



American Fisheries Society

Western Division

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

Agenda for Executive Committee Conference Call on Date: **Thursday, January 15, 2015**

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

US Toll-Free: 1-800-582-3014

Canada Toll-Free: 1-888-626-9463

International Toll-Free: 1-302-224-7029

Passcode: 837490314#

1. Introductions and welcome
 - a. Hilda Sexauer (President), Jim Bowker (President-Elect), Travis Neebling (Secretary-Treasurer), Jane Sullivan (Student Representative), Bill Stewart (AZ-NM), Dan Brauch (CO-WY), Pat Saffel (MT), Calvin Black (UT), Lori Martin (Environmental Concerns Committee Chair), and Luke Schultz (Native Fishes Committee Chair).
2. Determination of quorum
 - a. A quorum was established
3. Secretary-Treasurer report (Travis)
 - a. Approve December minutes (Travis)
 - i. Travis summarized the revisions he received from Hilda. Jim moved to approve the December minutes as revised, Dan seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved with no objections.
 - b. Finances Update (Travis)
 - i. Travis gave a brief update of the finances. The 'Balances by month' spreadsheet has been updated to include the approved budget and Excom travel sheets. \$25,000 was transferred from the endowment to the checking account to cover future anticipated expenses which are outlined on rows 18–33 of the 'Balances by month' sheet.
4. WDAFS small grants – (Pam)
 - a. As Pam was not able to make the call, discussion of small grants was postponed until the February conference call.
5. Update on 2015 AFS/WDAFS/ORAFS meeting in Portland (Hilda/Jim/Mike)
 - a. Hilda and Jim gave an update. There was a core meeting yesterday. They only have \$2,500 in the bank currently; however, Bethesda has stated that they will cover any mandatory expenses. Programming is going well; symposia

submissions are due tomorrow, but will be accepted until noon on Saturday. Currently they have 41 submissions, they are hoping for ~80; for reference Seattle had 103 submissions of which they accepted 90. There will be a site visit the last week of April when they will figure out room assignments.

- b. They plan to podcast 8–12 one-day sessions at a cost of \$700 per session; this is based on one technician covering four sessions. They have asked symposia sponsors to support the cost of podcasting. Beverly Pike is working on a copyright waiver form. All images in presentations must be verified prior to presenting. Presenters who are unable/unwilling to be recorded will be scheduled at the end of their session.
 - c. The planning committee is working hard to make sure that everything is being archived for future meetings. They are developing smart-sheets and schedules.
 - d. Mary Buckman has requested the \$1,500 donation from the Western Division. Travis will send the check to her.
 - e. Hilda sent out an email regarding the challenge to other AFS units to match the funds Western Division has allocated for student, professional, and international travel to the Portland meeting, and also for Chapters to donate trips for the auction. The plan is to get the program printed around June 24, with a deadline for submissions by May 1 (later confirmed to be June 30). Hilda asked if the Chapter's needed more time to arrange donations, but noted that they would not turn down any donations, Chapter's just wouldn't receive recognition in the program.
6. Possibly updates on KSM Canada and Alaska Mining project and Susitna Dam (Hilda, Phil?)
- a. Sarah O'Neal from the Alaska Chapter (also with Trout Unlimited) called in to discuss the proposed Susitna Dam. This will be a giant dam; the second tallest in the United States. It is proposed on the Susitna River in central Alaska on a major King Salmon run. It is a state funded project.
 - b. They are currently in the pre-application phase, conducting environmental impact studies. This is an abbreviated process because the dam was first proposed in the 1980s and studies were completed then. They are working on their FERC (integrated licensing process) which takes two years. The first year is complete; however, there were issues with permits on tribal lands and a late break-up. Due to low oil prices causing a tanking Alaska economy, they are reconsidering the project altogether.
 - c. Trout Unlimited can help draft a letter to FERC to take to the Legislature. Lori commented that it would be nice to comment now after the first year. Lori asked if the state conducted the studies; Sarah responded that they were conducted by consultants and that there were issues with the work. Lori asked what the schedule for the letter is; Sarah would like to take it to the Legislature in February. Lori suggested the first letter be quick to develop and read, and suggested bullet points. Sarah said that the FERC deadline is in May and we could include detailed comments then.
 - d. Hilda asked if this is something we want to be involved in, noting that in August we had planned to comment. Jim thinks this is something we should be involved in, but asked how we are going to sign it? Lori, with assistance from Excom and Sarah, will draft a letter to the Legislature. Excom will review it and send it in February. Jane volunteered to help.

- e. Sarah discussed having it come from the Alaska Chapter, but noted that it is a hot-button issue and that it would be better coming from the Division. Jim suggested elevating it to the Society level. Hilda commented that Bob Hughes knows about this, but will contact Bob and the AFS Environmental Concerns Committee.
 - f. Sarah has nine files of background material and is willing to send it to anyone who is interested.
 - g. Sarah also discussed KSM (trans-boundary mining). British Columbia has opened a power line into new country and are proposing 6–7 large mines in central British Columbia with rivers that flow into south-east Alaska. The United States is not involved in permitting upstream. British Columbia is moving permitting along quickly. KSM recently cleared a major hurdle in permitting and is expected to open a mine similar to the Pebble Mine. They are looking to mine a copper perforated deposit which could lead to acid mine leaching. There are also many other mines in development. Sarah would like to appeal to the IJC (International Joint Commission) to better scrutinize the proposed mines and let the United States get involved. Bob Hughes has sent a letter to the IJC. Trout Unlimited is considering an op-ed piece in a Canadian newspaper. Pat had no comment and Luke said he was ok with this.
 - h. Hilda noted that the Alaska Chapter has agreed to sign on to the AFS letter. She asked if everyone is ok with researching and sending a letter to IJC; there was not dissent. Lori asked Sarah what the timeline is; Sarah noted that there is no deadline for the IJC request and that the Susitna Dam issue is more pressing. Hilda commented that she would like to get buy-in from the WA-BC Chapter before proceeding. Jane will also contact the BC Student Subunit.
 - i. Pat brought up the Pallid Sturgeon recovery in the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. The Montana Chapter has commented on this in the past and the Division has written a letter in the past. The government has eliminated biomonitoring and there are issues with the operation of Fort Peck Dam. The Montana Chapter has been asked to join litigation on this topic which is proving to be a challenging process. Pat asked what AFS's view is on legal advocacy; Hilda sent a letter to Doug about this last year, but didn't know. Donna Parrish suggested not getting involved in legal action. Bob Hughes and Tina Swanson would be good to talk to about this. Jim noted that he would have to recuse himself from this discussion and matter. Pat noted that there are potential costs to AFS and it's members. Pat seems to be getting some support from the state, but it is complicated. Hilda asked what he would like from the Division; Pat responded with expertise. Hilda will talk to Bob about this matter.
7. Update on 2016 WDAFS/CalNeva meeting in Reno (Jim/Cleve/Norm)
- a. No update.
8. Officer/Student rep update(Jane Sullivan)
- a. Jane gave an update. The student colloquium will be next month. The Cal-Neva Chapter donated \$500 for the mentoring social. There are 30 registrants, but they have only received three abstract submissions. There will not be a proposal writing workshop, but Jane would like to put together a list of what makes a good proposal.
 - i. Hilda commented that it should be concise and to the point.
 - ii. Jim noted that it should contain how the money is going to be used.

- iii. Hilda also commented that they should follow the instructions, answer all the questions, and follow the format.
 - b. Jane has been in contact with the British Columbia Student Subunit, but still has not been able to reach anyone with the Oregon student subunits.
- 9. Chapter roundtable
 - a. MT – Pat:
 - i. The Chapter has submitted a bid for the 2017 Division meeting to be held in Missoula; a big thanks go to Tracy Wendt for her work on this. The bid looked great and should be posted to the Division website for archiving.
- 10. New or other business
 - a. Native Fishes Committee update – Luke Schultz.
 - i. Luke is the new Native Fishes Committee Chair; he has been with Oregon State University for about three years. Eric Wagner used to be the chair. The Society for Conservation Biology is hosting the Western Native Fishes database as part of Databasin. Luke wants to know how much use it is getting. He noted that the Oregon Chapter Native Fishes Committee is very active and he will check with them to see who is using the database. He hopes to update it every 10–15 years, as well as develop a mission statement for the committee and a list of past and present members. There will be a committee meeting in Portland. Luke would like to get more articles (peer-reviewed) that include the database and also have more meeting symposia focused around it.

The next conference call will be on February 19. The meeting adjourned at 12:35pm MST.