

Mid-Term Report to the AFS Governing Board, February 18, 2009

To: William Franzin, President

From: Desmond M. Kahn, President, Northeastern Division

Date: February 18, 2009

I. Motion Report

(A) Recommended Motion: None

(B) Minority View: None

(C) Background for Motion: None

II. Activity Report

(A) Summary of Outcomes and Accomplishments Organized by Focus Area in Strategic Plan:

GOAL AQUATIC STEWARDSHIP 1, LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Strategy AS 1.5

- The New York Chapter annual meeting, held on February 4-6, 2009 at Owego, NY, was organized as a joint meeting with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The theme of the meeting was *Energy and Fisheries*. The plenary session featured a slate of speakers who addressed the fisheries implications of energy-related topics ranging from new tide and wave power technologies to natural gas production in the Marcellus Shale to the economic significance of declining energy return on investment (EROI). Over 100 people attended the meeting despite a difficult budgetary environment. (also listed below under MS2.1)

GOAL AQUATIC STEWARDSHIP 2, STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION

-The NED is working with AFS to publish the proceedings of the “Challenges for Diadromous Fishes in a Dynamic Global Environment – 2nd International Symposium on Diadromous Fishes”. There were 45 oral presentations, and 60 posters presented at the symposium on a diverse range of topics in six sessions, including; Dynamic Nature of Diadromy, Climate Change and Anthropogenic Influences, Ocean Environment and Migration, Linkages With Ecosystem Energetics, Population and Habitat Restoration, and Management and Governance of Diadromous Fishes. Publication is anticipated later this year. Fundraising is nearing completion.

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter donated \$250.00 toward the publication costs of the AFS' Diadromous Symposium book.

-PA Chapter executive committee authorized funding to support publication of the proceeding for the Anadromous/ Catadromous workshop and a publication about paddlefish restoration.

GOAL: INFORMATION TRANSFER AND OUTREACH 2, COLLABORATION

Strategy ITO 2.1. Collaborate with other relevant scientific organizations to actively make scientific information about fisheries and aquatic ecosystems accessible and relevant to public policy makers. Establish joint scientific and technical meetings, joint position statements, web site links, and joint electronic mailing lists.

-PA chapter recently held a joint meeting with the NY chapter entitled “Energy in Fisheries” which was attended by individuals from many different organizations and agencies as well as several related disciplines.

-The **PA Chapter** web page currently provides links to several related organizations and agencies including the parent society.

-The Southern New England Chapter continues to support the biannual Flatfish Ecology Conference and provides a representative to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Fisheries Advisory Council. We are also collaborating with the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologist (AIFRB), by planning joint meetings for which AIFRB will provide keynote speakers. We donated \$200 to the Northeast Division of AFS to help fund the publishing of the “Challenges for Diadromous Fishes in a Dynamic Global Environment”.

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of AFS (MAC) continues to collaborate with other organizations to host joint meetings, develop position statements, interlink websites, and share electronic mailing lists. In 2008, the current President of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter began to significantly upgrade the Chapter website. The upgrade included links to other organizations. In addition, the revised website allows additional users to become aware of upcoming meetings, employment and scholarship opportunities. The MAC of AFS will continue to enhance their internal and web-linked resources to increase the availability of scientific information and the knowledge of fisheries science, including postings of upcoming meetings and mailing list opportunities.

GOAL: INFORMATION TRANSFER AND OUTREACH 3, PROFESSIONAL STATURE

Strategy ITO 3.7: Encourage fishery educators to promote AFS benefits and professional goals to students.

The New York Chapter, at its 2009 business meeting, approved revised bylaws which will facilitate the formation of new student subunits within the chapter.

- Multiple graduate students at SUNY-ESF remain involved with the undergraduate chapter. Several times during the fall of 2008 undergraduates volunteered for the graduate students, aiding in collecting field data from Onondaga Lake. The data is used by the graduate students for their respective studies. Undergraduates gained valuable field experience and a direct connection to the course of study.
- The Southern New England Chapter has also instituted two student travel awards to national AFS meetings, as well as a Student Associate Fisheries Scientist Certification Award that reimburses students for the application fees associated with the certification. The University of Connecticut Student Sub-Unit remains active and has planned a variety of activities for 2009, including field trips to fisheries labs and a fund-raising fishing tournament. They will be participating in a stream cleanup in fall. They expressed interest in participating in a colloquia of the regions student organizations.

Strategy ITO 4.2. Units to develop and enhance their web sites and/ or discipline-specific electronic mailing lists with particular emphasis to outreach to other users.

The New York Chapter website was updated regularly over the last year and now features annual meeting information, archived newsletters and contact information for our various committees. Our newsletter is now distributed only through the website, with new issue notifications distributed to the membership via e-mail. The phase-out of postal distribution was completed in 2008.

-The PA Chapter is in the process of further developing and updating our website. The original updates of spring 2008 and fall 2008 are functional. Presently, website information contains both chapter specific information as well as links to other related organizations and groups.

GOAL: INFORMATION TRANSFER AND OUTREACH 5, PUBLIC POLICY

The SUNY-ESF Chapter is a member organization of The Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. The Federation provides legislative representation, conservation education, public relations, and recreational information on issues of concern for Onondaga County sportsmen.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 1, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

Strategy MS 1.1. Provide directly and facilitate (through other providers) offerings of continuing education courses sufficient to satisfy members' demand and serve other continuing education needs.

-PA Chapter: Due to the availability of continuing education opportunities as part of the AFS 2010 (Pittsburgh) and the NEFWA conferences, the chapter is presently not offering any continuing education opportunities. Upon completion of the AFS 2010 conference, it

is the intent of the chapter to use proceeds to sponsor some significant continuing education opportunities for members.

-A continuing education workshop, *Genetics for Fisheries Professionals: Tools and Decisions*, was sponsored by the New York Chapter on February 3, 2009. The workshop, featuring instruction by Dr. Chris Wilson of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Meredith Bartron of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was offered free of charge to any interested fisheries professionals or students. Over 90 people attended the workshop, either at the workshop location in Cortland, NY or via video-conference at one of ten remote locations. Continuing education credits were approved by AFS for this course. This was the first workshop that the chapter has offered via video-conference and preliminary feedback from those participating by video link has been very positive.

Strategy MS 1.5: Encourage recognition of volunteer contributions to the success of the Society at all levels.

-Two awards were recognized at the New York Chapter's annual meeting on February 5, 2009. The Conservationist of the Year award was given to Dr. John Braico, of the Adirondack Chapter of Trout Unlimited. The David Bryson Memorial Award was given to Ross Abbett, a graduate student at SUNY Brockport.

- The Southern New England Chapter continues to recognize contributions to both the Chapter and the fisheries field at-large with our Professionalism awards. Awards can go to government groups, non-government organizations, private citizens or government workers. Information on recent award recipients is available on our website www.snecc-fisheries.org

Strategy MS 1.7: Maintain or increase student membership to reflect the proportion of time spent as a student, and increase student involvement.

-In addition to the aforementioned awards, The Southern new England Chapter also awards two Best Student Paper Awards (one at each meeting) and one Best student poster award. The Chapter also provides membership in the Parent Society and the Chapter for fifteen students each year. We will continue to offer free registration to our meetings for students who pre-register by the specified date.

-The Southern New England Chapter has instituted two student travel awards to national AFS meetings, as well as a Student Associate Fisheries Scientist Certification Award that reimburses students for the application fees associated with the certification. The University of Connecticut Student Sub-Unit remains active and has planned a variety of activities for 2009, including field trips to fisheries labs and a fund-raising fishing

tournament. They will be participating in a stream cleanup in fall. They expressed interest in participating in a colloquium of the region's student organizations.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 2, SCIENCE-BASED INFORMATION

Strategy MS 2.1. Continue to host Society and Unit scientific and technical meetings

-The PA Chapter held its fall 2008 technical meeting on Friday, November 21. The meeting theme focused on emerging fish health issues in and around Pennsylvania. A pizza social was followed by a brief business meeting and four technical presentations. Presentations were given by Dr. Vicki Blaser, Dr. Luke Iwanowicz, Andy Shiels, and John Arway.

-Several members and officers of the Pennsylvania Chapter and staff from the PA Fish and Boat Commission are in the initial planning process for the 2010 National AFS Meeting planned for Pittsburgh, PA. 10 individuals attended the AFS 2008 meeting in Ottawa, ON, CA in preparation. Committee chairs have recently been designated and an organizational meeting is planned in conjunction with the spring technical meeting.

-The New York Chapter annual meeting, held on February 4-6, 2009 at Owego, NY, was organized as a joint meeting with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The theme of the meeting was *Energy and Fisheries*. The plenary session featured a slate of speakers who addressed the fisheries implications of energy-related topics ranging from new tide and wave power technologies to natural gas production in the Marcellus Shale to the economic significance of declining energy return on investment (EROI). Over 100 people attended the meeting despite a difficult budgetary environment. PA chapter attendance was low, unfortunately. As a result of the poor PA attendance, the PA Chapter is currently investigating a spring technical meeting for mid-March 2009. Potential topics are being discussed with "invasive species" being the primary topic at this point in time.

-PA chapter members are also planning on playing a critical role in the NEFWA conference in Lancaster, PA in April. Projected attendance is low and as such the agenda for this conference has been shortened.

-The Southern New England Chapter holds two Board of Directors (BOD) meetings each year. We have a very active BOD with an average of 10 members in attendance at each meeting. The Southern New England Chapter offers two one-day long meetings each year (January and June) that are well attended by a mix of professionals, students and interested parties. In the past year, 90-100 people have attended these meetings with students comprising approximately 50% of participants. In recent years we have offered free student registration, which has increased attendance by students and their advisors. Our Publicity Officer routinely summarizes these meetings and provides articles and

photographs for *Fisheries*. Our January 14, 2009 meeting was held at Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI. Approximately 100 people attended. The program featured 11 platform and 8 poster presentations. More detail on all of the above is available on our website www.snec-fisheries.org.

-The 36th Annual Meeting of the Atlantic International Chapter of the American Fisheries Society will run from September 21-23, 2009. The meeting and conference will be held at the Town and Country Inn in Shelburne, NH. The meeting theme will be "Watershed Processes". Our arrangements chairman, John Magee (New Hampshire Fish and Game Department), is the head of the local arrangements committee for the 2009 AIC Meeting. John is working on a speaker from the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest to talk about research at this location.

- The Mid-Atlantic Chapter continues to host bi-annual Chapter level meetings (Spring/Fall). In addition, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter continues to host the meetings in a format nominated and voted on by its members. The MAC held its Fall 2008 meeting at the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ on November, 13, 2008. Eight oral presentations were given by professionals and students from NJ, and DE. Our Spring 2009 meeting is planned for a facility in Delaware (possibly Delaware State University), and will focus on student presentations and awards. At the Fall 2008 meeting, we collected \$440.00 in registration fees, \$105.00 in t-shirt sales, and \$45.00 in chapter dues.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 3, ONLINE AND WEB SERVICES

Strategy MS 3.1 Use of online tools to enhance communication

-The Southern New England Chapter has transitioned to electronic media for information exchange. An e-mail listserve (snec@fisheriessociety.org) has been set up to facilitate communication from the BOD to SNEC membership and communication between SNEC members. Our website also serves as a clearing house for various types of information concerning annual meetings, award recipients, job openings, and student opportunities. The UConn Student Subunit has taken on the task of compiling our bi-annual newsletter, which is now distributed electronically through the e-mail listserve and the website.

Strategy MS 3.2. Maintain and improve the timeliness and employer use of online job announcement services

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter has continued to update and maintain the job openings section of the AFS Mid-Atlantic Chapter website, and will strive to continue to add updated, current postings and opportunities to the website for members, students and professionals to utilize.

Strategy MS 3.3. Encourage AFS Units to develop or enhance their Web sites using AFS Web site plan and Society and Unit strategic plans as guidance.

-The PA Chapter is in the process of further developing and updating our website. The original updates of spring 2008 and fall 2008 are functional, however, we are presently working to expand the webpage to allow members integral in the planning of AFS 2010 to communicate and grab information from the webpage. This capability will allow us to easily convey information both between and among workgroups without having a secure FTP site which has caused problems with other meetings in the past.

-The AIC website is promoting online registration, abstract submissions and hotel bookings for the 2009 AIC Meeting. This will alleviate some of the paperwork involved in meeting preparations. In addition, the Chapter is requesting submissions for the website ranging from job openings to brief articles on member activities within the chapter.

Strategy MS 3.1 and MS 3.2

The Southern New England Chapter continues to operate our web site www.snecc-fisheries.org. The website provides information to our members for past and future meetings including registration forms and agendas. Services to our members and opportunities for students are described on our website. We post job openings in our area and, as mentioned under Activities Goal 3.4, our newsletter will soon be available on our website as well.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 4, DIVERSITY

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter is working to increase overall Chapter membership by both students and professionals. To accomplish this goal, the chapter has expanded outreach to local Mid-Atlantic universities, as well as professional organizations, societies and federal, state and local governments. The Chapter has also started to reach out to local industry and/or consulting firms, and has recently hosted a number of Chapter-level meeting presentations on aquatic sciences and techniques by consulting professionals and non-profit organizations.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 5, STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy MS 5.4. Keep all procedural manuals updated.

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of AFS is currently revising their procedural manual and constitutional by-laws to reflect recent changes in business procedures, to allow for additional member services and benefits, and to best reflect the scope of work and level of quality the members would like to have available. A completed constitutional by-laws revision, and new procedural manual, should be developed and completed by the end of 2009.

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 6, FINANCIAL SECURITY

Strategy MS 6.3 Establish and achieve annual operating budget.

-The Mid-Atlantic Chapter is investigating options into diversifying our current operating budget into high interest-bearing accounts, in order to increase our financial security and decrease our dependence on unit/meeting attendance and dues, as well as from the National AFS Organization. In addition, we are working to recruit new members and better advertise our meetings to increase our overall meeting revenues, member dues, and operating budgets (Which will then increase our potential to gain higher interest returns).

Strategy MS 6.4. Audit financial activity

-PA Chapter: The chapter conducted an audit in the summer of 2008 with the change in officers. Presently, the treasury of the chapter is strong and as a result no change in the membership fee structure is anticipated.

-PA Chapter: In anticipation of the upcoming officer change and an increase in revenue as a result of hosting the 2010 AFS annual meeting, the ex-comm is going to investigate an investment strategy to make the most of our present treasury as well as future revenue.

B) Recommendations or Suggestions for Future Action

Having successfully provided our first video-conference-enabled continuing education workshop to a participatory audience of over 90 persons (details reported above), the New York Chapter challenges other units of the American Fisheries Society to identify workshop topics amenable to this technology and to consider providing such educational opportunities in the near future. The chapter further suggests that, in order to maximize the opportunity for professional development in a time of severe financial constraints, those units with the means to do so follow our example in absorbing the fixed costs of such a workshop and offering it without fee.

- The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of AFS requests that other AFS Units, Chapters, and Divisions keep the Chapter posted on upcoming and existing opportunities for collaboration, expansion and support. In addition, when possible, our chapter continues to look for opportunities to contribute to student growth and development; therefore, we challenge all other AFS units to develop new and innovative ways to support fisheries student development and make opportunities available for all chapters/units to contribute to and to support; the Mid-Atlantic Chapter will continue to strive to do the same.