



Early Years – AFS Water Quality Section



1978 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER  
OF THE AFS WATER QUALITY SECTION

by

John W. Meldrim

The charter meeting of the Water Quality Section of the American Fisheries Society (hereafter WQS-AFS) was held in the Thompson Room of the Bayshore Inn on 15 September 1977 as part of the 107th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society (hereafter AFS). The meeting of prospective members in attendance (54) was called to order by Howard E. Johnson, Chairman of the AFS Water Quality Committee. Howard first discussed the past history of the formation of the WQS - AFS as an idea originated by J. Cameron Stevenson, President of AFS 1975-1976, and supported by Carl R. Sullivan, Executive Director of AFS and by Robert F. Hutton, President of AFS 1976-1977. He then read the objectives



# Early Years – AFS Water Quality Section



# Early Years – AFS Water Quality Section

- Section membership grew rapidly, reaching a high of 678 members in 1981
- However, as budget dollars declined and interests diversified, membership in the WQS began to decline.
- Many AFS and WQS members were also members of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), which had a greater diversity of professional scientists than AFS.
- Membership decline in mid-1980s
  - SETAC tended to attract those WQS members involved in acute and chronic aquatic toxicity testing.
  - Fisheries managers had a waning interest in water quality
- Membership in 1990 recovered to 605 and has been relatively steady ever since

# The Water Quality Section has broadened its perspective over the years

In 1982, a group of approximately 200 individuals led by Lynn Starnes interested in acid mine drainage joined the Water Quality Section

In the late 1990s, a group led by Paola Ferreri interested in watershed issues decided to merge with the Water Quality Section

Periodically, members have raised the issue of changing the Section's name. The most frequently discussed change focused on inclusion of the concept of fish habitat or habitat quality in the name. A separate Fish Habitat Section was formed in 2009.



# Position Statements

Historically, the Water Quality Section has served as a resource to AFS executive directors.

Requests for review of issues and questions concerning water quality concerns for AFS policy statements have been directed to the Section for resolution

## *WATER QUALITY SECTION AFS COMMENTS ON USEPA'S PROPOSED EFFLUENT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT*

As professionals in the fields of fisheries and aquatic ecology, we are confident that if all the environmental and societal benefits of reducing runoff from construction and development were measured and evaluated accurately, there would be no argument whatever regarding the appropriateness of such actions. In support of this statement we offer the following observations based on a summary of scientific literature and professional experience.

Storm water runoff is a very significant contributor to water pollution in streams, rivers, and estuaries. It has been estimated as responsible for almost 50% of pollutant inputs to the marine environment (GESAMP 1990), and for major habitat alterations in estuaries (Kennish 2002). Runoff degrades large areas, threatens drinking water supplies, causes beach and shellfish closures, and increases flooding potential. It is a major source of coastal water pollution, especially near urbanized areas. Since total

economically achievable, especially with new low-cost storm water control techniques. Unfortunately, the final rule, following OMB's changes, removes the regulatory options for addressing these inputs, removes the 80% TSS goal (which is already in use under Coastal Zone Management rules) and includes no effluent limitation guidelines. These changes make the new rule ineffective, and threaten both the ecological and economic benefits of storm water control.

Inputs of suspended solids cloud the water, which has numerous harmful effects on aquatic ecosystems. They can be detrimental to benthic filter feeders (Bock & Miller 1994, Loosanoff & Tommers 1948), and reduce the ability of visual feeders to find their prey (Miner & Stein 1993, Johnson & Hines 1999). Suspended solids can clog gills and other respiratory membranes, smother embryos by coating them with particles, and change the particle size distribution of




# Position Statements

Some positions were too contentious to move forward. The position on Economic Growth was championed by Brian Czech starting in 2003.

This position never made it out of the Resource Policy Section led by Kim Hyatt.

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## Take a Position on Economic Growth

The following position on economic growth is taken by the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy (CASSE). Clear and concise, this educational tool was carefully crafted after years of study and has been sanctioned by many leaders in the field of sustainability science. It not only explains the conflict between economic growth and environmental protection, but provides an alternative vision for a sustainable and secure future.

The CASSE position on economic growth serves as a template for consideration by professional societies and conservation organizations. Individuals who e-sign also provide support for the position. Please sign and ask your friends and colleagues to do the same! (To prevent spamming or potential employer conflicts, no contact information is requested.)

**The Position:**  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Whereas:**

- 1) Economic growth, as defined in standard economics textbooks, is an increase in the production and consumption of goods and services, and;
- 2) Economic growth occurs when there is an increase in the multiplied product of population and per capita consumption, and;
- 3) The American economy grows as an integrated whole consisting of agricultural, extractive, manufacturing, and services sectors that require physical inputs and produce wastes, and;
- 4) Economic growth is often and generally indicated by increasing real gross domestic product (GDP) or real gross national product (GNP), and;
- 5) Economic growth has been a primary, perennial goal of American society and government, and;

**Sign the Position**

Sign In  View Entries

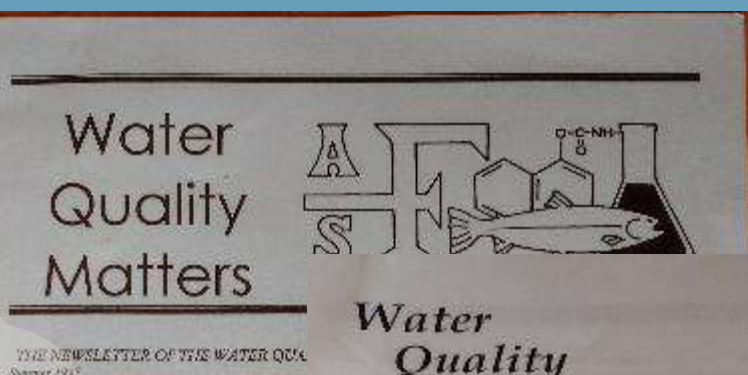
Signatories  
(Nearest 50)  
**650**

# Water Quality Section Role

- The Section continues to be an information source for the AFS Governing Board and membership by:
  - publishing newsletters
  - sponsoring, organizing, and moderating symposia
  - chairing contributed paper sessions at annual meetings
  - reviewing and commenting on key water quality documents
  - alerting fisheries professionals to water quality issues affecting the health of aquatic resources
- The Section remains responsive to emerging issues as the role of water quality and fisheries science changes



# The Section has published a newsletter since 1978 (now online).



**Officers of the Water Quality Section**

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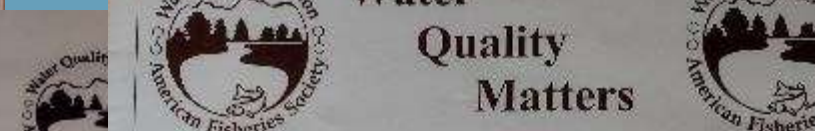
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## Water Quality Matters

The Newsletter of the Water Quality Section of the American Fisheries Society  
 Volume 21, No. 1  
 Spring 2000

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
 Larry Brown, President

The Water Quality Section (WQS) has been very active in the New Year. We established our own Paper Society as a forum to the EPA regarding proposals regarding cleaning the pollution in the "Waters of the United States" in the Clean Water Act. That letter and the EPA's response are posted on the WQS web site. The Section also provided comments on EPA's proposed 5 year review plan to cover the period from 2001-2006, comments on EPA's proposed Efficacy Guidelines for its Construction and Designation, Categorical Listing, and construction of the "405 Wetlands in the Use of Federal Resources". These comments and activities were completed with the help of Ericson, Weston, and others. Our responses to requests for comments were posted to the internet. Thank you to those who responded and members who put out the Section what we have been meeting over the year.



**Water Quality Matters**  
 The Newsletter of the Water Quality Section of the American Fisheries Society  
 Spring 2000  
 WQS Meeting August 22<sup>nd</sup> 7 - 8:30 am  
 Adams Mark Hotel St. Louis, Mo.  
 Volume 21, No. 1

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
 Larry Brown, President

Reflecting over 2000 President, Christine McAfee's theme for this year, "Reflection", I want to look back a bit in the message before I look forward. At your new president, I first want to thank you for your past President Jerry Schube, Secretary-Treasurer John Melnick, and 1999-2000 Past President Bob Gray for providing me with 20 years of leadership and wisdom in my first month as the president. I also want to thank President-Elect Jerry Schube for asking questions that will help him better serve the Section when he becomes President at the end of the 2001 business meeting.

Reflecting further back, it is important to recognize how the WQS has evolved in response to changing natural issues (see a spring 2000 Fisheries article by Greg Gray and John Melnick for details). We began as an AFS section in the state year as the Clean Water Act was enacted (1972), with a focus on the heavy effects of point source pollution, especially from chemicals. In the 1970s, as point sources were minimized, the WQS was granted interest in more air, water, soil, and atmospheric deposits of mercury. The Section expanded its perspective in the 1990s to include forest habitat structure and sedimentation, a total re-organizing that physical habitat deterioration can be preventing to restore the ecosystem. This year, we have again changed our mission to include non-point source pollution, and to focus on the heavy effects of point source pollution, especially from chemicals. In the 1970s, as point sources were minimized, the WQS was granted interest in more air, water, soil, and atmospheric deposits of mercury. The Section expanded its perspective in the 1990s to include forest habitat structure and sedimentation, a total re-organizing that physical habitat deterioration can be preventing to restore the ecosystem. This year, we have again changed our mission to include non-point source pollution, and to focus on the heavy effects of point source pollution, especially from chemicals.



**Water Quality Matters**  
 The Newsletter of the Water Quality Section of the American Fisheries Society  
 January 15, 2021  
 Volume 21, No. 1

**Happy New Year from the Water Quality Section of AFS!**

After the surreal events of the past week, we look forward to a return to normalcy in the coming year(s). Please renew your AFS membership if you have not already. Students and Early Career memberships are free. AFS will not be mailing paper renewals this year. Instead, you can print your own invoice: log into your AFS account and go to My Dues & Subscription tab, click "print renewal invoice" button. That printable invoice becomes a printable receipt when dues are paid off.

**Updated Section By Laws**  
 Why are they called "By Laws"? The Governing Board, guided by alumni Bob Hughes and Margaret Murphy, has revised the By Laws to reflect changes in the way we conduct business and to clarify roles and responsibilities of section officers. We are also proposing a new elected position as Communication Officer, described below.

**Upcoming Elections!**  
 In June the Water Quality Section will be having elections for two office positions. Becoming an officer is a great way to be more involved with the American Fisheries Society and facilitate the protection and improvement of the water resources that our fisheries depend on.

The two positions are **President-Elect** and **Communications Officer**. The President-Elect is a two-year position that leads into two years as President and finally two years as Past-President. As President-Elect, the incumbent serves on the Elections and Audit Committees and performs the duties of the President in their absence. The President develops a two-year work plan and budget, prepares the agenda for and presides at Section meetings, serves on the Elections Committee, appoints all committees, and serves as an ex-officio member of the Governing Board.



perform other functions that require technological expertise and continuity.

If interested you are interested in either of these positions or wish to nominate someone else, please contact Paul Kusnierz ([pkusnierz@alumni.nyu.edu](mailto:pkusnierz@alumni.nyu.edu)) or Henriette Jager ([myjago@gmail.com](mailto:myjago@gmail.com)). We are happy to answer any questions.

**Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies (CASS)**  
 A meeting of the Joint Aquatic Sciences is being planned <https://aquaticsocieties.org/event/aquatic-sciences-meeting-2021/> with participation from AFS.

**Annual AFS Meeting – Baltimore, Nov 6-10**  
 With any luck, the annual AFS meeting will be in Baltimore with the theme Chesapeake headwaters to estuary <https://afsanualmeeting.fisheries.org/2021-annual-meeting-in-baltimore/>. Future meetings are planned in Spokane, Grand Rapids, and Honolulu.

**Symposium proposals**  
 We are aware of one proposal so far. Reach out to the organizers if interested.

**Planning for Coldwater Fisheries Resources: Modeling and Managing Temperature Impairments**

# Communications

The Water Quality Section has focused on communicating various aspects of water quality issues among fisheries scientists

The Section has sponsored or chaired more than 75 symposia and contributed paper sessions at annual AFS meetings over the past 44 years

Some of these symposia have been published (e.g., Coutant 1985; Mehrle et al. 1985; Becker and Neitzel 1992)



# Published Symposia

## Advances in Understanding Landscape Influences on Freshwater Habitats and Biological Assemblages



Robert M. Hughes, Dong M. In'tante, Lizhu Wang, Kai Chen, and Blanca de Toledo Tardá, editors

American Fisheries Society  
Symposium 90



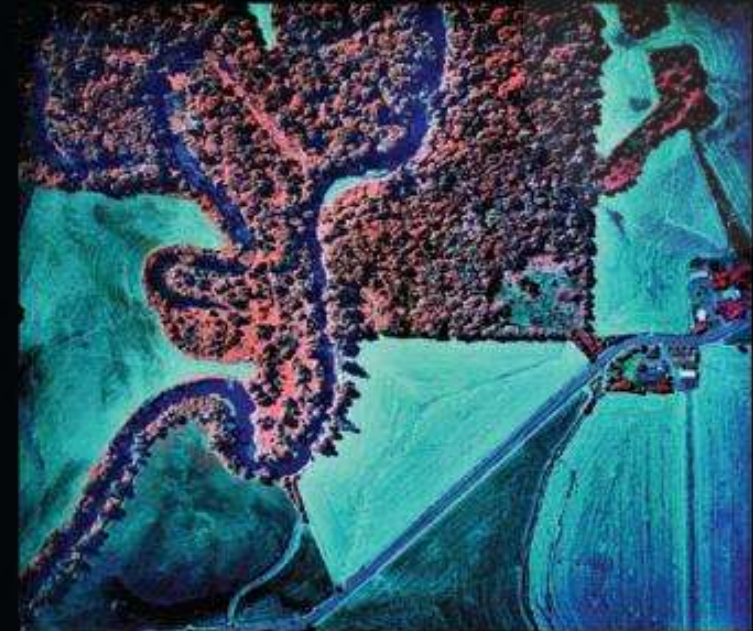
## Effects of Urbanization on Stream Ecosystems



### AFS Symposium 47


Larry R. Brown, Robert H. Gray,  
Robert M. Hughes, and Michael R. Meador, editors

## Landscape Influences on Stream Habitats and Biological Assemblages



American Fisheries Society Symposium 48

Robert M. Hughes, Lizhu Wang, and  
Paul W. Seelbach, editors

The image features a light blue background with a large, stylized water droplet shape on the right side. The droplet is composed of several concentric, slightly wavy lines in varying shades of light blue and white, creating a sense of depth and movement. Centered within the blue area is the text "Water Quality Section Sponsored Symposia" in a dark grey, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines.

Water Quality  
Section Sponsored  
Symposia



# Symposia

**1978 AFS Kingston, RI**

ABSTRACTS

OF

PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE

WATER QUALITY SECTION

SPECIAL SESSION

ON

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT VERSUS WATER QUALITY--  
CAN THEY BOTH BE WINNERS?

AT

AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

108TH ANNUAL MEETING

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

KINGSTON, RHODE ISLAND

22 AUGUST 1978

# Symposia

## **AFS Louisville, KY**

- Fish Behavior Studies – Can they Aid Environmental Impact Assessment? R.H. Gray and J.A. Fava

1980

## **Western Division AFS Honolulu, HI**

- Fisheries Technical Session: Freshwater Papers, R.H. Gray

1981

## **AFS Hilton Head, SC**

- Striped Bass: Environmental Risks in Fresh and Salt Water, C.C. Coutant
- Water Quality Issues in the 1980's: An International Perspective, P.M. Mehrle and R.H. Gray

1982

## **AFS Milwaukee, WI**

- Effects of Contaminants, R.H. Gray
- Habitat Evaluation and Techniques, J.W. Meldrim
- Mitigation Techniques for Acidified Surface Waters, J.G. Wiener
- Water Level Fluctuations: Impacts on Salmonids, D.A. Neitzel

1983