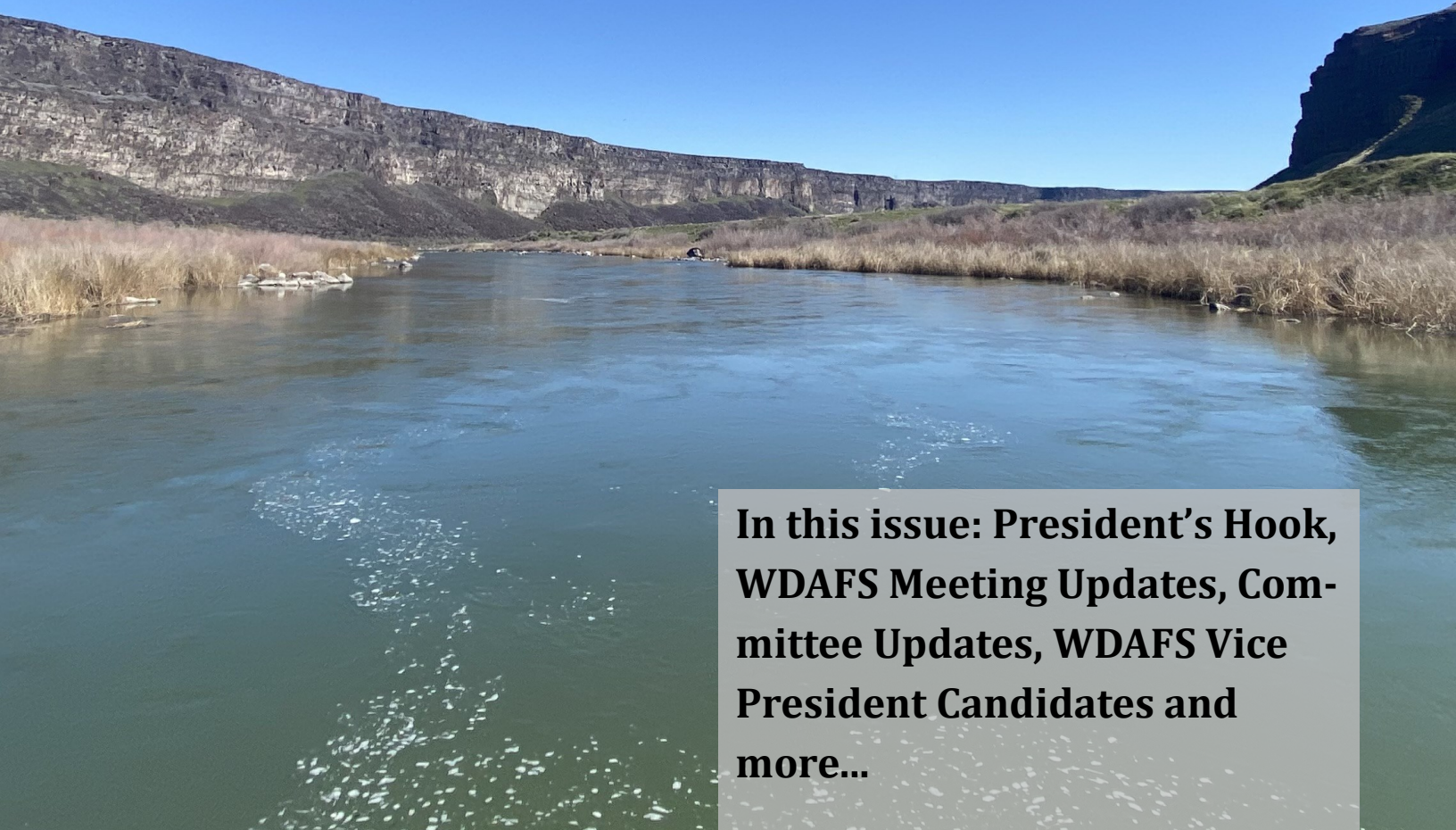


# TRIBUTARY

## Western Division of the American Fisheries Society

*Advancing fisheries and aquatic science and professionals in western North America and the Pacific Islands*



**In this issue: President's Hook, WDAFS Meeting Updates, Committee Updates, WDAFS Vice President Candidates and more...**

**President:** Eric Fetherman    **President-Elect:** Julie Carter

**Vice President:** Tim Copeland    **Past-President:** Laurie Earley    **Sec.-Treasurer:** Laura Burckhardt

**Student Representative:** Meredith Leigh Journey    **Tributary Editor:** Timothy D'Amico

*PRESIDENT'S HOOK***Eric Fetherman**

The grass is starting to turn green, the flowers are coming out, and the leaves are popping. It's officially spring! Spring is a busy time for the Division chapters and officers. Most of the chapters have held their annual meetings within the last few months, with a few more to come in the next few weeks. Division officers have been busy traveling to each of these meetings to represent the Division during poster sessions and chapter business meetings, meet members, and learn more about the chapters. In addition, the President and President-Elect serve on and travel to the in-person AFS Governing Board meeting to help guide the Society and discuss issues important to members at all levels within AFS. This year, I was lucky enough to get to attend both the Montana and Alaska chapter meetings, and the Governing Board meeting held in conjunction with the World Fisheries Congress.

The Montana AFS meeting was held in Lewistown, the geographical center of the state, providing a central meeting location for folks that work in both the mountains and plains of Montana. The chapter DEI committee hosted an excellent continuing education workshop led by Dr. Mariah Hill focused on cultural identity, implicit bias, microaggressions, and microaffirmations. Peter Brown organized a great plenary session focused on the importance of aquaculture in fisheries during which I was able to share much of the aquaculture research we have conducted in Colorado. I learned a lot about bull trout, sturgeon, and several other plains species that I don't have the opportunity to work with, but are really cool fish! There were lots of socials and opportunities to meet new fish folks, fish trivia night, and the chapter even helped me celebrate a milestone birthday while I was up there!



The 9<sup>th</sup> World Fisheries Congress was held in Seattle, WA, and brought together fisheries professionals from 82 countries and several societies from across the globe. Some folks traveled up to 60 hours to be at the meeting! Again, the meeting had some excellent socials and opportunities to meet and talk with these fisheries professionals, including a grand networking social at the Seattle Aquarium. It also provided a venue at which to learn about global fisheries issues, including managing very unique marine and freshwater species, dam removal efforts, water availability, temperature, and climate change, and new-to-me topics such as cetacean and marine bird bycatch. A very eye-opening aspect of the meeting was how important fish are as a food resource to much of the world, and how hard people are working to make sure that this resource is sustainable and available to ensure food security. Overall, I learned just how much bigger the fisheries profession is and the scale of the issues professionals are working on worldwide!

The Alaska AFS meeting was held in Seward, a beautiful small town where the mountains rise out of Resurrection Bay. I had the opportunity to participate in the Two-eyed Seeing workshop and allyship discussion hosted by the DEI committee, a tour of the Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute where they rear butter clams, abalone, and chiton, among other marine species, and take a wildlife boat tour through Resurrection Bay provided as a field trip by the chapter. The meeting was full of salmon talks, as well as talks on species I rarely get to hear about in Colorado, including rockfish, crabs, and razor clams. I learned that

## *PRESIDENT'S HOOK, cont.*

most presenters also include whether their sites are “on the road system” indicating that they can be driven to, versus “not on the road system” meaning they must fly, boat, or find other means of getting themselves to their sites. Also new to me was the concept of subsistence fishing and how important the fish and fisheries are to the native peoples of Alaska. Another great meeting in an amazing location!

All of these meetings had a couple things in common. They were all very welcoming and accepting of me as a new attendee, showing that wherever you may travel for these meetings, you have a home in AFS. Additionally, they broadened my perspective on what fisheries mean to people around the world, and the importance of the work being done globally by the folks in our profession. Lastly, they allowed me to travel to some places I have never been and take some time to see some new parts of the country. As we move beyond the chapter meeting season and focus on the upcoming Society meeting, we hope to provide these same opportunities to anyone attending the 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Honolulu Hawai'i. We had over 100 symposia proposals submitted, meaning there will be a lot of possibilities to learn new things about the fisheries profes-

sion. Although it is important to go to talks that pertain to what we work on, I strongly recommend you take a few moments to attend some talks about a new topic that you know nothing about and broaden your world fisheries view. Additionally, I hope you make time while in Hawai'i to go fishing, learn about the culture, and explore everything that the Hawaiian Islands have to offer. Looking forward to seeing you all there!



## *WDAFS MISSION/VISION STATEMENTS*

**WDAFS MISSION:** The mission of the Western Division of the American Fisheries Society is to: 1) improve the conservation and sustainability of unique fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems in western North America and the Pacific Islands by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals, and 2) serving as an effective bridge between the Society and Chapters within the Western Division, promoting communication among and support of the Chapters and membership, and being the American Fisheries Society's representative to the public in western North America and the Pacific Islands.

**WDAFS VISION:** The Western Division of the American Fisheries Society seeks to be recognized as the pre-eminent organization providing fisheries information to decision makers in all arenas of western North America and the Pacific Islands. While fulfilling our vision, we will recruit and develop new fisheries professionals by offering learning and training op-

portunities crucial to maintaining a well-trained profession, support programs and efforts to increase diversity and inclusion, and enhance the value of American Fisheries Society professional certification.

**WDAFS SLOGAN:** Advancing fisheries and aquatic science and professionals in western North America and the Pacific Islands.

**WDAFS CHALLENGE:** Ignorance of fisheries and aquatic ecosystems is our arch enemy. We will fight against ignorance by communicating science to other scientists, decision makers, influencers, and the public, and we will advocate for conducting and using science to achieve sound management and policy decisions. We will expose suppression and misuse of science and enhance scientific credibility by attempting to maintain purity of the scientific enterprise. It is our hope that elevating science will help influencers and decision makers to achieve what is best for current and future generations.



Western Division American Fisheries Society

## NEW WDAFS LOGO

The membership has spoken, and the logo competition is complete! Thank you to all the artists that contributed to this effort and thank you to everyone who voted. There was some stiff competition, but the selected logo had the edge.

The artist who designed the new logo is Emily Chen. Emily is a PhD student at University of California-Berkeley and the chair of the WDAFS Diversity & Inclusion Committee. She repicked up computer graphics as a hobby during the pandemic, designing the logo for her lab and creating educational posters for K-12 classrooms highlighting fisheries scientist of color. Her posters were printed with funds from the

Western Division small project grant (highlighted in [past Tributary newsletter](#)) and have been distributed across northern California schools to encourage children to become interested in fisheries and aquatic sciences. The logo was intended to depict the role of WDAFS carrying out the mission of the American Fisheries Society in the western region. The W and D's colors and design represents the region's spawn from the mountains to the sea.

The Division will be actively working to update all its materials and communications over the next couple months, but we are excited to release it in this new year!

## 2024 WDAFS MEETING UPDATES

### Film & Photo Festival

Tim Copeland



The Western Division American Fisheries Society (WDAFS) and the Pacific Islands Chapter of AFS (PIAFS) invite you to submit an aquatically oriented films and photographs to be showcased as part of the

#### [AFS 2024 Aquatic Film and Photography Festival.](#)

This film and photography festival will occur during the AFS Meeting in Honolulu, HI, September 15-19, 2024 ([154th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society – September 15-19, 2024, Honolulu](#)).

**To accommodate organizational needs, film submission forms are due July 1, 2024 to secure a tentative spot in the festival and final film and photography submissions are needed by July 15, 2024.**

**\*\* Film and photography submissions may be used in promotion of the conference (e.g., publication and film festival trailer).**

#### **Film submissions must:**

- Focus on aquatic themes (freshwater, estuarine, and marine) that advance our understanding, appreciation, and management of aquatic ecosystems. This could include films that showcase beauty, science, restoration, and management. Of particular interest

## 2024 WDAFS MEETING UPDATES, cont.

are films that address the meeting theme of **“Conserving Fishes and Fishing Traditions Through Knowledge Co-Production”**

- Be less than 30 minutes in length - preference will be given to shorter films (ideally 10 minutes or less) to allow for more films to be included in the festival.

Be downloadable to conference organizers online or via [vimeo.com](http://vimeo.com).

Participants are limited to three film submissions but priority will be given to films that provide an opportunity for more individuals to present their work.

### Deadlines:

- Completed submission form is due on **July 1, 2024**.

Final cut film submissions with web links are due no later than **July 15, 2024**. As long as organizers can access the films online to facilitate the jury selection process, videos do not need to be uploaded to Vimeo and available for download at this time.

If you have any questions please contact Tim Copeland at [vicepresident@wdafs.org](mailto:vicepresident@wdafs.org) or by phone at (208) 697-7520.

Jury-selected best films will be played during a dedicated film festival event during the conference. Jury- and audience-selected best films will be recognized after completion of the conference.

**Film Submission Form** (send no later than **July 1, 2024** to [vicepresident@wdafs.org](mailto:vicepresident@wdafs.org)):

Film Contact First and Last Name:

Film Contact Organization:

Film Contact Member Type, Student or Professional (if applicable):

Film Contact Email:

Film Contact Web address (if applicable):

Film Name:

Film Description (200 words or less):

Film length:

Permanent URL for film to be shared in the festival program (if applicable):

**Upload film to Vimeo** – If your film is selected, you will be asked to upload your film to Vimeo so that it can be accessed and downloaded by the festival organizers prior to the event. If you don't already have an account on [www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com), begin by signing up (it's free!). Using this platform's uploading service, upload your finished film and share the link in your submission form (above). The link should look some-

thing like this: [www.vimeo.com/82813271](http://www.vimeo.com/82813271).

You must change the privacy settings so that we are able to download your submission. To do this, scroll below your downloaded video and description and click the 'settings' button. Select the 'privacy' tab and scroll to where it says 'What Can People Do With This Video' and select 'Download The Video'. By following these steps, Vimeo will compress your video and allow us to easily watch and download your film for the festival. Once your film has been downloaded we will let you know so you can change the privacy setting on Vimeo or delete it upon your preference. Please send an email to [Tim Copeland](mailto:Tim Copeland) with your Vimeo link details.

### **Photo Submissions**

**Photos** – High-resolution photographs with aquatic themes can be emailed directly to [Tim Copeland](mailto:Tim Copeland) by **July 15, 2024**. Aquatic themes can include riverscapes, oceans, estuaries, underwater biota and scenes, fish activities, science activities, management activities, etc. Photographs will be viewable by AFS meeting attendees in a slide show as part of the film festival; photos will not be individually posted on the meeting website or available for download or use beyond the meeting. In addition, select photographs may be shown opportunistically throughout the meeting. The best photographs will receive awards and be recognized during the conference. In addition, top photos will be printed on wrapped canvas, displayed during the film festival, and offered in the silent auction to raise funds for AFS programs. Photographers may submit between 1-5 photographs. The following information should accompany each photograph and should be provided at the time of photo submission.

Photographer's name:

Photographer's Member Type, Student or Professional (if applicable):

Photograph title (should include fish name and location taken if appropriate):

Photograph purpose (What is the purpose or story of the image? For example, purposes may be to increase awareness of a certain topic or to show the beauty of underwater life):

Filenames of the photographs should include the last name of the photographer and a short title of the image. Files should be .jpg format.

If you have any questions about photo submissions please contact [Tim Copeland](mailto:Tim Copeland).

## WDAFS STUDENT COLLOQUIUM 2024

Meredith Leigh Journey (WDAFS Student Representative)

Join your fellow graduate students in the Western Division American Fisheries Society for 3 days of academic and professional development, peer-to-peer socialization, and fun in the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park! Shared housing and group meals will be provided. Travel funding may be available.

**When:** Thursday May 30 – Saturday June 1

**Where:** YMCA of the Rockies – Estes Park, CO: 2515 Tunnel Rd, Estes Park, CO 80511

**Who:** Any current graduate student in Western Division AFS region (you do not need to be a current AFS member to attend!)

Please see this [Google form](#) for more information, to register, or to provide any feedback (even if you can-

not attend please check out the [google form](#)).

Contact [Meredith](#) at with questions and comments



## WDAFS COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Early Career Professionals Committee

Tawni Riepe & Audrey Harris (WDAFS Early Career Professionals Committee)

What's new?

The WDAFS ECP Committee and members host our first Winter Webinar Series in January 2024. This year, we invited several professionals, including WDAFS president Dr. Eric Fetherman, Dr. Jessica Glass from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and Kimberly Nelson from USDA, to share their experiences on navigating USA job applications, salary negotiation, fellowships, permanent technician positions, and determining job readiness. After sharing their experiences, the professionals participated in a career panel discussion where attendees could ask questions. We had a great turnout with over 60 attendees! Stay tuned from emails about potential topics for the January 2025 Winter Webinar Series.

ECP Travel Grants

Applications for 2024 WDAFS Travel Grants are open! Click [here](#) for more information.

Ongoing CV and Cover Letter Review Form

The ECP committee hosts a CV/resume and cover letter review session at annual meetings to provide feedback to students and early career professionals. To extend this service year-round, a Google form was created so individuals can submit their materials for review at any time. Once submitted, the documents will be matched with an ECP committee member in the relevant field to provide edits and suggestions within a few weeks. To submit materials for review, please [visit](#) here .

### Resource, Policy & Environmental Concerns Committee

Bob Hughes (WDAFS Resource, Policy, & Environmental Concerns Committee)

The RPECC has organized a session for the 2024 AFS annual meeting in Honolulu entitled 'Fire Effects on Surface Waters.' It currently has 10 invited speakers, but others are welcome. The abstract submission site

is now open, and it closes on 26 April. Please contact [Laurie Earley](#) or [Bob Hughes](#) if you have questions.

*WDAFS COMMITTEE UPDATES, cont.***Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

Emily Chen (WDAFS Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee)

D&I Committee at AFS meeting in Honolulu

The Committee is involved in organizing and contributing to the annual Society, Western Division, and Pacific Islands meeting in Honolulu this September. The Committee is organizing a session titled “Inclusive outreach and education for inspiring the next generation”. We encourage individuals who are thinking about improving the inclusivity and accessibility of their outreach and education program to participate and those who have attempted to design an inclusive and accessible program or modify an existing program to submit abstracts. Abstract submissions close April 26th. The description of the symposium is below.

The demographic makeup of the existing workforce is the legacy of hundreds of years of oppression, exclusion, and continued implicit reinforcement. Increasing diversity will not happen passively, but requires identifying and dismantling barriers in the system and transforming how we recruit and retain the next generation of fisheries scientists. This session calls for proposals discussing outreach and education initiatives in academia and for the public with the intention of advancing diversity and inclusion in the fisheries profession. This session showcases successful long-term efforts as well as innovative and trial efforts, the process for developing inclusive outreach and education initiatives, and discussion of

challenges and brainstorming solutions. Examples of potential proposals include discussing 1) outreach initiatives for diverse audiences, 2) revisions to the fisheries curriculum and teaching content, 3) workshops and training summaries for educators in improving equity, accessibility, and inclusivity. The goal of this session is to exchange ideas of transforming education and outreach and provide a space for brainstorming solutions to challenges. Another goal of this session is to encourage educators to consider the equity, accessibility, and inclusivity of their teaching and outreach and to provide support and community for educators with similar goals.

Join Our Committee

The Committee is looking for new members to join our committee in 2024. [Contact](#) us to be added to listserv

Recent Events

Committee Meeting Jan 18, 2024

Committee Meeting Mar 27, 2024

Upcoming Events

Next Committee Meeting May 2024

Working Groups

Conference Planning

Education and Training

Visibility and Awards

Equity and Access

Chapter Support and Development

**Western Native Fishes Committee**

Timothy D’Amico &amp; Luke Schultz (WDAFS Western Native Fishes Committee)

The Western Native Fishes Committee (WNFC) is excited to host and share our ninth-annual symposium focused on native freshwater nongame fishes. Given this year the WNFC is focusing solely on native freshwater nongame fish, we are broadening the typical focal area of this symposium (western North America and the Pacific Islands) to include papers from around the country and world. We are excited to have a broader geographic scope for our symposium, which will appeal to a broader audience, while still being able to highlight commonality amongst the

great diversity of native nongame fishes. The WNFC invites you to submit papers to this year’s symposium, to be considered to be included in to our symposium, please submit abstracts through the [AFS website](#) and select our symposium from the session choice list. Please feel free to pass along this information, we look forward to seeing you in Hawai’i.

## WDAFS VICE PRESIDENT ELECTIONS 2024

### Amber Steed

Thank you for your interest in learning about me and how I would proudly serve as a member of the Western Division AFS (WDAFS) Executive Committee. I am honored by the nomination! This role requires a balance of collaborative engagement in the fisheries profession, proactive leadership experience, and a vision for a future WDAFS that grows our professional resilience and relevance. I offer a record of accomplishment in each of these areas that I would be privileged to bring to this commitment. And of course, I would be proud to represent Montana in WDAFS leadership again!

#### Background and Fisheries Experience

As a kid growing up in Minnesota, I was happiest when exploring the woods and waters around my suburban home. Pursuing an education in biology seemed only natural, leading me to the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire where I studied fish movement in a tributary to the Chippewa River running through our campus. Following graduation with a B.S. in Biology, I broadened my experience in marine, anadromous, and freshwater systems while working across the western U.S. for state, federal, non-profit, and academic employers. Earning a M.S. in Fish and Wildlife Management from Montana State University set my roots deep in the state, solidified in my current position as fisheries biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) since 2007.

My fisheries work with FWP has evolved considerably since it began in 2007, shifting from a largely science-centric perspective to a broader and more socially nuanced approach. While I have maintained a focus on the conservation and management of northwest Montana's aquatic resources, I have increasingly emphasized the collaborative nature of research, monitoring, on-the-ground mitigation, and proactive communication and education. For example, I have endeavored to conserve Westslope Cutthroat Trout in the interconnected upper Flathead River drainage through a portfolio of approaches, including: 1) leading a nonnative rainbow trout suppression program since 2007 while monitoring efficacy and collaboratively researching fish movement and life history, 2) developing an iterative decision framework to identify opportunities fish passage barriers conserving genetically unaltered populations, and 3) directing basin wide genetic monitoring to inform a wide range of management actions. Threatened Bull Trout have

also been a large focus of my work, from researching life history, survival, and movement to collaboratively leading the development of standard FWP protocols for evaluating and conducting bull trout translocation as a conservation strategy. More broadly, I have worked with partners to amend operations to Hungry Horse Dam benefiting downstream fisheries, building lasting and meaningful working relationships across jurisdictions. I have served as lead and co-author on peer-reviewed publications including in CJAFS, NAJFM, TAFS, as well as in popular literature (e.g., "From Banning TNT to Scanning DNA" Montana Outdoors). These handful of examples illustrate the themes of partnership, communication, and proactive leadership that I would bring to my service for WDAFS, if elected.

#### Leadership and AFS Involvement

While I have supervised a crew of outstanding and inspiring staff during my 16+ years as a biologist, I have also embraced opportunities to develop leadership skills beyond my immediate job duties. I am honored to have served as the Montana Chapter AFS (MTAFS) Secretary/Treasurer (2012-2014) and President (2018), entering as President-Elect to help plan and execute the 2017 joint WDAFS/MTAFS meeting in Missoula, Montana. This was an eye-opening, fun, and challenging experience that provided a valuable glimpse of what it takes to pull off a large-scale conference. More importantly, it allowed me to meet and form connections with peers



## WDAFS VICE PRESIDENT ELECTIONS 2024, *cont.*

throughout our broader AFS community. This inspired me to serve on the AFS Ethics and Code of Conduct Committee since 2018 and the WDAFS D&I Committee since 2022.

I have also served as our Montana Chapter's newsletter editor and, most recently, as co-founder and chair of our newly formed committee focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Accomplishments to date include: 1) hosting the first DEI-focused continuing education workshop in our chapter history, held at our 2024 annual meeting, and 2) a membership survey intended to describe chapter demographics and identify existing perceptions of DEI, DEI-related concerns, and ideas and priorities for DEI-related initiatives. While in the early stages of this work, I am inspired by the engagement and support of our members and look forward to building on our momentum. Outside of my AFS leadership service, I have had the privilege of leading and supporting numerous initiatives within and outside of my agency. Examples include serving as lead facilitator of various local and statewide groups including FWP's Lower Yellowstone River Advisory Committee (2021) and the FWP Internal Communications Work Group (2018-2021). I co-founded and have collaboratively led an agency-wide monthly informational seminar ("The Brown Bag Series") since 2020, connecting and educating staff through the sharing of relevant and inspiring content from their peers. I also served on a team charged with rewriting FWP's vision during 2015, later joining a branding team tasked with bringing that vision to life through effective storytelling, visuals, and human connection. Yet, one of my most rewarding efforts has been connecting with our future scientists and outdoor enthusiasts through youth education. While often exhausting (educators, I salute you!), I leave every day of guest lecturing, science fair judging, or fish dissection more inspired and hopeful for our future.

### Vision for WDAFS Leadership

We gain the most from a leadership structure that reflects the range in perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds that we see in our membership. Knowing that relatively few of us can serve in leadership roles, I would continually strive to ensure that WDAFS decisions and actions reflect our vision, mission, and membership values as best as possible. I would actively listen and engage as liaison to division committees, chapters, and the parent society, working to both identify and help address your priority issues and ideas. If elected to this role, I would

focus on proactively communicating across these groups to improve connectivity and mutual learning. I would also work to grow AFS engagement across all levels, a chronic and growing challenge in our professional society. I would strive to collaboratively build on creative ideas from our diverse membership, identifying and removing barriers to participation and retention. An important component of this effort would include engaging our student subunits in actively shaping a professional society they want to belong to for years to come. This inclusive emphasis would dovetail with ensuring financial sustainability, achieved through close collaboration with our Executive Committee and the broader AFS network. Thank you for taking the time to consider me as your next member of the WDAFS Executive Committee! If elected, I look forward to building on the contributions of WDAFS leaders past to positively empower the fisheries community of tomorrow.



## WDAFS VICE PRESIDENT ELECTIONS 2024

### Jeff Falke

Background—I write this as I’m riding through west-central Nevada enjoying the endless vistas of snow-capped mountains and sagebrush-filled ranges. I find myself, as I often do, reflecting on the how the availability of water on the landscape drives many of the things we love about fish and fisheries in the West. My own fisheries journey began at an early age. Some of my first memories of being outdoors were fishing with my father near where I grew up in Western Missouri, right outside Kansas City. Public parks and open spaces were relatively plentiful and well-managed fisheries provided abundant fishing opportunities. I remember many hot and humid summer evenings sitting beside a reservoir fishing for Channel Catfish – without a care in the world! This passion for the outdoors was reinforced through Scouting where a suburban kid was able to enjoy the natural world by learning about all the critters found in the woods, camping, and camaraderie.

Going into a natural resources profession seemed like a good fit. I enrolled as a Fisheries and Wildlife major at my states land grant institution, the University of Missouri where I started out as a Wildlife major; that lasted about half a semester before I switched to Fisheries. I’ve never looked back! I also gained my first professional experiences during this period via positions with USGS and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). My time with MDC exposed me to how state agencies manage fisheries and gave me my first experience with native fish (and crayfish!) conservation. Post-bachelor’s, I moved west to Arizona for a stint with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. This was an eye-opening experience with respect to water management and the plight of native fishes in the West. After about a year I quickly realized that to meet my career goals I needed to further my education through graduate school.

My graduate (MS; Kansas State University; advisor: Dr. Keith Gido, PhD; Colorado State University; advisor: Dr. Kurt Fausch) and post-doctoral research (NOAA/Oregon State University; advisors: Dr’s Jason Dunham, Gordie Reeves, and Chris Jordan) focused on human and climate change impacts to native fishes and their habitats and was funded by state and federal agencies. I can’t understate the value of their mentorship and strive to

incorporate their wisdom into my own mentoring. My graduate and post-doctoral studies set the stage for my career as a federal scientist working in an academic setting. For the past 12 years I have been with the U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Research Unit Program, first as an Assistant Unit Leader-Fisheries and Unit Leader at the Alaska Unit and now (as of June 2023) as Unit Leader of the newly-formed Nevada Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. I value the time spent in Alaska but am also happy to back in the “lower 48” and closer to colleagues, friends, and family.

AFS Involvement—AFS has been a guiding light throughout my time as a student and a professional and I have been fortunate for opportunities to be involved with my primary professional society from the beginning. While a student, I started my AFS service as Vice President of the Mizzou AFS Student Chapter, President of the Kansas State University AFS Student Chapter, and during my time in Colorado served as Western Division Student Representative. After graduation, I continued service at the regional and parent-society level as Western Division Representative to the Education Section, and on the Society Membership Committee. My most fulfilling service (to date) has been on the ExComm of the Alaska Chapter, from Vice President through Past President. This was an extremely rewarding experience and provided me with leadership skills I continue to use every day in my “regular job” and AFS. I have also helped plan and successfully carry out numerous AFS



## WDAFS VICE PRESIDENT ELECTIONS 2024, cont.

meetings, from university student symposiums to multiple Alaska Chapter annual meetings, to serving as co-chair of the Western Division Annual Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska. Most recently I had the honor of serving on the international program committee for the 2024 World Fisheries Congress. This was a richly rewarding experience to meet and interact with fisheries professionals from around the globe. I look forward to continuing my AFS service and focus on the Division and Society levels. My wealth of practical experience with the nuts and bolts of AFS operations will serve me well with Western Division and allow me to focus on carrying out the mission of the Division, as well as implementing new initiatives to move the organization forward.

Vision— I've learned a lot during my tenure with various academic, state, and federal organizations, and the integration of those experiences is key to my current successful collaborations with my cooperators. The Cooperative Research Units mission of research for actionable science, training the next generation of leadership through graduate education, and providing technical assistance and outreach to meet cooperators training needs guides these interactions and aligns well with the goals of AFS. However, this isn't enough at face value – purposeful focus on diversity and co-production is our modern challenge and should be implemented from the start. I am committed to increasing justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the fisheries profession via my personal actions to ensure every person is valued and has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential. As a mentor and supervisor, it is critical that I take an active role in this pursuit, and I will continue to work to support diversity initiatives via my direct and indirect actions and professional society service. Another ongoing issue is declining support by agencies to allow staff to participate in AFS. Institutional support is key to keep folks engaged and able to benefit from all the AFS has to offer. I know that I was lucky to be able to attend state AFS meetings as a technician and early career scientist. Coming up with novel and actionable methods to increase participation from agency professionals is key to a diverse and robust future for our professional society. Finally, if elected my first challenge would be to listen – what are the most pressing issues for the Division today? Answering this question will require input from our membership, the current ExComm, and the society at

-large.

I'm finishing writing this statement on the northern California coast where the forecast for over an inch of rain is putting a bit of a damper on family hiking plans. Several area roads are closed from landslides and flooding – certainly a far cry from the dry central Nevada landscapes. My recent transition from Alaska to Nevada mirrors the breadth of water quantity issues in the West (sometimes too much or at the wrong time, but often too little or too late). My near-term focus is to highlight innovative actions to address water issues in Western fisheries, promote native fish conservation through research and education, continue to address climate adaptation, and facilitate useful educational and training opportunities for fisheries students and professionals on such topics. I have come to realize that success will require novel applications and novel applicators – those that are trained to use human dimensions techniques of co-production (i.e., cooperation, collaboration - call it what you wish) will be most successful. I am on a personal journey to become better at incorporating such methods into my research, teaching, and society endeavors from the get-go. I invite Western Division AFS to join me on this journey!



## Meet Your WDAFS Officers

### President: Eric Fetherman

*Hometown:* Lakewood, CO

*Education:* B.S., Colorado State University; M.S., Colorado State University; Ph.D., Colorado State University

*Employer:* Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Fort Collins, CO

*Interests:* I enjoy hiking and backpacking with my wife, especially in Rocky Mountain National Park on any free weekend we can find, as well as hunting, fishing, birdwatching, and photography.



### Vice President: Tim Copeland

*Hometown:* Boise, ID

*Education:* Ph.D, Virginia Tech University

*Employer:* Idaho Department of Fish & Game

*Interests:* Fishin', hikin', huntin' and other excuses to go see things outside.



### Secretary-Treasurer: Laura Burckhardt

*Hometown:* Casper, WY

*Education:* M.S, University of Arizona

*Employer:* Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Cody Wyoming

*Interests:* I enjoy exploring nature. Including hiking, kayaking, rafting, paddleboarding, backpacking, camping, skiing, fishing, hunting, harvesting and preserving my own food. I also enjoy helping kids learn to love and take care of our natural resources.



### President-Elect: Julie Carter

*Hometown:* Phoenix, AZ

*Education:* B.S. Biology Northern Arizona University; M.S. University of Alaska Fairbanks

*Employer:* Arizona Game and Fish Department

*Interests:* I love to fish for trout and I'm currently working to complete the Arizona Trout Challenge and the Western Native Trout Challenge. Spending time hiking in the mountains, trips to the beach, and seeing live music with my family.



### Past President: Laurie Earley

*Hometown:* Colchester, VT

*Education:* B.S., University of Rhode Island; M.S., Auburn University

*Employer:* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Essex Junction, VT

*Interests:* Outdoor recreation of all kinds, traveling, gardening, cooking, reading, and exploring our surrounding with our 1 year old daughter.



### Student Representative: Meredith Leigh Journey

*Hometown:* Emerald Isle, North Carolina

*Education:* B.S., Utah State University; M.S. University of Washington

*Employer:* PhD Student, University of Wyoming

*Interests:* I love to spend as much time as possible in the mountains: rock climbing, mountaineering, skiing, and trail running. Ideal rest day: doing the NYT crossword and eating donuts.



Western Division American Fisheries Society