

AFS Publications Workshop

May 16-17, 2017 • Reno, Nevada

Attending: Derek Aday, Doug Austen, Jim Bowker, Julie Carter, Steve Cooke, Patrick Cooney, Dan Daugherty, Ron Essig, Mary Fabrizio, Sarah Harrison, Laura Hendee, Dave Hewitt, Dan Isermann, Aaron Lerner, Joe Margraf, Steve McMullin, David Nicholson (Wiley), Donna Parrish, Brandon Peoples, Mike Quist, Dan Schill, Trent Sutton, Jesse Trushenski, Jason Vokoun, Ben West (facilitator), Melissa Wuellner.

Summary

The American Fisheries Society convened a special committee representing a diverse cross-section of membership to discuss future direction and operation of AFS publications, including journals, books, and agency reports. The goals and structure of the meeting were developed by a planning committee, consisting of Doug Austen, Aaron Lerner, Joe Margraf, and Steve McMullin. Ben West, University of Tennessee, facilitated the meeting and prepared this report.

Goals and Objectives

Although the planning committee had developed a comprehensive agenda and set of desired outcomes, participants were asked to identify the outcomes they most desired from the workshop. Their desired outcomes were focused on AFS journals and included:

- Develop action items, timelines, and commitments to maximize the attractiveness and satisfaction of our journals.
- Discuss journal rankings and citation-based impact factors. Do we care? And where and how do we care?
- Discuss and address state fishery managers concerns/perceptions of NAJFM.
- Reassess and focus the scope of the journals and how to maintain scope in practice.
- Develop a clear action plan for resolving long standing issues and topics related to AFS journals.

Primary Outcomes

1. A report will be generated and submitted to AFS leadership for consideration and approval at the 2017 AFS annual meeting in Tampa, FL. Aaron Lerner will take the lead in compiling this report. The report will articulate each journal's mission and scope, as well as outline recommendations for each journal and the larger journal program. Key universal recommendations from this report shall be:
 - a. Greater clarification is needed regarding the role and primary audiences for Transactions of the American Fisheries Society, North American Journal of Fisheries Management, and Fisheries. The report will outline these recommended clarifications.
 - b. AFS should institute a new editorial structure for AFS journals, whereby an Editor-in-Chief will be named for each journal. The Editor-in-Chief will be contractually responsible for implementing each journal's vision, mission, and strategic direction.

- c. Citation-based impact factors are critically important for some journals, but less so for others. Journal-specific recommendations shall be outlined in the report to maximize impact of the journal and, where appropriate, increase citation-based impact factors.
 - d. While authors frequently complain about it, the committee determined that time to publication for AFS journals is within industry averages and is not a significant issue. Nevertheless, the Strategic Vision report will outline some strategies for each journal to reduce time to publication.
 - e. AFS should work with Wiley to institute a seamless redirect option for paper submittals that represent good work but may be a better fit for another AFS journal rather than the journal originally submitted to. The goal would be to keep good manuscripts within the AFS family of journals rather than being rejected and submitted elsewhere.
2. The committee discussed three specific issues that have been under consideration: 1) the creation of a joint AFS/TWS journal, 2) the creation of a new journal for lay audiences, and 3) establishing a co-publishing arrangement for the Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management (with USFWS) and Fishery Bulletin (with NOAA).
 - a. AFS/TWS journal – The committee recommends not pursuing this at this time, but to continue to engage with TWS on collaborative opportunities and, perhaps, revisit this issue in the future.
 - b. Journal for lay audiences – The committee recommends not pursuing this proposal, but did suggest many options to better reach lay audiences (see below for specifics).
 - c. Co-publishing federal agency journals – The committee is hesitant to pursue this opportunity, but recommends continuing to have dialogue and conversation with USFWS and NOAA. One particular possibility that excited committee members would be to have the Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management serve as a cascade journal for AFS journals.
3. The committee briefly discussed many issues related to the AFS books program. A complete record of their comments and suggestions are below. In general, the committee recommended publishing more books electronically, and being more discerning about which titles to physically print.
4. The committee discussed the need and opportunity to develop an online repository for agency reports and other gray literature. In summary, the committee agrees there is a need for this and it would represent a benefit to many AFS members. Doug Austen and Aaron Lerner will develop a concept paper in this regard, in consultation with the Fish Management and Administration Sections, as well as CARS and FITS.

**COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS,
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS**

Journals

Process: Participants were broken into groups by Journal, with groups for Fisheries, TAFS, NAJFM, NAJA, and MCF. Participants decided not to include discussion about JAAH as nobody in attendance has a strong connection to the journal.

Participants brainstormed and discussed issues related to the journal's mission, scope, audience, typology of ideal papers, and other issues. Furthermore, each group discussed importance of citation-based impact factors to the journal's mission, as well as the importance of time to publication.

Based on small and large group discussion, the following goals and tasks were identified:

Develop a comprehensive report for journal recommendations, titled "A Strategic Vision for AFS Journals," with the following framework:

1. Preamble to entire report/process
2. Journal reports
3. Common themes/recommendations throughout journal reports; Priorities

Who: Aaron L. will lead process. Joe, Steve, and Doug will assist. Each group representative will contribute and participate.

When: First draft of the report due June 4

Develop a summary of recommendations for each journal, which will be incorporated into the "Strategic Vision for AFS Journals" above, to include:

1. Preamble
2. Mission statement
 - a. Including an articulation of the "kinds" of articles that should be published
3. Focus audiences for the journal
4. Statement regarding importance of impact factors
5. Statement regarding the goal of time to publication
6. Recommendations for action

Who: Each breakout group will work together to finalize report (1-page maximum). Each group will appoint a person to lead this process and to help prepare the comprehensive report.

TAFS: Derek
NAJFM: Dan I.
Fisheries: Trent

NAJA: Jesse
MCF: Ron
JAAH: Jesse and Jim will contact JAAH

When: First drafts of the journal reports will be due by May 24

Develop review and approval process for comprehensive journal report

Who: Joe, Steve, and Doug will discuss with AFS officers and develop process. Draft process is below.

When: TBD; in time for consideration at Tampa

Review and evaluate 2 years of Fisheries articles to help inform mission and typology of articles

Who: Donna, Stephen, Patrick, Trent, Derek, Jason; Dave

When: In time to incorporate into Fisheries recommendations before review by governing board

Modify Scholar One to address review structure needs

Who: Derek A., David N., Aaron L. , Dan D., Jim B.

When: August 2017

Process for Approval of Publications Workshop Recommendations

1. Compile draft report at conclusion of publications retreat and send to all editors and AEs for comment.
2. Officers call on June 6 to include discussion of approval process, steps we need to take (e.g., what motions will need to be presented to MC & GB).
3. Comments back from editors by June 30.
4. AFS staff prepares summary of financial implications to include in document for MC.
5. Revise report for submission to Management Committee by July 14 (including financial implications).
6. Management Committee call on July 21 to discuss and approve report and recommendations.
7. Report as approved by MC included in GB briefing book with motion for approval by August 5.
8. GB considers and approves report/motion in Tampa on August 19.
9. Publications vision statement presented to editors at their meeting in Tampa.

Summary of Journal Discussions/Draft Reports

Fisheries

Preamble

Since its inception in 1976, *Fisheries* has been a monthly, glossy, magazine-style periodical that is mailed in hard copy to all ~8,500 American Fisheries Society (AFS) members. It is regarded as the primary communication tool with its members, even with the increased use of electronic communication means in recent years. Unlike the other AFS journals, the Editor-in-Chief is the Executive Director of AFS, reflecting the importance of the monthly publication for members. The Editor-in-Chief and the Managing Editor of *Fisheries* (an AFS employee) solicit and generate content related to AFS unit news, events, job opportunities, and other AFS-relevant material. There are also several regular columns (e.g., President's Commentary, Policy, Communications, Student Angle, etc.). Science content is subject to peer review and is coordinated by a Senior Editor, two Co-Editors, and a team of Science Editors (analogous to Associate Editors for other AFS Journals). Typically, each issue contains between two and five peer-reviewed papers that are subject to page charges. On occasion a single, long paper has dominated an issue. The science articles are categorized as feature, perspective, mini-review, or essay and are intended to have broad implications or applications with subject matter that can be readily understood by professionals of a variety of backgrounds. For the past few years, there have also been thematic issues (e.g., on climate change, education, and aquaculture) where all the science content along with associated short perspective articles from different units are included. *Fisheries* is unique among the AFS journals in many ways; for example, there is opportunity for the use of color photos and figures to support science content. *Fisheries* has a longer time to publication because of the limited number of articles published each issue. Additionally, it has struggled with its identity – Is it a journal? Is it a magazine? In reality, it is a hybrid, not unlike the journals *BioScience* or *Frontiers in Ecology and Environment*. The Impact Factor has hovered between 2 and 3 for the last decade or so and is the highest ranked of all AFS journals. Financially, *Fisheries* is uniquely supported by advertising (which has declined in recent years).

In conclusion, *Fisheries* is a unique and critical publication platform for AFS that offers a wide array of communication avenues for a diverse audience. Therefore, the ultimate oversight, solicitation, submission, and review process for content must focus on a high degree of long-term relevance for a broad audience.

Mission

Fisheries serves as the Society's primary communication tool with its membership. The goal of this periodical is to provide timely, useful, and accurate information on fisheries science, management, and the fisheries profession for AFS members. *Fisheries* contains 3-4 fishery review or synthesis articles covering specific issues. Additionally, the publication contains several shorter communications that include perspective or opinion pieces, essays, teaching case studies, and current events or news features of broad appeal to the membership, regardless of specific aquatic science discipline. Additional features include timely domestic and international fisheries issues, multi-author point-counterpoints, editorials, and special columns. *Fisheries* has a broad, interdisciplinary appeal, with content that is current, interesting, and accessible, even to those reading outside of their immediate area of expertise, and should account for interest from policy makers, resource managers, educators, industry partners, stakeholders, and the general public.

Content submission criteria

Fisheries covers all aspects of fisheries science and management, including those that focus on large-scale spatial and temporal issues, broadly impactful research and education, cross-disciplinary or multi-partner endeavors, new techniques and technologies, novel approaches to old problems, and practical applications of fisheries science and management. Contributed material should provide timely, useful, and accurate information on fisheries science, management, and the fisheries profession, primarily for AFS members. Articles suitable for *Fisheries* include fishery case histories, review or synthesis articles covering a specific issue, policy articles, perspective or opinion pieces, essays, teaching case studies, and current events or news features. We encourage submissions of short-form synthesis articles (under 6,000 words excluding references and tables), current events in fisheries science, interviews with fisheries scientists, history pieces, informative how-to articles, etc. We also encourage articles that will expose our members to new or different fields. Research articles may be considered if the work has broad implications or applications and the subject matter can be readily understood by a large majority of our primary audience. Content submitted for consideration should appeal broadly to fisheries professionals and speak to the interests of the AFS membership. Lengthy, highly technical, or narrowly focused research articles are better suited to the AFS technical publications, and we encourage authors to consider the other AFS journals as venues for these works.

Audience

Fisheries has the most diverse readership of the AFS publications. Here, the audience is presented into three groups:

Primary Audience

- AFS Members
- Academia (Faculty, Post-Docs, Students)
- Management Agencies (Government and Tribal agency personnel)
- Private Industry (Utility Biologists, Natural Resource Extraction, Environmental Consultants, Equipment Manufacturers)
- Policy Makers and Administrators (Government Agency Commissioners, Tribal Commissioners, Politicians, Staffers, NGO)
- International Community

Secondary Audience

- Potential AFS Members (Promotional tool, one-time impact to create influence)
- Academia (Faculty, Post-Docs, Students)
- Management Agencies (Government and Tribal agency personnel)
- Private Industry (Utility Biologists, Natural Resource Extraction biologists, Environmental Consultants, Equipment Manufacturers)
- Policy Makers and Administrators (Government Agency Commissioners, Tribal Commissioners, Politicians, Staffers, NGO)
- International Community

Tertiary Audience

- Engaged Stakeholders
- Thought Leaders
- Other Membership Groups (Trout Unlimited, BASS, Bonefish and Tarpon Trust)
- General Public
- Press (News agencies, Fishing magazines, Outdoor magazines)
- Anglers (Recreational, Commercial, Subsistence, Tribal)
- Science Readers

Impact Factor

The broad relevance of the scientific articles published in *Fisheries*, the large distribution of the physical copy of *Fisheries* to all members, and the low number of articles published in each issue of *Fisheries* presumably contributes to the higher impact factor for *Fisheries* compared to the other AFS Journals. The trend of the impact factor of *Fisheries* can be used as an indication of the broad relevance of the published articles. Given its current standing, there may be strategic content oversight opportunities to gain unrealized potential.

Time to Publication

In general, *Fisheries* has a longer time to publication than the other AFS Journals because only two or three articles are published per issue. However, there are additional unique scenarios associated with *Fisheries* that can also extend the time to publication for submitted manuscripts. As a result, communications from the Editors to content submitters regarding the extended timeline, unique experience, and differing process of submitting to *Fisheries* is critical to addressing the longer time to publication.

Things to communicate regarding time to publication and time to first editorial decision:

- A. Unique constraints of publishing a magazine that has limits on the number of articles per issue
- B. General “Time to publication from submission” on *Fisheries* website (update quarterly)
- C. Typical timeline disruptions, including thematic issues and timely topics
- D. Times of the year that generally lead to longer review times that may delay first editorial decision making
- E. Objectives that *Fisheries* articles must meet to be considered for publication
- F. Time to first editorial decision must be initiated within 90 days. If circumstances prevent this from occurring, communication must be made to inform the authors regarding their manuscript’s status.

Recommendations

During this exercise, a limited number of refinements were made to the mission of the publication, indicating that much of what needs to be completed is the implementation and execution of long established protocols and guidelines for *Fisheries*.

To provide proper guidance, there is a need for an Editor-in-Chief to oversee and implement this comprehensive strategic plan. The Editor-in-Chief will be responsible for the refined content management to ensure that science articles published in *Fisheries* are consistent with the spirit of the publication and that non-science material is appropriate and engaging. To ensure that scientific rigor and the reputation of *Fisheries* maintained, individuals will be sought for the Science Editorial Board that have sufficient editorial, publishing, and visionary experience to identify and solicit key topics and issues that should be addressed. The Science Editorial Board for *Fisheries* must focus on implementing and executing *Fisheries* mission objectives. A major aspect of meeting this vision will require that some board members strictly focus on forward thinking, horizon-scanning expertise to solicit timely and relevant content, while others focus on standard peer review processes.

Ideas for soliciting additional content:

- Synthesis perspectives from Plenary Speakers at AFS conference
- Perspectives from international members and members of other international societies (International Fisheries Section)
- Professional development from Professional Certification Program

- Ethics and philosophy
- Tools, technology, and do it yourself (field experts and manufacturer driven spotlights/techniques)
- Safety in the workplace
- Creating content for policy makers
- Tribal perspectives (Equal Opportunities Section)
- Themed issues
- Pre-analyze incoming abstract submissions for conferences to solicit information on emerging ideas for themed issue that precedes conference
- Locate other existing data sources that will identify emerging ideas (i.e. communication with Editorial Boards from other journals for trending concepts)
- Solicit intriguing content from AFS Sections, Divisions, and Chapters that go beyond “News”
- Encourage students to provide content from emerging communication tools (social media, graphic arts, photography, emerging technologies)

The editorial team needs to evaluate all submissions with strict consideration for consistency with the mission to ensure proper content fit. Content that is better suited to other AFS journals shall be redirected prior to peer review. In addition, the following best practices should be followed for *Fisheries*:

1. Maintain visual appeal and design, including attractive photography, that helps distinguish *Fisheries* from other AFS journals.
2. Encourage authors to submit compelling graphics and data visualizations within papers (e.g., increase the utilization of infographics).
3. Maintain reasonable literature cited space (beyond one page, develop alternative placement, i.e., online or smaller font).
4. Invited papers are critical to the forward thinking needs of this journal. The Editorial Board needs to include individuals that strictly identify and solicit content, and should be given appropriate tools, like waiving page charges for solicited content, to maintain strong invitation capabilities.
5. Provide examples with submission materials of articles that demonstrate the spirit and essence of appropriate content of the *Fisheries* model.
6. The Editor-in-Chief needs to ensure content is relevant to a strong majority of the *Fisheries* audience.
7. Relevant, short, impactful statements/summaries of premier articles, from other AFS journals to increase awareness of scientific content across AFS communications platforms.
8. Improve *Fisheries* advertising appeal by incorporating package deals, Social Media, Product Highlights, and trade show booth space.
9. Maintain close communication with all other Editors-In Chief to encourage strong relevance between communication platforms
10. A differentiation needs to be established for the peer-Reviewed scientific content of both Transactions of the American Fisheries Society and *Fisheries*. Item number 5 above must provide examples of appropriate *Fisheries* content that captures the essence and spirit of appropriate material.

These recommendations implore the editorial team must consistently execute the mission statement while continuing to identify ways to improve the broad-reaching relevance of *Fisheries* content to a broad and diverse audience.

Transactions of the American Fisheries Society

Preamble/Mission

Transactions of the American Fisheries Society is AFS's oldest and most recognized scientific journal. Its mission is to publish the best scientific content among the broadest disciplinary scope in the AFS portfolio. The journal seeks to publish scientific articles that appeal broadly, have high influence within fisheries science, and that are novel or represent seminal scientific results, such that TAFS is and continues to be recognized as the flagship scientific journal of the society.

Audience: Very broadly, Transactions is intended for fisheries and aquatic science professionals globally.

Goals

The goals are to increase impact factor/citation metrics (as described in strategies) to be competitive with journals such as Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences and to make TAFS a top 10 fisheries journal. Further, we aim to decrease time to publication of articles.

Strategies

1. Increase publication of the best available science by:
 - a. Faster and more frequent desk rejection
 - b. More direct focus by editors, AE and reviewers (guided by the new Editor-in-Chief) on best science, not on shepherding papers towards acceptance
 - c. More frequent inter-journal transfer of articles (including with reviews, if appropriate)
 - d. Aiming for approximately 50% rejection rate – initially – after desk rejection
2. Recruitment of specific papers through a new 'Features Editor'
3. Target synthetic, review, cutting-edge, meta-analyses, emerging issues papers, etc.
4. New editor responsible for handling the recruitment and review of these papers
5. Initial target of one per issue for the first year, with potential to expand
6. Dissolve the 'notes' category
7. Increase international representation on the editorial board
8. Editor-in-Chief should be responsible (and held accountable) for these strategies (see below)

Common Themes:

- A. Provide a check-box at submissions requiring authors to commit to at least one review of an AFS manuscript in the coming year.
- B. Stricter enforcement of reviewer time limits
- C. Default early online publication
- D. Eliminate author formatting requirements – authors simply prepare appropriate manuscript sections, everything else handled by copy editors
- E. Regular, focused communication among Editors-in-Chief of all journals

Role of EIC:

- A. Responsible for implementing and overseeing all identified strategies
- B. Inter-journal communication to prevent 'mission creep'
- C. Responsible for tracking papers and metrics (time to first decision, rejection rate, etc.)

- D. Mentoring of new editors, associate editors
- E. Reduce paper load by 50-75% (or as appropriate, tbd) for EIC to handle additional responsibilities
- F. Hire new editor to pick up reduced EIC load
- G. Make EIC a contractual relationship and expect goals to be met

North American Journal of Fisheries Management

Mission: The North American Journal of Fisheries Management is intended to promote communication among fishery managers in North America. The journal's contents chronicle the development of practical monitoring and management programs for finfish and exploitable shellfish in marine and freshwater environments. Contributions relate to the way populations, habitats, and users may be managed to protect and enhance fish and fishery resources for societal benefits. Case histories of successes, failures, and side effects of fisheries programs help convey practical management experience to others.

Submissions to NAJFM must be relevant to fisheries management in North America and can include:

- Original research describing new information relevant to fisheries management.
- Research supporting or contradicting previous findings.
- Case histories of successes, failures, and side effects of fisheries programs help convey practical management experience to others.
- Tools and techniques used to monitor and manage fish populations.

Primary Audience

- Fishery managers in North America
- Researchers and academics focused on fisheries management and training future fishery managers
- Students

Impact factors

- Citation-based indices do not measure "impact" to the profession.
- Relevance of NAJFM should be measured by practical use of science in the process of fisheries management.

Time to publication

- Not a substantial issue.

Recommendations

- Renewed focus on publishing papers consistent with the mission of NAJFM.
- Greater oversight in selecting editors, associate editors, and reviewers that are engaged in the process of fisheries management.
- Provide a more structured process for vetting and selecting editorial staff that includes consideration of specific criteria.
- Engage Fisheries Management Section and Fish Administration Section to obtain continual feedback on journal direction and in selecting members of the editorial board.
- Increased prevalence of special issues or segments of papers focused on topics relevant to fisheries management.
- Ask management agencies to identify exceptional candidates for editorial positions and provide time to complete these duties.
- Assign papers based on AE expertise, not workload.
- Increase pool of available reviewers.
- Expand number of editors.
- Establish an editor-in-chief whose responsibilities will include:
 - Ensuring journal direction is consistent with mission.
 - Recruitment of new editors and AEs.

- Mentoring of editorial staff.
- Quality control (e.g., review quality, time to publication).
- Dismissal of editors or AEs not meeting performance standards.
- Annual evaluations of editor and AE performance.
- Single point of contact for desk rejects and assignment of papers to editors and AEs.
- Still serves as editor on some papers.
- Point of contact for author inquiries regarding process and decisions.
- Liaison to governing board and POC.
- Direct development and completion of special issues.

North American Journal of Aquaculture

AUDIENCES

Geographical Scope: Global, but with a priority on works relevant to aquaculture in North America
Scope of purpose: All types of aquaculture, but with a priority on aquaculture for the purpose of natural resource enhancement or conservation

Scope of science: both basic and applied, but a priority on applied science/projects, including practical experiences, descriptive studies, and other manuscripts that do not fit the typical model based on designed experiments, formal statistical analysis, and so forth.

Target Readership: practitioners and researchers, but with a priority on addressing the underserved community of applied researchers and public aquaculture practitioners

MISSION STATEMENT

We encourage the submission of original papers on all aspects of aquaculture, including broodstock selection and spawning, nutrition and feeding, health and water quality, facilities and production technology, and the management of ponds, pens, and raceways. We will consider papers dealing with ways to improve the husbandry of any aquatic species—marine or freshwater, vertebrate or invertebrate—raised for commercial, scientific, recreational, enhancement, or restoration purposes that may be of interest to practitioners in North America.

ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER THE JOURNAL IS SATISFYING THE NEEDS OT THE IDENTIFIED AUDIENCES

NAJA has drifted away from its mission to address the needs of the public practitioners of aquaculture in North America, particularly with respect to publication of technical notes and other pieces of value to the community that do not fit the model of replicated studies with formal statistics.

GOALS/ACTIONS TO ADDRESS MISSION SHORTFALLS

Better define the manuscript categories and use this existing structure to encourage submission and publication of nontraditional content. For the nontraditional content, AEs and reviewers will need to be given specific guidance regarding the nature of the submission and tone/scope of the peer review needed. Charge editors and AEs with soliciting and developing content, particularly seeking appropriate submissions from underserved audiences. For example, engaging with prospective contributor during AFS and other meetings, symposia, etc. Written guidance for editors and AEs recently developed must be reviewed, adopted, and implemented by the editorial leadership. In general, there is a need for routine communication among the editors and AEs to continue to shape and enact the stated mission of the journal, ensure procedural consistency and common practices (e.g., number of needed reviews, whether reviews can be rescinded, how to resolve differences between reviewers, whether to copy edit or comment on style, etc.), implement the recommendations described herein, and mentor new AEs. These routine communications will also provide an opportunity to articulate the mission of the journal; expectations for editors, AEs, and reviewers; differentiation of roles and responsibilities; and techniques for how to handle common issues that arise during the peer review process.

TIME TO PUBLICATION

At 31 weeks between submission and online publication of articles, NAJA does not have a recognized time-to-publication problem, but there are a few things that can be done to reduce the time-to-publication. The easiest and most meaningful change will be implementation of 'early

online' or 'online first' publication of uncorrected proofs online immediately after acceptance so that the material has a DOI number and is searchable; this is expected to reduce time-to-publication to approximately 21 weeks. Better utilization of 'tracked changes' style reviews and revisions will facilitate more rapid manuscript handling during peer review, revision, and proofing phases. One of the identified contributors to extended time-to-publication is the lengthy and repeat reviews as a matter of course: often, editors and/or AEs are able to make a decision without a secondary (or tertiary) review, but may not be fully empowered to do so. Secondary reviews may be occasionally needed, but they should not be standard practice in handling revisions.

IMPACT FACTOR

The consensus is that impact factors, per se, are not especially relevant for NAJA. However, there are a number of elements that could increase the practical *relevance* of the journal. These include use of social media and other means to advertise/market journal content. Author experience is, in part, what drives choice of publication venue, so by giving authors a good experience we will encourage them to submit their best work to NAJA. Efforts to improve author experience include editor/AE mentoring to make peer review more consistent and predictable, clear guidance to reviewers regarding what is/is not appropriate for review (e.g., no copy editing, what makes for a high quality review, examples of constructive reviews), better use of scoring system to identify and cull poor reviewers from the system, etc. Increasing publication of content that serves the identified audiences, including more nontraditional content, will increase the relevance of the journal.

NOTES FOR JAAH:

We sense that many of the issues identified for NAJA and the other AFS publications will also apply to JAAH. We recommend that a conference call be held with a select group of JAAH editors, AEs, and readers to undergo the process undertaken by the broader group with a specific focus on JAAH.

COMMON THEMES

Copy editing should be in tracked changes to make alterations clear.

Tracked changes needs to be better integrated into the peer review, revision, and proofing processes.

Editors and AEs must be empowered to reject manuscripts based on fit, but allow for a seamless transfer of a quality submission to another AFS journal that is more appropriate.

Help AEs identify prospective reviewers automatically by extracting cited authors from the Introduction.

Encourage identifying AEs to increase accountability for quality of peer review process and legitimacy of final published papers.

Marine and Coastal Fisheries

Preamble – The American Fisheries Society's newest journal, *Marine and Coastal Fisheries: Dynamics, Management, and Ecosystem Science* is an open access, online-only publication. Manuscripts are compiled into a single volume--as ready--throughout the calendar year. The journal was launched in 2008 with its own production and management team; within one year, the team was deemed not financially viable and dissolved. In 2011, Taylor & Francis began publishing this title. The editorial board consists of an editor and multiple subject editors who are charged with publication decision.

Mission – The journal aims to publish original and innovative research that synthesizes information on biological organization across spatial and temporal scales to promote ecologically sound fisheries science and management. The journal provides an international venue for studies of marine, coastal, and estuarine fisheries, with emphasis on species' performance and responses to perturbations in their environment, and promotes the development of ecosystem-based fisheries science and management. *Marine and Coastal Fisheries* encourages contributors to identify and address challenges in population dynamics, assessment techniques and management approaches, human dimensions and socioeconomics, and ecosystem metrics to improve fisheries science in general and make informed predictions and decisions. In addition to publishing peer-reviewed articles, the journal initially offered a "Fisheries Forum" to give readers an opportunity to discuss topical issues in near-real time, and encouraged the submission of "essays" (peer-reviewed comments) on relevant subjects. The Fisheries Forum fizzled, in spite of several attempts to initiate such exchanges. Reflecting the broad range of ecosystems, issues, and perspectives included in the scope of the journal, the journal seeks contributions that are inclusive and interdisciplinary. Major themes include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Fisheries biology and ecology (including age and growth, reproduction, behavior, physiology, stock identification, genetics, larval dispersal, and life histories) at different spatiotemporal scales as well as species' performance and responses to perturbation, restoration, and management actions
2. The biology, ecology, assessment, and management of marine birds, invertebrates, and mammals related to fisheries and ecosystem topics
3. Population demographics and dynamics
4. Habitat as a resource in space and time
5. Food webs, trophic dynamics, and prey resources
6. Assessment science and management scenario evaluation, including dedicated access, adaptive management, area-based management, community-based management, and coastal and marine zoning (including protected areas and reserves)
7. Single- and multispecies assessment and management
8. Data synthesis, management, and informatics
9. Historical data and ecological baselines
10. Policy, including the implementation of innovative solutions and negotiated settlements and court decisions that affect fisheries policy
11. Human dimensions and socioeconomics
12. Fisheries management capacity building (training, education, and the promotion of collaborative research and management)
13. The influence of environmental variability and change (including climate change) on population and ecosystem dynamics and productivity
14. Metrics, benchmarks, and determination of ecosystem status
15. The ecological impacts of fishing
16. Ecosystem-based fishery assessment and management in theory and practice

17. Ecosystem modeling and forecasting aimed at better understanding and managing coastal and marine fisheries

Audience – The audience for this journal includes marine scientists & managers. These professionals hail from federal, state, provincial, and tribal agencies; regional fisheries management commissions (e.g., ASMFC); regional fishery management councils (SAFMC, MAFMC); international agencies (ICES, ICCAT); and academic institutions, including Sea Grant institutions. Undergraduate and graduate students, as well as post-doctoral fellows engaged in the study of fishery science, oceanography, marine biology, marine ecology, and environmental science also comprise the target audience. The secondary audience for this journal includes staff from aquaria (e.g., Boston Aquarium, Monterrey Aquarium), industry (sea-ranching, hydropower private sector, marine aquaculturists), and coastal policy planners.

Impact factor – Impact factors are important to the majority of authors that publish in this journal. Comparable journals include *Canadian Journal of Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences*, *Fish and Fisheries*, *Fisheries Oceanography*, and the *ICES Journal of Marine Science*. The goal for *Marine & Coastal Fisheries* is an impact factor of ~2.0 (currently, it is 1.44). Several strategies currently used to improve impact factors should continue, namely, publication and promotion of special issues and promotion of select papers through social media and press releases. Other strategies focus on outreach to potential authors associated with annual meeting symposia; some of this is being done (e.g., invitation to symposia organizers to consider AFS journals for publication of presented research), but additional targeted strategies could be implemented. For example, Award of Excellence recipients who work in marine science could be asked to prepare a “Perspective” article; an incentive to publish may be offered (e.g., 50% reduction in publication charges). Another strategy targets students in the Best Student Paper Symposium; here, it is important to establish a personal connection with students to solicit publication of their work; an appropriate incentive would be to waive publication charges. These students represent the ‘best’ of our up-and-coming scientists and are likely to publish influential work.

Time to publication – Time to publication for this journal is one of the longest for AFS journals, about 10 months; the goal is to reduce this to 6 months from the time of submission to publication. A reasonable target is 9-12 weeks from submission to first decision, and this could be published on the webpage.

1. Consider hiring a full-time journals production coordinator to assist with the production of the 5 AFS journals; this hire may or may not be an ‘external’ hire. The increased workload among AFS publications staff due to the departure of the dedicated journal production and management team has negatively affected time to publication. AFS staff is currently performing a lot of quality control which has been necessitated by Taylor & Francis.
2. Monitor the peer-review system by pro-actively tracking papers that are under review and that are overdue (rather than respond to authors’ prompt). This monitoring is facilitated by the hiring of a production coordinator.
3. Continue publishing Advance Manuscripts Online, but make this the default (authors must opt out).
4. Provide incentives to reviewers to complete reviews in a timely manner (see, e.g., POC recommendations and consult with Wiley).
5. Subject editors (who are known to authors) should continue to make final decisions regarding publication; this practice is perceived to improve time to publication.
6. Increased frequency of communication with the managing editor is desired (Aaron/Laura – can you fill in details here?).

Recommendations

1. Promotion and improved visibility are key for this journal. Many AFS members are not aware of this journal, and table of content alerts from Taylor & Francis have been inconsistent. This journal should be promoted to a broader readership (including international audiences). *Fisheries* would be one good outlet for promoting this journal to AFS members, but other mechanisms will be necessary to reach non-AFS.
2. Of all the AFS journals, this journal has the largest proportion of international authors; as such, AFS should maintain and possibly, expand international representation among the subject editors to include international professionals.
3. This journal should not be used as a 'cascade' journal for other AFS publications, as this will only serve to lower the prestige of the journal and decrease the impact factor.
4. Consider a variety of pricing structures to encourage submissions. Options include a flat rate publication fee (rather than fees based on word or page counts), a discount for "referred" papers, a discount for reviewers for the journal in the past year, and suspension of publication fees. Advertise this widely.
5. Promote newer technologies for displaying supplementary materials. The journal has the capability to post video (e.g., nesting behavior) and supplementary material but such options have not been used much (only 3 times in the past). Other AFS journals have these capabilities, but this is not well known.
6. Pursue the original idea of The Fisheries Forum through the Fisheries Blog.
7. Consider refreshing the editorial board (e.g., addition of subject editors from Norway and Australia); also consider renaming and reassessing duties of editor; e.g., assign an editor-in-chief to fulfill duties as described for other AFS journals.
8. Consider using the standard AFS cover image to make all the journals within the AFS portfolio consistent.

Feedback on Journal Discussions/Recommendations from David Nicholson, Wiley

General points:

- This has been a great opportunity to understand the “character” of the AFS, and specifically the mix of scientists and practitioners and applied people working somewhere in between – this character will need to be a guiding principle of the AFS-Wiley relationship
- It’s also been great to have input to your plans at this early stage and not coming in later in the process
- This has been a well-structured and well-run event, with a great breadth and depth of stakeholders. This deserves recognition and acknowledgement as it is not easy to execute. The meeting has also been very progressive and forward looking. I would really recommend a shorter interval until the next one, and encourage us to discuss how to supplement these big events with an annual strategy meeting

Specifics:

- Portfolio and Journal Strategy – the work in this morning’s session is just perfect preparation for how we want to work together. It will help inform marketing plans, transition planning etc.
- Editorial leadership – the consensus to appoint one EiC for each journal, and to foster more communication between these EiCs feels inspired to me. One thing that I didn’t mention this morning was that it will be important for the Wiley team to understand how it should interact with the individual editors but I think that is a “business as usual” type issue.
- Publishing “practice, support and transition” – the meeting has raised some specific areas for us to work together incl. queries about ScholarOne workflows and optimization, appropriate levels of copyediting, cover designs, etc.. We will be working with Aaron, his team, and the editors to address these in the coming months.

Journal for Lay Audiences

AFS should NOT pursue publication of a journal for lay audiences. Sharing what we do with the public is important, but we will struggle to get content for such a journal.

Other steps to engage the public could include:

1. Hire science writers on a freelance basis to publish fisheries-related articles in existing publications.
2. ID fisheries info from journals to push out to media.
3. Empower science communication section to work with editors to get info out.
 - i. Clarify relationship between section, committee, and staff.
4. Reach out to outdoor writer's association.
5. Use social media more effectively to increase awareness of key articles.
6. Use Scholar One to capture Twitter handle and 140 character summaries of articles.
7. Create dedication section on AFS website for lay audiences.
8. Explore possibility of staff position to focus on public science communication. Perhaps share with TWS or SAP. Perhaps reassign existing staff.
9. Discuss Wiley's role in this issue.
10. Host a student competition for video/audio science communication.
11. Share existing local communications for broader dissemination through blog.
12. Focus on producing short videos to get more hits. Should be done by communications professional not biologists.
13. Need media room/archive/clearinghouse.
14. Reach out to members to collect existing video.
15. Capture winners of student writing contest through short videos.

Co-Publishing of Federal Agency Journals

Summary of Discussion – We shouldn't pursue this immediately given the many other changes we will be pursuing with AFS journal, but we should continue dialogue with USFWS and NOAA.

Fish and Wildlife Management

General comments:

- FWS journal totally redundant to NAJFM. Yet, people choose to publish in FWS.
- NAJFM would benefit by getting FWS journal.
- FWS could gain support from AFS editorial team.
- Could be redundant with joint AFS/TWS journal.
- Obtaining good reviewers would be difficult.
- FWS does provide an outlet...good value in having this outlet.
- Could FWS (along with SEAFWA) be a cascade journal for AFS journals?

Value of partnerships:

- Financial
- Access to expanded readership
- Access to new authors

Follow-ups:

- What other options does FWS have for future of the journal?
- What is their readership?
- What is the financial investment (Allen Press contract)?
- Would FWS be willing to see their journal as "cascading" journal?
- Is there a sustainable business model for this? (very difficult)
- Is there a value in an editorial partnership?

NOAA Journals

MFR – Very unique. Focuses on big questions that NOAA addresses. No overlap with MACF.

FB – Would be competitor with MACF. Not an option for editorial collaboration, but what value would come from that?

AFS benefits:

- Access to expanded (slightly) authorship.
- Possible increased awareness of MACF by NOAA.
-

Questions:

- What is the sustainability challenge of MFR and FB? Is this in question?
- How does NOAA benefit from partnership with AFS?

Creating a new AFS/TWS joint journal

Summary of Discussion – We shouldn't pursue this immediately given the many other changes we will be pursuing with AFS journals, but POC should continue dialogue with TWS. In addition, new Fisheries Editor-in-Chief and TWS counterpart should work together to solicit companion papers and joint publications.

Pros

- Share a publisher (Wiley)
- Incoming TWS Executive Director is supportive
- Interdisciplinary interaction may drive new members to us
- 2019 joint meeting may be a good time to revisit journal launch after a few years of smaller article collaborations
- A collaboration with TWS could result in a "larger voice"

Cons

- Finite pool of personnel for editors, reviewers, etc.
- With all the other changes in AFS journals that are coming, the timing is not great.

Priority Book Recommendations

1. Explore idea of symposia publications be digital only instead of printing and potentially in a serial form.
2. Think about future of print books strategically.
3. Recognize that books may constitute a service component that transcends business model.
4. Explore whether some staff time developing books is better spent on learning and developing new digital frontiers.
5. Favor textbooks and references books as print books. Everything should be online.
6. Anything that is a compendium of papers should be in journal formats online (similar to #1)
7. Eliminate categories of books on the website; classifications are fuzzy.
8. Be more strategic and actively solicit books that are predicted to be successful.
9. Re-examine minimum number of sales needed to justify printing.

Agency Reports/Gray Literature

Recommendations/Observations:

- AFS should explore opportunities to collaborate with TWS and/or AFWA on this issue.
- Potentially, having an effective database of gray literature could be a significant value to many AFS members.
- Rather than creating a stand-alone database, AFS should encourage and facilitate agencies to make their literature available online in formats able to be archived and catalogued by Google Scholar.
- Wiley is working on similar issues in other professions.
- There are more data available than just from state and federal agencies. AFS should also explore these.
- Encouraging hatcheries to likewise share data in a system would engage and involve them in a way they are currently not.

Immediate Tasks:

- Doug and Aaron will lead development of a concept paper regarding the need for a gray literature cataloging system, as well as potential next steps.
- AFS should reach out to Fish Management and Administration Sections, as well as CARS and FITS, for input