

Western Division American Fisheries Society
EXCOM Meeting
May 15, 2006

In attendance: Joe Margraf, Lynn Starnes, Bob Hughes, Dave Ward, Eric Wagner, Kate Walker (Montana), Leanne Roulson (Montana), Keith Underwood (NPIC), Pam Sponholtz (AZ-NM), Russ Bellmer (CA-NV), Barry McPherson (Oregon), Hilda Sexauer (CO-WY), Lori Martin (CO-WY), Phaedra Budy (Bonneville), Mark Novak (Utah State University Student Subunit), Kajsa Stromberg (Newsletter), Dave Lentz (CA-NV Time and Place), Jim Tilmant (Western Native Fishes), Isaius Salgado (Mexico), Scott Maclean (Alaska), Russ Kiefer (Idaho), Mark Brouder, Jim Tilmant, Jennifer Nielsen (AFS President-Elect).

Quorum Established

President's Message

President Joe Margraf encouraged participation in the Western Division, and thanked those that have been involved. Joe noted that a key for the Society is communication. As an example, Joe discussed the loss of the previous newsletter editor, about which the Division was unaware for some time. The Division has since found a new editor, Kajsa Stromberg. The Division is also losing its Webmaster, Mary Whalen. A replacement or replacements will be announced shortly.

Joe discussed upcoming elections and the need to elect a Vice-President prior to September.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary-Treasurer Dave Ward summarized the current financial situation (fairly good), expenditures and income to date for the current fiscal year (close to the approved budget), and expected income from the annual meeting (slightly higher than projected).

Finances and Budget

President-Elect Bob Hughes moved that funds in the checking account allocated to the Pallid Sturgeon Committee be unencumbered and re-allocated to the grant endowment fund. Past-President Lynn Starnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Bob Hughes also moved that funds allocated to the Cutthroat Trout documentary be moved to the grant endowment fund. Russ Bellmer seconded the motion. Considerable discussion ensued, which included concerns regarding completeness of the potential expenditures for the documentary (copies, distribution, advertisement, etc.). President Joe Margraf suggested a potential new focus for the Cutthroat Trout Documentary Committee (populated by new members) be distribution of the documentary. Because of these concerns and potential new work for the committee, the original motion failed unanimously. Joe then asked for volunteers to re-charge the committee. Kajsa Stromberg, Phaedra Budy, and Hilda Sexhauer volunteered. Joe will ask Ken McDonald to remain on the committee.

Bob Hughes then led a discussion on a draft of the proposed FY 2007 budget. Line items discussed included the ExCom mid-year meeting, payment to reviewers of the Columbia River Hydrosystem Biological Opinion, estimated income from the 2007 annual meeting, and funding for grants. After considerable discussion, ExCom recommended that the next draft of the 2007 budget include expenditures for an ExCom mid-year meeting, retain a line-item for grants funding, increase the amount budgeted for ExCom travel, and increase the estimate of income from the annual meeting. Bob will develop the next draft of the budget for ExCom review.

ExCom decided to pay reviewers of the Columbia River Hydrosystem Biological Opinion from FY 2006 funds. Income in 2006 is higher than projected, and it is still possible that the Division could receive payment from the Associated Tribes of Northwest Indians to offset this payment to the reviewers.

Committee Reports

Most committee chairs were not present.

Joe Margraf led a brief discussion about chapter participation in the grant endowment fund. There is also potential to go on a larger scale and invest cooperatively with the Parent Society.

Lynn Starnes gave a brief update on the nominating committee. Lynn also announced the winners of various awards. The Western Division officers agreed to meet later to decide on Chapter of the Year, and on Student Subunit of the year.

Phaedra Budy reported that responses to the bull trout survey would be summarized during the bull trout symposium at this meeting.

ExCom discussed establishing guidelines for what can be sent out on the Division's list serve. Dave Lentz agreed to develop a policy for consideration by ExCom. This will include a disclaimer about Western Division endorsement on list serve items.

There was stiff competition for the Eugene Maughan awards this year. Phaedra Budy moved, and Bob Hughes seconded that in the future, preference be given to first-time recipients. The motion passed unanimously.

ExCom discussed combining the Newsletter and Electronic Communications committees. A plan will be developed for consideration by the end of June.

Hilda Sexhauer announced winners of the Riparian Challenge awards.

Jim Tilmant gave an overview of the Western Native Fishes project. The databases are being reviewed, and some still need to be populated. The Division will need to renew the contract with Garcia and Associates as soon as possible. This is under negotiation. Vice-President Eric Wagner moved, and Bob Hughes seconded a motion to approve contract renewal. The motion passed unanimously.

Chapter Reports

- Alaska: Working on funding stability for student travel; next meeting in Fairbanks in November.
- AZ-NM: Annual meeting in February 2006 was largest in history; next meeting in February 2007.
- Bonneville: Chapter has a growing student subunit with 30-40 members.
- CA-NV: The March 2006 meeting was sponsored jointly with the Mexican Chapter.
- CO-WY: Annual meeting in Cheyenne was a huge success; the Chapter received \$5k grant for watershed protection. A detailed report is attached.
- Idaho: New student subunit is being formed. "Native Fishes of Idaho" will be published by AFS.
- Mexico: Next annual meeting will be in La Paz in May 2007. All are invited.
- Montana: Holding this meeting has been the big news for the Chapter. The Chapter also funded fish barrier removal and restoration work.
- NPIC: Held a good meeting in British Columbia, but most attendees were involved in climate control. Future of the Chapter as it currently exists is questionable.
- Oregon: Record attendance (500+) for an annual meeting in Eastern Oregon in March 2006; The Chapter co-sponsored the Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium held in Port Townsend Washington.

Non-Active Chapters

The Hawaiian Chapter will be difficult to re-energize/re-constitute, but after discussion, President Joe Margraf felt the Division should make an attempt to do so.

It is likely the Humboldt Chapter will dissolve and be re-constituted as a student subunit of the CA-NV Chapter. The New Mexico State University unit is not a legal chapter, and needs to be re-constituted as a student subunit. The Portland Chapter is moving towards disbanding.

The following motions were offered by Bob Hughes, seconded by Russ Bellmer, and passed unanimously:

To recommend to the Governing Board that the Humboldt Chapter be dissolved;

To recommend to the Governing Board that the New Mexico State University Chapter be dissolved;

To recommend to the Governing Board that the Hawaiian Chapter be dissolved.

New Business

As per minutes from recent ExCom meetings, the allocation of profits from the 2007 Parent Society meeting in San Francisco was discussed. The Division is trying to negotiate a change from the past formula that gives 80% to the Parent Society, with the remaining 20% split between co-sponsors (usually the Division and one Chapter).

President Joe Margraf led a discussion about income sources for the Division. A need was identified to develop income from additional sources. Book royalties were identified as a possibility. The potential need for a business plan was discussed.

Joe then led a discussion on potential services from the Parent Society. Chapters and the Division should strive to better utilize the Parent Society. Chapters have submitted lists of potential services to the Division.

A draft of the AFS "Best Science" white paper (discussed by ExCom at the September 2005 meeting in Anchorage) has been submitted to the Management Committee for final review. The revised draft will be distributed for wider review in summer 2006. Discussion between the Parent Society and federal agencies is still being planned.