



## 2012 Fisheries Management Section Annual Business Meeting

August 19<sup>th</sup>, St. Paul, MN

The joint meeting with the Fisheries Administration Section (FAS) began at 2:45 PM, with Doug Nygren (President FAS) and President Dirk Miller (FMS) presiding. AFS President Bill Fisher provided remarks, first about the Fisheries Professional Salary Survey conducted by Responsive Management this past year. Prior to its release, a small committee made up of members from FAS, FMS, AFS Membership Concerns Committee and the AFS Excom worked to craft the survey to make sure the questions were clear and responses were appropriate to the different categories of professionals employed. Responses from state agencies has been very good, a little less from the federal agencies, but also included for the first time non-governmental entities as well. The second topic was the policy statement on lead in sport fishing tackle. It has had several drafts and reviews to date, with the latest version published in Fisheries with a 60 day comment period. This statement has now been revised and approved by the Governing Board to go before the membership. The final topic is the transition to a new AFS Executive Director; Gus has been with us for 13 years and has done a wonderful job of righting our financial ship. A search committee headed by incoming AFS President John Boreman is already active, and hopes to have the final slate of candidates at the mid-year Governing Board meeting, with a selection in place by next year's annual meeting in Little Rock. Bill then thanked the host committee for all their efforts in pulling off a great meeting in light of the many challenges faced with staffing and federal travel restrictions. Dirk Miller asked about the Governing Board retreat entitled "Re-imagining AFS". The changing face of professional societies was discussed to determine how AFS can stay relevant to our members, which resulted in some deep discussions and soul searching on how we can better serve our members now and in the future.

Jim Gregory, Vice-Chair of the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) addressed the group about our exchange program with FAS and FMS, and the current activities of IFM. Jim first reiterated the importance and benefits to IFM of the exchange and thanked our members for their support of the program. IFM is also primarily a volunteer driven organization with about 5,000 members in the UK and Ireland that work towards the modern sustainable management of recreational and commercial fisheries. At this year's annual meeting in Oxford, they established a conservation network and held workshops and training courses for their members. Doug Nygren reiterated the warm reception he received during his visit and encouraged others to engage Jim during his visit. Dirk concurred that the IFM are very gracious hosts.

Ron Essig provided an update on Thursdays Symposium celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pittman-Robertson Act which was the genesis of the Federal Aid Programs for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration. A full day of presentations with opening talks focusing on the history behind the founding act and the Wallop-Breaux legislation, state agency project presentations, and winding up with a perspective from the industry. Ron thanked both sections for sponsoring the symposium and Doug Nygren and Bob Curry for co-organizing the presentation.

Scott Stuewe addressed the group with an update on HAMAR (formerly known as PFIRM 2) which stands for “Hatcheries and Management of Aquatic Resources”, an effort jointly supported by FAS and FMS. At their last organizational meeting the steering group decided that changing the name was appropriate in an effort to instill the value of hatcheries and their importance to management efforts. Still trying to decide when and where to hold a symposium, but Little Rock with a special issue in an AFS Journal resulting from the meeting is likely. Don MacKinley and Jesse Trushenski will be co-chairs organizing the meeting. In preparation, a survey is being prepared to determine the issues that should be addressed at the symposium. Gary Whelan added that two symposia is still a possibility, and that the AFS Management Committee has also committed \$5,000 in seed money.

Mike Allen gave a quick update on the progress of the upcoming publication “Foundations of Fisheries Science”. He and Greg Sass are the organizers, and have reviewed the results of the 120 survey responses they received, have selected which papers are to be included in the publication, are writing the preface and are now getting copyright permissions for the selected publications. Mike once again thanked the sections for their support of the project.

The joint meeting was concluded.

### **Call to Order**

President Dirk Miller called the annual business meeting of the Fisheries Management Section to order at 3:19 PM (68 signed the attendance sheet). Dirk recognized Jim Gregory from IFM and AFS President Bill Fisher, both had addressed the group during the joint session so we saved some time by not asking them to present again. FMS Past Presidents in attendance were Steve Filipek, Jeff Boxrucker, Dave Willis and Ron Essig, AFS Past President Carl Burger was also recognized and thanked for their leadership roles. Dirk then thanked the membership for his opportunity to serve, and challenged everyone to get involved in one facet or another. A question from the membership asked about Dirk’s take on the Governing Board Retreat, and Dirk responded that the consultant challenged them through several brainstorming sessions to take a hard look at the governance structure, strategic plan and technology to make sure the Society is keeping itself relevant to its membership. The consultant noted that a good association has a competency based board of 5 people, while AFS has 35+ on its Governing Board. The discussion of what determining factors could be used for the competency based portion was the most controversial. No immediate large scale changes were predicted by Dirk.

### **Reports**

Secretary/Treasurer Mark Porath asked for comments on last year’s Business Meeting Minutes that were posted on the FMS webpage last January. With no comments, the minutes were approved by acclamation. Mark then presented a financial summary of FMS transactions since last year’s meeting. A slight increase was realized due to the timing of receiving AFS book royalty checks. Jeff Boxrucker provided a recap of a similar situation in previous years when the fund balance rose to \$20,000, they worked hard to spend it down to \$10,000. He recommended worthy projects be found and apply our current healthy balance to them. Dirk commented that while no grant applications were received this year, it still falls on the leadership to find worthy projects and so Jeff’s comments are duly noted. An

audience member asked if monies could be provided towards next year's meeting in Little Rock, and Dirk responded that any and all applications received through the webpage would be considered.

Newsletter Editor Quinton Phelps displayed the FMS t-shirts created last year and announced that a wide variety of sizes were still available for sale.

Webmaster Travis Neebling was unable to attend, but Dirk shared that he had spoken with Travis who was excited to begin reworking the webpage content and welcomed any thoughts, ideas and content from the membership.

Urban and Community Fisheries Management Committee Co-chair Tom Lang moved that the committee be dissolved. With no discussion a voice vote approved the dissolution of this special committee.

### **Awards**

President Elect Brian Graeb presented a Conservation Achievement Award to Musky's Inc. and Musky's Canada. Sean Landsman and Steven Cooke had worked with both organizations recently and nominated them for the award. Sean reported that these organizations are very similar with nearly identical mission statements. Musky's Canada has raised over \$100,000 to restore natural populations and works extensively with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Musky's Inc. works to raise money to support propagation efforts with state hatcheries (purchase of feed, tagging, brood stock collection). Both work extensively to benefit their communities through habitat improvement projects and sponsorship of youth and veteran fishing events. Steven mentioned that these two groups work together quite frequently and therefore a joint nomination and award seemed fitting. Jay Zahn accepted on behalf of Musky's Inc, and Ian Young on behalf of Musky's Canada.

President Elect Brian Graeb then presented the Award of Excellence to Dr. Dave Welch for his career in advancing fisheries management of aquatic resources in our world's oceans. His innovations in pacific salmon and electronic tagging of migratory fish, led to the widespread use of large scale telemetry arrays which are now being used extensively to track salmon populations in the Pacific Ocean shelf tracking project. Due to his efforts we now have a much better understanding of mortality rates and spatial ecology of many populations of wild fish from Australia to the Artic. Dr. Welch could not attend but Steven Cooke accepted on his behalf. Steve began by sharing that Dr. Welch was a frustrated research scientist with DFO and quit his position to start his own company to focus on the development of large scale arrays to answer management questions, realizing that telemetry would be a key tool in unlocking the answers. Somewhat ironically, the products he developed are now routinely used by his former employer. Steve read a portion of Dr. Welch's thank you note "I'm deeply honored and very grateful for this award. I hope that the decision to award it to someone who has straddled the quantitative stock assessment and the climate/environmental change divide for several decades, will now lend both moral force and professional support of my peers and my personal conviction, that effective fisheries management in the face in what is likely going to be a very severe climate change. Is going to require new tools and new ways of thinking. Classical fisheries management has been likened to driving down the highway while looking in the rear view mirror to measure where we have been and using those measurements of the past to forecast the road ahead. Increasing climate change is going to

make for even sharper curves in that road, and I believe it is imperative that we develop new quantitative tools to better measure and understand how the survival of fish stocks is determined and what is the cause. This is not just an academic endeavor, millions of dollars of economic input to the GDP of both the US and Canada may depend on our science and management of getting it right.” “...to conclude, your decision to give the Award of Excellence in fisheries management means a great deal to me personally, and gives me a renewed confidence that my world view has broader support and that the work required to design and develop these new systems is worthwhile. Again, truly, truly grateful.” Steve then encouraged the membership to provide nominations for these worthy awards, stating the procedure is not onerous and there are many desiring individuals out there, many in this room.

President Elect Brian Graeb then presented the final award. Dr. Phil Bettoli is inducted into the Hall of Excellence (HOE). Dr. Bettoli could not be present, so Brian read a summary of the language emblazoned on his plaque to hang in the Hall of Excellence housed in the Aksarben Aquarium in Gretna, Nebraska. Brian read the following; “Phil is currently the assistant unit leader for the Tennessee Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit and has served in that capacity since 1999. Since 1987 he has been a faculty member of the department of biology at Tennessee Tech University. And is currently a professor of biology. He received his B.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Maine in 1977, his M.S. in Biology from Tennessee Tech in 1979, and his PhD in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M in 1987. Throughout his professional career, Phil has been focused on fisheries management oriented research. Many of his projects have shaped fisheries management policies of the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency and the water management strategy of the TVA and the USACE. He has consistently conveyed his results to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission, local angling groups and commercial fisherman, and to the public through numerous interviews on local and national media outlets. Since 1990, Phil has authored or co-authored over 70 publications with the majority of these being published in AFS journals. And as part of AFS Phil has served in several capacities, he is past president of the Tennessee Chapter, served as Program Chair for the 2007 SDAFS Meeting and Program Co-chair of the 2009 AFS Annual Meeting. His professional service and outstanding research have resulted in the Outstanding Achievement Award from the SDAFS in 2007, and he was recognized by the Tennessee Chapter as the Outstanding Fisheries Scientist for 1997.” Brian mentioned that Phil’s nomination was assembled by his students and this sentence really rang true, “The ultimate product of Phil’s career has been his students, he has mentored over 50 graduate students to date. These students have been well prepared for the natural resources careers and consistently demonstrate that preparation they received from working with Phil. The effects of his mentorship will continue to be felt for many years throughout the agencies, universities where his students are employed and continue to advance.” Jeff Boxrucker commented how important it was to recognize the university professors that have been leaders in fisheries management. Tom Lang requested that all HOE members present in the audience stand up to be recognized. The membership then thanked them for their contributions with a round of applause. President Graeb remarked that this recognition of HOE attendees should continue at future meetings.

## **Old Business**

Scott Bonar provided a progress report from the Standard Sampling Database Project, giving a .ppt demonstration/presentation on the database mechanics. A symposium on the topic is scheduled for Thursday, and the model is on display booth at the Trade Show to receive comments on the project. Scott mentioned the project has spawned some overseas interest in the project, including from Mexico, Scotland, Russia, Mongolia, the British Isles and Europe. Scott asked for the blessing of the FMS to begin talking with international interests to share the database outputs and project. Nigel Lester from Canada, Ian Winfield from the Fisheries Society of the British Isles, Norm Mercado from the University of Guadalajara and the University of Arizona, were introduced to speak towards this amount of interest. Interests were rooted in standardization and calibration techniques and validation. Scott reiterated that individual data sets are still protected, as that is a sensitive issue. Scott then made a motion that "The FMS support investigating opportunities to collaborate with our colleagues overseas on standardization of fisheries sampling techniques, expanding the standardization effort." A second was made by Jeff Boxrucker. A question about the form of collaboration was raised. Scott suggested that many forms were possible and likely ranging from informal conversations, which are already beginning, to full-fledged conferences. An additional comment and question on the level of federal agency involvement was raised, suggesting that continued involvement within our own arena should continue as well. The motion carried.

Brian Bohnsack mentioned that the upcoming ASA Summit intends to focus on data issues and wondered if Scott or FMS should be involved. The meeting is at Hilton Head, SC this year.

### **New Business**

Dirk handed over the meeting to Brian Graeb, whose first order of new business was to present Dirk with a plaque denoting his service as FMS President and expressed his gratitude for all the work he has done with FMS and especially his mentorship with him. The membership responded with applause.

Brian thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve; he was very humbled and honored to take the reins from Dirk. Brian also noted that during this year's election cycle, he received a lot of positive feedback about the Section and our activities. One effort Brian would like to champion during his term is the continued emphasis of our special committee on young professional development. Quinton will remain heavily involved and the committee will provide a report at next year's meeting on identifying things we can do to support students and young professionals in professional activities.

### **Election Results**

Brian then announced that Mark Porath will be the new President-Elect and Quinton Phelps the new Secretary/Treasurer. Brian then thanked Geno Adams and Tom Lang for serving as candidates, and emphasized that one of the most common comments he received during the election was about the strength of the candidates. The membership then applauded Geno and Tom for running. Regional Representatives will remain, Scott Decker-NED, Mike Hawkins-NCD, Lawrence Dorsey-SD, Cory Sipher-WD. Travis Neebling will also return as our web guru.

### **Other Business from the Membership**

Don Gabelhouse asked that FMS consider examining alternative locations for the HOE currently housed at Aksarben Aquarium in Gretna, NE. While he was excited in 1993, when Aksarben was honored with the selection, he is concerned that the HOE is not getting the viewership needed to sustain this important feature. Don didn't have any better location specifically in mind, but suggested that we aim for a location where more adult viewers and especially anglers would get an opportunity to see the inductees, as Aksarben primarily hosts groups of children. Don mentioned that the Fish Culture Section utilizes a hatchery facility, but Fisheries Management is everywhere. The National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame in Hayward, Wisconsin, the Freshwater Fisheries Conservation Center in Athens, Texas, the Bass Pro Shops store in Springfield, Missouri were all mentioned as potential locations. An extensive discussion ensued whereby multiple exhibits or locations could be used, a physical presence could also be replicated with a virtual presence. The basic plaque information and pictures could be augmented with video interviews of inductees. Jeff Kopaska with AFS Electronic Services Board recommended that AFS President John Boreman be approached about expanding this virtual presence idea to other arenas, as a way to archive important AFS history, and as a service. Brian will appoint a committee to flesh out the discussion ideas (Tom Lang, Andy Loftus, Jeff Kopaska, Brian Bohnsack, and Mark will Chair) and report back at next year's annual meeting.

Jason Vokoun expressed a concern about the growing disconnect between upcoming fisheries students and their knowledge of different fish management techniques used around the world. Any avenue we can employ such as an expansion of the virtual HOE idea to include more information about important techniques, methods or even history would be very beneficial. And something that is open access would be the most available and valuable. Jason didn't really have any concrete ideas on how to move forward, but wanted to brooch the issue to raise awareness. Quinton mentioned that this could be a topic to be addressed by the special Young Professionals Development committee. A number of members chimed in that as managers we do encounter a number of unique and diverse fisheries (spearing or rifle harvest of Northern Pike, jug lines, catfish noodling), and providing materials to educate students would also benefit other professionals.

Steven Cooke announced that the Canadian Aquatic Resources Section (CARS) is putting together a symposium for the Quebec City Meeting in 2014, a series of status reports on inland fisheries in Canada as well as some of the key issues and challenges they face. Additionally, a number of historical information products will be included.

Brian asked for comments about the success of the new "joint session format" with the FAS. Members felt it was valuable and the consensus is to continue if possible.

Brian Bohnsack recommended that FMS support the travel for 2-3 people to attend the ASA Sport Fishing Summit meeting in October. Brian explained that ASA is the fishing tackle industries' major trade group that is an active player in Washington and in the Wallop-Breaux reauthorization efforts. A motion for expending up to \$4,500 to support this travel was moved by Brian, seconded by Andy Loftus. Discussion revolved around the benefits to FMS for participation; the need to better organize efforts in preparation for participation at the Summit, can FMS somehow get on the agenda yet at this late date, is this participation something more appropriate for AFS as a Parent Society? Consensus from the

membership was to extend some “feelers” but that participation at this late date was probably not likely to be feasible. As the motion was already on the floor, it needed to be voted on and the motion failed. Brian G. asked that Brian B. and Andy put together information about the value of FMS interaction with ASA for an upcoming newsletter.

Brian asked for a motion to adjourn, made by Ron Essig, seconded by Dan Shoup. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Porath  
FMS Secretary/Treasurer