

President's Plan of Work

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To be presented to the AFS Governing Board

I have identified four high-priority areas of focus for my term as President of AFS:

1. Increase AFS development of standards for the fisheries profession.
2. Preside over the AFS 150th anniversary and associated celebration.
3. Increase AFS engagement and interactions with other professional societies on large-scale issues such as climate change.
4. Continue work of past presidents to encourage outreach and communication of fisheries science by fisheries professionals to the general public and policy makers.

These four focus areas are included in the new draft Strategic Plan. I discuss each focus area in more detail below.

1. Increase AFS development of standards for the fisheries profession.

Standardization in industry, medicine and science has led to great advances. Both AFS and other scientific societies, such as the American Public Health Association, the American Water Works Association, the Water Environment Federation, the American Nursing Association, the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering, the American Psychiatric Association and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, have developed standards for processes and methods within their professions. AFS is a natural place for fisheries standards development because it can serve as a leader uniting expertise across federal, state, provincial agencies, non-governmental organizations and academia. Standards are increasingly important for communicating, studying large-scales processes across political boundaries, providing basic rules of practice for an increasing population of professionals, and for increasing scientific credibility. Therefore, I will encourage the development of processes at AFS that will lead to further development of various types of professional standards.

Specific Actions Proposed –

- Identify methods other societies use to develop and encourage appropriate member participation in standards development.
- Use this information to outline a plan for members or units to initiate development of specific standards on various topics. Plan will outline procedures to prioritize what is to be standardized, how often standards are to be updated, and how to select appropriate experts or units for authoring the standards.

- Encourage appropriate units and members to participate in standards development.
- Move forward with the development of specific standards such as those for fisheries sampling methods.

2. Preside over the 150th anniversary and associated celebration of AFS.

The 150th anniversary is an important milestone in the history of the society, and an excellent opportunity to showcase the important accomplishments of the organization. Planning and priorities will focus on the following steps:

Specific Actions Proposed –

- Select a 150th meeting chair and coordinate with the chair, 150th committee and local arrangements committee to oversee activities.
- Define a Celebration/Meeting theme.
- Select appropriate plenary speakers for the annual meeting.
- Define overall celebration and annual meeting objectives with oversight by AFS officers, staff and governing board. Work with 150th committee; AFS staff; officers, governing board; arrangements committee; and society units to meet the proposed objectives. Objectives could include, but are not limited to: Identify and prioritize the greatest challenges currently facing the fisheries profession; Provide information about *past* fisheries successes and failures to identify what we can learn from them to help meet these challenges; Compile and share *current* ideas on how to best meet these challenges; Use past and current information to inform *future* actions of a) fisheries professionals, b) policy makers, and c) the general public.

3. Increase AFS engagement and interactions with other societies on large-scale issues such as climate change.

Large scale issues such as climate change are now among the greatest threats to the world's fisheries resources and aquatic systems. Unfortunately, policy makers and the general public do not typically prioritize these issues as high as scientists, who suggest several of these issues are a huge threat, not only to the world's fisheries, but to most aquatic and terrestrial, including human, ecosystems. Recent Gallup polls suggest only 1-3% of the U.S. Population believes that environmental issues are the most important issues we face. While smaller issues can be addressed at the chapter, division or even the society level, large-scale problems, by their very definition, are difficult for one society or organization to impact. Therefore, I will plan to further encourage AFS to work with other organizations to impact public opinion on large-scale issues and improve our ability to educate policy makers to trust and act upon established science.

Specific Actions Proposed –

- Involve AFS Policy Staff, Communications Staff, the Science Communication sections and other interested groups to further:
 - identify how items for joint action can be prioritized;
 - identify how best to work with other groups to communicate with public and policy makers so they understand the consequences of inaction on select large-scale environmental issues;
 - find groups with which to work; and
 - participate in joint actions.
- Provide written report on the above to inform future AFS staff, officers and board members.
- Because climate change is one of the greatest anthropogenic threats our fisheries and human populations face, I will focus on this issue as the major large-scale issue for my term. This will include querying the governing board and the membership to identify what specific additional policy and communication steps AFS can take individually and with other organizations to reduce emissions causing climate change, then moving forward to participate in these steps.
- Include symposiums, workshops and policy forums on large scale issues such as climate change s at the 150th annual meeting in Columbus.
- Work with other organizations (e.g., AFWA) to understand what limits AFS meeting attendance and membership from various agencies and encourage attendance and membership by fisheries professionals.

4. Communicate fisheries science to professional and nontechnical audiences

This area of focus will continue to build upon the work in progress during President Joe Margraf, Steve McMullin and Jesse Trushenski's terms. During my presidential term, we will further implement strategies to increase communication of large-scale issues affecting fisheries and the fisheries profession. This includes educating the general public, policy makers and teachers.

Specific Actions Proposed –

- The President, Executive Director, AFS Communication Program, the Scientific Communication Section and other interested sections, chapters and divisions will continue to collaborate with other scientific societies to
 - communicate the value of science to nontechnical audiences;
 - present science and probable effects of large-scale environmental issues important to fisheries such as climate change, overfishing and large-scale habitat loss.
- The President, Executive Director and continuing education program director will continue the work of Past-President Jesse Trushenski to make available communication continuing education training to fisheries professionals,
- The AFS Policy Program will continue to actively distribute science information needed to inform policy and management.

- Encourage the Education and other sections to involve secondary and primary teachers and laypeople in disseminating fisheries science information. This can include lesson plans, public information sessions, and other activities.