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

by

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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
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- 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.
- However, as budget dollars declined and interests diversified, membership in the WQS began to decline.
- 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.
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.
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).
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
Water Quality
Section Sponsored
Symposia
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

**Western Division AFS Honolulu, HI**
- Fisheries Technical Session: Freshwater Papers, R.H. Gray

**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

**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