

# **American Fisheries Society Governing Board Meeting**

August 20, 2016

Sheraton Crown Center, Kansas City

## **Minutes of the Meeting**

### **Participants**

#### **Governing Board Members**

Ron Essig – President

Joe Margraf – President-Elect

Steve McMullin – First Vice President

Jesse Trushenski – Second Vice President

Donna Parrish – Past President

Kristen Ferry – President Northeastern Division

Jason Vokoun – President Elect Northeastern Division

Melissa Wuellner – President North Central Division

Wes Porak – President Elect Southern Division

Dave Coughlan – President Southern Division

Jim Bowker – President Western Division

Cleve Steward – President Elect Western Division

Mike Garelo – President Bioengineering Section

Katie Bertrand – President Education Section

Marybeth Brey – President Equal Opportunities Section

Karin Limburg – President Estuaries Section

Carl Kittel – President Fish Culture Section

Tom Bigford – President Fish Habitat Section

Doug Munson – President Fish Health Section

Ken Kurzawski – President Fisheries Administration Section

Julie Defilippi – President Fisheries Information & Technology Section

Mark Porath – President Fisheries Management Section

Jeffrey Olsen – President Genetics Section

Bob Hughes – President International Fisheries Section

Pam Fuller – President Introduced Fish Section

Benjamin Walther – President Marine Fisheries Section

Sue Edwards – President Physiology Section

Tom Lang – President Socioeconomics Section

Yushun Chen – President Water Quality Section

Clint Lloyd – Proxy Student Subsection of Education Section

### **Guests**

Scott Bonar – Incoming Second Vice President  
Rebecca Krogman – President Elect Fisheries Information and Technology Section  
Wendylee Stott – President Elect Genetics Section  
Keith Criddle – President-Elect Socioeconomics Section  
Greg Pitchford – President Missouri Chapter  
Julie Claussen – Incoming President International Fisheries Section  
Bob Curry – Awards Committee Co-Chair

### **Non-Voting**

Doug Austen – Executive Director  
John Boreman – Constitutional Consultant

### **Emerging Leaders:**

Michael Moore, Dan Nelson, Patrick Shirey

### **AFS Staff:**

Dan Cassidy, Katrina Dunn, Sarah Harrison, Jessica Mosley, Denise Spencer, Taylor Pool, Eva Przygodzki, Martha Wilson, Kurt West

## **Minutes of the Meeting**

- 1. Quorum confirmed by Boreman and called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Essig.**
- 2. Announcement of Proxies**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**  
Motion by Porak, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bowker, approved by unanimous consent
- 4. Approval of Minutes** – April 2016 mid-year Governing Board Meeting, Potomac, MD  
Motion by Kurzawski, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bigford; approved by unanimous consent
- 5. President's Report**  
President Essig briefly recapped the accomplishments of his term, including the continuing of work set by past administrations and most notably the improving of the Communications Strategic Plan and its implementation

## 6. Approval of President-Elect's Plan of Work

President-Elect Margraf briefly outlined his plan of work (Attachment A) for his term in office. Aside from continuing the work that has been initiated by past administrations, there were three new items:

- Ensuring the success of the Tampa Annual Meeting
- Increasing the relevance of AFS publications
- Increasing the relevance of fisheries profession, where it would have the same respect as other notable professions

Motion to approve the Plan of Work by Bowker; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ben Walther

No Comments or objections were raised; approved by unanimous consent

## 7. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Austen provided a review of accomplishments and ongoing work of the main office. Highlights include:

- The planning of the next five annual meetings (through 2021) already in place as AFS staff take on the main responsibilities of meeting planning, resulting in more beneficial contracts with more competitive venues and pricing;
- Communications Update – The Communications Strategic Plan is being implemented, notably through the hiring of Communications Director Martha Wilson and the formation of a staff Communications Team (Wilson, Beth Beard, and Sarah Harrison); AFS publications are also being emphasized and being given a greater presence with and advertisement to the general public
- Greater Congressional Outreach – AFS has increased its presence on Capitol Hill, notably by participating in two briefings: “Climate Change and Inland Fish” (with USGS) and “Advances in Geospatial Tools to Enhance Smart Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems” (with USFS); agencies are recognizing AFS as a fisheries entity
- Publications – a joint-effort book publication with the FAO has been completed (Freshwater, Fish and the Future), and we are looking for more partnership projects in the future

### 2016 Annual Plan of Work

Austen reviewed the 2016 Annual Plan of Work (Attachment B) with particular emphasis on the following items:

- Staff is becoming more involved in meeting responsibilities but will also continue to tap into the expertise and resources of the local chapters
- *Fisheries* magazine is being enhanced, featuring topics that are timely and beneficial to people who can use the information for decision-making
- Continuing Education is being improved and is transitioning into being more effective as an online education resource

- The Communications plan is being deployed resulting in more engagement with both internal and external audiences, using the website and social media, plus increased traditional media outreach (on policy and other issues), and development of other marketing materials.
- Partnerships with other organizations – Aside from the joint-meeting progress with The Wildlife Society in 2019, AFS is looking to nurture other partnerships; Austen has been talking to similar wildlife agencies about operational issues we can share resources on and make progress more efficient
- Operational efficiency – AFS has been reviewing contracts while also working to streamline its budget and services

#### Questions/Comments

There was general praise for the way that Shawn Johnston and other staff have worked to plan out future Annual Meetings as a much more efficient process, but there was also exhortations shared to not neglect the expertise of local chapters and Divisions and to ensure good communications between staff and local teams. Another concern was raised that the Annual Meetings are becoming “regionalized” meetings rather than international.

#### 2017 Budget and Financial Report

Deputy Executive Director Cassidy presented the 2017 Budget (Attachment C) and also provided the Board with the current financial state of the society. Notable items include:

- Staff/Personnel Changes – AFS now has a part-time accountant on staff, saving a few thousand dollars in the process after terminating the contract with accounting firm DeLeon and Stang due to poor performance; Mary Buckman has completed a highly valued term as chair of the Audit Committee and the Society appreciates her efforts. It was noted that a new chair is being sought and the President will, as a normal course of practice, review the charge to the committee and seek recommendations from Mary Buckman and others to determine if an update is needed.
- After review, the Investment Committee has decided to stick with the current partnership with AXA
- Internal Financial Reporting – extraneous reporting codes have been eliminated, allowing auditing to run more smoothly and for the use of funds to be seen more clearly
- The June 2016 Financial Position demonstrated the impact of the society cash position transitioning from big meeting (Portland) to a smaller one (Kansas City), but overall AFS is financially healthy

- Budget unknowns for 2017 include the impact of fundraising, the status of chapter rebates, and what money a new/renewed publications contract could bring
- 2017 Annual Budget Report – a more conservative approach was applied to forming the budget this year, the biggest change being the budgeting for the Tampa meeting, which is based on the anticipation of 2,000 attendees. There was also discussion about the adjustment of registration fees and a greater cost for onsite registration, which is typical for meetings of non-profit organizations.

#### Questions/Comments

Many of the questions focused on how Units can take advantage of the investment opportunities and how these can be made clear to Unit leaders (Trushenski is currently working on updating the survival guide for Unit leaders). Bob Hughes also pointed out that AXA's accessibility for Sections has been an issue for the past two years and needs to be addressed. Hughes also asked if chapters can receive their dues rebates earlier than the current July payment. Response from staff was that this should be possible and that they would investigate this and report back to the Governing Board.

### **8. Constitutional Consultant's Report**

John Boreman highlighted the following statistics from the past year:

- 89 requests for constitutional changes have been submitted since 2015
- Since last August the society has gained 11 new student subunits
- The Management Committee has passed amendments for 12 bylaws
- 6 changes have been made to the Procedures Manual; the final version of the Procedures Manual is posted on the AFS website
- One change to the constitution regarding the responsibility of the Management Committee has been implemented

### **9. Policy Program Review**

Bigford introduced the current challenge facing the organization's Policy structure (Attachment D and E); 37 of 38 of the AFS policies are older than five years and are constitutionally no longer viable. It was emphasized by Bigford that these outdated policies have rarely seen relevant use within AFS. The challenge is how to address these insufficiencies and move forward with a specific plan. Bigford also drew attention to Policy Fellow Patrick Shirey's work on the Threatened and Endangered Species report and how he was able to succinctly condense policy recommendations into a relevant, shortened, and synthesized report as a possible model of what could be done for future policies. AFS needs to be more active in writing shorter, more meaningful documents that also have a chance to influence decision makers.

Proposed motion: To approve the AFS plan “Strengthening the AFS Policy Program” for implementation in fall 2016, including Option #4 as the preferred approach, namely to “redirect primary focus to letters, briefings, and other actions.” (Attachment D and E)

Motion by Porath; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pam Fuller.

#### Discussion

There was broad agreement that change was necessary and needed in the area of policy; many different suggestions were voiced for how best to implement them and affect change, including:

- Communication – There should be more opportunities for AFS members to hear from Bigford or other officers on policy so that the release of new policy is and emphasized and given importance. Goals for the policy statements should be defined.
- Format – policies should be brief and pithy but not so broad that they are no longer timely or relevant to issues at hand, as is the case with many of the current policies; all policy should be backed up by literature so that decision makers can see the science that backs up the policy.
- Timeliness and Expertise – Policy should be completed in a shorter amount of time to be relevant and should be headed by those who are competent in the particular issues at hand and have a stake in wanting it formed. This should involve the expertise of the membership, and science writers can help boil down the statements into palatable literature.
- Involvement – Incentives should be utilized in order to get members and experts involved. It was suggested that the Resolutions Committee could help in identifying choice candidates for shaping policy statements. Another suggestion was utilizing graduate programs for writing policy statements as graduate students already have the desire to work on real-world issues.

The motion was approved by unanimous consent

#### The Future of the Nation’s Fisheries and Aquatic Resources document

AFS Policy Analyst Taylor Pool presented the draft document “The Future of the Nation’s Fisheries and Aquatic Resources” – a brochure designed to present the next U.S. presidential administration with significant issues on aquatic resources and management, with the goal of using the document to begin a dialogue with decision makers. The draft is available in the 2016 Annual Meeting briefing book. The Policy team requires board approval to move forward with the plan to produce – in conjunction with the publications and communications staff – an attractive-looking

document that would be ready to distribute in November, after the presidential election.

Proposed motion: Approve “Future of the Nation’s Fisheries and Aquatic Resources: Recommendations for the Next President” final production and release in November 2016. (Attachment D and E)

Moved by Bowker; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Porak.

Discussion:

Overall appreciation and praise was shared for the work that Bigford and Pool put into the draft document and for its evident progress as well as appreciation for involving the Governing Board and Section leaders in the process. There was encouragement for the utility of the document to start the conversation and engage decision makers in the next administration and also inform the general public.

Questions centered around the level of specificity of the document and clarification on the plan for release and distribution. There were also questions about the timing of retaining signatories and funding, which the policy team felt were secondary steps to getting the information in the hands of decision makers and beginning a conversation on issues of aquatic resources and management.

There were also suggestions that the document should focus on goals for support and should convey a sense of urgency so that the new administration takes action immediately. It was also suggested that the title and acronym of the document be changed to be more catchy, easier to remember, and more appealing to politicians. Pool stated that the document would go through publications and communications staff to “jazz up” the language to make more palatable and appealing.

The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

## **10. Governing Board Reporting Tool Review**

Jesse Trushenski and Jim Bowker presented the work being done on the new online Governing Board Reporting Tool and demonstrated the strategy development and logic of how the reporting tool would operate. This was put into action as a way to make society reporting information quantifiable and searchable, as the current report book format is not conducive to summarizing and using information from the reports. There are currently no reasonably convenient options for quantifying important data, such as the number of society meetings, student subunits, total money earned, etc. without manually reviewing reports and collecting information. The online tool could also be useful for exhibiting data to the membership as a way of demonstrating the benefits of joining AFS. Although creating this tool will require a large amount of staff time and

resources, the benefits of the investment would be the ease of reporting with searchable, minable data and the increased ability to market to non-members.

### Questions/Comments

There were many technical questions about the way in which the tool would be used or how to enter specific data or who would be responsible for maintaining it (AFS Staff). There was also agreement that the reporting tool would be useful for capturing data in a historical document that members would have access to and be able to see the value of the society. It was suggested that the tool also be available for use by student subunits and chapter leaders so that they can feel more connected to the society and will be able to look back at what has been accomplished. Overall, the preview of the GB Reporting Tool was received positively.

## **11. Discussion on Streamlining the Mid-Year Report**

Directly tied to the previous discussion of the Governing Board Reporting Tool, Essig opened the floor for discussion of the desire to limit mid-year reports to motions or discontinue mid-year reporting altogether. Across the board there was support for the latter; many cited the difficulty or repetitiveness of reporting the same accomplishments twice in a year and that there is rarely any new motion to make in the span of six months. It was also suggested that with the new reporting tool, it would be easier to add data at any time year-round, but this also brought up the challenge of how to encourage leaders to report and not just wait for the time of the annual review. There was also encouragement to continue to have a print format (i.e., pdf version) so that there is a visual record of progress; this is already anticipated to be a function of the new reporting tool.

## **12. Evaluation of the Executive Director**

President Essig shared with the Board the results of the Management Committee's evaluation of Executive Director Austen. Essig stated that overall there was high praise for Austen's performance as a representative of AFS. It was felt strongly among the Management Committee that the AFS office has improved dramatically in function and quality from the time he began three years ago, citing the belief that Austen has empowered staff substantially, enabling higher quality work. Areas of concern/improvement included the following:

- Improvement is needed in the area of providing member services; this should be given greater priority.
- There was some confusion among the MC about specific staff responsibilities and there was a concern of a leadership void when Austen was out of the office.

- Communication – there was concern about the late sharing of information prior to Management Committee meetings; improvement was also needed in the area of making promises that have gone unfulfilled (providing unit websites as an example).

### Discussion

Essig opened the floor for the Board to share any additional comments on Austen's performance. In general, there was an echo of praise for Austen, pointing out that the areas of improvement were more nitpicky in relation to the improvements that Austen has helped usher in. Board members described Austen's leadership as one of openness to new ideas and an honesty while retaining a sense of humor. There was a prevailing concern of Austen perhaps being burdened with too much at once. Suggestions included looking into the possibility of having someone else on staff to relieve Austen so as not to burn him out, making a running list of action items from past meetings so that their progress is clear, and it was reiterated that Austen's top priority should be the management of staff so that performance continues to improve.

## **13. Evaluation of AFS Staff Operations**

Discussion moved from the evaluation of the Executive Director to the AFS Staff Operations. Again there was overall satisfaction with how staff operations have been performing under Austen's leadership, with a vast improvement in tone and level of communication being cited. Areas of improvement included:

- Better communication, specifically with the status of changes that are promised (updating the website, etc.).
- The biggest holes were seen in membership and journal services, which need improvement so that the average user can navigate through those areas on the website more easily; iMIS solutions need to be worked out.
- Online publishing needs to be modernized to match the speed and attractiveness of our competitors.
- The difficulty of unit reporting to the IRS was also brought up, with a suggestion to report as part of AFS HQ brought up. Practical suggestions for filing for tax exempt status were discussed. It was suggested that details for filing could be made clear through the AFS website/survival guides.

## **14. Membership Services Update**

AFS Member Services Manager Eva Przygodzki presented an update on Membership and a review of changes being implemented from the Membership Committee (See Appendix F for presentation slides). Eva reviewed some of the biggest factors to low participation in associations – namely, generational shifts, social changes, making do

with a recession-prone economy, and technology-enabled access to free content. There is also a shift in association values with the generational divide (Generations X and Y) in terms of more value being placed on field/profession benefits or on personal benefits.

For an association to be successful, it must have:

- A niche with a competitive advantage
- Compelling benefits with focus on member return-on-investment
- Special acknowledgment of new recruits
- Adequate technology to keep members engaged while also delivering benefits

Eva also described the differences between niche (successful products and services held in common) and brand (a promise of value). Eva recommended to the Board that AFS needs to define its niche and develop a broad spectrum of benefits for members, work to understand better what its members want, and to stress the benefits and not just the features of membership. Catering to new recruits involves providing services and easy access to information and possibly implementing new engagement features such as “gamification,” that is, members are able to earn points for services, keeping them engaged. At the end of her presentation, Eva provided 5 steps to “take home” for revitalizing membership services:

- 1) Focus – identify the society’s niche and its target audience
- 2) Develop benefits that meet the needs of the target audience
- 3) Assess the cost to provide those benefits; eliminate anything that does not provide benefit
- 4) Test these benefit and cost changes with members and non-members; make adjustments as necessary
- 5) Repeat!

### Questions/Comments

Some board members questioned whether it was necessary to be concerned about variable membership numbers particularly if they are a reflection of what was suggested to be simple changes in the number of students in fisheries programs nationwide. Others voiced strongly that not engaging younger generations could lead to the society’s demise. This led into conversation among the Board about the factors that convinced them to join AFS (e.g., meeting others engaged in the same professional interest, serving the resource and the profession). Some suggestions included communicating to members to give back to the society, looking at fixing or improving what’s already in place to answer “what can I get out of this?,” and the need to tie membership into employment opportunities or benefits that directly impact the employer, so that the employer has incentive to encourage its employees to take part in AFS.

### Membership Status

Executive Director Austen provided an update on the status of AFS membership and some of the ideas that the Membership Committee is working on with the Communications Team. Austen identified the challenge of figuring out how to engage and retain new members from big annual meetings who typically drop out a year later. As well, there's a need to produce material that is current and relevant. The Membership Committee is also working on items that would be useful for chapters and would enable them to feel the value of membership and detail the differences between society and affiliate membership. Other materials aimed at the chapter level, such as a table top display and postcards that demonstrate the value of AFS membership to different audiences, have been completed or are in the works. Austen also talked about the Chapter Incentive Program, targeting affiliate members who likely think that they are society members, and looking at payment incentives for chapters to increase their percentage of AFS Society membership. This also involves enticing AFS members to be chapter members as well.

### Questions/Comments

Suggestions included giving cash incentives to only those chapters who reach 100% AFS membership and moving to an auto-renewal system for membership. There was also an appeal for AFS promotional efforts to start at the student level and to take a deeper look at what the society needs to do to appeal to the other 20,000 fisheries professionals that are not AFS members.

## **15. Communications Plan**

Communications Director Martha Wilson provided an update on the society's communication improvement efforts and on the implementation status of the PCG report. Some of the key points include:

- Communications tools are improving; the Communications Team (Martha Wilson, Beth Beard, Sarah Harrison) is working to coordinate communication more consistently between HQ and chapters, while also promoting policy work done by Bigford and Pool
- The Communications Team and Membership Team are working on corresponding responsibilities to manage both internal and external audiences
- New systems will be worked on after the Kansas City meeting to improve communications, including tactical calendars, social media standards, communications toolkits, and enhanced print and audio/visual tools
- Professional relationships are also being leveraged; the Communications Team is working more closely with Taylor & Francis to promote journals and the

magazine much more effectively; relationships with the press have also been further developed to better promote AFS to the general public

Digital Content and Engagement Strategist Beth Beard gave an update on the new website status, which launched in January, and unit websites will be integrated into the main website and server. Beard described the process as taking longer than expected due to unforeseen complications, with many used plugins being out of date while other sites had been hacked, etc. On the positive side, a permanent website for annual meetings has been established; the Tampa team is ready to launch their page as soon as the Kansas City meeting ends.

At the end of the presentation, Wilson summarized some of the new communications developments and statistics, including:

- To complement the post-PCG strategic plan, the AFS Communications Team developed an Operational Work Plan for 2016-2017, which will be made available to the Governing Board as soon as possible
- AFS social media standards and guidelines were completed, and will be merged into the Procedures Manual
- The revamped E-newsletter has been refreshed; the number of people viewing it has doubled
- The number of people following AFS on Twitter has also doubled and followers on Facebook and Instagram increased
- As a result of encouragement from the Communications Special Committee, a new fisheries science blog edited by Sarah Harrison is in development
- The Annual Report is now online and in a more dynamic format
- Branding Redesign – research has begun for rebranding AFS for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- A new Science Communications Section was proposed by Julie Claussen, on the Communications Special Committee, to provide a place for science communications experts to share research, techniques and tools to better provide internal and external outreach on fisheries science (in contrast to the AFS focus of the Communications Special Committee)

Next steps for Communications included: implementing the 2016-2017 operational work plan, fine-tuning HQ and Unit communication, merging the new social media standards into the Procedures Manual, and developing long-term strategic and tactical work plan

#### Questions/Comments:

Many of the questions centered on the details of rebranding. Several Board members cautioned the Communications Teams to tread carefully with the restrictions of logo

rebranding and how to convey that to chapter artists who have traditionally had creative freedom with personalizing the AFS logo. It was suggested that artists in the society be encouraged to come up with designs for rebranding, which would in turn make them feel more involved with the society. Others voiced their agreement with this suggestion.

#### Proposal from the Special Committee on Communications to become a Standing Committee

In their report to the Governing Board, the Special Committee on Communications had proposed a motion to become a Standing Committee so that it would not be limited to an appointment of one year in light of the continuing work on communication and PCG recommendation implementation. However there was a lack of clarity as to what the purpose was of changing the Special Committee to a Standing Committee. Past President Donna Parrish indicated that President-Elect Margraf could simply reappoint the Special Committee during his term. With the purpose of the Communications Committee needing to be clarified, Julie Defilippi – a representative of the Communications Committee – decided not to propose the motion to the Governing Board at this time.

#### **16. Round-Robin Review of Governing Board Reports**

- Yushun Chen (Water Quality Section) – Section participated in joint efforts with the Mississippi-Yangtze symposium; on Thursday it is holding a symposium to promote fisheries resources management; Chen is serving as liaison between AFS and the China Society of Fisheries and will be hosting President Margraf at an annual meeting
- Tom Lang (Socioeconomics Section) – Fish Gills book being updated, a symposium on the Stephen Weithman award is occurring here; hosting an angling participation symposium as well
- Sue Edwards (Physiology Section) – recognized Education Section for help with student funding, held 20 different symposia at its meeting; the next international conference will be held in Calgary 2018
- Ben Walther (Marine Fisheries Section) – bylaws now updated thanks to John Boreman
- Pam Fuller (Introduced Fish Section) – report stands as written
- Bob Hughes (International Fisheries Section) – with the interest of increasing international exposure of AFS, Section is holding a program for those who speak English as a second language
- Jeffrey Olsen (Genetics Section) – report stands as written
- Mark Porath (Fisheries Management Section) – report stands as written

- Rebecca Krogman (Electronic Services Advisory Board) – a quick survey on the website is in place, 130 responses indicated that the website is a vast improvement, but there was also difficulty of logging in and adding affiliations and accessing journals
- Julie Defilippi (Fisheries Information & Technology Section) – report stands as written; co-sponsoring the AIFRB symposium on social media at the Annual Meeting; also promoted the AFS Publications Endowment Fund
- Ken Kurzawski (Fisheries Administration Section) – holding joint symposium on angling participation with Socioeconomics Section
- Doug Munson (Fish Health Section) – report stands as written; highlight that the Section is receiving applicants for Tier 1 phase accreditation for small health laboratories
- Tom Bigford (Fish Habitat Section) – report stand as written; Section has been active in developing social media efforts and is looking to develop a CE course for next year
- Carl Kittel (Fish Culture Section) – highlighting the joint-meeting with the World Aquaculture Society, which brought over 3,000 attendees; new partnerships in development with other organizations on managing funds; Section is holding a symposium on Thursday on the future of fisheries as a career
- Karin Limburg (Estuaries Section) – recognize those involved in “Monsters in Stock Assessment” symposium in Portland, also would like to thank the editors of *Fisheries* magazine for inviting the Sections to participate in the Climate Change issue; recognizing work of Abigail Archer as Program co-chair
- Marybeth Brey (Equal Opportunities Section) – Section co-sponsored a symposium on actions to increasing engagement of underrepresented minorities in fisheries and aquatic sciences; also holding a luncheon in Gilham Hall; Section was able to hand out 5 student travel awards; recognition of Nivette Perez-Perez and her work on the Scavenger Hunt; Emmeline Moore Prize has been awarded to Dr. Mamie Parker
- Katie Bertrand (Education Section) – report stands as written; Section gave out 34 awards this year; also hosting best student paper and posters session; also starting up a new intersectional fisheries section on education
- Mike Garelo (Bioengineering Section) – report stands as written; over 400 were in attendance at the fish passage conference meeting; the next meeting will be in Australia 2018
- Jim Bowker (Western Division) – report stands as written; would like to highlight a new annual meeting MOU that anyone is free to use as a template
- Dave Coughlan (Southern Division) – report stands as written; will soon be signing MOU with the Florida Chapter for the Annual Meeting in Tampa; next annual division meeting will be in Puerto Rico 2018

- Melissa Wuellner (North Central Division) – report stands as written; would like to give credit to the Missouri Chapter for putting together the KC meeting
- Kristen Ferry (Northeastern Division) – Division has examined trends in membership and was happy to do that; took some big steps toward dedicating to meeting planning and collaboration; planning to raise visibility of division by increasing collaboration with chapters in 2017

#### **17. New Business**

With the recent flooding in Louisiana, Austen appealed to Board members for ideas of how AFS can be involved in relief efforts. [An AFS Relief Fund was established later in the day.]

#### **18. Governing Board Meeting Adjourned at 5:00 p.m.**

## Attachment A. Draft President's Plan of Work for 2016-2017

### Draft President's Plan of Work for 2016-2017

Joe Margraf – March 19, 2016

The 146-year-old American Fisheries Society (AFS) has a mission to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic sciences, and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. My plan of work builds on the leadership of my predecessors and our Executive Director and staff. The top priority of this plan is overall support for the goals of the 2015-2019 AFS Strategic Plan, with the following areas of emphasis during 2016-2017.

#### Science

1. Explore ways to increase the citation rates of AFS primary publications so that they are among the highest of all fisheries journals.
2. Explore the feasibility of a joint AFS-TWS journal as an outlet for topics that span both disciplines.
3. Implement avenues for virtual attendance at AFS scientific and business meetings.

#### Education

1. Hold a Governing Board retreat to review and better align AFS professional certification requirements with employer expectations for new hires and increase the societal relevance of professional fisheries careers.
2. Charge the Continuing Education Committee and encourage other AFS units to develop distance learning continuing education offerings in addition to in-person sessions.

#### Communication

1. Support implementation of the AFS Communications Plan.
2. Use a variety of approaches to share current scientific and policy information with members in easily understandable formats, potentially:
  - a. Develop articles on projects and programs that do not lend themselves to AFS publications.
  - b. Provide summaries of recent AFS and other journal articles.
  - c. Develop and release fisheries news items.
3. Explore opportunities for fee-based electronic information dissemination to non-members.

#### Networking

1. Provide a first-class annual meeting in Tampa, Florida in August 2017 with the theme "Fisheries Ecosystems from Uplands to Oceans."
2. Attend the four AFS Division meetings and Chapter meetings as possible.
3. Share observations with members on Presidential travel to fisheries societies meetings in other countries.

4. Explore approaches to increase information transfer among other fisheries societies and AFS.

#### Advocacy

1. Support the AFS Policy Fellowship Program to update AFS policies.
2. Continue Congressional Hill briefings as appropriate topics arise.
3. Ensure appropriate and timely AFS responses to legislative and policy issues that affect fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems.

#### Governance

1. Support the AFS development and fund-raising program to include actively pursuing government and foundation grants for targeted programmatic expansions.
2. Explore methods to build membership, particularly among Chapter affiliate members, by clearly describing the value-added benefits of AFS membership, and by providing membership incentives and evaluating their effectiveness.
3. Use some of my President's Commentary columns to provide background and explain aspects of AFS business that are less familiar to many members.

## Attachment B.

### 2017 Executive Director Proposed Annual Work Plan

#### AFS Executive Director Doug Austen

Submitted to AFS Incoming President Joe Margraf, AFS Management Committee and AFS Governing Board

AFS Kansas City Annual Meeting, August 19-20, 2016

Goal Summary	Specific Activities	Target or goal	Status Update
<b>Science Goal:</b> <i>(Advance and promote fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences).</i>			
Annual Meeting Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Work with Joe Margraf, Florida Chapter host organization, AFS staff and various partners to host a high quality annual meeting.</li><li>2. Continue to develop joint TWS-AFS meeting in 2019</li><li>3. Conduct feasibility assessment and background research on virtual attendance for AFS meetings including the development of podcasts and other tools.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet financial target for Tampa meeting</li><li>• Obtain signed MOU with TWS</li><li>• Provide report to MC and GB by Tampa meeting.</li></ul>	
Review and enhancement of <i>Fisheries</i> magazine	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Complete new editorial structure for fisheries</li><li>2. Continue to identify and develop timely and scientifically rigorous thematic issues for <i>Fisheries</i>.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least two thematic issues of <i>Fisheries</i> published</li></ul>	

Publishing contract re-bidding	Work with Director of Publications and special committee to ensure that AFS receives high quality bids and that the Society finalizes a new contract with a publisher that will provide the highest quality journals with a competitive financial package.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New contract in place by July 1, 2017</li> </ul>	
Expand utilization of AFS journals	Expand the reach of AFS journals through integration with AFS communications tools, promotional efforts by the publisher, outreach of content via webinars and other means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase number of hits to journal web pages and downloads of articles.</li> <li>Increase impact factors of journals</li> </ul>	
Explore open access joint journal with TWS	Work with POC and TWS to develop scoping document to fully evaluate potential for this proposed open access journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support POC and AFS leadership in developing concept document and evaluation report.</li> </ul>	
<b>Education Goal: (Support education and professional development in fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences).</b>			
CE @ annual meeting	Develop full slate of high quality Tampa CE classes	At least 8 courses successfully offered at Tampa annual meeting	
CE Distance Learning offerings	Continue to expand CE distance learning offerings through AFS HQ and in conjunction with AFS units	At least one full CE course provided using distance learning technology	
<b>Education subgoal: Certification Program</b>			
Certification program assessment to better understand and document utilization and value certification	<p>Certification assessment tool developed by Gail (Survey Monkey) but not deployed. Findings of survey can be used for improve and market certification program.</p> <p>Complete survey and CE programmatic assessment and utilize to support mid-year GB retreat discussions.</p>	Complete survey and provide report to CE committee and AFS leadership	
Re-engineering of administrative aspects of certification program	Need to improve automation and business process of certification to reduce management time.		

Communication Goal: <i>(Disseminate fisheries science information).</i>			
Operational Communications Work Plan for CTeam	Prepare operational communications framework and work plan to implement CCmte and CTeam priority activities, as agreed by GB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2017, continue to update CTeam operational document alongside Communications Committee</li> </ul>	
Reach and utilization of AFS journals	Expand reach of AFS journals through integration with AFS communications tools, promotional efforts by the publisher, outreach of content via webinars and other means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of hits to journal web pages and downloads of articles</li> <li>Continue to increase impact factors of journals</li> <li>Ramp up publisher's communications outreach to key science audiences via social media and other tools/tactics</li> </ul>	
AFS Social Media Presence	<p>Expand AFS social media presence</p> <p>For Units, establish standards and guidelines for each social media platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merge social media standards and guidelines document into Procedures Manual through GB and share with Units</li> <li>Continue to increase social media interactivity on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram</li> <li>Plan workshops and other training on successful social media planning and implementation</li> </ul>	
Website Launch, Upgrades and Maintenance	<p>Successfully launch and maintain new Society website</p> <p>Move old content to storage</p> <p>Help Units set up their own websites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade the AFS website, post-launch</li> <li>Continue to move old content to storage</li> <li>Work with Units on migrating their content to our format</li> </ul>	
AFS e-newsletter and Blog	<p>Create a new science blog to highlight journal and magazine articles</p> <p>Update look of the newsletter while increasing the number of members and non-members accessing it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test different blog formats to determine most effective one</li> <li>Increase the number of members and non-members opening the e-newsletter</li> </ul>	
Science Policy Engagement	Expand policy reviews and utilize a variety of media outlets to convey science on policy issues, including potential Op-Ed development for national media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On Capitol Hill, work with partner agencies and NGOs to promote hearings</li> <li>Feature policy hearings on website, in social media and through magazine and newsletter outreach</li> </ul>	

	Promote AFS policy work through website, social media and newsletter outreach.		
Institutional Branding	Start developing standards and guidelines for an AFS re-branding effort, anticipating the 150 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of AFS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct preliminary branding research in anticipation of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary goal</li> </ul>	
<b>Networking Goal:</b> <i>(Provide forums and networks to promote interaction among fisheries professionals and students).</i>			
Continue to expand AFS partnership efforts with other organizations	Build new cooperative agreements or other partnership agreements with organizations with shared interests and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop new agreement with USGS and renew expired agreements as needed (e.g. BLM)</li> <li>Further develop CASS partnership</li> </ul>	
World Council of Fisheries Societies (WCFS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build new partnership and identify potential WCFS members.</li> <li>Complete new budget, dues formula, and improve financial management of WCFS</li> <li>Evaluate need to separate legal and tax status.</li> </ol>		
<b>Advocacy Goal:</b> <i>(Promote the fisheries profession and support evidence-based decision making for the conservation, development, and sustainable use of fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems).</i>			
Congressional briefings	Identify appropriate topics and successfully accomplish events.	Meet obligations of the various cooperative agreements	
Policy revisions	Finalize new policy development process	Complete review with Officers, MC, and GB and implement new process.	
Fully develop the AFS Policy Fellows Program	Expand funding for policy program in 2016	Hire at least one policy fellow and two interns.	
<b>Governance Goal:</b> <i>(Practice good governance of the Society and its member units).</i>			
Development program	Staff and launch AFS development program with goal of \$100,000 in new funds in CY2017	\$100,000 in new funds for AFS	

Continue to Evaluate performance of all AFS contractors	Identify key contracts for evaluation and potential re-bidding of vendors. Focus on audit contract.	Review audit contract.	
Support of AFS Officers, MC, and GB activities	Complete Governing Board report submission tool and develop strong Officer retreat agenda	Reporting tool complete in time for mid-year report submission	
Marketing AFS membership	Develop new programs and content to expand AFS membership including, but not limited to, new member welcome kit and other promo materials, working with chapters to move more affiliates into AFS membership status, and other activities.	10% increase in total member numbers for AFS in 2017 over 2016	

## Attachment C.

### American Fisheries Society 2017 Annual Budget Report

August 15, 2016

The Society's 2017 Annual Budget shows Revenues of \$4,035,000 Expenses of \$4,359,000 resulting in a Net Change from Operations of (\$325,000). The 2017 budgeted Net Change is on par with the 2016 Budget and 2015 Actual which both showing similar net operating shortfalls.

Category	2017 Budget	2016 Budget	2015 Actual
Revenue	\$4,035,000	\$3,519,000	\$3,464,000
Expense	<u>\$4,360,000</u>	<u>\$3,763,000</u>	<u>\$3,798,000</u>
Net Change			
From Operations	(\$325,000)	(\$244,000)	(\$334,000)
Restricted contributions	<u>\$118,000</u>	<u>\$117,000</u>	<u>\$166,000</u>
<b>Total Net Change</b>	<b>(\$207,000)</b>	<b>(\$127,000)</b>	<b>(\$168,000)</b>

The 2017 Budget is not significantly different in scope from 2016 and it contains many of the same programs carried over into the new fiscal year. As with any budget, some aspects are sounder in basis than others. For example, projecting annual meeting revenue and expenses is built on many years of meeting data with many contracts already in place. In Publications, the Books program delivers stable revenues while Journal revenues are based on a contractual revenue-sharing agreement.

Other aspects are less defined in terms of the potential financial impact. For example, how rapidly and to what degree will the Development function generate net new fundraising? Will new education programming engage members and yield non-dues revenue? How successful will fundraising be for Special Publication 30: Monetary Values? What impact will the Chapter Rebate program have on membership? The impact of these questions and similar ones may greatly affect the Budget as it is presented here and of course, staff and Society officers will monitor it closely and report changes as they are identified.

Another critical question and long-term challenge for consideration by the Management Committee and Governing Board is: *How will the Society grow revenues and allocate resources over the next few years to support its activities and initiatives and rebalance its budget?* The Society's financial position has fallen over the past few years as it has invested in new staff and infrastructure improvements (Director of Development, PCG communications study, database enhancements, etc). There likely isn't going to be one new program on the horizon generating significant revenues. Instead, the Society will probably need to assess program results for all major activities and optimize profit wherever possible (being more aggressive with sales activities, pricing its products more competitively, etc).

Regarding technology and equipment, the Society is budgeting for the new Board reporting tool (\$50,000), a new education / learning management system (\$25,000) and miscellaneous enhancements to other technologies (\$16,000) for replacement computers, minor iMIS enhancements, etc.

The 2017 Budget continues the format presenting the budget on a functional / program basis. In 2016, staff consolidated the accounting codes reducing it from over 1,000 accounts to a manageable set and adding new program codes for better tracking of financial results. This approach will give the Society stronger programmatic control over its activities and provide clearer information about trends and performance.

This Report is organized as follows:

Page 2 Budget Report on a Functional Basis  
Page 3 Revenue Budget on a Program Basis  
Page 4 Notes to Revenue Budget  
Page 6 Expense Budget on a Program Basis  
Page 7 Notes to Expense Budget  
Page 9 Annual Meeting Tampa Budget

Finally, a Budget (powerpoint) presentation will be given at the Management Committee and Governing Board meetings and covering approaches for improving the Society's financial position.

## AFS 2017 Annual Budget Functional Basis

Functional Department	Budget 2017	May 2016 YTD - Actual		2016 Budget	2015 Annual
		2016	2015	Budget	Actual
<b><u>Revenue</u></b>					
Administration	\$ 329,000	\$167,352	\$151,393	\$348,000	\$(85,556)
Communications	-	-	-	-	-
Education	48,000	2,575	2,775	26,000	19,255
Governance	-	-	-	-	-
Grants & Contracts	559,000	-	-	588,000	208,255
Meetings	1,331,000	123,298	304,785	794,000	1,549,496
Membership	532,000	450,639	458,693	609,000	542,322
Policy	22,100	-	-	-	-
Publications	1,214,000	875,468	915,832	1,153,500	1,230,351
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,035,100</b>	<b>1,619,332</b>	<b>1,833,478</b>	<b>3,518,500</b>	<b>3,464,123</b>
<b><u>Expense</u></b>					
Administration	2,470,900	930,587	939,182	2,384,500	2,371,024
Communications	45,200	4,458	8,222	48,000	19,053
Education	47,000	149	272	35,000	4,545
Governance	37,700	16,655	19,526	51,000	32,078
Grants & Contracts	343,500	446	1,749	283,000	101,000
Meetings	1,153,000	90,488	9,435	670,000	1,000,358
Membership	85,100	143,514	70,105	130,000	103,375
Policy	26,800	-	-	31,000	-
Publications	150,600	56,344	35,426	130,000	166,294
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,359,800</b>	<b>1,242,641</b>	<b>1,083,917</b>	<b>3,762,500</b>	<b>3,797,727</b>
<b>Net Change from Operations</b>	<b>(324,700)</b>	<b>376,691</b>	<b>749,561</b>	<b>(244,000)</b>	<b>(333,604)</b>

Restricted contributions	122,000	(6,634)	151,191	117,000	165,659
Rotenone (net)	(4,000)	-	-	-	-
Total Non-Operating	118,000	(6,634)	151,191	117,000	165,659
<b>Total Net Change</b>	<b>(206,700)</b>	<b>370,057</b>	<b>900,752</b>	<b>(127,000)</b>	<b>(167,945)</b>

## AFS 2017 Annual Budget Program Basis

	Program #	Budget 2017	May 2016 YTD - Actual		2016 Budget	2015 Annual
			2016	2015	Budget	Actual
<b><u>Revenue</u></b>						
Administration	110	329,000	\$167,352	\$151,393	\$348,000	(\$85,556)
Staff Costs	120					
Technology	130					
Communication	210					
Web	220					
Development	230					
Continuing Education	310	16,000			12,000	13,360
Rotenone	320	22,000				
Certification	330	5,000	2,575	2,775	8,000	5,895
Other Education	340	5,000			6,000	
Board	410					
Committees	420					
Hutton	510	129,000			129,000	95,400
MSU/Inland Fisheries	520	-			10,000	
Climate Science Center / Cornell	530	131,000			105,000	112,855
Other Grants & Contracts	540	299,000			344,000	
Annual Meeting	610	1,331,000	123,298	304,785	794,000	1,549,496
Other Meetings	620					
WCFS	630					
Membership	710	485,000	429,514	442,520	557,000	497,745
Awards	720	4,000	2,946	2,338	6,000	3,678
Mem Other	730	13,000	3,579	2,885	16,000	9,049
Jobs	740	30,000	14,600	10,950	30,000	31,850
Policy	810	22,100				
Books	910	130,000	78,353	45,508	119,500	109,916

Journals	920	1,081,000	774,765	869,105	1,034,000	1,117,347
Fisheries	930	-	60			372
Newsletter	940	-				
Other Publications	950	3,000	22,290	1,219		2,716
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>4,035,100</b>	<b>1,619,332</b>	<b>1,833,478</b>	<b>3,518,500</b>	<b>3,464,123</b>

### Notes to the Program Revenue Budget

(Favorable ↑; Unfavorable ↓)

Function	Code #	Status	Description	Assumptions / Explanations
Administration	110	↓	Primarily investment income	Larger portion of the investment account is comprised of restricted funds
Continuing Education	310	↑	CE course registration fees	Anticipating incremental growth in CE program participation
Rotenone	320	↑	Registration fees	New, Recording program income for better tracking purposes. Rotenone is a restricted program and not part of AFS Operations.
Certification	330	n/c	Certification fees	No change
Other education	340	n/c	Potential sponsorship for online education (webinars)	No change
Hutton	510	n/c	Program funding	Same level of anticipated support
CSC / Cornell	530	↑	Program funding	Interim funding for completing phase 2 site visits.
Other Grants and Contracts	540	↓	General fundraising TBD and SP30 Publication	Assuming \$100k in development (same as in 2016) and recognizing \$199k in SP30 funding, slightly less than last year with the deferral of more publication sales into future years.
Annual Meeting	610	↑	Tampa Meeting- registration, fundraising and exhibit sales	Proposed increasing ME fee from \$430 to \$475; budget built on 2,000+ attendees vs. 1,000 expected in KC.
Membership	710	↓	Individual and corporate dues	Budgeting a 5% increase from current-August 2016 levels; 2016 budget was unrealistic given the KC meeting will not be a big membership generator
Awards	720	n/c	Award sales	Essentially no change
Membership Other	730	n/c	Miscellaneous sales and donations	Essentially no change



Jobs	740	n/c	Job board income	Income from the job board has fallen over the past few years and leveled off around \$30k as more official members take advantage of packages.
Policy	810	↑	Coop Support	Funding now reported against related program expenses
Books	910	n/c	Publications sales	Sales have leveled off at \$160k down from nearly \$200k several years ago. Income shown net of \$30k of cost of sales; 2015 includes other sales costs.
Journals	920	n/c	Journal subscriptions, editorial support, electronic services, \$1M prorated advance makes up this line item.	Essentially no change. Staff are working with T&F staff to improve services and marketing approaches. 2015 total is slightly overstated with 2014 income reported in 2015.
Other Publications	950	n/c	Miscellaneous sales	Essentially no change.



## AFS 2017 Annual Budget Program Basis - EXPENSES

	Program #	Budget 2017	May 2016 YTD - Actual		2016 Budget	2015 Annual
			2016	2015	Budget	Actual
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>						
Administration	110	292,900	160,203	226,904	343,000	573,982
Staff Costs	120	2,144,000	770,109	688,469	2,036,500	1,766,050
Technology	130	34,000	275	23,809	5,000	30,992
Communication	210	15,000	2,834	6,602	28,000	10,104
Web	220	18,200	1,620	1,620	8,000	8,949
Development	230	12,000	4		12,000	
Continuing Education	310	14,000			10,000	4,217
Rotenone	320	18,000				
Certification	330	1,000	149	272	1,000	328
Other Education	340	14,000			24,000	
Board	410	35,700	16,655	19,526	51,000	32,078

Committees	420	2,000	-	-	-	-
Hutton	510	79,000	446	1,749	75,000	101,000
MSU/Inland Fisheries	520	-				
Cornell	530	83,500			40,000	
Other Grants & Contracts	540	181,000			168,000	
Annual Meeting	610	1,153,000	90,488	9,435	670,000	1,000,358
Other Meetings	620					
WCFS	630					
Membership	710	79,000	110,768	67,687	116,000	80,245
Awards	720	5,000	32,730	2,092	13,000	22,317
Mem Other	730	1,100	16	326	1,000	813
Jobs	740					
POlity	810	26,800			31,000	
Books	910	31,500	10,724	17,221	32,000	42,748
Journals	920	112,000	43,198	15,855	95,000	116,732
Fisheries	930	7,100	2,422	2,350	3,000	6,814
Newsletter	940	0				
Other Publications	950	0				
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>4,359,800</b>	<b>1,242,643</b>	<b>1,083,917</b>	<b>3,762,500</b>	<b>3,797,726</b>
<b>Net Change from Operations</b>		<b>(324,700)</b>	<b>376,689</b>	<b>749,561</b>	<b>(244,000)</b>	<b>(333,603)</b>
<b>Non-Operating (shown on a net basis)</b>						
Restricted contributions	550	122,000	(6,634)	151,191	117,000	165,659
Rotenone (net)	320	(4,000)				
Total Non-Operating		118,000	(6,634)	151,191	117,000	165,659
<b>TOTAL NET CHANGE</b>		<b>(\$206,700)</b>	<b>\$370,055</b>	<b>\$900,752</b>	<b>(\$127,000)</b>	<b>(\$167,945)</b>

### Notes to the Program Expense Budget

(Favorable ; Unfavorable )

Function	Code #	Status	Description	Assumptions / Explanations
Administration	110		Office admin, accounting, general staff travel, depreciation,	No PCG expenses, Technology and Web moved to separate program centers.
Staff Costs	120		Staff, benefit and training costs	All staff positions filled, 4% salary increase, 10% increase medical-dental premium, higher eligibility for retirement plan

Technology	130	n/c	IT helpdesk and consulting support, computer supplies and software	Essentially no change as costs previously recorded in #110 have been segregated.
Communications	210	↓	General communications and marketing services	Expecting more activities to be designed electronically. The 2016 budget was built using more printed services and in anticipation of hiring a new Communications Director.
Web Site	220	↑	Web hosting and technical support.	These costs have been segregated from the Administration budget and include fees for external technical support, new for 2017.
Development	230	n/c	Travel and marketing costs	This budget was created in anticipation of hiring new Development Director and will evolve as the function moves forward.
Continuing Education	310	n/c	Expenses for delivering CE at the annual meeting	Essentially no change.
Rotenone	320	↑	Program and presenter expenses	New, Recording program expense for tracking purposes. Rotenone is a restricted program and not part of AFS Operations.
Certification	320	n/c	Administration expenses	Essentially no change.
Other Education	330	↓	Marketing and learning system costs	Costs for supporting a new Learning Management System (LMS). Prior year included depreciation expense.
Board	410	↓	Travel and meeting expenses	Prior year was over budgeted in travel for Officer retreat
Committees	420	↑	Conference calls, etc	Segregating expenses for committees
Hutton	510	n/c	Scholarships and admin costs	Budgeting for same number of awards as last year; will be scaled as funding and applications vary
MSU / Inland Fisheries	520	n/c	Inland Fisheries conference, Rome, Italy 2015	This program was completed and the proceedings published in 2016
Cornell / Climate Science Centers	530	↑	Contract with Cornell	Project is tracking slightly behind original schedule and now includes external consulting support of \$33K reducing the OH covered
Other Grants & Contracts	540	↑	Expenses for SP30	Expensing all project costs in 2017, same year the book is published, which differs from 2016.

Annual Meeting	610	↑	Tampa Meeting- Food, AV and other meeting expenses	Based on 2,000+ attendees
Membership	710	↓	Database support, bank fees, Unit rebates, marketing	Budget reduced reflecting lower support and promotional costs
Awards	720	↓	Cost of awards	Similar to 2016 and fewer fellow awards than in 2015.
Member Other	730	n/c	Mail list and other minor products	Administrative expenses to support various product sales
Policy	810	↓	Support for the Policy Director and Analyst	New program code separating travel and Capitol Hill briefing costs
Books	910	↓	Cost of sales and related publishing costs	Books Intl costs, bank fees, printing and postage
Journals	920	↓	Journal editorial and production expenses	Editorial support and revenue sharing with T&F
Fisheries Magazine	930	n/c	Costs to produce the magazine	Stipends and production expenses

---

**American Fisheries Society**  
**ANNUAL MEETING BUDGET SUMMARY -**  
**TAMPA 2017**  
8/15/2016  
**TOTALS**

Description	Budget at These Attendance Levels			% of Revenue
	1,500	2,000	2,500	
Registration	\$690,000	\$920,000	\$1,151,000	69%
Fundraising	\$148,000	\$151,000	\$153,000	11%
Credits	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	11%
Tradeshow	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	7%
Other Fees	\$17,000	\$25,000	\$32,000	2%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,090,000</b>	<b>\$1,331,000</b>	<b>\$1,571,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Networking	\$560,000	\$693,000	\$851,000	52%
Communications	\$147,000	\$169,000	\$190,000	13%

Arrangements	\$121,000	\$134,000	\$148,000	10%
AFS / LAC Travel and Expenses	\$43,000	\$43,000	\$43,000	3%
Program Expenses	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	1%
Contingency (2.0%)	\$18,000	\$21,000	\$25,000	2%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$905,000</b>	<b>\$1,076,000</b>	<b>\$1,273,000</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Meeting Net Profit</b>	<b>\$185,000</b>	<b>\$255,000</b>	<b>\$298,000</b>	<b>19%</b>
Profit Sharing - 30%	\$56,000	\$77,000	\$89,000	
<b>AFS Profit Share</b>	<b>\$129,000</b>	<b>\$178,000</b>	<b>\$209,000</b>	

## Attachment D.

**To:** Ron Essig, *President*

**From:** Tom Bigford, AFS Policy Director and President Fish Habitat Section

**Date:** July 20, 2016

### **I. Motion Report**

**A) Recommended Motion #1:** Approve “Future of the Nation’s Fisheries and Aquatic Resources: Recommendations for the Next President” final production and release in November 2016.

**B) Minority Views:** Among the comments received during reviews of earlier drafts or the Management Committee discussion were:

- The format of one-page summaries including several recommendations indicates AFS is moving away from its core mission based on sound science – That concern was addressed by reminding all that this type of report (very brief, 30,000 foot perspective, one page per each of about 12 priorities) needs to be concise, with a careful mix of facts, background, and recommendations. The intent is to acquaint the next President with AFS, prompt consideration of the issues most important to AFS, and remind the transition team that AFS is a solid source of fisheries-related knowledge.
- We are moving away from neutral advice and into advocacy – Some reviewers drew an important distinction between sharing our technical knowledge and becoming an advocate for a particular position. Advocacy is one of the six primary goals of the AFS strategic plan and AFS has a long history of taking strong positions on projects or issues, but the amount of advocacy drew attention.

### **C) Background for Motion:**

This report has been evolving since January 2016. AFS either hosted or attended more than two dozen events to discuss fisheries-related topics that needed to be brought to the attention of the next President. Our intent in all discussions was to generate discussion, identify recurring themes, and identify partners who would assist in preparing the report or would sign on as a supporter.

Our schedule was designed to have a final report for the transition team of the President-elect in early November. Along the way we shared versions of the report several times prior to the one in this GB briefing book:

- An early rough draft of this report was shared with a small group of people who provided direct input. One recipient, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, forwarded that version to state directors.
- The first, complete draft was shared with the AFS Management Committee prior to its July 18<sup>th</sup> call. Comments received from that discussion were addressed in preparing a second draft.
- That second draft is included in the GB Briefing Book. Comments received prior to the GB meeting on that draft will be compiled and shared with the full GB during the GB discussion of this topic and this motion.

**A) Recommended Motion #2:** Approve the AFS plan “Strengthening the AFS Policy Program” for implementation in fall 2016, including Option #4 as the preferred approach, namely to “redirect primary focus to letters, briefings, and other actions.”

**B) Minority Views:**

Two minority views were received on earlier versions of this document.

- Some descriptions of options implied that AFS was going to extend beyond its traditional role of providing neutral scientific knowledge. One reviewer interpreted the report to imply AFS was pursuing a decision-making role akin to that of a state or federal agency. The point was emphasized by stating that it is appropriate for AFS to provide technical input on various alternatives but not to state a preference for one alternative over another.
- A related concern was that AFS products would lose their usefulness and scientific value if they were condensed from our historical approaches to issue summaries and policy statements.

**C) Background for Motion:**

Detailed background is provided in the opening pages of the report included in this GB briefing book. At the heart of this effort is the clear realization that we need to make significant changes to a program that lacks the capacity to meet the Society’s by-laws or to make best use of the issue summaries and policy statements. Because of insufficient staff, 37 of the 38 AFS policy documents fails to meet our own expectations. And we fail to use approved policies to influence decisions for the benefit of fisheries. During discussions at the 2016 mid-year meeting all agreed we need to evaluate options that are sustainable given AFS staff capacity, responsive to our mission and goals, and reflected in a communication plan designed to influence specific decisions. If supported as explained in the report, Option #4 will meet those expectations.

## Attachment E.

### Strengthening the AFS Policy Program

This analysis was requested by the Governing Board at its April 2016 mid-year meeting. The AFS Policy Program was asked to evaluate current activities (policy statements, comment letters, resolutions, web offerings, social media postings, congressional briefings, symposia and other events at AFS meetings, and more) and propose alternatives for improved success. This effort will:

- complete this report for discussion during the GB meeting in Kansas City;
- identify a preferred direction; and
- prepare our Society for implementation.

Policy Program History - AFS interests in policy and advocacy date back to our formative years in the 1870s when we shared scientific opinions on shellfish aquaculture. Over the decades our interests expanded to include finfish and all fisheries issues, and stretched well beyond science. During our 63rd annual meeting (1933) then-President Fred A. Westerman appointed a committee to draft an American Game Fish Policy, signaling our first official foray into Society policy statements. After five years of effort, the North American Fish Policy was presented at the 68th annual meeting, adopted by the membership, and published in the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society (1939, 68:40-51). As an early example of our Society's policy work over the years, past Executive Director Carl Sullivan coordinated AFS contributions to shape the Wallop-Breaux amendments (1984) to the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act. Efforts leading to those amendments and their implementation were major factors in the National Wildlife Federation's decisions to give AFS an Outstanding Organization Award (1980) and then Carl Sullivan (1989) their Conservation Achievement Award, but to recognize "outstanding contributions to the wise use and management of the nation's natural resources."

The AFS Policy Program evolved steadily over the decades. AFS President Carlos Fetterolf led a successful effort during 1992-1993 to encourage our Society to advocate for sound science and management. His work provided the basis for the AFS "Advocacy Guidelines" in place today (see <http://fisheries.org/policy-media/advocacy-guidelines/>). At that same time (1991-1994), AFS hired Pam McClelland as its first "Policy Planner," a full-time position with a focus on using science to inform management and influence policy.

Those efforts set the stage for a multi-pronged approach to policy matters. We created a Resource Policy Committee to help the Society evaluate, develop, and maintain resource policies by assessing concerns of the membership, advising the AFS President and Executive Director about aquatic resource issues, producing or coordinating draft resource policy statements for Society approval, and reviewing approved policies to ensure continued

usefulness (see <http://fisheries.org/about/committees/resource-policy-committee/>). AFS also established a Resolutions Committee that occasionally has ventured into policy (see <http://fisheries.org/about/governance/procedures/standing-and-special-committee/#resolutions>).

Our Society also has become more active in writing letters or developing facts to influence decisions related to fish. Several times each year since 2007 we have submitted technical comments via our own letters or by co-signing with multiple groups (see <http://fisheries.org/policy-media/policy-letters/>). The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (a consortium of more than 100 fishing and hunting groups), FishNet (mostly recreational fishing interests, led by the American Sportfishing Association, a trade association), and the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies (six professional societies) and American Institute of Biological Sciences (dozens of professional societies) have proven to be our most effective allies. The National Wildlife Federation, coupled with other general membership organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, might offer a fourth type of network to generate joint policy letters. Similarly, efforts such as the ASA FishNet and our own attempt at a Fisheries Action Network from the mid-1990s might provide insights to how AFS might identify key opportunities, but we need to proceed cautiously, as some efforts may be counter to our science-based mission.

A few years after Pam McClelland's appointment, our Policy Program efforts were supported by a series of short-term interns and entry-level staff:

- 1997-2008 – Sea Grant Fellows (Lee Benaka, Nature McGinn, Katherine McLaughlin, Alesia Read (each for approximately one-year)
- 2003-2013 – Policy and Development Coordinator position on the AFS staff and filled by four individuals (Brooke Zanetell, Jessica Guebther, Elden Hawkes, Kevin Lynch)

During those early years, AFS also hosted three federal employees for short-term projects, including establishing closer connections with key agencies. Ron Eisler from the U.S. Geological Survey, Eugene Fritz from NOAA/National Ocean Service, and Margaret Lorenz from NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service each worked on short-term assignment at AFS in the early 2000s.

The efforts of those 12 individuals supported the AFS Policy Program from 1991 through 2014, and set the stage for two significant advances. First, AFS pursued cooperative agreements with two federal agencies. The first agreement was with the NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service to provide services, including policy work via a congressional briefing. The five-year NOAA agreement was renewed to ensure a professional relationship through fiscal year 2020. AFS signed a second multi-year financial arrangement in mid-2015 with the U.S. Forest Service to organize one congressional briefing each year. Other agreements with the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management are possible, each with a strong policy thread. Those activities build nicely on AFS staff efforts to track policy-

related actions by Congress, government agencies, and natural resource partners and write occasional letters regarding their actions.

The second major action unfolded over the past few years, encouraged by Executive Director Doug Austen and reflected by financial decisions made by AFS leadership. The goal was to support a deeper commitment to policy across the fisheries and aquatic resource sectors. In the intervening 2.5 years, the following personnel actions have positioned AFS to play an active role in fisheries issues, and established a solid basis for future improvements.

- March 2014 – Hired first Policy Director (Tom Bigford).
- October 2014 – Enhanced staff capacity when new Policy Intern and Policy Fellow programs were approved by AFS leadership.
- December 2014 – Tested the idea of a paid Policy Internship for young AFS members who are in undergraduate school or early in their graduate schooling. One intern (Owen Mulvey-McFerron) volunteered full time for three weeks on a mix of policy tasks.
- January 2015 – Hired first Policy Fellow (Patrick Shirey) to update and merge our three out-of-date policies on threatened and endangered species. The paid, half-time, six-month Policy Fellowship was designed for a fisheries professional who has completed graduate training and moved into the work force.
- April 2015 – Invested more deeply in the Policy Internship program, renewing our contract with Owen Mulvey-McFerron and hiring Valerie Holland, both for paid, full-time summer positions.
- December 2015 – With support from leadership, hired a Policy Analyst to add long-term stability and depth to the Policy Program. As a full-time employee, Taylor Pool provided immediate benefits across all program tasks. Also in December AFS hired a second Policy Fellow (Tracy Wendt; paid, half-time for six months this time focusing on instream flow issues).
- April 2016 – Hired two more paid summer Policy Interns (undergraduates Zach Steffensmeier and Marcos Holland) to work on two reports – “Fisheries Recommendations for the Next Administration” and “Strengthening the AFS Policy Program.”

We are now at another critical juncture as we challenge ourselves to serve a stronger role in the natural resource and fisheries arenas. Questions include whether a different mix of products and roles would enable AFS to wield greater influence either alone or with our partners.

Throughout this history, AFS staff have worked closely with the AFS Resource Policy Committee and other AFS units. While AFS has written several dozen letters to government leaders on fish issues our focus has been to summarize the literature and creating policy statements for priority topics – 38 as of mid-2016. Those statements are the primary products of the Resource Policy Committee, supplemented recently by the two AFS Policy Fellows listed above.

In combination, the literature reviews, policies, letters, and other products represent a steady effort to make best use of AFS staff and to reflect our strategic plan, especially our six goals:

- Science Goal: Advance and promote fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences.
- Education Goal: Support education and professional development in fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic sciences.
- Communication Goal: Disseminate fisheries science information.
- Networking Goal: Provide forums and networks to promote interaction among fisheries professionals and students.
- Advocacy Goal: Promote the fisheries profession and support evidence-based decision making for the conservation, development, and wise use of fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems.
- Governance Goal: Practice good governance of the Society and its member units.

Each goal embraces our policy and advocacy efforts and is supported more deeply by more specific strategies (see <http://fisheries.org/about/governance/strategic-plan-2015-2019/>).

**Our Charge** – Our charge is to do better, to strengthen our performance. The opportunity is real since the AFS Policy Program efforts during the past two decades have not been accompanied by a clear strategy to apply those policies to fisheries decisions. Our efforts to review the literature and develop policy recommendations usually stopped there, followed by minimal communication with affected industries, agencies, or legislatures. As a Society, we have technical knowledge and professional experience across the fisheries disciplines that could inform decisions by those state and federal agencies. That shortcoming left our Society on the fringes of important decisions, without established opportunities to provide neutral analyses based on the best information. This lapse has become more evident in the past two years as AFS sharpened its policy focus and sought to become more influential in aquatic science arenas. AFS, the experts on fisheries since 1870, needs to continue its efforts to carve out roles with decision makers on key fisheries and aquatic resource issues.

As our Society increased its presence on science, management, and policy fronts, the need for serious introspection became more urgent. At the suggestion of Executive Director Doug Austen, and with the full support of the AFS Policy team, these issues were raised in late 2015 and placed on the agenda for our 2016 Mid-Year Governing Board meeting. The Mid-Year GB discussion aired concerns related to efficiency and effectiveness, leading to consensus around the charge.

This report responds to that GB task and will inform a more detailed discussion at the Governing Board meeting in Kansas City on August 20, 2016. Our hope is that the Governing Board will accept the recommendations described below, and charge the Society to proceed

with implementation. A special meeting has been scheduled on August 24 in Kansas City to discuss those next steps and our schedule.

**Our Options** – Reflecting on our charge from the Governing Board, we should consider options to take greater advantage of our primary assets (fisheries-related knowledge and experience) as we seek to become more influential in the science, management, policy, and education arenas. Those options range from the status quo to a major shift, as summarized below and presented in greater depth in the two tables at the end of this report.

- Option #1, Status Quo: This option reflects our current approach, with a focus on occasional letters (about 2-5 per year, perhaps more depending on how our new role evolves with the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies, CASS) we write, signing on to more letters (perhaps 10-15) authored by others but with an AFS signature indicating concurrence, briefings or other tasks as required via cooperative agreements or other legal documents, our traditional 5-yr reviews on existing policies (addressing about 7-8 of our 38 policies annually), and a new policy statement about every 2-4 years.
- Option #2, Revised By-laws to Ease Workload: This option covers the same suite of activities mentioned under Option #1 but with one significant change. Since our work on policies is our most challenging task, this option would shift from a 5-yr to a 10-yr review cycle for existing policies (about 3-4 policies reviewed annually, down from 7-8 under Option #1). The reduced pace would be matched with revised AFS by-laws to enable us to incorporate the best available science in a schedule we would hope to maintain.
- Option #3, Shift to Shorter Background Documents: With this option we would revise all existing policy documents into much more concise scientific summaries and policy statements, still supported by our expert excerpts from the technical literature, professional testimonials, or other references. The dual intent is to reduce effort in writing and updating the documents while also increasing the prospects of decision makers reading our products. As with Options #1 and 2, we'd transition toward shorter documents over the course of years, revising about 7-8 per year if we combine shorter documents with a 10-yr review cycle. The shorter documents would include fewer references but still sufficient to support our statements.
- Option #4, Redirect Primary Focus to Letters, Briefings, and Other Actions: Since policy statements and related literature reviews require so much effort, this option proposes to shift our attention to other tools to share fisheries knowledge and influence decisions. We would need to develop a priority list of issues to address and partners to share the effort. Fortunately AFS has a long history of identifying key issues (we have developed 38 literature summaries) so the shift would not be too abrupt. The new products would be even more succinct than those discussed in Option #3 but would still include key references and facts. A sub-option would be to develop the condensed

summaries in Option #3 and use them to bolster our work in Option #4, but that extra work would require substantial effort.

With each option AFS will need to provide the capacity to succeed. Permanent staff in Bethesda, temporary Policy Fellows and Interns, AFS volunteers on the Resource Policies Committee (RPC), and experts from other AFS units will need to redirect effort toward our selected approach. One option could be to ask each AFS division and/or section to identify a person to serve on the RPC, thereby enhancing the RPC's technical capacity and its ability to respond nimbly to worthy issues, be they of geographic or topical interest. Another proactive approach would be to seek subject-matter experts from AFS sections and chapters to work on the issues we anticipate during some planning cycle. Both offer increased capacity compared to the status quo and simply reacting as opportunities arise.

AFS Policy staff have a draft process to help the Society determine when to engage on an issue, be it with a partner or alone, and how to develop acceptable language on tight deadlines. These criteria could apply to AFS officers, AFS Policy staff, the AFS Resource Policy Committee, and related activities in AFS divisions, sections, chapters, and committees.

This logic model could help us decide whether to respond to:

- Offers to join a sign-on letter or other document that connects to our mission and priorities;
- Identifying and developing OpEd submissions to national news media;
- Seeking or responding to opportunities to provide testimony to Congressional committees
- Requests to attend/speak at meetings with Society partners;
- Invitations to write guest pieces for a partner's publication;
- Priorities developed annually by the Resource Policy Committee; and,
- Our own decisions at all Society levels and across geographies to engage in an issue by writing a letter, visiting an agency office, talking with a private-sector group, or other opportunity.

AFS will be most inclined to engage when:

- The issue (science, management, policy, education; domestic or international; national or regional; administrative such as budget or technical such as a program review) is considered a priority to AFS leadership at the chapter, section, division, committee, or national level;

- AFS has previously engaged in the issue via an existing AFS policy statement, resolution, or other statement of Society priority and position or, in the absence of a historical role, the issue demands our attention;
- The opportunity would enable AFS to provide a new perspective or when the weight of our reputation can have a significant impact; and,
- Timing affords AFS with an opportunity to influence a key opportunity, e.g., preparing for new leadership, a bill before Congress, state or national budgets, a noteworthy event.

Often timing will be important. AFS must consider if:

- We have time to contribute in a manner that reflects our high standards, be it a written letter, guest speaking role, or other means;
- We have several days (at least) to vet both the opportunity and our proposed contribution with AFS leaders, including those with AFS units who are engaged in the issue; and,
- As noted above, our action will contribute to a pending action or decision.

This process should establish a common basis for consistent and predictable action, spanning the terms of multiple officers. Some measure of continuity is crucial as many policy actions will demand our attention for longer than the one-year term of an AFS President. The process will help our leaders at any time to determine the best course of action for AFS.

Aside from those criteria we also need to consider how we will engage. AFS currently takes actions at the level of each AFS unit – chapters, sections, divisions, national – based on decisions by the appropriate leaders. We ought to give thought to those *de facto* delegations and related coordination. The Executive Director, Deputy ED, officers, unit president, or program director cannot be expected to lead on each issue but we might want to create some level of communication so we are aware of actions, precedents, and implications. That will help us to delegate decisions to appropriate levels and to operate efficiently.

**Preferred Approach** – The AFS Policy Program recommends Option #4, a major shift away from lengthy policy documents but retaining the science-based approach more likely to influence decision makers. The mix of products envisioned with this option would reflect our annual priorities, be more flexible to accommodate proactive and reactive opportunities, and be more suitable for partnering with other organizations and agencies. Option #4 would greatly reduce our burden to maintain dozens of lengthy issue summaries while positioning our Society to be more influential across the fisheries and aquatic resource communities. Furthermore, ending the need to maintain 38 policies would free up time to focus on the subset of those and other issues where AFS can make a difference. Out-of-date policies will be maintained in an archive

on the AFS webpage (see list of archived policies at <http://fisheries.org/policy-media/policy-statements/> )

Our preferred approach has some important implications:

- This recommendation includes an emphasis on shorter, more strategic documents (as suggested in Option #3) rather than lengthy literature reviews. Some of the issues addressed in those documents can be identified proactively as we anticipate our annual work plans while others will require flexible reaction. AFS will need to establish the capacity to meet both types of demands.
- For each policy initiative, from the largest congressional briefing to a special letter, we need a communications plan complete with roles, tasks, and a schedule. The communications plan should be finalized at the same time as the policy product to ensure timely action and full success.
- With an eye toward the personnel needed to implement this recommendation, AFS needs to retain its two Policy staff positions (Director and Analyst), the Policy Fellow, and the Policy Interns. We also need to work with the Resource Policies Committee and consider roles for divisions and sections so our overall capacity will match anticipated roles and issues. A revamped Resource Policy Committee is likely to be a very important source of much-needed capacity.
- We also need to develop criteria to help us identify which issues (or types of issues) we should address based on priorities and can address based on workload and internal procedures. One important administrative point is the review processes leading to final approval. We need to establish a streamlined review process so our products can be timely. That also includes guidance on who can approve an AFS position and sign a document on behalf of the Society.
- Draft criteria were developed in 2015, are summarized on pages 3-4, and could be revisited.
- With a new approach to our Policy work, the Policy Program will need to work with the AFS Constitutional Consultant to identify changes to Society by-laws and guidance.
- We'll also need to work with the Communications Director and website team to create content, post changes, etc. For example, we'll need to update the Policy link that includes archived and "active" policy statements and the links to letters (links provided on page 1).

**Recommended Implementation Schedule** – With our preferred Option #4 we will need a schedule of issues we can anticipate in the next year or three (the proactive portion of our workload) coupled with a list of AFS Policy Program members (staff and member volunteers) who can dedicate appropriate time to each issue. That schedule will need to be revisited at least annually, reflecting obligations in cooperative agreements with federal agencies (now NOAA/NMFS, USDA/USFS), fellow scientific societies (such as the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies), hunting and fishing groups (such as through the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation

Partnership), trade associations (American Sportfishing Association, National Marine Manufacturers Association), and citizen-based groups (National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy). We'll also want to connect our efforts to our annual and division meetings so issues can be vetted and decisions shared. This effort promises to require more hands-on leadership than the status quo, at least in the beginning. We recommend that AFS staff coordinate this effort and that all AFS efforts be shared with all appropriate units. Work on a topic deemed important to an AFS division (geographic component) or section (technical knowledge) would involve AFS staff to track and assist in the short term and keep records for longer term use.

As proposed, implementation will begin in Kansas City with a special meeting on August 24 after the Governing Board renders its decision. Our intent is to integrate the new approach into Policy work throughout the Society by late 2016. Tasks will be incorporated into annual work plans for the Executive Director, Policy staff, and Resource Policy Committee effective with 2017.

# AFS Policy Program – Options for Future Directions

Option/Key features	Primary Product	Secondary Products	Process	AFS Staff Role	RPC Role	Partnerships	Implications to AFS Guidance
<b>#1 - Status quo (review/revise every 5 years)</b>	Background documents (3-75p) supporting brief AFS policy statements (1-3p) with actions. 38 currently; only 2 are up-to-date	Communications plan with press release, distribution, visits, etc. – rarely prepared but sorely needed	Reflected in existing by-laws, guidelines, etc. but rarely maintained correctly due to insufficient capacity and expertise; continuing status quo would ignore reality	Assist RPC with emphasis on steps with MC and GB; employ AFS Policy Fellow to assist on one policy per year	Assisted by some current RPC members but not a primary role. Occasionally serve as lead authors with experts from other AFS units but oft-times do not engage in writing	No history of joining with others beyond affiliations of AFS members on RPC	Pro: No need to change procedures but need to recognize existing processes are not followed Con: Lapsed policies complicate our workloads and confuse public
<b>#2 – Adjust existing process (e.g., review/revise every 10 years)</b>	Same but review and revision schedule would be extended beyond existing 5yr cycle to reflect AFS capacity	Same as with status quo	Would need firm commitment to adapt to new schedule reflected in AFS guidance to be revised	Increase support to RPC and involved units; uncertain if additional capacity can be expected from other units	Increase direct role and unit partnerships; perhaps adjust membership	Could remain AFS-only effort or with partners such as TRCP, CASS, etc.	Pro: Con: Will need to revise AFS guidance to reflect new procedures and schedule. Lots of work but necessary
<b>#3 – Shift to shorter documents</b>	2-5p statements with merged background and very concise policy positions (1-2p)	Same as with status quo	Would need firm commitment to reflect AFS guidance that would need to be revised	Still need additional support to RPC but less than #1; could reinvent RPC role and membership	Could shift as needs change from detailed documents to something shorter/concise	Subject-matter partner could help to convert best-available information into new format; with TRCP and partners or not	Pro: Con: More extensive revisions than with #1 would be needed for RPC guidance and AFS by-laws, including perhaps the review and approval process
<b>#4 – Focus on letters and briefings</b>	Letters to leaders in agencies, legislatures, and industry or briefings of them or others; convey policy intentions in letter	Still requires a communications plan but different from those needed for other options with formal products; handouts to summarize issues	Would need major revision of AFS policy and firm commitment to adapt on new process and schedule	Greater role with existing units and staff roles but lead could shift if RPC role changes	Could shift to new role converting literature into short documents or letters; might benefit from members adept at communications rather than subject-matter expertise	Greater opportunity to work with TRCP, CASS, and other existing networks	Pro: Con: Even more extensive changes than #1 or 2 since AFS would move away from background documents and policy statements to typical advocacy products like letters and briefing materials

# Associated Workload Implications

Option/Key features	Convert to New Option	Establish List of AFS Priorities	Identify Upcoming Opportunities	Pace for Conversion	Identify Policy Team
<b>#1 – Status quo</b>	Revise AFS website to move out-of-date documents to new “archive” section	Review 1998 table as revised in April 2016	Supplement existing table with emerging issues based on AFS interests or current events, e.g., fire, drought. Compare to assistance available from AFS units.	Assign priorities based on April 2016 table and assistance expected from AFS units	Revisit role of RPC, AFS staff, and AFS units on reviews and revisions of existing policy statements
<b>#2 – Adjust existing process</b>	After creating new “archive” section for policy statements place dates for original approval, 5yr sunset date, and new date based on new process that might be based on a 7yr or longer sunset. Make changes to guidance documents, as listed below for Option #2. Consider archive for policy letters and other products that may become dated.	Establish new sunset dates with sweeping amendment to existing dates	Revisit archived documents and consider new issues to establish list of future action, beginning in late 2016	With existing process extended to new sunset schedule, determine number of issues per year AFS can revisit over the new extended review cycle. Work rate will depend on expected assistance primarily from the RPC but also other AFS units and AFS staff.	Conduct review as described under Status Quo to determine realistic pace and expectations
<b>#3 – Shift to shorter documents</b>	Work with constitutional consultant to update “Advocacy Guidelines: Guidelines for Making Policy Statements,” “Use of Best Available Science,” “AFS Procedures – Standing and Special Committees: Resource Policy Committee,” AFS Procedures – Operational Policies and Procedures, “Policy Statements,” and “Policy Letters.”	Establish new list of priorities to be addressed with shorter document (possible project for summer interns). Connect to effort to develop recos for next President. Finalize criteria for setting priorities.	Some of our existing 38 policies might be re-cast as shorter documents for use in priority efforts. Those condensed versions might also be helpful when writing letters or developing talking points.	Some issues covered by our existing documents remain timely and consider full consideration as 2016 priorities. Without a serious staff increase we are likely to be limited to a pace of perhaps 3-5 issues per year.	Conduct review as described under Status Quo to determine realistic pace and expectations

<b>#4 – Focus on letters and briefings</b>	Would require edits to same documents as listed for #2	Establish new list of priorities to be addressed with shorter document as described for #3.	Opportunities increase with each election and political transition. 2016-2017 promises to be busy with letters and perhaps agency support to NOAA and USFS.	We need to act quickly to move away from policy statements and to products more suitable for the decisions we hope to influence.	Staff lead in Bethesda but with clear role for the RPC and experts from other units.
--	--	---	---	--	--

# To Join or Not to Join

What 16,944 individuals can tell us about why they do, or don't, affiliate.



# Why participation in associations is changing

- Generational shifts in workforce
- Social changes
- Recession-prone economy
- Technology-eased access to free content
- Differing values shared by younger generations

S. Sladek *The End of Membership As We Know It*

## Where the Associations fall short according to Gen Y & Gen X

*Research & Analysis from ASAE*

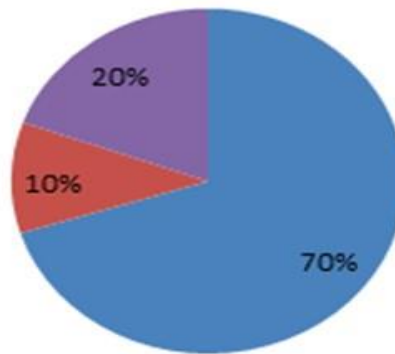
- Importance of personal benefits
  - Access to the most up to day information
  - Professional development of education programs
  - Access to career information and employment opportunities
  - Opportunities to network with experienced professionals in the field
- Importance of benefits to your field/profession:
  - Supporting student education and entry into the field
  - Promoting greater public awareness of contributions in the field
  - Promoting greater appreciation of the role & value of the field

**Satisfaction ratings of the above have negative values and show vulnerability for associations among the youngest members**  
*ASAE The Center for Association Leadership*

# Is AFS trending similarly?

## Young Prof Retention: 3y average

■ Y Prof ■ Yprof to Reg Change ■ Yprof drop toNonMember



# Association Must-Haves

- Niche – the competitive advantage
- Compelling benefits with focus on members ROI
- Acknowledging the *New Recruits*
- Adequate technology to keep members engaged and deliver the benefits

# Niche and Your Brand

- Niches are what successful products and services have in common. Finding a niche will set us apart as experts in the field.
- A brand is defined as a promise of value, and is extremely important in recruiting and keeping members.
- Questions to consider when defining our niche:
  - How are we different from other similar organizations?
  - What image comes to mind when AFS's name comes up?
  - What do we do that is unique to us?
  - What is our brand? Whom do we represent?

# “What’s in it for me if I join?”

- Understanding what members want and need is crucial when developing new benefits.
- Offers which solve members problems will keep members renewing
- Focus on member ROI instead of program ROI
- Explain the value of membership benefits (not features), through crafted marketing messages

# Catering to the New Recruits

- Providing services and access to information outside of regular business hours
- Implementing new engagement features such as “gamification”
- Using a robust fully integrated system enables proper data collection with analytics
- Careful tracking members engagement and identifying those in danger of dropping out

# Take home message

- 1) Focus – identify the niche and target audience
- 2) Develop benefits that solve the problems of our target audience
- 3) Assess the cost to provide those benefits and eliminate anything that does not provide benefit
- 4) Test these offerings and revenue models with members and non-members. Make adjustment.
- 5) Repeat

# Repetitions help us stay in good shape



Eva Przygodzki: [eprzygod@fisheries.org](mailto:eprzygod@fisheries.org)