



American Fisheries Society

January 2024

Management Committee Minutes

Key Motions and Tasks:

1. Adoption of revisions to the bylaws of the Fisheries Management Section
2. Draft 2024 budget was presented and shows a small positive net result. However, this is contingent upon a series of expense and income assumptions that will simply need to be tracked over the year.
3. Projected 2023 financials suggest that AFS operations will be negative about \$112,000 but this will be offset by investment gains resulting in a small overall net gain. It was emphasized that continued efforts to develop more proactive financial and program planning is needed.
4. Membership continues to be challenging but a new set of actions by the membership committee, AFS staff, and leaders is projected to result in some gains. It was encouraged that AFS leaders, chapters, divisions, and sections, utilize the gift membership option to encourage new members at the student and early career professional level.
5. The AFS midyear Governing Board meeting will be held in conjunction with the World Fisheries Congress on March 2-3, 2024.

Minutes of the Meeting:

Participants:

Management Committee Members:

Cecil Jennings, Miguel Garcia Bermudez, Gary Whelan, Margaret Murphy, Lynn Quattro, Jeff Kopaska, Heather Stewart, Eric Fetherman, Man Dosier, Doug Austen (Executive Director, non-voting)

ELMA: Matt Wipf, Josephine Johnson, Kyler Hecke, Drew Holloway

AFS Staff: Dan Cassidy, Kelly Kotche, Lauren Maza, Laura Hendee, Beth Beard, Jenna Hanks, Rachel Bruce

1. **Greetings, Recognition of Proxies, and Determination of Quorum** – Meeting called to order by Cecil Jennings at 12:04 p.m. EDT and quorum established by Doug Austen (in lieu of Randy Schultz).
Recognition of proxies: None

2. **Approval of Agenda**- Reviewed by Austen with minor changes to date for Hawaii meeting. Motion to accept by Lynn Quattro, 2nd by Heather Stewart. Approved by unanimous consent.
3. **Review of the December 2023 Joint Governing Board and Management Committee minutes** – Approve minutes and minor change to name spelling. Motion for approval by Dan Mosier, 2nd by Eric Fetherman. Approved by unanimous consent.
4. **Constitutional Consultant Report** – Doug Austen for Randy Schultz
 - a. **Motion:** Revision to the bylaws of the Fisheries Management Section (Attachment A) and presented by Jeff Kopaska
Background: The changes simply updated multiple section of the bylaws with titles of section modified, terminology and language clarified, roles of section officers clarified and other relatively minor changes.
Moved for approval by Lynn Quattro; 2nd by Dan Mosier. Approved by unanimous consent.
5. **Budget Presentation** (Dan Cassidy; Attachment B)
Key points
 - a. Projected 2023 net operating change is negative \$112,000 but investment income offsets this loss for a positive total net improvement in financial position. Total net assets of AFS increased slightly in 2023.
 - b. Book sales strong in 2023; membership revenue strong due to fee increase but counts continued to decline; staff number dropped by one (Drue Winters), but she is on 1/3-time contract.
 - c. No change to status of building sale as the request for a zoning text amendment has not moved forward; Latin America and Caribbean Congress was a net fiscal loss.
 - d. AFS needs to better define a financial plan for fiscal improvement. Too much reliance upon one-time events (e.g. JASM, WFC, previous building sale) and lack of membership growth and publications revenue has been problematic. Program Reviews will help but better translation of strategic direction into actionable directions is needed.
 - e. 2024 budget proposal, based upon a series of projections, shows a net positive operational result. Revenue projections from the World Fisheries Congress and the Honolulu annual meeting are a substantial part of this projection but are also somewhat speculative. This also includes a 5% increase in membership which we believe is reasonable given the planned new marketing efforts.
 - f. Books funding through USFWS/AFWA Multistate Conservation Grant Program: Question was asked about future opportunities for this funding method. It was also noted that some AFS Sections (e.g., Fisheries Management) have been approached for funding support for two books (Michael Quist – Inland Fisheries Management and Dan Iserman-Crappie Biology and Management).
 - g. The AFS Development Program is working on a new annual report that will be useful for approaching potential funders/supporters.

- h. Obligated Reserve contribution is currently not included in the 2024 budget, neither is support for an Executive Recruiting firm to support the Executive Director search.
- i. 2024 should be a stable financial year but program planning is essential. AFS is currently understaffed, and this limits our ability to develop new program areas. AFS also has a backlog of capital projects (e.g., key software upgrades) that need to be addressed.

6. Officers Reports

- a. Cecil Jennings, President – Starting visits to sister societies (e.g., SCAS) and Division meetings (e.g., Southern Division). Cecil will be presenting plenary to SCAS on AFS approach to DEIJA. Working on Fisheries columns as well as planning for the Hawaii annual meeting (specifically, submission of a session on traditional ecological knowledge with Shivonne Nesbit and Sarah Cannon, and with Eric Fetherman and others on plenary speakers). Cecil was interviewed by Lauren Maza for the new AFS Fisheries Podcast (<https://americanfisheriessociety.podbean.com/>)
- b. Miguel Garcia Bermudez, President Elect – Working on RFP for Executive Director position, working with Puerto Rico chapter members to encourage their becoming AFS members, continues to represent AFS at CASS. Exploring 2028 World Fisheries Congress bid with others in the Latin America region.
- c. Margaret Murphy, 2nd Vice President – Working on location of the 2027 AFS annual meeting with plans for proposal presentation at Seattle midyear meeting. Preparing for NY chapter meeting and plenary presentation as well as presentation to business meeting. Specific effort to encourage AFS membership among NY chapter members, particularly students. Working on AFS Membership Committee.

Jeff Kopaska noted that gift membership to students or young professionals is a wonderful option to get them started in the society. Jeff does this for one graduate student in Iowa each year. Cecil Jennings noted that he suggested this to the Georgia chapter, and they now support two student members each year. Kelly Kotche reported that gift memberships are rapidly increasing, and she is seeing an increase in forms and questions submitted.

7. Update on ED Search – Attachment C

Cecil Jennings provided a brief update. This included the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) to find an executive recruiting firm to assist with this process. The committee has a list of potential firms but also AFS has resources to help with this search if needed. The committee would like to get the search going as soon as possible. The RFP will also provide AFS with a better sense of potential costs for an executive search. If the committee does decide to contract an outside firm, the request will come back to the Management Committee for approval of the expense.

8. Executive Director and AFS staff reports.

- a. Membership Update (AFS Membership Director Kelly Kotche) - Austen noted that, as AFS leadership at all levels participate in chapter and division meetings, it is important for you to convey to attendees the value and importance of AFS membership. The decline that we have been experiencing in membership has implications for programs that simply cannot be funded. Kelly Kotche reported:
- i. AFS Membership Committee is developing a toolkit to include letter templates, handouts, and other support material.
 - ii. Currently, membership is down 8% from 2023, but a new campaign will likely reduce this deficit. However, current membership is down 33% from 2019. It should be noted that these numbers vary widely depending upon campaigns and other events that impact membership renewals.
 - iii. The Membership Committee has developed a strategic plan for increasing membership and this is being employed immediately through actions such as the development of a new membership cards and direct mailing to non-renewals.
 - iv. Heather Stewart asked about reduced registration for students at the Hawaii meeting to encourage student involvement. The Northeastern Division is working on a travel award and Heather is asking if other efforts are being developed. Response was that there are student registration discounts but there is no other accommodation for student award winners at the Division or Chapter level.
- b. WFC Registration Update (AFS Meetings staff Rachel Bruce)
Current registration (early registration ends January 31) is 780 registrants. It is expected that this will increase substantially as we close early registration. There are 27 exhibitors. Registrants are majority from U.S. but substantial numbers from Canada and many other countries.
- c. Honolulu planning update
- i. Travel recommendations. Air travel is a challenge, but air fare has been decreasing and are the lowest in several years. Honolulu will include the Mississippi Yangtze River Symposium which will attract a good contingent of Chinese fisheries scientists.
 - ii. The general schedule of AFS leadership activities is similar to past meetings, but this has not been finalized. Additional details will be sent as soon as possible.
 1. MC meeting on afternoon of Friday, September 13 (Tentative)
 2. GB on Saturday, September 14 (Tentative)
 3. Business meeting on Wednesday, September 18
 4. Incoming GB breakfast on Thursday, September 19

9. Additional Topics and New Business

- a. 2024 MC schedule to be reviewed as needed.
 - i. No February MC meeting
 - ii. March and beyond TBD and will be discussed at the midyear meeting.
- b. The Midyear GB meeting is set for Saturday, March 2 through noon on Sunday, March 3 in conjunction with the World Fisheries Congress in Seattle. A remote participation

option will be available. An agenda is being developed and will be shared when completed.

10. Adjournment

Attachment A – Bylaws Revisions of the Fisheries Management Section

Fisheries Management Section Bylaws

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE I. NAME AND OBJECTIVES.

1. The name of this organization shall be the Fisheries Management Section of the American Fisheries Society, hereinafter referred to as the Section and Society respectively.
2. The objectives of the Section shall be those of the Society as set forth in Article I of the Constitution. In addition, the purpose of the Section is to promote effective fisheries management by:
 - a. Developing and maintaining an association of persons interested in and involved in fisheries management and development;
 - b. Promoting sound fisheries management practices and developing new management concepts and techniques;
 - c. Encouraging continuing professional growth among Section members and others interested in fisheries management and growth of the profession itself by holding meetings and sponsoring workshops, symposia, and publications to disseminate information relating to all aspects of fisheries management;
 - d. Encouraging publication of case histories, policy analysis, and evaluation of management programs;
 - e. Promoting communication between fisheries managers and researchers, employers, educators, legislators, and the public; and,
 - f. Providing a forum for identifying, bringing attention to, and solving issues and problems relating to fisheries management.
3. All activities of this Section shall conform to the Society's Constitution, Rules, and Procedures.

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP.

1. Membership in the Fisheries Management Section shall be open to all members in good standing of the Society.

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE III. MEETINGS AND VOTING.

1. The Section shall hold at least one meeting annually at a time and place designated by the Executive Committee, typically at the Society's annual meeting. Special meetings may be called by the President with approval of the Executive Committee.
2. The Section may conduct management conferences, workshops, and technical sessions as approved by the Executive Committee.
3. The Section may meet jointly with other organizations but shall request official organization recognition when cosponsoring meetings.
4. A quorum at an annual meeting for the transaction of official business shall be 15 members of the Section.

5. Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws or the Constitution of the Society, meetings are conducted according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
6. Decisions at meetings are by simple majority of Active Members voting, except 2/3 majorities are required in special cases such as amending the Bylaws and suspending a Rule. Other less frequently used voting requirements are described in Robert's Rules of Order.
7. Business and voting may be conducted via mail, electronic mail or other electronic methods in addition to regular or special Section meetings. Voting methods must be approved by the Executive Committee, as appropriate for the issue being considered. All aspects of the vote must conform with these Bylaws.

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS.

1. The officers of the Section shall consist of a President, President-Elect, Past-President and Secretary- Treasurer.
2. All officers must be members in good standing of the Society and members of the Fisheries Management Section.
3. Officers shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee appointed by the President and chaired by the ~~Past-President~~President-Elect. Other members of the Nominating Committee include the four Division Representatives. Officers shall be elected by a majority of ballots cast and election methods shall be determined by the Executive Committee.
4. Officers shall serve for a term of two years, or until a successor is elected. The President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer shall be elected every two years. Terms of newly elected officers shall change at the Society's annual meeting. The President-Elect shall succeed to the office of President on completion of his or her term of office. The President shall succeed to the office of Past-President on completion of his or her term of office. The Past-President shall not be eligible for election as President-Elect for a period of 4 years after completion of his or her term. The Secretary-Treasurer may serve 2 consecutive terms (4 years) and shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of 4 years after completion that service.
5. Four ~~Division~~Regional Representatives shall be elected from every two years. One representative shall come from each division (North Central, Northeastern, Southern, and Western). ~~Division~~ Regional Representatives may serve 2 consecutive terms (4 years) and shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of 4 years after completion of that service.
6. In the event of a vacated position, the Executive Committee shall appoint a qualified replacement to fill the unexpired term.
7. The ballot will consist of two nominees who are members in good standing of the Society for each elective office. Votes for write-in candidates can be cast on the official

ballot. The ballot will establish a deadline date for the receipt of ballots to be counted prior to the annual meeting. Members shall have at least 30 days to vote. Officers shall be elected by a majority of the ballots counted. Newly elected officers shall be installed in office at the annual meeting of the Section.

8. No elected officer, ~~Division~~~~Regional~~ Representative or appointed committee member shall receive any salary or other compensation for services rendered to the Section. Expenses may be defrayed from funds available to the Section when authorized by the Executive Committee.

~~SECTION~~ARTICLE V. DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

1. The President shall:

A. ~~Preside at all meetings;~~

~~B. Serve as Chair of the Executive Committee;~~

~~B.C. Serve on the Awards Committee;~~

~~C.D. Appoint all committees and chairpersons thereof, except as may be designated in these Bylaws;~~

~~D.E. Coordinate the activities of the Section's standing and ~~special~~technical committees and serve as liaison between such committees and the Executive Committee;~~

~~F. Represent the Section to the Society as a member of the Society Governing Board and submit a report of Section activities at the Society Governing Board meetings;~~

~~E.G. Represent the Section as a member of the AFS Management Committee, if elected;~~

~~F.H. Conduct official correspondence for the Section and present reports of Section activities at the annual meeting;~~

~~I. Make such appointments and perform other duties and functions as are authorized and necessary;~~

~~G.J. Perform other duties and functions as are authorized, necessary, and further described within the Section's Procedures Manual; and,~~

~~H.K. Proceed to the office of Past-President at the end of the term.~~

~~A. Preside at all meetings;~~

~~B. Serve as Chair of the Executive Committee;~~

~~C. Appoint all committees and chairpersons thereof, except as may be designated in these~~

Bylaws:

- ~~D. Coordinate the activities of the Section's standing and technical committees and serve as liaison between such committees and the Executive Committee;~~
- ~~E. Represent the Section to the Society as a member of the Society Governing Board and submit a report of Section activities at the Society Governing Board meetings;~~
- ~~F. Conduct official correspondence for the Section and present reports of Section activities at the annual meeting;~~
- ~~G. Make such appointments and perform other duties and functions as are authorized and necessary; and,~~
- ~~H. Proceed to the office of Past President at the end of the term.~~ _____

2. The President-Elect shall:

- A. Assume the duties of the President if the President is absent or unable to act;
- B. Serve as Chair of the Awards Committee, including the Fisheries Management Hall of Excellence;
- ~~C. Chair the Nominating Committee and conduct the election;~~ _____
- C. Serve on the Executive Committee;
- D. Perform other duties and functions as are authorized, necessary, and further described within the Section's Procedures Manual; and,
- E. Advance to the office of President at the end of the term.

3. The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

- A. Keep the official records of the Section, keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements, collect and be custodian of any fees or assessments authorized by these Bylaws or funds allotted to the Section by the Society;
- B. Disburse funds only as authorized by either the membership or Executive Committee;
- C. Present a semi-annual report to the Executive Committee and an annual report to the membership;
- D. Submit a record of the annual business meeting and a financial report for the Section to the Executive Director of the Society within 30 days after the annual meeting of the Section and at other times as requested by the Governing Board of the Society;
- ~~D-E. _____ Perform other duties and functions as are authorized, necessary, and further described within the Section's Procedures Manual; and, and,~~

~~E.F.~~ _____ Serve on the Executive Committee.

4. The immediate Past-President shall:

A. Serve on the Executive Committee;

~~B. Chair-of~~ ~~Serve on~~ the Nominating Committee;

~~B.C.~~ ~~Serve on the Awards Committee;~~ _____

~~D.~~ Assist the other officers as needed;

~~E.~~ _____ ~~Perform other duties and functions as are authorized, necessary, and further described within the Section's Procedures Manual; and, and,~~

~~D.F.~~ Update the Section Bylaws as needed, ~~and distribute the current version to the Executive Committee by September 1.~~

5. The four elected ~~Division~~~~Regional~~ Representatives (from the North Central, Northeastern, Southern, and Western divisions) shall:

~~A.~~ Serve on the Executive Committee;

~~A.B.~~ ~~Serve on the Nominating Committee;~~ _____

~~B.C.~~ Assist the other officers as needed; and,

~~C.D.~~ Contribute regionally important information to the Section ~~website~~~~newsletter~~.

~~SECTION~~~~ARTICLE~~ VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1. The Executive Committee of the Section shall consist of the officers and one representative from each of the Divisions of the Society.

2. The Executive Committee shall have authority to determine policies and conduct business consistent with the objectives of the Section and the Society's Constitution, Rules and Procedures. The Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the Section between annual meetings.

3. A quorum is required for transaction of official business at an Executive Committee meeting. A quorum for an Executive Committee meeting shall consist of five of the eight members. Executive Committee members can appoint a proxy.

4. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote on Executive Committee decisions. In the event of a tie, the President's vote shall be the deciding vote.

5. Executive Committee meetings are called by the President and are held as needed. Meetings shall be conducted by any means agreeable to a majority of the members (in person, telephone, electronic mail, etc.).

6. The Executive Committee can approve individual funding requests up to \$1,000 without a vote of the membership up to a maximum of \$3,000 each fiscal year. All requests larger than \$1,000 must be electronically submitted via the Section web-page by 1 July each year. The Executive Committee will conduct a preliminary review of all requests. Applications clearing the preliminary review will be distributed electronically to the membership for comment and then presented to the membership for final approval at the annual Section business meeting.

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE VII. SECTION COMMITTEES.

1. Committees and Chairs of committees, except as listed in Sections-Articles V and VI of these Bylaws, shall be appointed and charged by the President. Except for Standing Committees, these Section committees shall cease to function upon the discharge of the duties for which they were appointed or with the end of the term of the appointing officer. The President may extend the term of a Special Committee beyond their term as President.

2. Standing Committees help the President and the Executive Committee conduct the Section's affairs, and the chairs should report their committees' activities, findings, and recommendations at annual Section meetings and interim meetings of the Executive Committee.

3. Special Committees can be joint committees with another Section as approved by the President.

~~4. Standing committees are established through amendment of the Bylaws.~~

~~5.~~ The Section has established the following Standing Committees:

A. Nominating Committee~~;~~

B. Awards Committee (including Hall of Excellence)~~;~~

~~C. Newsletter Committee; and,~~

~~D. Web Site Committee.~~

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE VIII. DUES AND FEES.

1. The Executive Committee shall establish annual dues subject to approval of the members.

2. The Executive Committee may assess registration fees for meetings or symposia.

~~SECTION~~ ARTICLE IX. BYLAWS AND PROCEDURES.

1. The Bylaws are the defining document for the Section and take precedence over all other rules and procedures of the Section. The Bylaws cannot be suspended and cannot be changed without prior notice to members.

A. The Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 majority of members choosing to vote, provided that the proposed amendment(s) are circulated to the members, who will have at least 30 days to vote.

B. In accordance with the Society Constitution, an adopted amendment shall be reviewed by the Society's Constitutional Consultant for conformity with the Constitution, Rules and Procedures of the Society. The Constitutional Consultant presents the adopted amendment to the Society ~~Management Committee~~ Governing Board for approval.

C. Amendments take effect when the Section receives written notice of their approval by the ~~Management Committee~~ Society's Executive Director ~~Governing Board from the Executive Director~~.

2. ~~The Section's~~ Procedures Manual is ~~are~~ the lowest level of documentation of Section operations. They are established to provide continuity in the conduct of Section business. The Procedures may be suspended or amended by a simple majority of the Executive Committee.

September 2005

Approved September 2011

Attachment B – Financial Review

AFS 2023-24 FINANCIAL REVIEW

MC Meeting
January 25, 2024

TOPICS

1. 2023 financial projection
2. Recent financial trends
3. 2024 Budget overview
4. Planning and budgeting
5. Take-a-ways




2023 Op. Net Change

Nov23 Net Change	\$325,000
Invest. Income	\$216,000
Adj. Net Change	\$109,000
Dec Income	\$29,000
Dec expense	\$250,000
Proj. Net Change	(\$112,000)

* Excludes all investment income and gains/losses


** Before year-end financial close



2023 Success - Challenges

Success:

- ✓ Annual Meeting
- ✓ Books
- ✓ Membership (from > dues)
- ✓ Net grant income, Hutton
- ✓ Investment income
- ✓ Administration and staff costs



2023 Success - Challenges

Challenges:

- ✓Latin Congress
- ✓Member counts
- ✓Job board income
- ✓Office condo rezoning

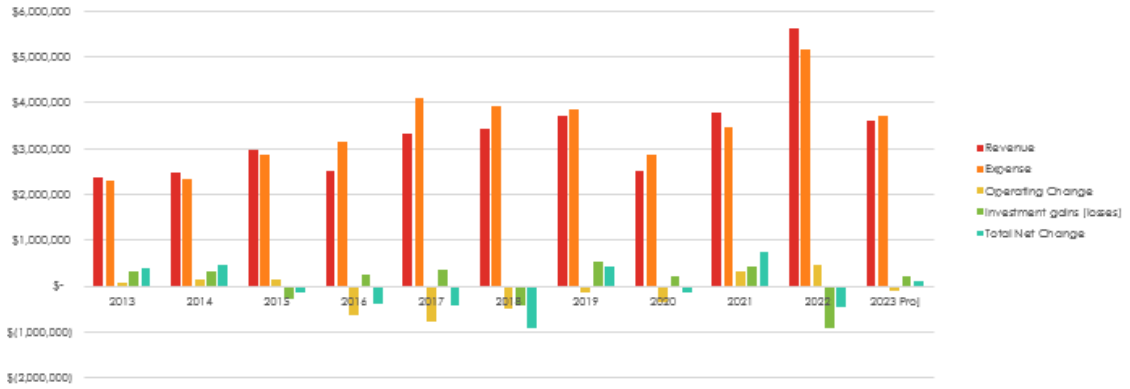
** (omitting other program accomplishments-shortcomings)



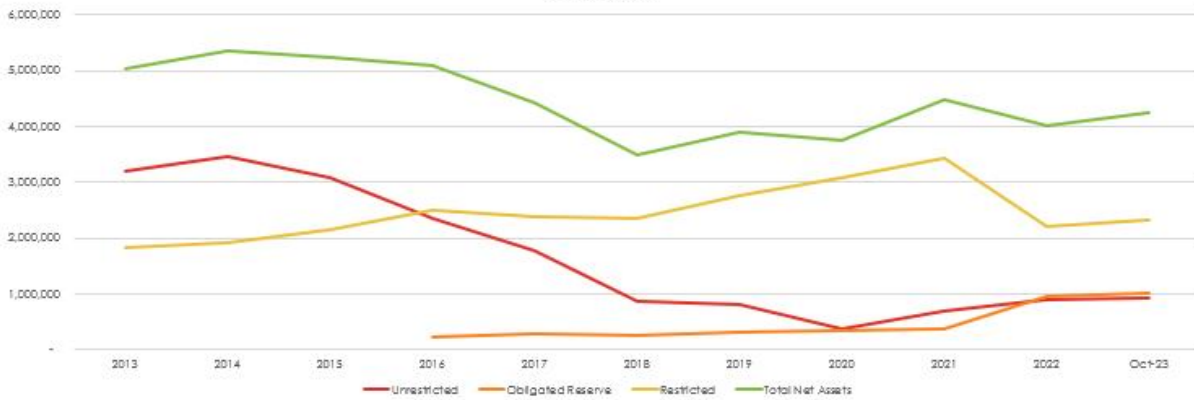
Recent Financial Trends



Revenue & Expense
2013 - 2022 (audited) 2023 Interim



Net Assets
2013 to 2023





Path to Financial Growth

- AFS lacks a path for restoring its financial position
- Relies on 1x events help sustain the budget:
 - Journal royalty advances, govt Covid support, 2014 condo sale, external meetings
- Has the ingredients: infrastructure (units-committees), data (survey results) and adopted financial procedures to do so ...



Path to Financial Growth

- Meanwhile, planning is not keeping up addressing underlying program and market changes.
 - Ex. 2024 Mem renewals <53% Dec 2020
- Would benefit from translating strategic priorities into Op. goals (2-3 year program plans) setting course, tracking performance
 - This was a SPC charge.



Path to Financial Growth

- Program + Business planning are key to improving financial results:
 - Fundamental org. activity and
 - Primary governance responsibility (at it since Feb 2020 Little Rock mtg)
- A less financially strong organization limits capacity
 - Responding to new opportunities and
 - “weathering” future economic events, industry changes, govt restrictions, internal challenges, etc



Path to Financial Growth

AFS adopts an annual budget ... what is keeping it from multi-year program planning?

2024 Budget Summary

	2024 Budget	Nov23 Actual*	2023 Budget
Total Income	4,677,000	3,801,497	3,431,000
Total Expense	4,652,000	3,379,091	3,436,000
Net Change	\$25,000	\$422,406	(\$5,000)

* 2023 year-end projection is (\$112,000)

2024 Income Budget

Program Area	2024 Bgt	Nov/23 Act.	2023 Bgt
Investment	45,000	216,309	40,000
Communications	7,000	5,390	-
Development	-	-	-
Prof Dev. / Hutton	284,000	281,365	208,000
Federal Agreements	60,000	141,845	-
Grants	-	130,453	82,000
Meetings	2,260,000	1,087,014	1,200,000
Membership	611,500	559,359	643,000
Policy	-	4,210	25,000
Publications	1,409,500	1,375,552	1,233,000
Total Income	4,677,000	3,801,497	3,431,000

2024 Expense Budget

Program Area	2024 Bgt	Nov/23	
		Act.	2023 Bgt
Administration	268,000	263,148	297,500
Staffing	1,862,000	1,626,943	1,808,000
Communications	42,000	30,839	26,000
Development	13,000	95	-
Prof Development	208,000	175,710	143,500
Governance	50,000	51,649	30,000
Federal Agreements	-	56,500	-
Grants	-	136,067	-
Meetings	1,767,000	702,243	871,000
Membership	169,000	102,411	137,000
Policy	60,000	47,844	5,000
Publications	213,000	185,642	118,000
Total Expense	4,652,000	3,379,091	3,436,000
Net Change	25,000	422,406	(5,000)

Key 2024 Income Assumptions

- 36 Hutton students, in-person summit
- HI Meeting
 - Reg fees +\$25 to \$650 Mbr early
 - +\$25 more = \$28,000 total
 - 1,500 attendance target (low range)
 - \$125k sponsorship goal (same as GR)
- WCF Congress –AFS net \$180k (\$70k profit + \$110k mgmt. fee)
- Membership (stretch goal) 5% inc or + \$47k



Key 2024 Income Assumptions

- Coop / Grants
 - Federal coop agreements
 - 5 active MSCG
- Books
 - new Standard Methods book (sales are 100% profit- funded through MSCG)
 - Other pub sales approx. 2023
- Journals- indexed per Wiley contract. No additional royalty income.



Key 2024 Expense Assumptions

- Administration
 - Insurance, bank fees, deprec., accounting, audit, atrlly staff mtgs, ltd travel, bank fees, misc, etc
 - IT- technical support / software subscriptions
- Staffing levels
 - down by 1/3 from peak
 - In need > Journal support and Marketing pos
 - Benefit plans +15%



Key 2024 Expense Assumptions

- Development- AFS annual report and marketing
- Prof/ Development- CE breakeven, Hutton
- Governance- GB mtgs, officer travel, omits Exec Search fees
- Annual mtg- catering scaled back, omits student activities



Key 2024 Expense Assumptions

- Membership- software license, tech support, \$23k marketing materials (new)
- Policy- retains DBW Strategies
- Publications- little changed



Key Omitted Items

- Obligated reserve contribution
- Executive search - \$50K ...?
- HI Meeting student events - \$40-50pp
- Staff development / bonuses
- Software (long-term capital projects)
 - Accounting - \$40-50k
 - iMIS upgrade – TBD but likely \$20-30k assessment; \$50k++ for system upgrades



Take-a-Ways

- Financial trends may continue into 2025
- 2024 Budget allows time finish Program Reviews, define Planning Processes, if all Bgt. assump. fall into place
- Program planning essential to restoring financial position
- AFS is currently understaffed, Backlog of Capital Projects
- Office sale uncertain, \$ resource lifeline



Next Steps

- Request time to share 2024 budget information with the FPPC for input
- Staff have prepared program summaries that add context to their budgets.
 - I'll share these with the MC and FPPC
- We can revisit it with the GB in March 2024

Attachment C – Executive Director Search Committee

17 January 2024

*Request for Proposal (RFP)
Search for the Executive Director of the American Fisheries Society*

Dear Bidder,

The American Fisheries Society (AFS or Society) invites executive search firms to submit a proposal for conducting a search for the Society's next Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to the Society's Governing Board, a committee of elected leaders representing all segments of the Society.

About the Society

The mission of the AFS is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. The Society adopted a Strategic Plan for 2020–2024 with five overarching goals: (1) Advance fisheries disciplines, conservation, and management; (2) Develop fisheries professionals; (3) Communicate the importance of both the science and the value of fisheries discipline; (4) Increase diversity among fisheries professionals and promote an inclusive environment in AFS; and (5) Provide effective governance of AFS and high-quality service to AFS's members.

AFS seeks candidates with an advanced degree and progressive experience in the area of natural resources. Compensation for the position is highly competitive, and will be based upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. Additional information about the position and ideal candidate is attached. The position appointment may be as soon as an acceptable candidate has been identified, with an expectation that the appointment be no later than **August 1, 2024**.

Specific Services Desired from the Executive Search Firm

The firm we will select for this search should have extensive experience in membership based leadership searches for organizations similar to The American Fisheries Society, should have a deep understanding of and familiarity with natural resources professional culture, understand the mission of AFS, and must be able to work smoothly and effectively with the 7-member Search Committee consisting of a diverse group of members from the Society. The search will be expected to produce a pool of highly-qualified and diverse candidates appropriate for and interested in this important and challenging leadership position. The firm will be expected to handle all administrative aspects of the search including ad placement, recruitment and outreach, nominations and applications, referencing, background checks, etc.

In cooperation with the Search Committee, the search firm will be asked to assist in:

- searching for and identifying candidates through use of internet and database searches, advertisements in appropriate print and electronic publications, and personal and professional referrals and nominations;
- establishing an operational calendar that identifies and defines the steps in the identification and selection processes; and
- developing application and interview questions, procedures, and selection criteria.

In addition, the search firm will be asked to manage the application process as follows:

- advertise the position,
- collect applications,
- review applications for completeness,
- screen applications for qualifications,
- conduct any necessary follow up with applicants,
- prepare complete electronic copies of application materials on each candidate and distribute them to the Search Committee,
- manage releases for, and conduct necessary credit and background checks (personal, professional, and educational) on all semi-finalists, and
- provide all appropriate notifications to all applicants, including but not limited to
 - receipt of application,
 - any missing information,
 - the approximate timeline for the process,
 - the final status of each applicant, and
 - debrief all applicants regarding the process.

Following the application deadline, the AFS Executive Director Search Committee will meet with the search firm to evaluate and rank the top candidates and recommend semi-finalists to the AFS Governing Board. The search firm will then be asked to complete background checks (personal, professional, and educational) and credit checks on each of the semi-finalists. From this pool, final candidates will be selected for in-person interviews.

Should you wish to be considered, please submit an electronic-copy proposal by **Friday 1 March 2024 to the following address: **devridr@auburn.edu****

Please reference your company name as well as the RFP in the subject line of the email (ex: COMPANY_NAME-AFS_RFP_Bid_submission).

In addition, please make sure that the submitted file name contains your company name as well as AFS-RFP.

The following items are to be addressed in your proposal:

- Firm Profile:** Provide a brief introduction to your firm, describing its organization and services.
- Project Team:** Identify the key executives and/or staff who would be assigned to this project as well as their professional experiences, qualifications, responsibilities, and functions. Please identify the specific project manager who will be the primary contact for The American Fisheries Society Search committee.
- Project Scope:** Firm is to summarize the project tasks they anticipate completing as part of the search. Task descriptions should provide sufficient detail for the AFS Search

Committee to understand and evaluate the firm's proposed effort for completing the application process.

- d. **Fee Proposal:** The proposal shall include a budget for all aspects of the recruiting cycle including advertising, interviewing, background checks, final report of recommended candidates, estimated travel costs, administration, and any other aspects deemed to be an integral part of the recruitment process.
- e. **Client References:** List at least three (3) recent clients for positions of similar function and scope to this search, including the organization, contact person, email address, telephone number, and brief description of the services provided. References should preferably be from other non-profit, membership-based professional organizations.
- f. **Communication Plan with AFS Search Committee:** The proposal should detail the frequency and method of communication that will occur between the search firm and the AFS Search Committee, including
 - o e-mail and video call updates to the Chair of the AFS Search Committee
 - o notifications regarding the completion of each phase of contracted services, and
 - o interim and final progress reports.

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- responsiveness of the proposal to the needs and purpose of this search,
- fee structure,
- ability and history of successfully completing similar leadership searches of this type, and
- qualifications of the project manager assigned to this search.

We look forward to reviewing your response, and we thank you for participating in this request for proposal process.

Sincerely,

the AFS Special Committee to recruit a new Executive Director

Troy Brandt, tbrandt@riverdesigngroup.net

April Croxton, april.croxton@noaa.gov

Miguel Garcia Bermudez, mgarcia@fisheries.org

Caleb Hasler, cchasler@gmail.com

Laura Hendee, LHendee@fisheries.org

Jessica Mistak, mistakj@michigan.gov

Cecil Jennings, cjennings@fisheries.org (*Ex Officio*)

Dennis Devries, devridr@auburn.edu (Chair)