

2024 AFS Water Quality Section Business Meeting

Monday, September 16, 2024

11:00 AM–12:00 PM Pacific/Honolulu (5:00–6:00 Eastern)

Location: 313B – Conference Venue

Attendees:

Online

Brian Alford – WQS member, Section President-Elect

In-person

Gregg Lomnický – WQS member, Section Secretary/Treasurer

Paul Kusnierz – WQS member, Section Immediate Past-President

Yushun Chen, WQS member and a past section president (his son was also present)

Mwazvita Dalu – non-WQS member

Tatenda Dalu – non-WQS member

A quorum (≥ 10 Section Members) was not present for the meeting.

1) Officer introduction:

Jonathan Leiman is the Section President

Brian Alford is the Section President-Elect

Yetta Jager (previous Section Past-President) is the Communications Officer

Paul Kusnierz is the Past-President

Gregg Lomnický is the Treasurer/Secretary

2) Officer Section handbook:

The document is still being drafted. There are just a couple of minor additions that need to be made. It will be available for all Section Officers. As a reminder, the handbook describes annual activities and important dates as the bylaws do not discuss detailed logistics for officer duties. A president's email was created: AFSWQSPresident@gmail.com.

3) Additions to the Agenda:

- a. Cecil Jennings 2024 Annual Meeting Talking Points (presented by Paul)

New Executive Director - Jeff Kopaska (formerly of IA DNR); Aug. 30, 2024

-Doug Austen, current ED retires on Sept. 19th, 2024.

New 7-year Publishing Contract with Oxford University Press

-gradual transition to hybrid publication access model – subscription/open access

-open bid process; two finalist – Wiley and OUP – best fit given new publishing landscape

2024 annual meeting in Honolulu, HI (Sept. 15-19, 2024)

-Theme: Conserving Fishes and Fishing through Knowledge Co-production

-Great turnout!! (2100+ registrants); promises to be very profitable for AFS

-Excellent response in paper submission to conference theme (11 individual sessions throughout the week)

AFS Hosted World Fisheries Congress in Seattle, WA (March 3-7, 2024)

-Theme: Fish and Fisheries at the Food-Water-Energy Nexus

-Great turnout: 1200 fisheries professionals from 70 countries!!

-Presidential Column: World Fisheries Congress: seeing fisheries through an international lens (Fisheries March 2024)

AFS to Host Joint Aquatic Societies Meeting (JASM) in Spring 2028

-AFS will also move its annual meeting to Spring and have it in conjunction with JASM

New Draft Strategic Plan/Positioning/Visioning Document (2025-2029)

-current plan expires Dec. 31, 2024.

-new plan addresses current and emerging challenges and opportunities

Improve AFS messaging to: students/young professionals; partner agencies

-address "affiliate membership" paradox; no AFS, no local chapter or division

-intended to combat flat or declining membership numbers.

-emphasize the breadth of "fisheries work" and who are "fisheries professionals"

Continue DEIJA efforts to create a welcoming professional environment to all

-support Equal Opportunity Section in its mission to increase representation within Society

-engage with indigenous/underserved groups as opportunities allow (here in HI)

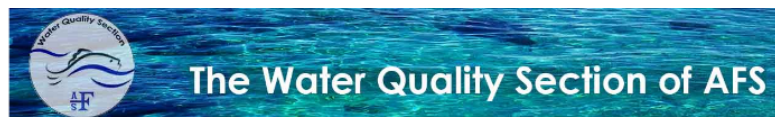
-reiterate 11 individual sessions on knowledge coproduction/indigenous stewardship

-Presidential Column: Enhancing Fisheries Management through Other Ways of Knowing (Fisheries November 2023)

- b. Gregg suggested that we all introduce ourselves. We went around the table/phone and did this.
 - c. 2025 Black Bass Symposium support request (will discuss this at the end the meeting before we open the meeting for member input.
- 4) Financial Update (July 31 end of calendar year):
- a. Water Quality Section membership: 579 active members including 9 life members, 90 regular, 17 retirees, 187 young professionals, 276 students. In addition to the US, membership comes from 1 developing and 8 foreign countries including Brazil, Isreal, Canada, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Italy, Netherlands, Republic of China, South Korea.
 - b. Overall, our funds increased \$3,912.05 this year. Income came from our Edward Jones fund (\$3,114.05) over the past fiscal year, and we received \$798 in Section membership dues from AFS.

Expenses: \$100 for 2023 student WQS sponsored poster award. Gregg gave a brief explanation of how the poster award works.

- c. No other expenses were incurred.
 - d. Net worth as of July 31, 2024: \$36,943.37
- 5) Gregg and Paul will be judging posters tonight. *Follow up note: We had selected a short list to review (8) based on abstracts submitted and accepted by AFS, but none of these posters made it to the meeting for evaluation. This is the first time that so many submissions did not make it to a meeting.*
- 6) WQS Mission Statement
- a. With the lead of the Section President Jonathan Leiman, the ExCom refined the Section's mission statement. After a 60-day comment period for the membership the new statement was finalized.
 - b. It has been posted to the Section website and is as follows: "The American Fisheries Society Water Quality Section will serve as the leading forum for fisheries-based water quality science and management by delivering symposia, promoting applied and theoretical scientific research, ongoing career guidance, and professional networking."
 - c. Each element of the mission statement is intended to serve as a potential deliverable-type to guide the president and the ExCom. The ExCom tried to keep the language less specific intentionally, so as not to limit to the nature of a specific action item the ExCom leadership decides to undertake. The language was kept broad enough so it encapsulates and directs action items related to topics revealed by WQS members during the 60-day comment period.
- 7) Section symposium in San Antonio 2025:
- a.



- American Fisheries Society, Water Quality Section, 2025 San Antonio, TX: August 10-14, 2025
 - Symposium Title: Linking fisheries and Clean Water Act programmatic information and numerical data for improved water quality management
 - Contributors can submit sessions categorized by concepts such as: waterbody type (small lakes and impoundments, large lakes and impoundments, streams and rivers, estuaries, open ocean, etc.) or using water quality management end-points to meet the needs of different environments.
 - Symposium Abstract
 - The Clean Water Act supports a variety of designated uses, with fisheries being one of the most pronounced in terms of ecological and socio-economic value. Therefore, administrators of the Clean Water Act have an interest in identifying linkages between water quality management frameworks and techniques used by natural resource agencies to manage fisheries for commercial, recreational, and conservation values. Coupling water quality and fisheries management to achieve better endpoints can be done by identifying: (1) regulatory initiatives like toxins in fish tissue and permits, (2) indicator species like aquatic invertebrates, and (3) data generated by water quality and biological monitoring. This symposium will seek to cultivate these three links between Clean Water Act administrators and fisheries professionals.
 - Two-day symposium, all parties interested in contributing abstracts related to the Clean Water Act as well as the Safe Drinking Water Act are welcome to contribute.
- b. If you'd like to volunteer to help with this symposium, please reach out to any of the officers. You can do that in person here at the meeting or contact us through email. The officer's email addresses are on the Section website.

8) 2024 FARM bill position statement:

- a. Brought up by Bob Hughes at 2023 meeting; renewal is being considered by Congress for September 2024.
- b. Past ED Doug Austin told the section officers after last year's meeting that AFS does not advocate for policies on Capitol Hill anymore. So, writing a letter/position statement to congress on behalf of AFS would be a moot point.
- c. Committee members felt that something should be done with WQ Section as the lead regardless.
- d. Currently this is all in limbo.

9) WQS Publications:

- a. Members of the WQS are working on two publications intended for Fisheries Magazine.
- b. The first is about the Clean Water Act's 303(d) process and how involvement by fisheries professionals can lead to better water quality and fisheries outcomes. It was submitted in July and received a positive review. We submitted a revised manuscript. The manuscript has been accepted and will now enter the production process. It is anticipated to be published in the January issue.
- c. The second paper covers the topic of instream flow for fisheries professionals. With it we will (1) define instream flow, (2) describe instream flow challenges to fisheries management, (3) describe how instream flow issues are being addressed in North America, and (4) encourage fisheries professionals to learn more about this important issue and actively incorporate instream flow into their fisheries management duties. We are currently drafting the manuscript and hoping to submit it to fisheries in the fall or early winter.

10) 2025 Black Bass Symposium support request

- a. There was a support request from leaders of the Symposium for funds. Support includes dollar amounts from \$1,000 to > \$5,000.
- b. It is not clear whether there will be much of an explicit nexus to water quality.
- c. Could consider a smaller amount, distribute information to WQ Section membership, formal involvement only, other things we could do?
- d. If we support, would like similar support from them.
- e. Discussion revolved around the relevance to our section. There is tangential connection to the section, but if a monetary amount were gifted, it would be relatively small. It was suggested we put out the word to our section membership about the symposium in support of the Black Bass symposium.

11) Member input:

- a. There was some discussion about reaching out to membership. We need to have a more active section. We have not had a driving issue recently like a section sponsored book. We plan to have the symposium next year led by Jonathan and will be soliciting for presenters. Suggested membership might help with identification of presenters.
- b. We spoke with Tatenda and Mwazvita about their work in South Africa through the University of Mpumalanga. There may be an opportunity to work with them in a joint effort on biodiversity comparison between the U.S. and South Africa. Tatenda is using a modified version of the EPA's National Aquatic Resource Surveys for field work.

The meeting ended at 11:55 AM.