



American Fisheries Society
May 2019 Management Committee Meeting
Monday, May 20, 2019

Management Committee Participants: Scott Bonar, Leanne Roulson, Steve McMullin, Abby Lynch, Tom Kwak, Jud Kratzer, Heather Hettinger, Randy Schultz (Constitutional Consultant, non-voting), Doug Austen (Executive Director, non-voting)

Emerging Leaders: Cheyenne Owens

AFS Staff: Dan Cassidy, Drue Winters, Lauren Maza, Camryn Anderson

Minutes of the Meeting

1. **Welcome/Determination of Quorum** – Quorum established by Schultz. Meeting called to order by Bonar at 3:03 p.m.
2. **Agenda accepted.**
3. **Review and approval of minutes** from the April 15, 2019, Management Committee meeting. Accepted without change.
4. **Constitutional Consultants Report** (Schultz) –

Discussion topic: Process for approving final version of the Standards of Professional Conduct.

Background: The Standards of Professional Conduct were revised by the AFS Special Committee on Diversity and Inclusion as well as the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee. Their revised document was then reviewed by the Management Committee at their meeting on March 18, 2019. The Management Committee unanimously endorsed moving the document to the Governing Board for review and adoption at their next meeting. Subsequent to that, the Western Division Special Committee on Diversity and Inclusion requested to provide additional comment. These comments were provided to the Management Committee (Attachment A) and were described by Cheyenne Owens (chair). The comments were characterized by Constitutional Consultant Schultz as a valuable additions to the document but that did not materially alter the content in such a way as to require additional Management Committee action. It was agreed that the revised document will be referred to the Governing Board with full support of the Management Committee.

5. Policy Update (Drue Winters)

- a. WOTUS – Comments filed by AFS and a variety of partners. We are now simply waiting for the Administration to review and process responses. There is an expectation that this will immediately be challenged in court. AFS was asked if it will be willing to be party to an Amicus brief developed by partner societies and submitted at the lower court level. A response to this was not determined and additional discussion will need to take place.
- b. RAWA – There is some speculation that a bill will be submitted in the House by June 4 but this is likely to be updated and there is no clear path forward.
- c. Pebble Mine – Extension on comments to July 1. AFS Alaska Chapter, Western Division and Policy office are working on consolidated response.
- d. Marine aquaculture – briefing is scheduled for June 6 in conjunction with Capitol Hill Ocean Week.
- e. Climate Working Group – Appointments of members has been completed by Trushenski and the group has initiated work. The members are primarily addressing science issues. A subgroup to address policy matters is being developed.

6. President/Officers activities report

- a. Bonar – AFS Special Committee on Climate Change is moving forward. Bonar has been working with a University of Arizona class on communications to develop and test messaging on climate change.
- b. Roulson – Member of Meetings Oversight Committee and participating in CASS calls
- c. McMullin – Finalizing efforts of Awards Committee with May 1 deadline. Working with Past Presidents Advisory Council on three awards.

7. Executive Director and AFS staff report (Austen et al.)

- a. AFS Role in the State Fish and Wildlife Agency Regional Associations (RA)
 - i. Austen reviewed the organization of the four regional associations – NEAFWA, MAFWA, SEAFWA, and WAFWA. These organizations are not a subset of AFWA but are independent organizations with a strong affiliation with AFWA. Each RA has membership options for non-state entities such as non-profits. AFS is currently a member of MAFWA but not of any other RA. Austen does try to attend some of the RA's but has only been to MAFWA and NEAFWA in recent years. There is currently no official presence by AFS Divisions at any of the RA's.
 - ii. MAFWA – Heather Hettinger reported that the State of Michigan works closely with MAFWA. NCD supports the student travel funding option adopted by MAFWA. This is a program where MAFWA will return profits from their meeting to AFS NCD and TWS North Central Section to support student travel to MAFWA events.

- iii. NEAFWA – Kratzer reported that until three years ago, NED held its business meeting at NEAFWA. Since then, however, NEAFWA has held meetings outside of the boundary of NED with the result of NED meeting elsewhere. Furthermore, NED has decided to hold its business meetings in conjunction with a chapter meeting (e.g. recently with the New York chapter. This has already proven to be a successful model. NEAFWA has expressed some discontent with the limited AFS involvement at their meeting and this has resulted in conversations between NEAFWA leadership and Austen and this will be followed up by NED leadership establishing communication with NEAFWA. It is anticipated that a mutually beneficial relationship can be constructed.
- iv. SEAFWA – Kwak reported that AFS SD has been completely separate from SEAFWA for many years and that SD hosts a very successful fisheries meeting that rotates among the SD members (recently in Texas). AFS student members primarily attend the SD meeting and not SEAFWA. McMullin added that this separation was initiated in 1992 and was partly a result of SEAFWA mandating that any presentation as SEAFWA be published as a manuscript in their Proceedings. This was seen as an obstacle for student (and professional) presentations since the Proceedings were of limited value and quality and many students were seeking to either simply make a presentation or would rather publish in a higher impact journal. The relationship was characterized as not really avoidance but more a mutual departure. AFS does help with a symposium at the SEAFWA conference to ensure that there is a fisheries presence. It was also reported that SEAFWA has recently dropped its requirement for publication in their Proceedings.
- v. There was no WD representation on the call but others in the WD did not think that there was any presence at WAFWA meetings.
- vi. Follow-up: Austen (staff) will compile a list of membership costs in the four regional associations and make a recommendation at one of the next Management Committee calls about options for moving forward. NED leadership is working on a call with NEAFWA President Paul Johansen (West Virginia Director) and Austen will participate. Austen is also currently scheduled to attend the MAFWA meeting in late June. It was also noted that AFS President and Executive Director have made a commitment to attend each AFWA and North American Natural Resources Conference as a means of engaging with state and federal agency directors.

8. Additional Topics

- a. Reno update – A question was raised on the frequency of transportation between the Peppermill Hotel and Atlantis Hotel (and convention center). There will be

regular shuttles on a circulating basis with high frequency in the morning and late afternoon as well as for the evening networking events.

- b. Abby Lynch noted that the International Fisheries Section has submitted a number of items for the Governing Board meeting
- c. Cassidy reported that there will be a Unit Leader Conference call set for 1:00 p.m. ET on June 7

9. Adjourned at 3:52 p.m.

Attachment 1 – Revised Standards of Professional Conduct

Standards of Professional Conduct

Note: Current version text is in black, revisions made by Special Committee on Diversity and Inclusion as part of motion approved by MC in March 2019 in blue, revisions made as part of substitute motion drafted by WDAFS Diversity and Inclusion Committee are in fuchsia.

Standards of Professional Conduct

A member of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) has an obligation to perform ~~his/her~~ **their** duties in an ethical manner. First and foremost, on joining the AFS, a member accepts the responsibility to serve and manage aquatic resources for the benefit of those resources and of the public, based on the best scientific data, as specified by the Society’s “North American Fisheries Policy” (see Fisheries 21[3]:26-29). ~~He/she acts~~ **They act** ethically in ~~his/her~~ **their** relationships with the general public and with ~~his/her~~ **their** employers, employees, peers, fellow AFS members, and associates, and ~~he/she follows~~ **they follow** the tenets of the Society’s Equal Opportunity Policy (see 1998-1999 AFS Membership Directory and Handbook, page 3). ~~He/she strives~~ **They strive** to preserve and enhance the fisheries profession, **to provide a diverse, inclusive and welcoming environment, and to encourage these behaviors in others.** All members must adhere to the “Standard of Professional Conduct” as herein established.

Section I. Integrity of the Profession

Each member of the AFS shall:

1. Avoid actual or apparent dishonesty, misrepresentation, and unprofessional demeanor by using proper scientific methodology, by adhering to the Society’s “Guidelines for Use of Fishes in Field Research” (see Fisheries 13[2]:17-21) by fully documenting technical conclusions and interpretations, and by encouraging these practices by others;
2. Not speak for, represent, or imply in any way that ~~he/she represents~~ **they represent** the Society without the express approval of the president or Governing Board. No member of any Chapter, Division, or Section may speak with authority for that group without specific authorization;
3. Give appropriate credit for professional work done by others;
4. Make the fisheries profession more effective by exchanging information and experiences with colleagues, students and the public via formal publications, reports, and lectures; informal consultations; and constructive interactions with professional societies, journalists, and government bodies;
5. Approve only those plans, reports, and other documents ~~he/she has~~ **they have** helped prepare or has supervised;
6. Make professional recommendations and decisions to benefit fishery resources and the public, base them on the best available scientific data and judgments, ~~give a clear~~

- and balanced exposition of the consequences of following and of not following such recommendations and decisions;
7. Restrict, to the extent feasible, criticisms of technical results and conclusions of other researchers to professional forums such as meetings and technical journals;
 8. Balance, to the extent possible, professional viewpoints representative of the breadth of perspectives and backgrounds from which information is both obtained and applied;
 9. Recruit employees, ~~to the extent possible, reflecting the human diversity inherent in fishing communities, inclusive of all ethnic, gender, cultural, and age groups~~ gender or gender identity, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive ability, political affiliation, family, marital, or economic status. Members need to be aware of equal employment opportunity legal requirements in this area.
 10. Treat employees justly and fairly with respect to supervision, job development, recognition, and compensation;
 11. Encourage education that identifies unconscious biases, and incorporates training opportunities supporting inclusion, equity, and diversity in the workplace;
 12. Not engage in discrimination, harassment, or bullying^{1 2} in any form;
 13. Create and uphold a safe, open, and professional environment for learning, conducting, and communicating science with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency;
 14. Fulfill ethical obligation to weigh the societal benefits of their research against the costs and risks to human and animal welfare, heritage sites, or other potential impacts on the environment and society.

Section II. Relations with Clients, Employers, and the Public

Each member of the AFS shall:

1. Serve everyone professionally without prejudice or conflict of interest; unless the member's professional convictions conflict with the policies of the employer, in which case the member will provide the employer with full supporting evidence and sufficient time for study and action;
2. Maintain confidential relationships with employers and clients unless authorized by the employer or required by law or due process to disclose information or results produced while employed by that client;

¹ AFS rejects discrimination and harassment by any means, based on factors such as ethnic or national origin, race, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, or economic class. In addition, AFS opposes all forms of bullying including threatening, humiliating, coercive, or intimidating conduct that causes harm to, interferes with, or sabotages scientific activity and careers.

² **Discrimination** means unequal or unfair treatment in professional opportunities, education, benefits, evaluation, and employment as well as retaliation and various types of harassment. Discriminatory practices can be explicit or implicit, intentional, or unconscious. **Harassment** is a type of discrimination that consists of a single intense and severe act, or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts, which are unwanted, unwelcome, demeaning, abusive, or offensive. Offensive conduct constitutes harassment when 1) it becomes a condition of an opportunity, education, benefit, evaluation, or employment or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work or educational environment that most people would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. **Sexual harassment** includes any unwanted and/or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. **Bullying** is the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others in the professional environment that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

3. Advertise ~~his/her~~ **their** professional qualifications truthfully, without exaggeration and without denigration of others;
4. Express opinions on an aquatic resource subject only if qualified to do so by training, experience, or study;
5. Clearly separate professional opinion from accepted knowledge or fact in all communications;
6. **Recognize the value of diverse backgrounds of other professionals and members of the public, and acknowledge the scientific value of diverse perspectives;**
7. Advise against any action or decision by an employer, client or colleague that violates any law or regulation. If a member finds employment obligations conflict with professional or ethical standards, the member should advise the employer of the conflict. If such a conflict is not resolved in a timely manner, or if the action appears to materially affect public health, safety, or welfare, then the member shall advise the AFS of the objectionable condition or practice and supply substantial evidence of the problem. The member should reject attempts by employers and others to coerce or manipulate professional judgment and advice. The member should exercise professional judgment without regard to personal gain, and refuse compensation or other rewards that might be construed as an attempt to influence judgment;
8. Not distort or withhold information solely to substantiate a personal point of view;
9. Give expert testimony to a court, commission, or other tribunals only when based on adequate knowledge and honest conviction and give balanced judgments about the consequences of alternative actions;
10. **Fulfill ethical obligation to responsibly, accurately, clearly, and equitably inform the public about fishery resources, hazards, and other natural phenomena of importance to the well-being of Earth and society;**
11. **Act or intercede where possible to prevent professional misconduct. Any suspected professional misconduct, including discrimination, harassment, or bullying, shall be reported to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee without fear of retaliatory actions.**
12. Expose scientific or managerial misconduct, including misrepresentation to the public of aquatic science/professional information or overtly prejudice or exclusive behaviors, **and professional misconduct, including discrimination or harassment or bullying,** by informing the president of the AFS. The president shall refer this material to “The Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee.” **Members shall not fear retaliation against complaints and any Member enacting retaliation against reporting shall be referred to the Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee.**

Section III. AFS Process for Investigating Complaints under These Standards

The Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee will review documentation, and solicit more as appropriate, regarding allegations of ethics violations. The Committee shall determine any procedures for evaluation of professional conduct, with special care to maintain a balanced and fair assessment. The Committee shall maintain confidentiality with respect to all cases and is authorized to review the facts and findings of all prior ethics cases, where such cases may provide precedent or guidance to the Committee in reaching a decision. The Committee will inform the accused about the nature of the complaint and the identity of the complainant, unless there is reason to believe that the complainant will be harmed by doing so. Communication with either the complainant or the accused may be necessary to secure required information. After careful deliberation, the Committee

will decide whether an ethics violation has occurred, and the Committee Chair will communicate the decision to the AFS President and the Executive Director. The AFS President will inform both the complainant and the accused regarding the outcome of the Committee decision, but is not required to reveal the name of the complainant to the accused.

If a violation has been determined to have occurred, consequences to unacceptable professional conduct will be determined by the AFS Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee in conjunction with the AFS President and the AFS Executive Director.

Consequences may include one or more of the following actions:

- Dismissal from AFS meeting without refund
- Reporting to your agency
- Exclusion from any future AFS (sub unit/chapter/division) meetings for five years
- Revoke of AFS membership without the opportunity for renewal for five years
- If the offense is criminal, local law enforcement will be contacted.

This current version has been updated from the version that was adopted by the Governing Board in August 1997. This updated Standard of Professional Conduct is intended to address ongoing issues within the scientific community that may not rise to the level of legal actions, yet have profound impact in our profession and on individual lives and careers³. AFS has a desire to act in establishing and enforcing professional conduct expectations, and to provide additional education and awareness on how to change culture and behavior and address such issues.

³ AFS processes for addressing any claims of misconduct are outlined within these Standards to work within the law and remain strict in upholding principles of confidentiality and due process. When an allegation of misconduct involves activity that is against the U.S. code of law, or code of law in other respective regions, AFS will work with all appropriate authorities as needed and required to resolve the allegation.

References

American Geophysical Union- Code of Ethics: <https://ethics.agu.org/>

<https://ethics.agu.org/files/2013/03/Scientific-Integrity-and-Professional-Ethics.pdf>

(see III. Code of Conduct C. Student-Advisor Relationship and D. Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination E. Definitions)

American Astronomical Society- Code of Ethics: <https://aas.org/ethics> (See conduct toward others, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying)

American Sociological Association- Code of Ethics: <http://www.asanet.org/code-ethics> (See Principles D and E and Anti-Harassment Policy: <http://www.asanet.org/anti-harassment-policy>)

Ecological Society of America-Code of Ethics: <https://www.esa.org/about/code-of-ethics/> (see General, 8 and 9)

ADVANCEGeo Partnership- Codes of Conduct:

https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/codes_conduct.html (see What makes an effective code of conduct?)

American Geosciences Institute- “Sexual Harassment in the Sciences: Response by Professional Societies”: <https://www.americangeosciences.org/workforce/currents/sexual-harassment-sciences-response-professional-societies>

Nature- “Harassment Should Count as Scientific Misconduct”:

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05076-2.epdf?author_access_token=MWndepPTsNHnrXSBYDDGtdRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0MmLImDZrqWbB_zV5RfjRmhLiLGdxKXU2hH0g3SR32V_h6Be1EigSZPUmk72HhAUKftv0EBcX4oyZq6AF5eCYVqN92iUjMqpyRPIsrrlIYVFQ%3D%3D

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission- Laws & Guidance:

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/index.cfm>