



American Fisheries Society

Western Division

President Pam Sponholtz, President-elect Hilda Sexauer, Vice-president Jim Bowker, Secretary-Treasurer Travis Neebling, Past-president Tina Swanson

Minutes for Executive Committee Conference Call on Date: **Thursday, December 19, 2013**

Start Time: 8:30 am AK time/ 9:30 am PT / 10:30 am MT

US Toll-Free: 1-866-910-4857

International Toll-Free: 1-719-387-5500

Passcode: 586030

1. Introductions and welcome
 - a. Attendance: Pam Sponholtz (President), Hilda Sexauer (President Elect), Jim Bowker (Vice President), Tina Swanson (Past President), Travis Neebling (Secretary-Treasurer), Tracy Wendt (Student Representative), Phil Loring (AK), Paul Gerrity (CO-WY), Joe Dupont (ID), Todd Bucholz (OR), Jackie Watson (UT), Brian Missildine (WA-BC), Dave Lentz (List-server coordinator), Henry Booke (Investment sub-committee chair).
2. Determination of quorum
 - a. A quorum was established
3. Secretary-Treasurer report (Travis/Pam)
 - a. Review and approve mid-year minutes (November)
 - i. One revision was emailed prior to the meeting regarding travel assistance to the 2014 Division meeting for Division award winners. Todd moved to approve the minutes as revised, Joe seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved with no objections.
 - b. Finances Update
 - i. Travis gave a brief update on the finances. There were no major changes since last month; however, Travis has revised the format in which the monthly budget updates are presented which will hopefully make them easier to understand.
 - c. Endowment fund discussion/question session (Henry Booke)
 - i. Henry gave a detailed explanation of the endowment fund and how he manages it. Briefly, the Western Division endowment was established about 12 years ago. Henry now manages a total portfolio of \$2–3 million including the Parent Society's endowment.
Todd asked about the investment philosophy; Oregon has looked for “ethically wonderful investments” (i.e., not investing in companies that are

not good for the environment). Henry responded that they never invest in “evil” companies, but they never really exclude any potential group. He gets committee input before investing, but all decisions are based on potential for profit.

Joe asked for more details on how the committee works and what will happen when Henry retires. Henry responded that he is 81 years old and will retire eventually. He stated that there are others out there that can do just as well as he does. Henry is always looking for new committee members to help out and learn the ropes. Hilda stated that at a recent management committee call, Doug Austen wants others to get involved; it is an open invitation, just contact Doug or Henry.

Tina asked why we don’t put our endowment in the Parent Society’s. Henry responded that it mostly had to do with distrust in the past. Tina asked what advantages there might be. Henry responded that he receives input on the Parent Society’s endowment from a person with a background in economics who graduated from a school in Boston. This person does an incredible job and is a “stable, known entity”. The performance of the Parent Society endowment fund has been within +/-1% of the Western Division fund.

Joe asked if the Division received quarterly reports from Henry and what kind of contact is in place for Chapters to invest. Travis responded that the monthly budget updates include the end-of-month balance for the endowment, and each of the Chapter’s investments within it. He also stated that he is working on an MOU for Chapters to invest and will have a draft for review by the next conference call.

Joe asked again who would fill Henry’s shoes once he is gone. Henry responded that there are two or three other people on the committee that could take over. They have immediate access to manage the account if need be. This is important in case of a major change in the economy (e.g., 1973 when there was a 50% drop in one day; it’s rare, but it does occur). Pam indicated that the Division may look further into moving the Division endowment into the Parent Society’s. She also stated that future success will be based on who is in charge and that those with concerns should contact Henry directly.

4. Update on the 2014 WDAFS/Mexico WDAFS meeting (Felipe, Hilda, Pam)
 - a. Hilda gave a brief update on the 2014 meeting in Mexico. The deadline for abstract submission is January 17; to date, 275 papers and 68 posters have been submitted. Most of the symposia are filling up. They have space for 321 papers, but if necessary some rooms can be sub-divided to allow for more concurrent sessions.

Pam gave an update on the on-site visit that occurred from November 20–23. This is not normal practice for the Division to be so involved with the planning, but this is the first time a Division meeting is being held in Mexico. Also, correspondence with the Mexico Chapter occurs differently than what most Americans are used to. It was a very useful meeting, allowing attendees to see the hotel and layout, and start to lock in meeting details.

We are moving forward with meeting registration; it will hopefully be online by early next week. They are currently in the testing phase. February 14 will be the early registration deadline.

Details on the continuing education courses are coming together. There will be a field tour relating to mangroves as habitat; this is limited to 15 people. The sharks and rays symposium will host a course; registration for this will be through a separate website. There will be a course on standardized sampling techniques; this course will be split into English (25 participants) and Spanish (25 participants). There will not be an aquaculture course. Registration for the continuing education courses will part of the meeting registration.

Jackie asked about setting something up for arranging roommates. Pam responded that we don't have anything set up, but we should. Tracy would like to be involved with organizing that. Travis stated that we should be able to get something up on the meeting website pretty easily.

5. Update on 2015 WDAFS/AFS/ORAFS meeting in Portland (Hilda)

- a. Hilda gave a brief update on the 2015 meeting in Portland. There will be an on-site visit May 21 and 22. They are looking to hire an artist for the meeting poster; as there is no theme for the meeting, the art will likely focus on Oregon and Portland. Potential plenary speakers have been contacted.

Jim stated that Dave Ward believes that they are ahead of schedule, everything is moving along well, and that having daily plenary speakers is cost-prohibitive.

Dave Lentz asked about 2016. Pam confirmed that Cal/Neva is scheduled to host. 2017 will be in Alaska, joint with the Parent Society. HelmsBriscoe is helping with the 2017 arrangements. Jim Bowker and Dave Lentz are working with Jim Hobbs on the 2016 meeting arrangements.

6. Proposal on reclassification and re-description of the subspecies within *O. clarkii* (Pam)

- a. Pam gave an update on the request from Patrick Trotter regarding a review panel to look at *O. clarkii* subspecies and lineages. This is based on a Federal workshop this summer mostly looking at greenback cutthroat and cutthroat in CO, WY, and UT; the results of which are about to be released. Patrick wants to apply this work more broadly. He is looking to apply for the Division's small grant and get an endorsement from the Division.

Joe asked what the maximum small grant amount is. Pam responded that for this year we have \$5,000, but we usually fund two or three grants out of that depending on the number of applications. Tina responded that we usually haven't funded travel; this is just a preference, but funds have been going to research or a specific project.

Pam asked about giving an endorsement. Tina responded by asking if we want to have a Division representative. Hilda responded that Patrick's list has many Division members.

Pam suggested a symposium at a Division or Parent Society meeting. Tracy agreed with that idea. Tina asked about how we would give endorsement and support to that. Dave responded that he likes that idea, but it seems like Patrick is looking to do a "nuts and bolts" effort before a symposium. Dave also reminded everyone that the Division has historically supported cutthroat trout work (e.g., the DVD released a few years back); that it is our signature species.

Pam will respond to Patrick suggesting that he apply for a small grant, but reminding him that we usually do not support travel. She will also suggest a 2015 symposium. Many participants liked that idea. Jim thought it was especially good as there is no meeting theme, we could highlight the symposium.

7. Update from Student Representative (Tracy)

- a. Tracy has been sending out reminder emails and social media updates regarding the December 31 student travel grant deadline and the February 1 scholarship deadline. She asked that Chapters offering student grants forward their award winner information to Tracy so that they do not double-dip over the maximum expected cost. Tracy will be serving as the contact for student volunteers. In the first week of January she will rank all travel grant applicants and get ranking to the Division Excom. Rankings will be based on the criteria Hilda used to rank professional travel grant applicants. Voting on awardees will then be done by email.

8. Chapter roundtable

- a. CO-WY – Paul:
 - i. They had their ExCom meeting two days ago to plan for their annual meeting, March 4–6. There will be a continuing education course on fish genetics.
- b. Idaho – Joe:
 - i. They just had a face-to-face meeting planning for their annual meeting, February 10–14. They approved travel grants for attendees covering airfare and rooms (\$750–800); they spent \$5,000 total instead of the \$3,000 they planned. The book “Unwritten Laws of Fisheries” will be published in the next month or two.
- c. Alaska – Phil:
 - i. Their Chapter meeting was in October. They recently had an Excom meeting to review plans for 2014; they have booked a venue in Juneau. There is no update on bids for 2017, but will have one next month. Jim or Pam will attend the 2014 meeting representing the Division.
- d. Utah – Jackie:
 - i. Their annual meeting will be in Price, March 11–13. The chapter is financially unstable (i.e., broke). They will be talking about fundraising at the meeting. They have been living off Western Division meeting proceeds, but are looking for other sources of funding. Pam suggested talking to Joe as Idaho always does really well with fundraising and also talk to AZ-NM. They are also working on a procedures manual which should be ready for the members by the annual meeting.
- e. Oregon – Todd:
 - i. They are planning for their 2014 meeting. They are looking to tweak their bylaws to make the Secretary-Treasurer position two years. The external director who was recently involved in a helicopter crash is back on the Excom and back at work part time; the biologist and pilot are back at work. They have resolved their issues with the IRS and no longer owe them money.
- f. WA-BC – Brian:

- i. Brain asked about Utah and if other Chapters could sponsor them (i.e., give them a loan). Pam responded that she did not know the answer to that. Tina responded that the easiest way to help is to be a sponsor of their annual meeting. Joe responded that you have to spend money to make money at an annual meeting.

The WA-BC annual meeting will be March 25–27 in Vancouver; the meeting will focus on cutthroat trout, sturgeon, and estuarine species. The new website is up and running. They are looking to invest in the Division's endowment fund. Their membership is looking to make a request/comment about the capitalization of fish names; this will not happen until after their Chapter meeting, but will hopefully be addressed at the September Governing Board meeting.

9. New or other business

- a. Dave will provide documentation on the listserv at the January conference call. He is looking to develop some sort of policy on it (i.e., guidance that could be posted on the website). He has been running it for a number of years without a formal set of rules, basically just trying not to overload people's email.
- b. Tina has written up a call for award nominations. The deadline will be in late March. Hilda suggested moving up the deadline to allow awardees time to make travel arrangements or meet early registration deadlines. There was discussion about waving registration costs for awardees to which Pam agreed, thus the early registration deadline was no longer an issue. The final agreement was to move the nomination deadline to March 7.
Tracy asked about an award for educators or professors. Tina suggested that current award categories may already apply, but that Tracy should write up a proposal, run it by Jessica Mistak (AFS Constitutional Consultant), and present it at the annual meeting.
- c. Jim reminded chapters of the new AFS program focusing on emerging leaders (formerly the Young Professional Mentees program). They are looking for one or two people from each division. There will be a \$500 travel grant and they will need to arrive at the annual meeting three days early.

The next conference call will be on January 16. The call adjourned at 12:32 pm MST.