

**Western Division American Fisheries Society  
Annual Report for 2007-2008**

This report covers activities since March 2008, when the mid-year report was submitted, through August 2008. See the mid-year report to get a review of events in the Western Division of the American Fisheries Society (WDAFS) for the first half of the year.

I. Motion Report

A. Recommended motion: The WDAFS moves that net profits for the national 2011 annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society, and for future annual meetings hosted by both a Chapter and a Division, be split three ways: 70% to the parent society, 20% to the hosting Chapter, and 10% to the hosting Division.

B. Minority View (none)

C. Background for Motion: Due to past budget problems at the national level, higher percentages of net annual meeting income for the parent society became the norm. Currently the percentages are 10% for the host Chapter, 10% for the host Division, and 80% for the parent society. Local chapters and divisions of AFS made enough money on the meetings that this arrangement worked okay. According to data presented at the March 2008 Governing Board meeting, annual meeting revenue accounts for 10.4% of total revenue, based on 2006 meeting income. An increase of 10% to the host chapter would mean a 1% drop in the national AFS budget.

Growth in attendance to chapter, division, and national AFS meetings has led to a situation where 1) annual meetings take much more effort to produce, much of which falls on the local chapter, and 2) chapter and division income for their meetings has grown to the point where hosting a national or even a division meeting may result in a net loss in revenue. This does not provide the needed incentive for hosting increasingly complex annual meetings. This is an issue of fairness. Chapter and Division hosts do most of the work, they should be rewarded for it.

II. Activity Report.

Local and Global Leadership

Western Division-

The "Status of Western Native Freshwater Fishes Project" has continued to be the primary focus of the Division's Native Fishes Committee during the past year. The committee met periodically via teleconference during the year to discuss this project and actions necessary to bring it to completion. We have continued our contract with Garcia and Associates of Bozeman Montana to assist us with collection of information and development of the database. The Western Division has received past funding support for this project from the Packard Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's "Bring back the Natives" program, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies / US Fish and Wildlife Service Multi-state Conservation Grant Program, AFS's Fisheries Conservation Foundation, and the National Park Service. This year, additional funding for the project has come from national AFS, several Western Division

Chapters and the Western Division itself, along with a commitment of \$5,000 from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (not yet received). The committee currently has a funding balance of about \$12,000 (plus an additional commitment from the USFWS of \$5K) to carry out the remainder of the project. Additional fund raising is likely to be necessary.

The Western Native Fishes Project has completed the creation of a database for those species within the continental US, Alaska, and Hawaii. GIS maps depicting species distributions at the 4<sup>th</sup> HUC level have been produced for all species within the database. A project report for this phase of the project was completed and submitted to funding agencies this year. A CD of the project report, along with the database and GIS distribution maps with data query capabilities, has been made available to State agencies and others requesting copies. Comparable hydrological unit maps have been developed by Garcia and Associates for Mexico and have been put into the species database. Work on populating the database with species information for Mexico and Canada is continuing. A project poster and papers describing the results of this project to date have been presented at several chapter meetings, the National AFS meeting the last two years, and at the past Western Division's annual meetings. The committee has also completed a publication of papers presented at a Native Fish Symposium held in conjunction with the WDAFS's annual meeting in Salt Lake City in 2005. These papers were published as Symposium Proceedings through the AFS. A powerpoint presentation of the database and work to dated has been developed by Garcia and Associates. Most recently, a graduate student from the University of Redlands (California) Computer Sciences Program is contracted to convert the Western Native Freshwater Fishes Database to a web-site compatible format that will allow user-based queries of species information and more selective distribution mapping capabilities. This format will also allow for species information updates to be immediately incorporated into all future distribution maps. During the coming year, the committee hopes to be able to complete this conversion of the database, incorporate known necessary distribution corrections into the database, and get web-site access established. A substantial question yet to be addressed by the Division is where to house this database permanently. We have been talking to the National Database folks (Andy Loftus, Jeff Smith) about how the NWF database might fit in with their efforts.

#### Idaho Chapter

- The Excom is in the process of revising Chapter bylaws to improve transition process in the event of an Excom member resignation. We received a preliminary review of the proposed revisions by the AFS Constitutional Consultant, and have now presented them to the membership for review and voting. Unless we fail to get 2/3 majority approval by the membership, we will ask the Constitutional Consultant to review the changes and ask the governing board for approval of the bylaws in August.
- Palouse Unit and Portneuf Unit elected new officers

#### Oregon Chapter

- Met with Student Unit, to develop better communication, meet incoming student representative, coordinate with new student unit faculty liaison, discuss student scholarship policy and procedure to encourage more participation
- met with ODFW leadership to enhance legislative, policy, and technical efforts

#### Utah Chapter

## Stewardship Education (education efforts outside of AFS)

### Western Division

- Our website continues to be updated through the diligence of our webmaster Paige Ackerman

### Alaska Chapter

- **Ecotrust straying workshop sponsorship** Ecotrust is a conservation organization from Oregon with branches in Alaska. They are interested in the straying issue and want to sponsor a symposium next fall with 30K in funds.
- **Student units**– Planning a mentors lunch for the students at annual meeting. Student units will alternate submissions to the newsletter (spring edition will be UAF in Fairbanks, summer issue will be Juneau). UAA continued a Pebble Mine talk series; Dr. Carol Ann Woody spoke on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

### ●UAF AFS Student Unit

The Fairbanks Student AFS officers for the 2007-2008 academic year were Jess Johnson, President; Melissa Smith, Vice-President; Brandie Weintraub, Secretary/ Treasurer. Committees: Seth Wietgreffe, Continuing Education Committee Chair; and Megan Perry, Outreach Committee Chair. We scheduled meetings the first Wednesday of the month during the fall and the first Thursday of every month during the spring. We disseminated meeting announcements widely, both within and outside of UAF, and, generally, about 20-30 people, including students, professors and local agency biologists, would attend any given meeting. At each gathering, we auctioned off donated items as a fundraiser for the subunit and invited a fisheries professional to present a fisheries-related topic for around 45 min. This year's talks, arranged by the subunit VP, included the following:

September 2007 – A welcome back barbeque co-hosted with the School of Fish and Oceanography Sciences (SFOS)

October 2007 – Dr. Joe Margraf (UAF-SFOS): Why being an AFS member is important

November 2007 – Dr. Amanda Rosenberger (UAF-SFOS): A Resume and CV writing workshop

December 2007 – Dr. Mark Wipfli (UAF-SFOS): Prey resources supporting riverine fishes: spatial and seasonal change throughout drainage networks

February 2008 – Randy Brown (USFW): Otolith Chemistry: A Practical Review of Theory, Technology, and Application

March 2008 – No speaker due to 3 events scheduled for April

April 2008 – Audra Brase (Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Sport Fish Division):Harding Lake Pike: Past, Present and Future

This was the first year that our AFS student subunit had “official” committees to expand and organize unit outreach and member education.

### *Outreach Committee Events*

AFS members volunteered for the educational ADFG Egg Take Day for Fairbanks school district kids, in early October 2007. A number of UAF-AFS members managed educational booths teaching kids about aquatic insects and fish biology. Students and AFS members also assisted in taking eggs from gravid coho for classrooms to rear throughout the school year.

In keeping with tradition, we also participated in the Alaska Statewide High School Science Symposium (ASHSSS). We helped to gather volunteers to judge the science symposium, held on March 1, 2008 and presented an award for Best Aquatics Research Project. This was the fourth year that we attended ASHSSS and we are committed to making this an annual affair. We hope that our participation will generate more interest in aquatic sciences and help recruit students to the UAF fisheries department. This year's winner was Jackson Drew of West Valley High School for his talk on "Behavioral Aspects of Alaskan Blackfish". The Alaska Chapter of AFS assisted the Fairbanks Student subunit in sponsoring this award, generously agreeing to match the \$100 that the Fairbanks Student AFS awarded, adding a one-year student membership to the American Fisheries Society.

#### *Education Committee Events*

In March, the subunit hosted a burbot fishing, mushing and potluck trip on the Tanana River. We also hosted one movie night in March about the Inupit people using a stone weir to capture fish. This event was such a success (10-15 people attended), we hosted another in April. This movie featured Inupit seal hunting traditions.

In April of this year, the subunit hosted a first AID/CPR Course. We had students and professors take part in this course.

#### *Other Events*

Lastly, we are going to co-host an end of the year potluck/bbq social with the UAF School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (SFOS) on April 25. The SFOS has very generously offered to pay the rental fee for the Musher's Hall in Fairbanks, and the AFS student group will be purchasing food and other supplies. We are inviting all students, professors and agency personnel to come to the event.

We began a new tradition this year of issuing appreciation awards for outstanding students, faculty and staff as our way of thanking people who support our subunit and go the extra mile for students within the school. This year's winners are; Scott Ayers (student), Amanda Rosenberger (faculty), and Madeline Scholl (staff).

#### *Planning for the 2008-2009 school year*

In our final meeting in April, we elected our officers for next year. As a sign of our expanding and re-energized membership, we had more than one nomination for each officer position. Our new officers for next year are: Dave Caroffino (President), Stan Triebenbach (Vice-president), and Shelley Woods (Secretary/Treasurer). Seth Wietgreffe will continue to serve as committee chair for the Education committee, respectively. We are still looking for someone to serve as on our Outreach committee. They are committed to expanding both the membership and the activities of those committees for the 2008-2009 school year. Amanda Rosenberger will continue to serve as the faculty advisor for the subunit.

#### AZ-NM Chapter

- Chapter member, Shaula Hedwall, was involved in the May stakeholder meeting regarding Fossil Creek, an important stream in central Arizona that underwent a piscicide treatment, a return of full flows (after 100 years of diversion), salvage and repatriation of native fishes in 2004. This stream on U.S. Forest Service (FS) land is hugely popular with visitors from Phoenix and other localities. The FS has been unable to provide trash or sanitary services,

resulting in pressure from NGO's to better protect the stream. Several AFS chapter members have been involved in the prior planning and restoration of Fossil Creek, which is a gem of national importance due to the amount of water springing at its source and the unique travertine system, as well as maintaining six native species of fish, with recent introductions of three additional ESA listed fishes to see if they can be successfully introduced into Fossil Creek.

#### Idaho Chapter

- Funded repairs for Trout in the Classroom unit at Cascade High School
- The Chapter contributed \$500 to purchase field equipment for Craig mountain outdoor program, associated with Lewis and Clark State College
- Provided student travel assistance to Palouse Unit students to attend WDAFS
- The Chapter contributed \$200 to the Society's EOS Travel Award
- The chapter awarded \$500 undergraduate scholarships to Jennifer Spets (Lewis and Clark College) and David Burbank (U of I) and a \$500 graduate scholarship to Ryan Bellmore (ISU)

#### Utah Chapter

- Student subunit held a number of information meetings as part of their yearly activities.

Promotion of Stewardship (resolutions, position papers, letters to policy makers on issues, etc)

#### Western Division

- Efforts were made this year to form a functional environmental concerns committee. Members were solicited from each chapter. We had a conference call in June and established some near term and long-term goals. The committee developed a draft letter on reform of the 1872 mining law, supporting a bill in the House. The letter featured key points desired in reform and was sent to each member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Work on resolution and policy statement on mining reform is on-going.

#### Alaska Chapter

- **Past Presidents Letter to Governor**— concern about employee retention and effect on resource management
- **Chilkat River jet boat permit issue**—decided this does not warrant a position of advocacy under our guidelines. Perhaps the permitting process itself (state-wide) may be an issue, but we did not come to a unanimous agreement on that. We will send a letter regarding not taking action on this issue.
- **Chinook Salmon stocking issue** – There have been an informal public meeting in Haines and currently the public comment period for the ACMP permit application is suspended pending finalization of the release site. Program has undergone dept. review and approval as part of the state wide stocking plan. The size of return is considered small. No support from ExCom for writing a letter of advocacy
- **WD environ concern committee** appointed Carol Ann Woody to committee to help work on mining reform policy statement

#### AZ-NM Chapter

- The chapter commented on a Bureau of Reclamation fish project, involving Hot Springs Creek and a proposed barrier. The chapter asked that further analysis be documented as to why a barrier is the best solution to protect native fishes in this particular stream.

#### Oregon Chapter

- continued tracking controversial ocean issues, including marine sanctuaries and wave energy proposals

#### Utah Chapter

- Worked with Utah Division of Wildlife staff on two state bills working to protect aquatic resources. This included letters sent to state lawmakers on aquatic invasive species. This bill was passed to provide greater state funding to prevent the spread of these species.

#### Information Transfer and Outreach (increasing visibility and professional stature of AFS; collaboration/communication with other organizations)

##### Western Division

- Efforts continue to organize the WDAFS archives. There were 10 boxes that were transferred from Venice Beske, our historian since 1995, to President Wagner. Eric Wagner has put in over 100 hours getting the archives organized and catalogued. Scanning of files of abstracts, minutes, reports, resolutions, etc. to \*.pdf format for posting on the website is ongoing.
- For the annual meeting, press releases were sent to the major newspapers in the Portland area and local TV station.
- Through the WDAFS grants program, \$2K was awarded to support aquatic education via Salmon and Steelhead Days and \$1K was awarded for benthic stream biofilm research in AK.
- An additional grant of \$1,000 was provided to Emily Springer for work on chronicling the oral history of commercial fishermen and the commercial fishing culture in Alaska.

#### AZ-NM Chapter

- The University of Arizona chapter assisted with fish surveys in Aravaipa Creek, another native fish stream of great importance in AZ, and they were involved in cattail removal from some area ponds. The U of A chapter also had invited speakers from state/federal agencies and Trout Unlimited.  
(Unfortunately the NMSU activities were sent on incompatible software, so I was unable to open the file in time for this report). No response from the Arizona State University chapter.

#### Idaho Chapter

- . The proceedings from Burbot symposium at the 2005 Annual AFS meeting (edited by Vaughn Paragamian and Dr. Dave Bennett) was published.
- The Chapter contributed funds for the printing of 5,000 copies of an “Idaho Salmon and Steelhead” brochure

#### Oregon Chapter

- updating and reorganizing chapter website

Member Services (annual meetings, professional development, providing science-based info, web-based services, enhancing diversity of members)

#### Western Division

- WDAFS had a record attendance (1100) for its annual meeting in Portland, OR. There were 10 concurrent sessions of scientific papers. Continuing education courses and plenary speakers provided inspiration, perspective, and skills training.

#### Alaska Chapter

- **Planning for 35<sup>th</sup> Annual AK Chapter Meeting in Anchorage.** On-going have contract for facility and developing schedule and continuing education classes.
- **Newsletter:** published 2 newsletters
- **Budget** overview was submitted for review. A review of our investments showed that we took a little hit with the stock market declines. Our portfolio is well diversified and we have been conservative in our investments, so the loss wasn't too bad. The plan is to stay the course with quarterly reviews. Purchased new computer for treasurer. Chapter to donate \$2K for 2008 year Hutton Program. Contributed \$300 to AFS Equal Opportunities Section and \$500 for WDAFS meeting.

#### AZ-NM Chapter

- The AZ/NM chapter continues to progress on planning for the 2009 WDAFS meeting to be held in Albuquerque in May. The chapter developed a new chapter and a new meeting webpage, which are up and running (<http://www.aznmfishsoup.org/>). Planning committees are also up and running and key dates have been firmed up. Four chapter members promoted the 2009 WDAFS meeting in Portland in May and four members attended the Excom meeting in Portland as well.
- Our updated chapter bylaws were submitted for approval at the September meeting of the Governing Board.

#### Idaho Chapter

- Planning is underway for the 2009 annual meeting to be held March 4-6 in Boise. The plenary session is tentatively entitled *Hatchery Supplementation for Fishery Conservation: Diverse Policies and Applications*
- The Membership Committee has launched a website-based tool to connect volunteers or young professionals looking to gain fisheries experience to professionals who can provide those opportunities by allowing volunteers to work on their project.
- Produced and electronically distributed summer newsletter
- Improvements and updates are being made to the Chapter website to maximize its usefulness to members.
- The Chapter President has summarized the results from an exit survey following the annual meeting to help define what members want from the meeting. The results will be presented in the next Chapter newsletter.
- Contributed \$500 to WDAFS for annual meeting

#### Palouse Unit

- hosted the annual wild game feed fundraiser on April 19th
- Held a fish tagging clinic at the Clearwater Hatchery

#### Portneuf Unit

- Organized an electrofishing trip with IDFG on the Portneuf River
- Organized two public showings of the documentaries “Rising from the Shadows” and “River Webs” focusing on the conservation of aquatic ecosystems and cutthroat trout

### Oregon Chapter

- Hosted 2008 annual meeting of the Western Division. It was the largest WDAFS meeting to date, with about 1100 attendees.
- ExCom retreat with incoming ExCom - began process of establishing annual work plan and budget, funding priorities
- Began organizing 2009 Oregon Chapter annual meeting: theme, committees, registration services, etc.

### Utah Chapter

- Held the annual meeting involving over 110 people from a variety of Federal, State, university and private organizations over 20 papers were presented and a variety of topics. GIS training was also provided.