

**Southern Division American Fisheries Society**  
**Spring Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, 18 February 2016**  
**Oglebay Resort and Conference Center – Banquet Room 1**  
**Wheeling, West Virginia**

President Dennis Riecke called the EXCOM meeting to order at 1536 hrs. Secretary-Treasurer Kim Bonvechio announced a quorum was present. President Riecke called roll and the following proxies were identified: Dennis Riecke as proxy for the Alabama and Auburn Chapters, John Jackson as proxy for the Arkansas Chapter, Wes Neal as proxy for the Mississippi and Puerto Rico Chapters, Dave Coughlan as proxy for the North Carolina Chapter, Barry Bolton as proxy for the Oklahoma Chapter, Jason Henegar as proxy for the Tennessee Chapter, and Craig Bonds as proxy for the Texas Chapter. Attendee introductions were made, including SDAFS officers (President, Dennis Riecke; Past President, John Jackson; President-Elect, Dave Coughlan; Vice President, Wes Porak; and Secretary-Treasurer, Kim Bonvechio).

President Riecke presented the Spring EXCOM Meeting agenda. Vice President Porak made a motion to accept the agenda and President-Elect Coughlan seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

**SDAFS President Report**

President Riecke announced that AFS President Ron Essig, AFS Executive Director Doug Austen, and AFS Policy Director Tom Bigford are on the agenda and will report to the EXCOM if they arrived in time and/or will speak at the Business Meeting. President Riecke then summarized his past year of service commenting that he spent considerable time revising all division information on the SDAFS website and expanding a spreadsheet that lists chapter presidents, committee chairs and those who serve in appointed or elected leadership roles. At the end of the year, the SDAFS website was hacked. With the help of Sara Gilbert-Fox at AFS, most of the information on the old SDAFS website was transferred over to the more secure AFS server. Former SDAFS webmaster Zachary Martin resigned and has been succeeded by Hae Kim. He urged all committees to keep their information current and encouraged them to obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) for banking purposes. President Riecke did attend several chapter meetings, including Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and the joint Georgia/Alabama meetings. He commended the efforts to bring about the joint Georgia/Alabama meeting in Columbus, Georgia. Finally, he addressed the issue of finances and the need for the SDAFS to find additional revenue streams to support donations and student travel.

**SDAFS Officer Reports**

President-Elect Coughlan stated the President-Elect report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book. He added that a lot of the AFS functions are being done by a small group in the Management Committee. As a member, he has participated on monthly conference calls involving topics such as finances and student subunit and

chapter bylaws. This role will be taken over by incoming Vice President Craig Bonds after the 2016 AFS Annual Business Meeting.

Vice President Porak noted that one of the roles of the Vice President is to review SDAFS technical committees or chapters, as warranted. The Kentucky Chapter has not held a meeting since 2012, so Vice President Porak reached out to some of the biologists in Kentucky in an attempt to re-invigorate the chapter. Some of the biologists and fish chief were enthusiastic about the possibility, so hopefully progress will be made in the coming year. Vice President Porak also reviewed the Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee. This committee has been inactive for a long time, and in 2013, Immediate Past President Jackson did a review of the Committee and found there was limited interest in re-invigorating it. Instead, the Southeastern Fishes Council may serve the same role as this committee. Vice President Porak reached out to the Southeastern Fishes Council to possibly partner with them in the future. Additional discussion ensued later in the meeting.

Immediate Past President Jackson stated the Past President report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book. Two noteworthy efforts this past year included attending the Arkansas Chapter AFS meeting as the SDAFS representative and revising/updating the SDAFS Procedure Manual.

Secretary-Treasurer Kim Bonvechio's reports were handled individually. Minutes from the 2015 EXCOM Meeting were published in the Summer 2015 SDAFS Newsletter and in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book, as well as posted on the SDAFS website. Hearing no revisions, Bryant Bowen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and President-Elect Coughlan seconded. No discussion ensued and no abstentions were reported. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio reported the 2014 SDAFS tax return was submitted prior to the deadline. The 2015 SDAFS financial statement was discussed. The SDAFS started 2015 with \$17,299.91 (\$7,765.93 carry over from 2014 and \$9,533.98 of temporary holding of Catfish Management Technical Committee funds) and an additional \$6,000 in our strategic reserve fund. Major income sources were received from the Savannah Meeting (\$6,858.00) and the AFS dues rebate (\$6,208.00). The SDAFS received \$60 from the Society for book sale rebates, which was dispersed to appropriate technical committees. Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio explained that the Catfish Management Technical Committee was able to open a new bank account with BB&T by creating a new EIN for "banking purposes." Therefore, these funds were transferred back to the technical committee. Typical operating expenses were incurred during the year and discussed. The SDAFS provided financial support to the SDAFS Student Affairs Committee (\$5,169.40); the AFS Equal Opportunity Section (\$500); the 2015 SEAFWA Meeting (\$1,000 to support the Student Professional Luncheon); and the 2016 joint Georgia/Alabama AFS meeting (\$500). Various other expenses (e.g., awards, plaques, internet service, officer travel, podcasting coordinator travel, etc.) were expensed as needed. Ballot and electronic meeting expenses were eliminated in 2015 by using AFS-provided services. Total assets in the Southern Division's checking account as of 31

December 2015 were \$10,781.80, but one check distributed to Virginia Tech for website and newsletter services for \$1,000 had not yet cleared. This total includes \$6,000 which is set aside in a Strategic Reserve Fund. President Riecke commented that officer travel included travel to Portland for him and President-Elect Coughlan to represent the SDAFS at the AFS Governing Board meeting in Portland. Bryant Bowen commented that the Georgia Chapter does not usually solicit funds from the SDAFS, but this year, their effort to help the Alabama Chapter become re-established resulted in higher than normal expenses. The Georgia Chapter thanked the SDAFS for their \$500 donation. Discussion ensued about the history and future of the Alabama and Auburn Chapters from President Riecke. Vice President Porak also updated the EXCOM on Kentucky Chapter's efforts to partner with the Tennessee Chapter or The Wildlife Society for a possible joint meeting.

Year-end checkbook and financial statement balances were in agreement. An audit of the 2015 financial information was completed 12 January 2016 by the SDAFS Audit Committee and reported to President Riecke. Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio made a motion to accept the Audit Committee's report which was seconded by Vice President Porak. No discussion ensued and no abstentions were reported. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Proposed 2016 SDAFS Budget was discussed. Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio explained that the Student Affairs and Officer Travel expenses make up the majority of the EXCOM expenses. Projected income in 2016 is \$11,551.50 with \$3,781.80 carried over from 2015, and expenses are projected at \$10,920.00 for an end-of-year balance of \$4,413.30. The Strategic Reserve Fund will be maintained at \$6,000. Riecke mentioned that the web hosting charges (Host Gator) will be eliminated in the future once the SDAFS website and all SDAFS Chapters and Technical Committee sites are fully migrated to the AFS server. President-Elect Coughlan noted that donations are subject to the state of the EXCOM budget but would like to continue efforts to provide student financial support (e.g., student professional luncheon) at the annual SEAFWA meeting. Some discussion occurred regarding the Student Affairs funds and how those funds should be distributed. It was clarified that a total of \$4,000 should be allocated for student travel, which is typically used to cover hotel costs for the SDAFS meeting. It was also suggested by Past President Jackson that the EXCOM consider changing the "first-come, first-serve" process and instead establish a deadline and distribute funds based on the needs of each student. Undergraduate students, in particular, do not typically have as much financial support as graduate students. A motion was made by Vice President Porak and seconded by Craig Bonds to approve the 2016 budget. After further discussion about the SEAFWA donation, the motion passed by unanimous vote.

A summary of the financial issues plaguing some of the technical committees was provided by Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio. She explained that the Catfish Management Technical Committee was able to open a new banking account by registering for a new EIN for "banking purposes only." The Reservoir Technical Committee was also able to resolve its years-long dispute with Edward Jones, which revoked its tax exempt status because the name on the account did not match the name registered to the EIN on the account (AFS Fish Management Section). Edward Jones also notified the Warmwater

Streams Technical Committee of a similar discrepancy between the name on the account and the EIN registered to that account. Both issues were resolved in 2015, with each account registered as tax exempt using the SDAFS EIN. Given the structure of the SDAFS with the different self-governing technical committees, it was suggested that Secretary-Treasurer Bonvechio investigate how AFS and other divisions are handling these types of issues to determine the best course of action for the SDAFS.

### **Reports from Committees with Action Items**

President Riecke notified the EXCOM that a resolution of appreciation for the principal organizers of the 2016 SDAFS Meeting in Wheeling was drafted. Past President Jackson made a motion to take the resolution to the business meeting to be presented to members. Craig Bonds seconded. No discussion ensued and no abstentions were reported. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

### **Chapter Reports**

**Host Comments** – Pat Mazik welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reported that the current registration number was similar to the previous SDAFS meeting held at the same location in 2008. She was also encouraged by the number of technical sessions, posters, technical committee meetings, and symposia scheduled. She finished by making several other meeting and housekeeping announcements.

**Alabama** – President Riecke, proxy for the Alabama Chapter, noted the report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Arkansas** – Past President Jackson, proxy for the Arkansas Chapter, noted the report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Auburn University** – President Riecke, proxy for the Auburn Chapter, noted that the report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Florida** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Georgia** – Bryant Bowen, proxy for the Georgia Chapter, noted the report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book. He expressed the Chapter's appreciation to the SDAFS for their donation to host the 2016 Alabama/Georgia joint meeting. He also announced that proceeds from the 2015 SDAFS Meeting in Savannah will be used to set up a student travel stipend fund.

**Kentucky** – Not present. No report submitted.

**Louisiana** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Mississippi** - Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**North Carolina** - Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Oklahoma** – Not Present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Potomac** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Puerto Rico** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book. Wes Neal, proxy for Puerto Rico, re-iterated the desire of the Puerto Rico Chapter to host the 2018 SDAFS meeting. President Riecke requested that a formal written intention to host the meeting approved by the Chapter members be submitted to the EXCOM within the next two weeks in order to solidify the 2018 meeting location. Craig Bonds noted that the Texas Chapter is prepared to host the 2018 meeting in the event that Puerto Rico cannot do so.

**South Carolina** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Tennessee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Texas** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book. Craig Bonds, proxy for the Texas Chapter, noted that the Texas Chapter members voted to host the 2019 SDAFS meeting but are prepared to host in 2018 if necessary.

**Tidewater** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Virginia** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Virginia Tech** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**West Virginia** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

### **Committee Reports**

**Alligator Gar Technical Committee** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Aquaculture Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Catfish Management Technical Committee** – Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Non-game Aquatics Technical Committee** – No report submitted.

**Reservoir Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Small Impoundments Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Striped Bass Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Trout Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Warmwater Streams Technical Committee** – Not present. Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Pollutions Ad Hoc Committee** - Report stands as written in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

President Riecke noted that reports for these and other committees, including SDAFS Awards, Resolution, and Student Affairs, as well as from other positions, including the SDAFS Representative to SEAFWA, webmaster, and listserv administrator, are provided in the 2016 SDAFS Briefing Book.

### **Other Old Business**

President Riecke opened the floor to other old business, but hearing none, moved on to new business.

### **New Business**

Past President Jackson provided an update on revisions to the SDAFS Procedure Manual, which has not been updated in at least a decade. Work was divided among the SDAFS officers, and suggested changes (such as removing names of individuals that can change over time) are being made. Given proposed changes to technical committees to be

discussed and other suggestions provided by Pat Mazik, additional changes will be necessary and will be handled by President Riecke in the coming year. Past President Jackson gave an estimated timeline of six months for completion of the Procedure Manual revisions.

President-Elect Coughlan made a motion to disband the SDAFS Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee. The motion was seconded by Immediate Past President Jackson. Discussion was then facilitated by President Riecke. Vice President Porak summarized conversations with different people with previous involvement with the Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee, as well as members of the Southeastern Fishes Council. It was his understanding that there is little interest in continuing the Technical Committee within SDAFS, and that the Warmwater Streams Technical Committee could take on the same role. Bryant Bowen concurred, noting that many of the non-game biologists within the SDAFS already belong to the Warmwater Streams Technical Committee. As an aside, Past President Jackson said that the Nongame Aquatics Technical Committee had been struggling for years to find enough people to take on leadership roles within the Committee and keep it afloat, a pattern that should serve as a warning sign for any committee that its future may be in trouble. Following this discussion, President Riecke asked for a vote on the motion. No abstentions were reported and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

President-Elect Coughlan gave an overview of the Southeastern Fishes Council (SFC). The SFC holds an annual meeting in the fall of each year and has a similar function as the SDAFS but with a particular focus on non-game species. Vice President Porak listed reasons for partnering with the SFC including: improving communications, helping both organizations grow stronger, and facilitating cooperative efforts for future conservation initiatives. This partnership would involve sharing newsletters, sending announcements about meetings and other opportunities through the listserv, and linking to each other's websites. Possible future goals were also presented, such as soliciting more non-game presentations and symposia at future SDAFS meetings, offering SFC members space at future SDAFS meetings, offering possible tiered registration costs or complimentary registration for a leader to attend each other's meetings, and using SDAFS funds to help sponsor a SFC symposium at a future SDAFS meeting. With increasing emphasis on non-game fish species and the amount of overlap between the two organizations, EXCOM members agreed that a partnership with the SFC would be beneficial to the future of both organizations and conservation efforts of non-game fishes.

President Riecke brought up the idea of a tiered SDAFS spring meeting registration fee. When a person attends the AFS Annual Meeting, she or he pays a higher registration cost if not a member of the AFS. Although the SDAFS gets a rebate for each AFS member within the division, it is unclear how many registrants are members and how much money the SDAFS gets per member. Different options were discussed, including (1) offering a registration discount for AFS members, by either a percentage or set amount; (2) tacking on AFS membership dues to the registration cost for the annual SDAFS meeting; (3) adding a \$5-10 student support fee; (4) improving financial management for future SDAFS meetings to maximize meeting revenue; and (5)

encouraging technical committees to split fees for workshops or symposia for general meeting revenue or student support. A tiered registration would serve two purposes: 1) to increase revenue for SDAFS for operating expenses and student support and 2) send the message that AFS membership has its privileges. Concerns were raised that increasing registration costs could result in reduced attendance at the SDAFS meetings, as some Chapters have a low percentage of AFS members. Also, it is unclear how meeting organizers can verify that SDAFS registrants are AFS members. Past President Jackson reiterated that AFS membership, not Chapter membership, is required to be a member of the SDAFS. Some Chapters offer to pay for AFS membership for elected officers, but not all. Also, some state agencies offer pay incentive for AFS certification, which encourages employees to keep their AFS membership up-to-date. It was mentioned that a set of guidelines be established for SDAFS meeting organizers to help maximize meeting revenue. Future discussion will take place after the EXCOM officers assess the proportion of members who attend the SDAFS meeting, how much money per member is allotted to the SDAFS, other business models used by other divisions of AFS, and ways to handle registration that involves a member versus nonmember rate.

President Riecke noted the upcoming meeting locations. Oklahoma City will host the SDAFS meeting in 2017. Arkansas submitted a formal request to host the SDAFS meeting in 2020. Craig Bonds made the motion to approve the request, which was then seconded by Vice President Porak. Past President Jackson noted that the SDAFS meeting in 2020 will correspond with the SDAFS Catfish Management Technical Committee's 2020 Catfish Symposium. No abstentions were reported and the motion carried by unanimous vote. Wes Neal is in contact with Miguel Garcia from Puerto Rico to make known what needs to be done before Puerto Rico can secure the 2018 SDAFS meeting location, specifically a vote by Puerto Rico Chapter members to host the meeting and the identification of 8-12 people to form a planning committee. Craig Bonds made a motion to approve Texas for hosting the SDAFS meeting in 2019, contingent upon Puerto Rico hosting in 2018. Motion was seconded by Vice President Porak. After discussion, the motion was amended such that Texas will agree to host the SDAFS meeting in 2018 should Puerto Rico not be able to do so. No abstentions were reported and both the original and amended motions carried by unanimous vote.

Bryant Bowen made a motion to change the status of the Pollution Committee from an ad hoc committee to a technical committee. Discussion ensued. Past President Jackson mentioned that a formal request would be sent out to state agencies in the SDAFS region to appoint a representative for the committee. Bowen mentioned that the Pollution Committee is a larger effort with the ultimate goal of becoming a committee under the Water Quality Section of AFS. It was noted that some current members are outside the SDAFS, but any officers will need to become SDAFS members in the future. Vice President Porak said this opportunity allows the SDAFS to take a lead in a national initiative. Craig Bonds also added that the multiple projects, e.g., establishing values for other species groups (such as gastropods and marine fishes), are in the queue for the committee, which justifies elevating it to full technical committee status. No abstentions were reported and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Vice President Porak provided an update on the Black Bass Ad Hoc Committee. The future direction of the committee is unclear at this time.

Following no further new business or discussion items, President Riecke adjourned the EXCOM meeting at 1745 hrs.