



American Fisheries Society

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Southern Division

LOCALITIES:

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Mississippi

N. Carolina
Oklahoma
S. Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
Washington, DC
West Indian Islands
West Virginia

August 22, 2006

Dear Southern Division Membership:

Please review the activities and actions summarized below demonstrating what has occurred to date to assist members affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Particularly note the generosity of individuals, chapters, and Divisions in this effort. The Southern Division AFS (SDAFS) extends our gratitude to the individuals, chapters, Divisions, and Parent Society for their outpouring of support, continuous encouragement, and tremendous sensitivity to the horrendous impacts Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had on AFS members professionally and personally in the storm impacted regions along the Gulf Coast. This incredible response in these times of disaster and recovery underscores clearly that the American Fisheries Society truly is an organization that follows a path with a heart.

Although the water receded long ago, damage assessments are still being made and needs are only now beginning to be realized. Many agencies and institutions are not yet fully operational nor are they able to fully conduct research and sampling activities. Financial contributions are very helpful and material donations such as journals, books, equipment, and supplies (please see <http://www.sdafs.org/relief/default.htm>) are greatly appreciated.

SUMMARY

The AFS Disaster Relief Program, administered primarily through the SDAFS, assumed full responsibility for hurricane relief in June 2006. Emphasis has focused on outreach to members and their agencies or institutions in Louisiana and Mississippi. Additional relief efforts were extended to Alabama, Florida and Texas; however, no requests for assistance were received. Members of the former AFS Hurricane Relief Task Force are now integrated into the SDAFS Disaster Relief Program through their respective chapters. Additionally, the Disaster Relief Distribution Center is staffed and operational.

The Parent Society has allocated *up to* a maximum of \$30,000 to the SDAFS to address disaster relief operations during the period 15 March – 31 December 2006. WE partitioned these funds into three broad categories:

1. Complementary, temporary, AFS memberships and electronic journal subscriptions to AFS members identified by their respective chapters as impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita;
2. Scholarships to attend AFS meetings for AFS members identified by their respective chapters as impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita;
3. Staffing the Disaster Relief Distribution Center.

The full impact of the SDAFS Disaster Relief Program and opportunities for outreach are only now beginning to be fully recognized by the Society's members. Members identified by their respective chapters as impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita now are very much aware that AFS is reaching out to them, with aid from AFS aimed at keeping them connected professionally through memberships, journal subscriptions, scholarships to meetings, and material donations. They are particularly heartened that AFS understands that recovery from the hurricanes is going to be a long-term effort.

Danielle Pender is the Director of the Distribution Center and she primarily handles the coordination, delivery, cataloging, tracking and ultimate distribution of materials donations (library materials, equipment, supplies, etc) received at the Distribution Center.

Don Jackson volunteered to transition over to the SDAFS Disaster Relief Team as the primary liaison with the chapters to coordinate membership and journal scholarships and travel assistance. Don works with the Chapter Presidents to collate their requests and recommends actions to the SDAFS President.

ACTIONS

Complementary memberships, electronic access to *Fisheries Infobase* and electronic access to one AFS journal of choice will be provided to AFS members from Louisiana and Mississippi. Recipients are in the final stage of review and recommendations will soon be forwarded to the Southern Division for action. The Louisiana and Mississippi chapters are developing criteria for travel awards to AFS meetings for AFS members who were impacted by the storms.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks is providing a central processing facility at their Turcotte Laboratory in Jackson, Mississippi, to receive and distribute donated materials. John Skains (Mississippi Chapter) is the principal contact.

Mr. Al Sonski donated his *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* and the *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* journals.

Mr. John Nickum donated his library consisting of many books, reports, journals, and reprints.

Financial donors may contribute through the Parent Society AFS Website at <http://www.fisheries.org/html/disasterform.shtml>. Some financial contributions are summarized below. Note that additional donations received directly through the AFS website are summarized and tracked in Bethesda and are not necessarily included here.

- The Oklahoma Chapter AFS donated \$3,000;
- The Arkansas Chapter AFS donated \$1,000;
- The Western Division offered to donate up to \$500.00 to cover shipping fees for the John Nickum library;
- The Bonneville Chapter offered to provide additional funding to cover shipping fees for the John Nickum library;
- The SDAFS Reservoir Committee will provide two rooms for Katrina affected professionals from Louisiana and Mississippi, one room for each state, for the Reservoir Symposium in Atlanta in June 2007.

Visit the SDAFS Disaster Relief Web Page at <http://www.sdafs.org/relief/default.htm> for more information and to review needs requests of affected members. Also, review the list below to see if you can assist with any of these needs. Your assistance with financial and material contributions is greatly appreciated.

Equipment and Supply Needs Identified to Date:

- Maps/charts relevant to Mississippi;
- Fish and invertebrate keys;
- Specimen jars;
- YSI w/ a 100ft. cord w/ temp., salinity, and DO probes;
- "Marks' Standard Handbook for Mechanical Engineers" (any edition);
- Polarized Costa Del Mar Wavekiller sunglasses (approx. 12 pair) for spotting HAB's (Harmful Algal Blooms);
- Misc. batteries (AA, C, D, etc.)
- Thermal laser guns
- Microscopes
- Cleaning supplies
- Disinfectant supplies
- Laboratory gowns
- Water test kits - those with seafood safety applications
- Aquaculture applications like pH, salinity, nitrites/ nitrates, ammonia, D.O./B.O.D.
- AFS Fish slides – Gulf fishes

Bob Curry

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