

# Foundations for a Professional Society: AFS

Wayne A. Hubert, AFS President-Elect  
Leadership Workshop  
Pittsburgh, PA

## Questions:

- Who Are We?
- How Did We Get Here?
- Where Are We Going?

## Who Are We?

- The American Fisheries Society (AFS) is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources
- 140<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

## How Did We Get Here?

- Constitution
- Governing Board
- Procedures Manual
- Executive Director, Staff

Lot's of focus on procedure, tradition

## Where are We Going?

- Theme: New Frontiers in Fisheries Management and Ecology: **Leading** the Way in a Changing World
- What does AFS need to do to lead and be a success?
  - A model for governance that ensures AFS remains relevant
  - Strategic thinking & planning

## Where are We Going?

- The mission of the AFS is to advance **sound science**, promote **professional development**, and disseminate **science-based fisheries** information for the global protection, conservation, and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems.

### Three Characteristics of a Successful Professional Society

1. Maintains a reputation for value
  - A portfolio of 'good stuff'  
Meetings, Publications, Policies, Website – Good Science!!!
  - Return on investment (money, time & energy) by members

### Three Characteristics of a Successful Professional Society

2. Creates a nimble infrastructure
  - Allows for quick seizure of opportunities to create value
    - Rapid and effective communications
    - Responsive to members
    - Gets things done
  
  - Gulf of Mexico oil spill

### Three Characteristics of a Successful Professional Society

3. Maintains an enjoyable culture
  - Based on trust & communications
    - Transparency
    - Honesty
    - Ethical
    - Welcoming
    - No discrimination

### Influences on AFS

- Shifting demographics
  - Aging workforce
  - Declining recruitment into fishing, outdoor pursuits
  - Increasing diversity
- New intermediaries & technologies
  - Internet -- Google
  - Social media – Face book
  - Electronic publishing
- Reverse mentoring
  - Young teaching the old

### AFS Wants to Become an Intelligent Professional Society

- Goal:
  - Move towards more inclusive governance to ensure that AFS remains relevant
- Focus on:
  - Connecting with membership and understanding their needs
  - Using knowledge to drive decision-making
  - Providing value to members
  - Strategic thinking – look to the future

### Specific Challenges

- Implementing and evaluating the Strategic Plan
- Planning for leadership succession
  - Executive Director
  - Volunteer leaders
- Identifying and addressing issues of strategic importance
  - Advancing sound science?
  - AFS role internationally?
  - AFS role in education?
  - AFS role in advocacy?
  - Quality journals?



What is your leadership role?

How do these thoughts  
apply?