

2009 Mid-year Report to the AFS Governing Board

TO: Bill Franzin, President
FROM: Ron Essig, President, Fisheries Management Section
DATE: February 13, 2009

I. Motion Report

(A) Recommended Motion: The Fisheries Administration Section (FAS) and the Fisheries Management Section (FMS) move that the American Fisheries Society (AFS), in cooperation with each of their respective Sections, continue to support an officer exchange program with the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) based in the British Isles on an indefinite basis with information shared with AFS members as broadly as possible.

(B) Minority View: The motion was not supported by 3 of 41 (7%) of FAS members and 30 of 183 (16%) of FMS members who voted electronically. Their primary concern was that the return on this investment of funds didn't seem great enough considering the economic downturn and that electronic communications should be used instead of travel. There was also a need expressed for more sharing of information from the AFS travelers on their experiences with AFS members.

(C) Background for Motion: This motion is needed because there is an average annual expenditure of approximately \$1500-2000 and some staff time at the AFS level for IFM officer meeting registration and lodging at the annual meeting.

1. History – The IFM is comparable in size and mission to the FMS, with a membership of approximately 900. Both the FAS and the FMS approved an officer exchange program with the IFM at their respective 2004 annual meetings on a four-year trial basis. Officers of each Section would attend the annual IFM meeting on a rotating basis while an IFM officer would attend the AFS meeting. Meeting registration fees and lodging costs of travelers are covered by the host organization, while transportation and per diem costs are covered by the traveler's organization. AFS travelers were Gary Saul (FAS, 2005), Joe Larscheid (FMS, 2006), Dale Burkett (FAS, 2007), and Ron Essig (FMS, 2008). Travel costs of FAS representatives were borne by their agencies, so there was no cost to the FAS. Travel costs of FMS representatives averaged \$800 for each trip. Travelers to AFS meetings who formally represented IFM were Jim Gregory (2005) and Steve Axford (2007). Although Ian Winfield attended in 2006, there were no AFS expenditures for IFM travel to the AFS meetings in 2006 and 2008.

2. Information Transfer - AFS representatives provide the keynote address at the IFM annual conference which normally has 150-200 attendees. This address is often tied to the conference theme (e.g., Fisheries on the Edge, Breaking down Barriers), but also includes topics related to the traveler's fisheries expertise (e.g., lake habitat restoration, sea lamprey control). These presentations have had an excellent reception by the IFM meeting attendees and written versions are typically provided later by the AFS traveler for communication with other IFM members through the conference proceedings. AFS traveler experiences at the IFM meeting are typically shared with other Section members verbally at their annual business meetings and in writing through newsletters. While visiting the AFS meeting, IFM travelers typically give a short report at the FAS and FMS annual business meetings.

3. Relevance to AFS Mission – The exchange program provides an opportunity to share AFS information and North American fisheries management experiences with international fisheries professionals, while at the same time learn their perspectives. An example shared at the 2008 IFM meeting was the recent *Fisheries* article that 39 percent of North American freshwater and diadromous fish species are now considered imperiled. This falls squarely in line with the Information Transfer and Outreach focus area of the AFS Strategic Plan. The exchange program also represents an example of international collaboration with other societies through topic oriented meetings that is part of the current AFS President’s 2008-2009 Work Plan. One example of a side benefit of this international collaboration is that the 2008 IFM meeting provided a convenient venue for the FMS President to personally present a FMS Award of Excellence to a British fisheries professional for his work on global recreational fisheries issues.

4. IFM Perspective – Feedback on the exchange program from IFM leaders has been very positive. The current IFM Chairman states “In terms of benefit to our members I think it has been really useful both in terms of the presentations given which allow IFM members to gain an understanding of the issues affecting fisheries ‘across the pond,’ and also just being able to meet and socialize with the AFS representatives.” The previous Chairman states “The IFM has always greatly valued the contributions made by AFS...”

5. Goal for Exchange Program – Although not stated formally at its inception, the goal of the program has been to exchange ideas and gain different perspectives on fisheries management between the organizations. This concept is still pertinent, but a broader vision might be to encourage a more global focus on the impact of human activities on fisheries resources. International collaboration with other fisheries societies like IFM also enhances professional development opportunities.

6. Recommendations for Improvement – There are three areas of the exchange program that can be improved:

1. A formal invitation to IFM officers to attend the 2008 AFS meeting was not extended. To prevent this from happening in the future, our recommendation is for whichever Section just completed travel to the IFM meeting to take the lead on drafting a letter to be signed by the Executive Director and each Section President. That Section would be most knowledgeable on the current IFM officer to invite.
2. Although the IFM traveler to the AFS meeting can contribute a paper for presentation as well as any other meeting participant, it is likely to be lost in the crowd and not identified as being part of an officer exchange program. A more appropriate venue would be five minutes on the agenda of the business meeting of whichever Section just travelled to the IFM meeting and prepared their formal invitation. This could serve as a speed presentation inviting attendance at a longer presentation later in the meeting.
3. Information carried back from the IFM meeting could be better shared with the AFS membership. At a minimum, it should be distributed to members of both FAS and FMS via newsletters and reports at meetings. Any opportunities for sharing information with a larger AFS audience should be pursued as appropriate, such as a contribution within the Unit Reports section of *Fisheries*.

II. Activity Report

(A) Summary of Outcomes and Accomplishments Organized by Focus Area in Strategic Plan:

Aquatic Stewardship

Goal AS 1, Local and Global Leadership

Strategy AS 1.3. Jointly with the Fisheries Administration Section (FAS), the FMS conducted an evaluation of the AFS exchange program with the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) based in the British Isles. From members of each Section who submitted email ballots, support to continue this program on an indefinite basis was 84 percent in FMS and 93 percent in FAS. A recommended motion was prepared for Governing Board consideration at its 2009 mid-year meeting. FMS supported President Ron Essig's travel to the IFM conference in Leeds, England in October 2008. He provided a write up of this experience in the February 2009 FMS newsletter. In keeping with the IFM conference theme of *Breaking down Barriers*, Ron touched on the topics of declining angling participation, environmental assaults aquatic habitat, and stability of fisheries funding in his keynote address.

Goal AS 3, Promotion of Stewardship

Strategy AS 3.3. The FMS spearheaded the preparation of an August 21, 2008 letter to the US Environmental Protection Agency supporting the reauthorization and funding of Section 314 of the Clean Water Act (entitled Clean Lakes Program). The letter was co-signed by the AFS President and Executive Director, and Presidents of the FMS, Fisheries Administration Section and the Water Quality Section.

Strategy AS 3.3. The FMS is tracking progress on reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund scheduled for September 2009. The FMS is in a good position to provide any needed information on the critical importance of Sport Fish Restoration funding (\$404 million in FY 2009) to State agencies for fisheries management work.

Information Transfer and Outreach

Goal ITO 2, Collaboration

Strategy ITO 2.1. At its 2008 business meeting, the FMS approved a \$500 contribution toward an AFS member to participate in the *International Symposium on Wild Fish Disease*. This meeting will be part of an international joint symposium series with various global scientific fisheries societies. It will be held in conjunction with the Japanese Society of Fisheries Societies annual meeting in Tokyo, Japan in March 2009. The focus of the symposium is on emerging fish health and disease issues across the Pacific.

Strategy ITO 2.1. In March 2008, the FMS EXCOM approved a \$500 contribution toward the *21st Annual National Conference on Enhancing the States' Lake Management Programs*. This conference was co-sponsored by the Chicago Botanic Garden, the US EPA, and the North American Lake Management Society. It was held April 29 – May 2, 2008 in Chicago, Illinois.

The goal of the conference was to bring lake managers, private fishing organizations, fisheries biologists and others with the objective of working together on issues of national importance like water quality in lakes and impoundments. Several FMS members were actively involved in developing the agenda and participating in this meeting.

Member Services

Goal MS 1, Professional Development and Recognition

Strategy MS 1.5. The FMS recognized five outstanding fisheries professionals in 2008. The highest honor given by the FMS is selection into the Fisheries Management Hall of Excellence (HOE). The HOE is located at the AK-SAR-BEN Aquarium in Gretna, Nebraska where plaques of inductees are prominently displayed. It was established in 1992 with the stated objectives: 1) to recognize fisheries management professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of fisheries management; 2) to provide a site where the contributions of those honored can be displayed and viewed by the public and other fisheries professionals; 3) to emphasize the accomplishment, dedication and principles of those honored in the HOE; and 4) to describe the fisheries management profession. Inductees in 2008 were:

Tom Gengerke was recognized for his leadership in fisheries management both within the State of Iowa and regionally through his 35-year career. His work on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers was instrumental in the development of several fisheries and water management plans. In Iowa, he facilitated record high walleye harvests at Clear Lake and Storm Lake, initiated commercial fishing programs for rough fish, and most notably permanently protected three large land tracts with 13,900 feet of shoreline on three natural lakes.

Dr. Howard Tanner was recognized for his distinguished fisheries accomplishments, most notably for his collaboration with Wayne Tody in conducting the predator-prey research that led to the decision to introduce coho and Chinook salmon into the Great Lakes. These stockings, combined with sea lamprey control, restocking of lake trout, and converting commercial fisheries from gill nets to more selective trap nets, led to the emergence of the Great Lakes as a leading recreational fishing center of North America with an estimated \$7.1 billion in economic output annually.

Dr. Richard Whitney was recognized for his exemplary, long-time accomplishments in West Coast fisheries management. He is perhaps best known for his role as Technical Advisor and Chairman of the Fisheries Advisory Board for the United States District Court and its "Boldt Decision" on treaty fishing rights for Pacific salmon in Washington State. His contributions toward developing methodologies for in-season run size updates moved salmon management into a fully quantitative system.

The Award of Excellence is given for inspirational leadership in the fishery profession and substantial achievements for AFS and the fisheries resource. The recipients must have effectively communicated their work at the national or international level. This award is given for cumulative accomplishments rather than a singular effort. The 2008 Award of Excellence was made jointly to Drs. Robert Arlinghaus and Ian Cowx. They were recognized for their many accomplishments and leadership in the field of recreational fisheries management at the

international scale. Their collaboration on disseminating research and knowledge to the masses through books, articles, short courses and symposia; thinking globally on such issues as a Global Code of Conduct for recreational fisheries; and crossing boundaries to incorporate human dimensions into the ecosystem approach to fisheries management demonstrate their excellence as fisheries scientists within the world community.

An article on these 2008 FMS awards winners was submitted for publication in the Unit News section of *Fisheries*. There were no 2008 recipients of the FMS Award of Merit or the Conservation Achievement Award.

Goal MS 2, Science-Based Information

Strategy MS 2.1. At its 2008 business meeting, the FMS approved a \$5,000 contribution toward *Conservation, Ecology, and Management of Catfishes: The 2nd International Catfish Symposium*. This symposium, planned for June 2010 in St Louis, Missouri, will be co-hosted by the Ictalurid Technical Committee of the AFS North Central Division and the Catfish Management Technical Committee of the AFS Southern Division. The meeting will provide a forum for the exchange of information about the biology, ecology, management and conservation of worldwide catfish populations and their habitats. To attract anglers and provide opportunities for input and interaction, the symposium will be held at the conclusion of a national catfish angling tournament.

Strategy MS 2.4. At its 2008 business meeting, the FMS approved the formation of an ad hoc *Urban and Community Fisheries Management Committee*. Its purpose is to serve as a means for urban and community fisheries managers to better communicate, learn from one another, and advance the effectiveness of urban and community fisheries management. The intent is that this committee will serve as a platform to continue the dialogue on this topic following the successful Urban and Community Fisheries Symposium at the 2007 AFS meeting (for which the FMS contributed \$2,000) and the 2008 publication entitled *Urban and Community Fisheries Programs: Development, Management, and Evaluation*. Tom Lang and Rick Eades were appointed as co-chairs.

Strategy MS 2.5. At its 2007 business meeting, the FMS approved \$5,000 for the production of the third edition of *Inland Fisheries Management in North America*. Co-editors Wayne Hubert and Michael Quist report that substantial progress has been made on this project. The book will include a total of 21 chapters individually authored by one to three individuals. A tiered process is being used in the editing process. Upon submission of the first draft of manuscripts to the editors, the editors provide an initial review to assure proper content and format. The manuscript is then returned to authors for revision and a second draft is received from the authors. If there are not issues with the second draft it is sent to three anonymous peers for review and comment. Reviewers' comments and guidance by the editors is then returned to assist authors in the preparation of a third draft. Upon reception of the third draft, the editors determine if it is suitable for copy editing and additional revision is requested if deemed necessary. To date, the editors have not yet received first drafts of 5 chapters. First drafts have been received for three chapters and the authors are now preparing second drafts for peer review. A second draft has been completed for four chapters that are currently undergoing peer review. Peer reviews have been obtained for seven chapters the authors are working on the third draft. Two chapters are ready for copy editing.

Drawing of figures by a graphic artist will begin shortly. The editors hope that third drafts ready for copy editing by the AFS books department will be completed for all chapters prior to the 2009 annual meeting of the society. Authors are being strongly encouraged to address the writing process.

Strategy MS 2.5. At its 2004 business meeting, the FMS approved \$10,000 for the production of the textbook *Standard Methods for Sampling North American Freshwater Fishes*. Scott Bonar, Wayne Hubert and David Willis are leading this project and report that the book is currently in press with scheduled publication in late spring 2009.

Standardization in industry, medicine and science has led to great advances. However, despite its benefits, freshwater fish sampling is generally unstandardized, or at most standardized locally. Standardization across large regions would allow for measurement of large-scale effects of climate or geography on fish populations; larger sample sizes to evaluate management techniques; reliable means to document rare species; easier communication; and simpler data sharing. With increased interaction among fisheries professionals worldwide, reasons for wide-scale standardization are more compelling than ever. The FMS in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, USGS Cooperative Research Units Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, AFS Education and Computer User's Sections, and Arizona Game and Fish Department developed a book of standard sampling methods for North America. In total, 284 biologists and managers from 107 agencies, universities and private industries contributed to the book as authors, reviewers or sponsors. Almost 50 Mexican, Canadian, and United States sampling experts are authors.

Standard Methods for Sampling North American Freshwater Fishes describes standard methods to sample fish in specific environments so population indices can be more easily compared across regions and time. Environments include ponds, reservoirs, natural lakes, streams and rivers containing cold and warmwater fishes. This book provides rangewide and regional averages; calculated from over 4000 data sets from 42 states and provinces; of size structure, CPUE, growth, and condition for common fishes collected using methods discussed. Biologists can use these data to determine if fish from their waterbody are below, above, or at average for an index. These methods were reviewed by 54 representatives from 33 North American agencies and by biologists from five European and one African country. Final drafts were reviewed by an additional 36 sampling experts. These procedures will be useful to those hoping to benefit from standard sampling programs in their regions.

Goal MS 3, Online and Web Services

Strategy MS 3.1. The FMS produced and distributed a 16-page newsletter by email in February 2009. It included information on the 2008 FMS business meeting, 2008 FMS awards, a report on the 2008 Institute of Fisheries Management conference, and several timely news articles of importance to fisheries management.

Strategy MS 3.3. The FMS has kept its website up to date with recent information of importance to the fisheries management profession, including sections on Essays and Products produced by FMS committees and members. Website Manager Fred Janssen has done a terrific job with this task.

Goal MS 4, Diversity

Strategy MS 4.3. At its 2008 annual business meeting, the FMS approved a \$5,000 contribution to the Skinner Fund as part of a challenge offered by the AFS Education Section.

Strategy MS 4.3. The FMS provided a \$500 contribution to student travel to AFS meetings administered by the AFS Equal Opportunities Section. This is approved on a continuing basis as a line-item in the FMS annual budget.

Goal MS 5, Strategic Plan Implementation

Strategy MS 5.5. The FMS President Elect Dirk Miller updated and presented portions of the AFS Leadership Training course held at the 2008 AFS meeting in Ottawa, Canada. The FMS President Ron Essig participated in the training which was entitled *Leading at all Levels in AFS*.

(B) Recommendations or Suggestions for Future Consideration: None