosystem was once a network of complex, interconnected habitats that supported the most prolific salmon habitat in the world. Its Snake River basin once supported nearly fifty percent of the Chinook salmon and steelhead in the entire Columbia River Basin. Now, decades after their initial Endangered Species Act listings, native fish populations in the Snake River basin including salmon, migratory trout, sturgeon, lamprey, and others have not recovered, and many are alarmingly low and trending towards extinction. The once free-flowing river has been transformed into reservoirs by a series of dams that impede the movement of these fishes and greatly decreases their survival. The four dams on the lower Snake River (Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite) significantly reduce access to the cold-water, high-quality spawning and nursery habitat that are essential for fish sustainability (Storch et al. 2022). When the body of scientific evidence is considered (Williams et al. 1989; Nehlsen et al. 1991; Thurow 2000; NOAA 2017, 2022; Isaak et al. 2018; Storch et al. 2022; TU 2022), it is clear that breaching the four lower Snake River dams is necessary to (1) substantially improve the probability of recovering these cultural and ecological keystone species to healthy and harvestable populations and (2) safeguard those fishes from extinction.

Salmon and other anadromous fish move between the upriver spawning and rearing habitats and the ocean and back again. Today, only 1-2% of historic wild salmon and steelhead numbers return to the Snake River to spawn above the four lower dams. Climate change has (NWPPC [2015](#); Storch et al. 2022) and will continue to worsen the outlook for these coldwater species. Access to this habitat is the best opportunity to promote broad-scale population recovery and persistence in the face of climate-change induced warming.

Restoring healthy and harvestable salmon and steelhead populations will require a change in approach. Since the 1980s, many fisheries recovery strategies (e.g., supplementing with hatchery-raised fish, transporting fish, fish passage improvements, and rehabilitating habitat) have been attempted with little or no success. Despite spending billions on recovery, these species continue to decline, affecting both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, other imperiled species, tribal rights, and commercial and recreational fishing.

Scientific studies continue to show that breaching the four lower Snake River dams would provide greater certainty of achieving long-term survival and recovery of native wild fishes more than any other measure or combination of measures without dam breaching. Breaching the dams to restore riverine habitats in the lower Snake River will also benefit ecosystem processes, entire biological communities, and increase climate change resilience of anadromous fishes. Dam breaching has shown success towards recovering migratory fish species, notably in the Elwha River, WA (Hess et al. 2020; Storch et al. 2022) and Kennebec and Penobscot rivers, ME (Johnston et al. 2019; Kober 2019; Prosek 2020; Sharma and Waldman 2021; Wippelhauser 2021; NRCM 2022). Notably, the

Penobscot River project was accomplished by a combination of breaching, fish passageways, and increased power production for different dams, such that total hydropower production was maintained while restoring diadromous fish runs.

Although the four lower Snake River dams and reservoirs provide hydroelectric energy for western states, irrigation water for agriculture, and allow commercial navigation to move grain and other goods efficiently, they have led to significant declines in fish populations. The best available science suggests that a significant portion of the lower Snake River must be returned to a free-flowing condition to restore Snake River salmon populations. Proposals to breach the four lower Snake River dams have a long history, but the subject has become more critical as these iconic fish populations approach extinction. The WDAFS unanimously passed a resolution in 2011 and a subsequent letter to Oregon Governor Kate Brown in 2020 saying that breaching these dams will be required if these runs are to be recovered. Likewise, U.S. Representatives Simpson (R.-Idaho) and Blumenauer (D-Ore.) have [proposed](#) breaching these dams while also addressing the needs of stakeholders and tribal rightsholders who depend on the river. In summer 2022, Washington Governor Jay Inslee and Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) released a [final report](#) for the government to move forward to provide replacements of these dams' benefits (e.g., wind and solar power production and truck and railway transportation of goods [SOS 2022]), so that breaching is a credible pathway for policymakers to consider. The Biden Administration is also working to develop a comprehensive salmon restoration plan to settle longstanding litigation with Tribes, the state of Oregon, and conservation organizations.

If Snake River basin salmon and steelhead are to be saved, then policymakers and stakeholders at all levels will need to implement appropriate processes and funding provisions to breach the four dams on the Lower Snake River, as well as implement all necessary habitat rehabilitation. There are other services that must be accounted for if dam breaching were to occur. Dam removals often take decades of comprehensive planning and implementation, and replacing those services provided by the dams will also take time. This will require Congress, the Biden Administration, regional rightsholders, and stakeholders, to negotiate an agreement soon for the dam removal to proceed expeditiously.

The AFS represents over 7,500 professional fishery scientists and resource managers across the world. The WDAFS includes US states west of the Mississippi River basin and Pacific Canada. Our common mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by (1) advancing fisheries and aquatic science and (2) promoting the development of fisheries professionals. Our members represent a holistic array of fisheries experts who are employed in academia, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and private consulting.

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