

Seeking Sponsors: AFS Virtual Conference for Canceled Talks

Target Event Date: April through May 2020



Background: COVID-19 has caused enormous disruptions to everyday life. Among the many personal and professional challenges has been the cancellation of several AFS chapter and division meetings. Fisheries scientists, managers, and students have prepared important talks to discuss their work and now have limited or no venue to disseminate the information. In response, AFS is offering a virtual forum for information presentation and exchange for presenters and attendees. This is a distinct and separate event from the 150th AFS Annual Meeting.

Objectives:

1. Create a platform for members to share prepared presentations
2. Provide a vehicle for science delivery and dissemination to fisheries professionals and students
3. Establish a channel for the AFS community to stay connected during a challenging time
4. Host all presentations online to be accessible to a broad audience comprised of AFS members and others

Approach: AFS will provide an innovative virtual event for presenters of canceled in-person talks to disseminate their research. Registration is required, but will be free for all attendees. The sessions will occur at least twice per week, over the course of several weeks beginning in April. The number of sessions and variety of topics presented will be determined by submissions. Presentations will be structured in two to three-hour time blocks, scheduled at mid-day to allow for the broadest audience over multiple time zones. Specific details are rapidly evolving.

Audience: All indications from AFS Western Division survey data, and the initial response on social media platforms, indicate strong interest and a need for a virtual conference. We anticipate this event will be well attended.

Opportunities for Sponsors: We invite your organization to join us in this critical effort to support fisheries scientists in this time of uncertainty and unrest. A digital platform provides an easy and robust promotional opportunity for your company. All proceeds raised from your support will go directly to the Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program (<https://hutton.fisheries.org>). AFS has a gift that will match up to \$10,000 for funds contributed to the Hutton Program. This allows your support to be both actionable and charitable, while also offering promotional benefits.

Sponsorship Levels:

Gold	\$1,500	<i>Official AFS Virtual Conference Sponsor</i> (in addition to Silver and Bronze below): Company will be recognized as a principal Conference Sponsor and featured prominently in conference marketing efforts—including logo placement and thanks at the opening and closing of the conference.
Silver	\$750	<i>Session Sponsor</i> (in addition to Bronze below): Company will be highlighted at the start of a specific session. Company may select specific session to be recognized.
Bronze	\$250	Company will be recognized as a sponsor on website for the Virtual Conference and the Hutton Program. Company logo will be placed in marketing related to the conference.
The cost per student for the AFS Hutton Program is \$5,000. AFS invests 100% of all funds received for Hutton back into the program, with 80% going directly to the Hutton Scholars in the form of scholarship and program related expenses. Opportunities are available for your organization to sponsor a Hutton Scholar.		

Contact for Sponsorship is Katrina Dunn at kdunn@fisheries.org