



# Motions Before the American Fisheries Society Business Meeting

## Wednesday, September 18, 2024

### Item #1: Vote Auditor

#### Background:

Historically, AFS used paper ballots or simplistic electronic voting (or a combination) for election of officers. This antiquated approach required a separate, independent count and audit of votes to ensure accuracy and transparency. This was the role and purpose of the AFS Audit Committee. For over a decade, AFS has been using electronic voting systems and currently uses a highly reputed independent vote software service Balloteer, developed by Telusys, Inc. This service provides a secure process for electronic voting by requiring all voters to enter the email address associated with their AFS membership and a PIN, which is generated specifically for each election, to access the online ballot. This eliminates the opportunity for inappropriate or multiple voting. It also provides a very simple tally of votes and a spreadsheet of all votes cast. There is no need or opportunity for an independent audit of the process because it is entirely transparent and automated. Due to this process update, it is proposed that the role of the Vote Auditor is no longer needed and should be removed from the AFS Rules and Procedures. Any review of the vote software contractor can be handled by AFS staff, the Management Committee, or the Nominating Committee.

**Proposed Motion: That AFS eliminate the Vote Auditor as a standing committee and remove all relevant language from the AFS Rules as provided below and elsewhere as appropriate.**

Section 1. Order of Business. Subsection h. ~~Report of the Vote Auditor~~ (with subsequent renumbering)

Section 3. Officers, Staff, and Elections. Subsection B. Nomination and election of officers

- i. Members will be allowed at least 30 days from the distribution date to return their printed or electronic ballots ~~to the Vote Auditor~~.

Section 14. Standing Committees

- b. The Society has established the following standing committees:

~~xxvii. VOTE AUDITOR oversees procedures for electronic voting and officer elections. The Vote Auditor confirms the results of electronic votes (or for mail ballots, counts the election ballots), transmits the results to the President and Executive Director within 30 days of the closing date of the election or vote, and announces the results at the annual Society meeting or through other appropriate means. The Vote Auditor sends electronic results and/or mail ballots to the Executive Director, who shall hold them at least 90 days after the announcement of the results.~~

## **Item #2 – Name Change of Diversity and Inclusion Standing Committee**

Background: The Diversity and Inclusion Committee was initially a Presidential Special Committee. Based upon the important role of the committee and the need to support the continuation of its work, the committee was established as an AFS Standing Committee in July 2020. The committee has continued to be highly active since that time and has expanded in a number of areas, including working with indigenous communities and others. Along with the recent negative political connotations associated with “Diversity” as well as the expanded committee role, a name change was determined to be important so as to better characterize the roles of the committee and support effectiveness. A larger variety of names were evaluated with the most appropriate choice being “FishCAST - Fisheries Community Advocacy for (and) Sustainability Team” The description of the committee in the AFS Rules remains the same but new Procedures were adopted by the Governing Board to better reflect the current suite of activities.

**Proposed Motion: To change the name of the AFS Standing Committee on Diversity and Inclusion to “FishCAST - Fisheries Community Advocacy for (and) Sustainability Team” by modifying the AFS Rules as provided below.**

### **AFS Rules Section 14.ix**

FishCAST - Fisheries Community Advocacy for (and) Sustainability Team ~~DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE~~ provides oversight for AFS efforts to increase and maintain diversity in membership and the fisheries profession, and to assure that all AFS activities and programs are fully inclusive. Annually assesses AFS initiatives and programs related to diversity and inclusion, and makes recommendations for improvement to the Executive Director, Officers, and Governing Board. The Committee operates in close coordination with the Equal Opportunities Section, and other Sections whenever appropriate.

## **Item #3 – Removal of Audit Committee and inclusion of duties into the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee**

Background: The report of Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees (Attached) included a series of recommendations to improve the efficiency of AFS operations. One of these is to merge the roles of two committees, the AFS Audit Committee and the Financial Planning and Procedures Committees. Both committees support this action. The motion to address this in the AFS Procedures and Rules was approved by the Governing Board at its meeting on Saturday, September 14.

**Proposed Motion: Move that AFS amend the Rules to remove all language relevant to the Audit Committee, with the text of the Rules changes overseen by the Management Committee.**

Rules changes would include the following:

AFS Rules Section 14.b.ii

~~AUDIT COMMITTEE conducts an audit of Society finances and provides a report to the Executive Director and President concerning the results and any recommendations~~

AFS Rules Section 14.b

**FINANCIAL PLANNING & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE:** Reviews AFS financial trends ~~and the annual audit of AFS finances~~ and provides recommendations to the Management Committee with the overall goal of ensuring financial sustainability.

## **Item #4 – Elimination of the Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee (NAIC)**

Background: The report of Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees (Attached) included a series of recommendations to improve the efficiency of AFS operations. One of these is to eliminate the Names of Invertebrate Committee (NAIC). This committee has been inactive for over a decade and there are not plans to re-establish this committee

Proposed Motion: Move that AFS amend the AFS Rules to remove all language relevant to the Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee (NAIC), with the text of the Rules changes overseen by the Management Committee.

Rules Section 14.b.xix

~~NAMES OF AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES COMMITTEE deals with matters concerning the common and scientific names of aquatic invertebrates, and prepares checklists of names to achieve uniformity and avoid confusion in nomenclature. The Committee coordinates its activities with those of other organizations worldwide. The Chair is custodian of the master checklists.~~

# Removal of Vote Auditor from the AFS Rules and Procedures

## Background:

Historically, AFS used paper ballots or simplistic electronic voting (or a combination) for election of officers. This antiquated approach required a separate, independent count and audit of votes to ensure accuracy and transparency. This was the role and purpose of the AFS Audit Committee. For over a decade, AFS has been using electronic voting systems and currently uses a highly reputed independent vote software service Balloteer, developed by Telusys, Inc. This service provides a secure process for electronic voting by requiring all voters to enter the email address associated with their AFS membership and a PIN, which is generated specifically for each election, to access the online ballot. This eliminates the opportunity for inappropriate or multiple voting. It also provides a very simple tally of votes and a spreadsheet of all votes cast. There is no need or opportunity for an independent audit of the process because it is entirely transparent and automated. Due to this process update, it is proposed that the role of the Vote Auditor is no longer needed and should be removed from the AFS Rules and Procedures. Any review of the vote software contractor can be handled by AFS staff, the Management Committee, or the Nominating Committee.

## Proposed Motion:

Motion #1: Move that the Management Committee remove all language relevant to the Vote Auditor from the AFS Procedures as documented below.

Motion #2: The AFS Management Committee recommends that the Governing Board vote to bring before the AFS membership at the next appropriate opportunity the elimination of the AFS Audit Committee and modification of the AFS Rules all language as shown below.

## **Current AFS Rules – Statements including the Vote Auditor**

Section 1. Order of Business. Subsection h. ~~Report of the Vote Auditor~~ (with subsequent renumbering)

Section 3. Officers, Staff, and Elections. Subsection B. Nomination and election of officers

- i. Members will be allowed at least 30 days from the distribution date to return their printed or electronic ballots ~~to the Vote Auditor.~~

Section 14. Standing Committees

- b. The Society has established the following standing committees:

~~xxvii.—VOTE AUDITOR oversees procedures for electronic voting and officer elections. The Vote Auditor confirms the results of electronic votes (or for mail ballots, counts the election ballots), transmits the results to the President and Executive Director within 30 days of the closing date of the election or vote, and announces the results at the annual Society meeting or through other appropriate means. The Vote Auditor sends electronic results and/or mail ballots to the Executive Director, who shall hold them at least 90 days after the announcement of the results.~~

## Current AFS Procedures

The current language addressing the Vote Auditor will be removed as follows

1. Removal from the index
2. Removal from Governing Board meeting agenda (p. 11 and Item 1.i on)
3. Removal from language describing electronic voting (Item 1.b on p.22 and Item 1.i on page 23). Replace with language “AFS staff”
4. Removal of entire Vote Auditor section on pages 64-65 per below.

### Vote Auditor

#### Purpose:

~~Verifies voting results and/or counts the election ballots, transmits the results to the AFS President and/or Unit Officer and Executive Director within the designated number of days of the closing date of the vote or election, and announces the results at the annual Society meeting or as appropriate. The Vote Auditor sends electronic results and/or ballots to the Executive Director, who shall hold them at least 90 days after the close of the vote or election.~~

#### Composition:

~~Vote Auditor and Co-Auditor are appointed by the AFS President for staggered two-year terms.~~

#### Duties:

- ~~1. Works with the AFS Officers or other unit leaders in the development of fair and equitable voting procedures designed to ensure that each member has an opportunity to vote confidentially and only once.~~
- ~~2. Participates in the selection of services to provide electronic voting capabilities to the Society. Individual units may be responsible for their own voting services, as appropriate.~~
- ~~3. May communicate with the service provider to obtain specific information on the process (e.g., adequate provisions for notification, accuracy, secrecy, equity, and qualification of voters).~~
- ~~4. In the case of Officer elections, works with the Executive Director to ensure that the Ballot is prepared and transmitted to the membership in May, with a 30-day response period that typically closes at the end of June.~~

~~5. Checks with electronic ballot service provider periodically to ensure election is running smoothly. As necessary, the Vote Auditor may count paper ballots received from members who do not have electronic access for voting.~~

~~6. Verifies results within 30 days after the deadline for ballot returns.~~

~~7. Transmits results to AFS President or appropriate Unit Officers and Executive Director immediately after verification or counting of votes.~~

~~8. Protects confidentiality of these processes; results shall not be discussed with anyone other than the AFS President or appropriate Unit Officers and the Executive Director.~~

Operational Guidelines:

None specified at this time

## **Procedures for the Diversity and Inclusion Standing Committee**

**New Name proposal:** FishCAST - Fisheries Community Advocacy for (and) Sustainability Team

### **Purpose (from the charge/rules document):**

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE provides oversight for AFS efforts to increase and maintain diversity in membership and the fisheries profession, and to assure that all AFS activities and programs are fully inclusive. Annually assesses AFS initiatives and programs related to diversity and inclusion, and makes recommendations for improvement to the Executive Director, Officers, and Governing Board. The Committee operates in close coordination with the Equal Opportunities Section, and other Sections whenever appropriate.

### **Overview:**

The standing committee will work with AFS staff and leadership to achieve a shared vision for a more diverse and inclusive AFS which is representative of a broader range of interests. Committee efforts are aimed toward improving communications and leveraging resources within the society to best understand and address systemic barriers to member participation. The committee serves as a centralized organizational network which facilitates effective communication among related committees and teams. Successful efforts will enhance communications among interest groups, establish platforms for connection, and streamline redundant processes. By creating an environment where members can learn from each other and adapt to increasingly complex landscapes, the goal is to improve satisfaction, recruitment and retention for a broader range of current and future members.

### **Composition:**



## **1. Committee membership:**

### **Leadership:**

- a. Three (3) co-chairs who are active AFS members and at least one of which needs to be an active member of EOS.
- b. To create stability and improve transfer of knowledge, chairs will each serve a 3-year term. An individual chair will rotate off each year and be replaced by an incoming representative.
- c. To encourage stability, and continuity of communications within the committee, existing chairs and committee members will recommend candidates for vacated co-chair positions each year.
- d. In July each year, recommendations for the vacated co-chair position will be determined by chairs and committee members in consultation with the president and AFS staff representative. Final decisions are determined by the incoming president elect prior to the annual meeting.
- e. An AFS staff representative will ensure effective communication with AFS leadership.
- f. To ensure effective transfer of responsibility, the outgoing chair will query each member's intent to continue to serve. The outgoing chair will then provide a status update on committee membership and report on any assigned duties to the incoming co-chair prior to the annual meeting.
- g. Co-chair positions will transition at the annual meeting each year.

### **Members:**

- a. Committee members are selected by the committee co-chairs to assist in completing priorities and duties of the committee; they must be active members of AFS.

- b. Each of the 4 divisions of AFS will have at least 1 member representative on the Committee (preferable to have experience in working with inclusion efforts). (minimum 4 individuals)
- c. At least 1 member of the Committee will be an active member of EOS. (minimum 1 individual)
- d. May add membership requirements as new sections or committees are formed and have relevance to the committee's purpose.
- e. Additional members may be added based on expertise and to address specific priorities and tasks.

**Membership requirements:**

An individual's willingness to serve on the committee and active membership within AFS. Committee membership selection processes will consider diversity in representation and perspectives (e.g., age, gender, race, ethnicity, regional distribution, work backgrounds). Recruitment will be conducted through the division's various inclusion teams (e.g., EOS section, respectful meetings workgroup, indigenous workgroups, relevant division/state/student workgroups and teams) and via a partnership with the Equal Opportunities Section (EOS).

**Duration of membership term:** indeterminate.

**2. Subcommittees:**

Subcommittees are formed as needed to complete priority tasks and may include non-committee members.

**Duties:**

The Committee will provide guidance to AFS on how to create a more diverse and inclusive AFS which is representative of a broader range of interests.

**Specific duties include:**

- Serve in an advisory capacity informing policies, procedures, and organizational practices.
- Store relevant information and highlight best practices.
- Facilitate communication strategies to increase awareness of efforts that are being conducted within other sections and divisions across AFS.
- Capitalize on resources throughout the AFS to establish a strategic vision which addresses systemic issues affecting diversity and inclusion.
- Empower individuals and groups within AFS to do their best work.
- Seek and recommend solutions based on knowledge obtained from consultation with larger AFS membership and associated teams.

**Meetings:**

- A minimum of 2 meetings will be held each year. Committee Meetings will review accomplishments and orient members around the development and implementation of strategic objectives.

**Reporting responsibilities:**

- AFS leadership will ask the Committee to provide a status update on committee findings at a minimum of 1 governing board meeting annually. The Executive Director of AFS will ensure that this occurs.



# **Status of AFS Standing Committees Spring 2024**

## **Final Report**

**Submitted to**

**Cecil A. Jennings  
AFS President 2023 - 2024**

**by**

**Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees**

### **Committee Members**

Rebecca Brown - Chair

Julia Byrd - Member

Kyler Hecke - Member

Dawn Franco - Member

Tim Bonvechio - Member

Aaron Gray - Member

**June 2024**

## **Committee Background**

The Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees was created on February 19, 2024, by AFS President Cecil Jennings to identify if each standing committee has a chair, is active, the current charge is still relevant, needs a new charge, reasons for inactivity, and should be continued as a standing committee. President Jennings assigned the committee chair and two additional members to the special committee. Given the option to find additional members as needed, the committee chair added three more members.

### Committee Members

Chair: Rebecca Brown - retired (GeorgiaAFS@gmail.com)

Julia Byrd – South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Julia.Byrd@safmc.net)

Kyler Hecke – Arkansas Tech University (khecke@atu.edu)

Dawn Franco – Georgia Department of Natural Resources, CRD (dawn.franco@dnr.ga.gov)

Tim Bonvechio – Georgia Department of Natural Resources, WRD (tim.bonvechio@dnr.ga.gov)

Aaron Gray – Georgia Department of Natural Resources, WRD (aaron.gray1@dnr.ga.gov)

Committee report deadline: August 31, 2024

*This report accompanies additional information collected during the completion of this committee's mandate.*

## Executive Summary

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) is a professional organization dedicated to the conservation and management of fisheries resources. AFS has twenty standing committees that play a vital role in the organization's work. These committees are composed of volunteers who contribute their time and expertise helping to ensure AFS remains responsive to the needs of its members and the fisheries profession.

Managing the numerous committees is a significant challenge due to their varying levels of activity, ranging from highly engaged to inactive. The Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees was created and charged to

1. Identify if each standing committee has a chair and is active.
2. Identify inactive committees and investigate to determine the reason for the inactivity.
3. Determine if the charge for each committee is still relevant or needs revising.
4. Decide which standing committees need to be discontinued as a standing committee.

An assessment of committee activity revealed that three committees were inactive: the Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee (NAIC), the Meetings Oversight Committee (MOC), and the Electronic Services Advisory Board (ESAB). The NAIC has been inactive since 2006, the MOC declares they are somewhat inactive and needs a third co-chair before it continues with its charge, and the last chairperson of the ESAB stepped down in 2022.

Four committees reported their current charges were not relevant. The Audit Committee chair suggests the duties of their committee be assumed by the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee is currently working on developing its charge and requests assistance from AFS leadership as they define the duties and responsibilities of the committee. The Professional Development Committee is developing a new strategy for the AFS professional development program. The Resource Policy Committee reports that the current format is not very functional and there is a need to revise the program to become a Section or update its function as a standing committee. The remaining 13 committees are active, and their charges are still relevant.

The committee recommends the following:

- Designate Amberle Jones (akjones@azgfd.gov) as the chair of the ESAB so she can restore the committee to its optimal functioning state.
- The Audit Committee and the NAIC should no longer continue as standing committees.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Resource Policy Committee to assess the possibility of transforming into an AFS Section.
- AFS leaders work with the two MOC co-chairs to find a third co-chair for the committee.
- AFS leadership should meet with the DEI committee to examine the committee's progress on revising its charge and review the duties and responsibilities of the committee chair.

## Introduction

Management of multiple committees within a large national organization can present significant challenges in providing sufficient support to each committee and ensuring their effective operation. AFS comprises twenty standing committees, each with a specific role to ensure the effectiveness, efficiency, and mission alignment of the Society's activities. To improve the efficacy of the AFS standing committees, AFS President Cecil Jennings established a special committee charged with identifying if each standing committee has a chair, is active, the current charge is still relevant, needs a new charge, reasons for inactivity, and should be continued as a standing committee.

To fulfill its mandate most effectively, the committee members designed a comprehensive plan of action. The plan outlined specific strategies, tasks, and timelines for each goal, considering available resources and potential challenges. Each committee member was assigned a role and used shared documents to monitor and track progress. This structured approach aimed to optimize the committee's efforts, maximize impact, and ultimately complete its charge.

The plan was structured into five stages to collect, analyze, and interpret data, and subsequently make a recommendation based on the findings.

- Stage 1: Special Committee chair confirms contact information is correct for each committee and identifies inactive committees - complete by March 11
- Stage 2: Special Committee members contact each committee chair they were assigned, and the committee chair investigates the identified inactive committees – complete by April 18
- Stage 3: Special Committee Chair drafts report - complete by May 1
- Stage 4: Special Committee members decide if any of the standing committees need to be continued as a standing committee - complete by June 4
- Stage 5: Special Committee Chair prepares and sends a final report to AFS President – complete by June 27

An assessment of committee activity revealed that three committees were inactive: the Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee (NAIC), the Meetings Oversight Committee (MOC), and the Electronic Services Advisory Board (ESAB). The NAIC has been inactive since 2006, the MOC declares they are somewhat inactive and needs a third co-chair before it continues with its charge, and the last chairperson of the ESAB stepped down for reasons unknown for this report.

Four committees reported their current charges were not relevant. The Audit Committee chair suggests the duties of their committee be assumed by the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee (FPPC). The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee is currently working on developing its charge and requests assistance from AFS leadership as they define the duties and responsibilities of the committee. The Professional Development Committee is developing a new strategy for the AFS professional development program. The Resource Policy Committee

reports that the current format is not very functional and there is a need to revise the program to become a Section or update its function as a standing committee.

The committee recommends the following:

- Designate Amberle Jones (akjones@azgfd.gov) as the chair of the ESAB so she can restore the committee to its optimal functioning state.
- The Audit Committee and the NAIC should no longer continue as standing committees.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the Resource Policy Committee to assess the necessity of its revision as an AFS Section.
- AFS leaders work with the two MOC co-chairs to find a third co-chair for the committee.
- AFS leadership should meet with the DEI committee to examine the committee's progress on revising its charge and review the duties and responsibilities of the committee chair.

In the following sections, we provide additional details about our methods, the results we obtained, the conclusions we drew from those results, and our recommendations.

## **Methods**

The process began with structuring an action plan that detailed specific strategies, tasks, and timelines. This plan was designed in five stages to efficiently collect the necessary information and facilitate the successful completion of our assigned tasks. (see Appendix A)

### **Stage 1**

During stage one the special committee chair gathered information the committee needed to contact each of the standing committee chairs/co-chairs. During this process, the inactive committees were identified.

The following resources were used to identify committee chairs and inactive committees:

- Current list of AFS Standing Committees: <https://fisheries.org/about/committees/standing-committees-2/>
- AFS Committee chair contact information: <https://fisheries.org/about/committees/committee-chairs/>
- AFS Governing Board Minutes: <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/governing-board/governing-board-minutes/>
- AFS Meeting Briefing Books: <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/governing-board-reports/>
- Electronic Services Advisory Board 2018-2019 web page: <https://fisheries.org/about/committees/standing-committees-2/electronic-services-advisory-board/>



The special committee chair sent an email to the active committee chairs/co-chairs and explained to them the charge of the Special Committee to Evaluate Status of AFS Standing Committees and why they were being contacted. The committee chairs were asked to answer three questions to confirm if they were indeed the current committee chair of an AFS committee:

1. Are you the current chair or co-chair of an AFS standing committee?
2. If not, do you have the contact name of the person who replaced you as the committee chair?
3. What is the name of the standing committee you chair?

Two committees were determined not to have a current committee chair. The special committee chair contacted the last two chairs of the *Electronic Services Advisory Board* to investigate the reasons for the committee's inactivity. The *Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee* has not been active since 2006 and the last known committee chair retired many years ago.

## Stage 2

There were two tasks to complete in stage two. The first task assigned each committee member, except the chair, three standing committees to connect with, ensuring an efficient use of each member's time. The chairperson was assigned to investigate the inactive committees and connect with the remaining standing committee chairs.

### *List of AFS standing committees assigned to each special committee member*

<b>Rebecca Brown</b> Electronic Services Advisory Ethics and Professional Conduct Awards Development Name of Aquatic Invertebrates	<b>Julia Byrd</b> Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Membership Nominating	<b>Kyler Hecke</b> Imperiled Aquatic Species Names of Fishes Professional Development
<b>Dawn Franco</b> Audit Publications Overview Resource Policy	<b>Tim Bonvechio</b> Communications Board of Appeals Professional Certification	<b>Aaron Gray</b> Financial Planning Hutton Meetings Oversight

The special committee members collaborated to create an email to send to each standing committee chair/co-chairs by March 19, 2024 (see Appendix B). The standing committee chairs were asked to complete two requests by April 18, 2024:

1. Provide our committee with a copy of their most current duties and responsibilities outlined in the AFS Procedures Manual
2. Answer a set of questions using the Google Form provided

The first request was to ensure our committee had the most updated standing committee procedures. The second request allowed our committee to gather information about the charge of the committees, the committee chairs understanding of their duties and responsibilities, the recent accomplishments of each committee, and whether the committee chair believed their committee should remain as an AFS standing committee.

Each special committee member was asked to complete the shared Google Sheet as tasks were completed to gather information from the standing committee chairs. This checklist allowed the special committee chair to monitor that emails were sent to the standing committee chair/co-chairs, whether standing committee chairs confirmed receipt of the email, whether the Google Form was completed, and whether the standing committee chair/co-chairs provided the special committee member with a copy of their procedures.

The second task required the special committee chair to investigate the inactive standing committees identified during stage one. The most recent chairperson(s) were contacted, and information was gathered about the inactive committees to assist in deciding whether the committee should remain a standing committee. This information was added to a Google Doc shared amongst the special committee members.

### **Stage 3**

During stage three the special committee chair was tasked with drafting a report for the special committee members to review before meeting virtually to discuss. The draft of the report was generated using the responses the standing committee chairs provided on the Google Form, email correspondences from committee members, and the information gathered during the investigation of the active and inactive standing committees during stages one and two. The draft of the report was provided to the special committee members two weeks before the scheduled virtual meeting for them to review and add comments.

### **Stage 4**

The special committee members met virtually during stage four to discuss their findings and make recommendations. Questions answered during the virtual meeting included:

- What should be the fate of the inactive committees?
- Did any committee chairs report their committee is no longer needed as a standing committee? Why?
- Do we need additional information from any of the standing committees before we finalize our report?
- What are our final recommendations?

The information gathered during the virtual meeting was used to create the draft of the final committee report. The special committee members were provided ten days to review the final report for errors.

## Stage 5

The chair of the special committee compiled the final report to be submitted to AFS President Cecil Jennings.

### Results of our Investigation

Although the information on the website was not up to date, it provided a good starting point to identify standing committee chairs. Some of the names listed on the AFS website *Committee Society Committees 2023-2024* (<https://fisheries.org/about/committees/committee-chairs/>) were not correct, but the chairperson before them was able to provide us with the name and email address of the current chair/co-chairs. **(see Appendix C)**

#### Inactive Committees

A search of the Internet resulted in the discovery of a webpage that was created for the ESAB in 2018-2019 (<https://fisheries.org/about/committees/standing-committees-2/electronic-services-advisory-board/>). The ESAB committee chair in 2019 was Amberle Jones ([AKJones@azgfd.gov](mailto:AKJones@azgfd.gov)). We contacted Amberle and she said Jason Doll was the chair after her and had to step down in 2022. The committee became inactive after a committee chair could not be found to replace Jason. Amberle is committed to stepping in as the chair of the ESAB to complete some of what she and the committee were planning in 2019. The purpose of the ESAB is to

*Periodically evaluate AFS electronic membership services to assess effective and efficient functionality, information content, ease of use, timeliness of information, attractiveness, and implementation of new media. Additionally, the Electronic Services Advisory Board (ESAB) will provide for broadscale representation of member interests in electronic services by facilitating quality control of online data management, media, and communications and facilitating technical guidance (e.g., annual workshops on electronic services) for units, Sections, Chapters, and individuals.*

Additional duties include advising the AFS President and Executive Director on new technological tools that may be available to enhance the format and function of electric services of AFS membership and providing a summary of assessments to the Governing Board for the Mid-Year and Annual meetings. **(see Appendix D)**

After reading through the AFS Governing Board Meeting Minutes and Board Reports posted on the Society website it was determined that the Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee (NAIC) has been inactive since 2006. Donna Turgeon was the last chairperson for the NAIC and she retired many years ago. The AFS Procedures state the purpose of the NAIC:

*Reviews matters pertaining to the common and scientific names of aquatic invertebrates; prepares checklists of names to achieve uniformity and avoid confusion in nomenclature; coordinates its activities with those of other organizations worldwide. Chair is the custodian of the master checklists.*

The additional duties of the NAIC include preparing and updating AFS publications on common and scientific names of invertebrates. (see Appendix E)

The Meetings Oversight Committee (MOC) self-reported that they are somewhat inactive. This committee currently has two committee co-chairs but needs a third co-chair. Paul Venturelli mentioned that the most recent communication they received from AFS was slightly over a year ago. In that communication, AFS indicated that they were in the process of searching for a third co-chair.

## **Survey Responses**

The information gathered from the survey provided the special committee with information about the relevancy of the charge for each of the active committees and whether the charge for a standing committee needs to be revised (Table 1).

### ***Survey Question: Is the charge for your committee still relevant, or does it need a new charge?***

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) and the Professional Development Committee (PDC) are currently revising their charge. The DEIC chairs stated they can use some support from AFS leadership as they define the duties and responsibilities of the committee. The committee chairs expressed the need for guidance and support in effectively carrying out their duties and responsibilities as chairpersons.

### ***Survey Question: Should your committee remain as a standing committee?***

The Audit Committee chair and the Resource Policy Committee (RPC) chair were the only committees that suggested their committee could be of better service in a different capacity.

The Audit Committee chair, Tim Copeland, explained to our committee that he took over as chair of the committee after the committee had been inactive for several years and he never received any past records except what he could gather from past Governing Board briefing books. Tim submitted edits to the Audit Committee's charge in 2022 as part of the revision of the procedures manual but there were no changes to the current AFS Procedures Manual. After further investigation, it appears that the edits were not presented to the AFS Governing Board for approval. After much consideration, Tim suggested the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee (FPPC) could assume the duties of the Audit Committee.

The Resource Policy Committee's Chair, Leanne Roulson, emphasized to our committee the significance of the RPC. However, the current structure of the RPC is not conducive to effective

functioning. Leanne proposed two potential solutions: either revising the RPC to become an AFS Section or updating the charge of the RPC as a standing committee.

The Meetings Oversight Committee Co-Chair Paul Venturelli (paventurelli@bsu.edu) said the MOC has not been as active as it should be and is interested in re-activating the committee.

**Table 1: Summary of activity for the 20 AFS standing committees**

<b>Name of Committee</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Charge Relevant</b>	<b>Charge Need Revising</b>	<b>Reason for Inactivity</b>	<b>Remain Standing Comm.</b>
Audit	Y	N	Y		N
Awards	Y	Y	N		Y
Board of Appeals	Y	Y	N		Y
Board of Professional Certification	Y	Y	N		Y
Communications	Y	Y	N		Y
Development	Y	Y	Y		Y
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Y	Y	Y		Y
Electronic Services Advisory Board	N	Y	Y	No chair	Y
Ethics and Professional Conduct	Y	Y	N		Y
Financial Planning and Procedures	Y	Y	N		Y
Hutton Oversight	Y	Y	N		Y
Imperiled Aquatic Species	Y	Y	N		Y
Meetings Oversight	N	Y	N	Waiting on 3rd co-chair	Y
Membership	Y	Y	N		Y
Names of Aquatic Invertebrates	N	N	N	No activity since 2006	N
Names of Fishes	Y	Y	N		Y
Nominating	Y	Y	N		Y
Professional Development	Y	Y	N		Y
Publications Overview	Y	Y	N		Y
Resource Policy	Y	Y	Y		Make a Section

**Survey Question: Are there any recent accomplishments by your committee you'd like to share?**

The standing committee chairs had the option of sharing the recent accomplishments of their committee. Most of the standing committee chairs used the survey to share their accomplishments. (see Appendix F)

**Survey Question: "What additional information do you need to help you perform your duties as a committee chair?"**

Some standing committee chairs responded to this question (Table 2). One of the common needs shared is the sharing of information from AFS staff and leaders.

**Table 2: List of "Needs" shared by standing committee chairs**

Audit	When I started the Audit Committee had been inactive and I never received any past records except what I could glean from past GB briefing books.
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Does not completely understand the duties and responsibilities of a chairperson
Development	Priorities for funding needs that are important to AFS
Financial Planning and Procedures	Need timely and accurate financial information provided by AFS staff.
Hutton	We are working through the Program Review SWOT analysis and have submitted some questions to Ashley and Lauren. I think we still have some unanswered questions. At this moment I do not have the list in front of me.
Meetings Oversight	We need a third co-chair. The last communication that we had from AFS was a little over a year ago saying that they were looking for a third co-chair.
Nominating	Within the next couple of months, we will need to work with Miguel Garcia to identify a Vice Chair that will serve two years on the committee (one as Vice Chair and one as Chair). Additionally, we have four members that will rotate off the committee and will need to be replaced, two Division representatives and two at-large members.
Professional Development	Need to know what professional development is needed by AFS members
Resource Policy	Do not need more information- need more willingness from members to participate. Needs a co-chair.

## **Request for current standing committee's duties and responsibilities (AFS Procedures)**

Not all standing committee chairs provided a copy of their standing committee's procedures. The Resource Policy Chair, Leanne Roulson, provided copies of finalized procedures approved by the Management Committee (MC) in 2022 and sent to AFS staff to be added to the Procedures: Communications Committee, Nominating Committee, Professional Development Committee, Board of Professional Certification Committee, Imperiled Aquatic Species Committee, Hutton Oversight Committee, and Finance Planning and Procedures Committee. She also provided a copy of the Fellows Selection Subcommittee procedures approved by the MC on July 14, 2023.

## **Conclusions**

Recommendations were based on the committee's effectiveness in supporting AFS's mission and goals.

### **Electronic Services Advisory Board Committee**

When the ESAB committee is active, it assists in assessing what the members need for their electronic services, brainstorming, and creating tools for the members. Amberle Jones would appreciate the chance to lead the committee in providing tools like how-to videos and a webinar to help sections and units create and manage their AFS web pages in WordPress. Furthermore, the committee can demonstrate tips and tricks to assist sections and units in using their websites to the fullest. The Special Committee members agree that Amberle Jones should be designated as chair of the ESAB to restore the committee to an optimal functioning state.

The ESAB holds many significant responsibilities, including assessing the AFS website. This involves monitoring the site's attractiveness, information content, user-friendliness, appropriateness of links, and timeliness of information.

The new AFS website is more attractive than before. However, there are several issues with outdated information, information that does not match, difficulty finding information, etc. Examples of oversights on the AFS website include:

- The AFS Constitution and Rules on the website currently lists 30 standing committees (<https://fisheries.org/about/governance/constitution-and-rules/#IX>). According to the website, the most recent revision to the Constitution and Rules was in August 2018.
- The AFS Procedures Manual for standing committees also lists 30 standing committees (<https://fisheries.org/about/governance/procedures/standing-and-special-committee/>) but the 30 listed on this page do not match all 30 listed on the constitution and rules. The *Committee* web page (<https://fisheries.org/about/committees/standing-committees-2/>) lists 20 standing committees.

- The Committee Chair contact list (<https://fisheries.org/about/committees/committee-chairs/>) needs to be updated. The webpage states “Complete contact information for committee chairs can be found in the online Membership Directory.” There appears to be no access to a list of committee chairs in the Membership Directory.
- The new method (<https://fisheries.org/about/awards-recognition/call-for-award-nominations/>) for nominating people and organizations for awards should have been hyperlinked to each of the awards listed on the *Awards and Recognition* page (<https://fisheries.org/about/awards-recognition/>). This might have been the cause of a lot of confusion for members attempting to nominate someone for an award.

### Audit Committee

Comparing the duties of the Audit Committee and the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee (FPPC) revealed some commonalities. The list of duties for both committees shows both the Audit Committee and the FPPC discuss finances with AFS staff (Table 3). One distinction is that the Chair of the Audit Committee reviews the Society's financial statements before the commencement of the formal audit by an external firm and presents the finalized audit report to the Governing Board during the annual meeting.

Table.9;List.of.duties.performed.by.the.Audit.and.FPPC.committees

Audit Committee Duties	FPPC Duties
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the financial picture and practices of the Society at the end of each year before an outside contracted firm conducts the formal audit.</li> <li>2. Work with AFS financial staff to provide feedback to the Executive Director on financial issues.</li> <li>3. Review the audit report provided by the contracted audit firm prior to the midyear Governing Board meeting.</li> <li>4. Present conclusions in a report to the Governing Board at the AFS Annual Meeting.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage with AFS staff, the AFS Investment Advisor, and others to provide review, recommendations, and evaluation of AFS finances.</li> <li>2. Develop training for the Management Committee to ensure that members understand and better execute the fiduciary responsibilities.</li> <li>3. Develop more transparent tools for reporting on AFS finances to AFS leadership.</li> <li>4. Help AFS staff assess financial reports.</li> <li>5. Facilitate financial assessments of AFS programs.</li> <li>6. Review new program proposals and strategic plans.</li> <li>7. Revise the AFS Rules and Procedures, as appropriate.</li> </ol>



The FPCC was established in 2020 by the Governing Board to expand the roles of the Investment Committee. Attachment C of the Governing Board Minutes states “The Audit Committee would remain as an independent Committee for now with the possibility of it becoming part of the Financial Planning Committee after further evaluation.”

The Special Committee members concur with Tim that the responsibilities of the Audit Committee could be integrated with the FPCC, given the duplication of work being carried out by both committees. A new charge is recommended if this committee remains a standing committee. Another option is to consider an Audit Subcommittee under the FPCC. The purpose of the Audit Subcommittee would be to review and report the finalized audit report to the Governing Board.

### **Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee**

A committee that has been inactive since 2006 is no longer crucial to the mission of AFS. A liaison or an ad hoc committee can carry out the duties of the NAIC when needed. The Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society has a Common and Scientific Names Subcommittee ([https://molluskconservation.org/MServices\\_Names.html](https://molluskconservation.org/MServices_Names.html)) that maintains lists of common and scientific names of freshwater gastropods and bivalves. AFS currently has a liaison with the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society, and they can provide advice to AFS members and units regarding invertebrate name problems.

### **Resource Policy Committee**

The Resource Policy Committee (RPC) helps the Society evaluate, develop, and maintain fisheries policy by assessing the concerns of the membership, advising the AFS President and Executive Director about aquatic resource issues, producing or coordinating proposed resource policy actions for Society approval, and reviewing approved actions to ensure usefulness. The current chair, Leanne Roulson, suggests the committee revise its charge or begin steps for the committee to evolve into an AFS Section.

In our professional assessment, Leanne possesses the requisite qualifications and capabilities to establish a Resource Policy Section effectively. In addition to extensive expertise in fisheries, Leanne is knowledgeable in the interdisciplinary implementation of federal environmental regulations, especially the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Act, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA), and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Her work covers analysis of impacts for a wide range of project types, including transportation, coastal and stream shoreline stabilization and restoration, shoreline construction, and marine stewardship.

AFS should investigate transforming the Resource Policy Committee into an AFS Section. As an AFS Section, they would have more people and resources to educate members about how the Society advocates on behalf of the fisheries profession.

### **Meetings Oversight Committee**

The MOC can bring continual assessment, learning, and design improvements into AFS annual meetings to ensure meeting participants have a high-quality experience. Paul Venturelli, one of the co-chairs, said the MOC has not been active like it should be and is interested in re-activating the committee. He discussed with Doug Austen about returning this committee to a tri-care model that was attempted in the past. AFS leadership was helping to find the third co-chair of this committee but there has been no communication for many months about the search. The committee needs a third co-chair before it can carry out its duties.

Our committee agrees with Paul about the importance of the MOC. AFS leaders should locate a third co-chair for the committee and request that the current co-chairs evaluate and, if necessary, revise the MOC procedures.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee**

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) is a new standing committee that will play a vital role in ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded into all aspects of the Society's culture, policies, and practices. The co-chairs Nivette Perez-Perez and Jory Jonas are excited to lead this committee but reported they have some questions about their duties and responsibilities as AFS chairpersons. The committee conveyed its appreciation for the prompt response of the AFS staff to their inquiries and meeting requests. However, the committee still requires guidance from the MC regarding the formulation of procedures for the committee's operation.

Our committee recommends AFS leaders meet with the co-chairs of the DEIC and discuss the charge of the committee and how best to write the procedures to be published on the website and included in the AFS Procedures Manual. While the DEIC collaborates closely with the Equal Opportunities Section, it is essential to recognize and acknowledge that the responsibilities associated with each entity are distinct and non-overlapping.

## **Recommendations**

We recommend the following in response to our direction to identify inactive committees, determine if the current charge of each standing committee is still relevant or needs a new charge, and whether any standing committees should be dissolved.

### **The following inactive committee should be dissolved as a standing committee:**

Names of Aquatic Invertebrates: This committee has been inactive since 2006 and AFS has a liaison with the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society which can assist with updating AFS members and units on the names of aquatic invertebrates.

**The following active committee should be dissolved as a standing committee:**

Audit Committee: The duties of the Audit Committee could be assumed by the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee (FPCC) because of the redundancy of work being done by both committees.

**The following inactive committees should be continued as a standing committee:**

- Electronic Services Advisory Board Committee: The ESAB provides expertise on existing technologies and provides AFS sections and units advice on the application and utilization of new and existing technologies.
- Meetings Oversight Committee: The MOC can bring continual assessment, learning, and design improvements into AFS annual meetings to ensure meeting participants have a high-quality experience. AFS leaders should locate a third co-chair for the committee and request that the current co-chairs evaluate and, if necessary, revise the MOC procedures.

**Recommendation for the Resource Policy Committee:**

AFS leaders should meet with Leanne Roulson and investigate transforming the Resource Policy Committee into an AFS Section. Resource Policy would have more resources to educate AFS members on how the Society advocates on behalf of the fisheries profession.

**Recommendation for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:**

AFS leadership should meet with the DEI committee to examine the committee's progress on revising its charge and review the duties and responsibilities of the committee chair.

**Additional Thoughts**

Managing multiple committees can pose challenges in extending sufficient support to each and guaranteeing their efficient operation. The standing committees of AFS consist of volunteers who generously contribute a portion of their free time to the organization's mission. These volunteers need to know they are providing a service with a purpose. One suggestion to help manage these committees is to assign each elected AFS officer a set of committees as part of their duties and responsibilities. The AFS officer will be responsible for assigning chairs/co-chairs for each of their committees, arranging one-on-one meetings with the committees, reporting to the Management Committee the accomplishments and challenges for their assigned committees, and being the contact person for the committee chair when they are uncertain of their duties and responsibilities as the chair or the charge of their committee. Furthermore,

assigning each elected officer a set of committees allows each officer to learn more about each of the standing committees, provides elected officers a chance to work one-on-one with more members of the Society, and each standing committee an opportunity to showcase their work.

A technique leaders can use to help monitor the progress of the standing committees is to create a form that allows committee chairs to input their progress quarterly. The form should include a way for committee chairs to list anything they need to accomplish their charge. By regularly checking in, committee chairs can monitor their committee's progress, effectively manage their time, and stay on top of upcoming deadlines, ensuring they remain organized and productive. If this is implemented, an automated reminder can be set up to go to each committee chair/co-chair.

## Appendix A

### Plan of action to complete the special committee charge

<p><b>Stage 1</b> Special Committee chair confirms contact information is correct for each committee and identifies inactive committees</p> <p>(Complete by March 11)</p>	<p>The committee chair will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact listed committee chairs and confirm they are the current chair or if they have contact information for the current chair</li> <li>• Explain the charge of the Special Committee</li> <li>• Inform the standing committee chair that a member of the Special Committee will be in contact with them to gather more information about their committee</li> <li>• List inactive committees on shared Google Doc</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Special Committee members contact each committee chair they were assigned</li> <li>2. The committee chair investigates inactive committees</li> </ol> <p>(Complete by April 18)</p>	<p>The committee members will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Committee members email each committee chair on their list by March 19 and ask their assigned committee chairs to answer a set of questions using the Google Form provided <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use template letter</li> <li>○ Provide a deadline of April 18, 2024</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Follow up 3 days before the deadline to ask if they need an extension on the deadline</li> <li>• Special committee members complete shared Google sheet to check off as tasks are completed</li> </ul> <p>The committee chair will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the inactive committees to determine reasons for inactivity and gather information to assist in deciding on whether the committee should remain a standing committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Contact the last known chairperson for the identified inactive committees</li> <li>○ Add notes about findings to shared Google Doc</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 3</b> Special Committee Chair drafts report</p> <p>(Complete by May 1)</p>	<p>The committee members will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share with the committee chair any additional information provided to them by the standing committee chairs they were assigned</li> </ul> <p>The committee chair will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft a report of the information provided by standing committee chairs to be reviewed and discussed by special committee members</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send report to special committee members to review two weeks prior to meeting virtually to discuss</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 4</b> Special Committee members decide if any of the standing committees need to be continued as a standing committee  (Complete by June 4)</p>	<p>The committee members will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet virtually to discuss findings and recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What should be the fate of the inactive committees?</li> <li>○ Did any committee chairs report their committee is no longer needed as a standing committee? Why?</li> <li>○ Do we need additional information from any of the standing committees before we finalize our report?</li> <li>○ What are our final recommendations?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 5</b> Special Committee Chair prepares and sends final report to AFS President  (Complete by June 27)</p>	<p>The committee chair will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the final report and send it to Special Committee members for final approval (Review and send edits to the chair by June 18)</li> <li>• Send final report to AFS President Cecil Jennings</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B**

### **Letter template to AFS standing committee chairs**

Dear (name of committee chair(s)),

I am a member of the Special Committee to Evaluate the Status of AFS Standing Committees. Our charge is to determine the status of each of the 20 [AFS standing committees](#) to ascertain if a committee has a chair, is active, the current charge is still relevant, needs a new charge, has reasons for inactivity, and should be continued as a standing committee.

To fully carry out our task, we require pertinent information from each standing committee.

1. Please email me a copy of your committee's purpose, composition, and duties as outlined in the AFS Procedures Manual. We need this information because some AFS Standing Committees are new or their charge was revised since the last time the AFS Procedures manual was updated.
2. Committee chairs are asked to answer a set of questions using the Google form provided. If your committee has a co-chair please collaborate with them to complete the Google form. Only one chair needs to complete the form.

Link for Google Form: <https://forms.gle/X1MRS6SXZkWKV7xm6>

To assist you in planning ahead, we are providing you with the questions.

1. Select your committee from the list provided
2. Your name and email address (include the name of the co-chair and their email)
3. Does your committee have a co-chair? Please provide the first and last name of the co-chair and their email address. Type "need co-chair" if your committee requires a co-chair but does not have one.
4. Do you understand your duties and responsibilities as chair(s) of an AFS Standing Committee?
5. As chair, have you been successful at actively leading your committee to perform its duties and responsibilities?
6. Are there any recent accomplishments by your committee you'd like to share?
7. What additional information do you need to help you perform your duties as a committee chair?
8. Do you understand the [charge](#) of your committee?
9. If you do not fully understand the charge of your committee, what specifically do you not understand?
10. Is the charge for your committee still relevant, or does it need a new charge?
11. If the charge of your committee is no longer relevant, what should the new charge be?
12. Should your committee remain as a standing committee?
13. If you believe your committee should not remain a standing committee, please explain.

**Please complete both requests by April 18, 2024.**

Thank you for your time. Please contact me at (your email address) if you have any questions. I will reach out to you in a week to confirm receipt of this email.

Respectfully,

**Appendix C**  
**AFS 2023-2024 Committee Contact List**

<b>Name of Committee</b>	<b>Committee Chair(s)</b>	<b>Email Address(es)</b>
Audit	Tim Copeland (Chair)	tim.copeland@idfg.idaho.gov
Awards	Mark Pyron (Co-Chair)	mpyron@bsu.edu
Board of Appeals	Justin VanDeHey (Chair)	jvandehe@uwsp.edu
Board of Professional Certification	Justin VanDeHey (Chair)	jvandehe@uwsp.edu
Communications	Julie Simpson (Co-Chair)	julie.simpson@accsp.org
	Kevin Dockendorf (Co-Chair)	kevin.dockendorf@ncwildlife.org
Development	Brian Alford (Co-Chair)	alford.109@osu.edu
	Tom Lang (Co-Chair)	tom.lang@tpwd.texas.gov
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Nivette Perez-Perez (Co-Chair)	nperezperez@inlandbays.org
	Jory Jonas (Co-Chair)	jonasj@michigan.gov
Electronic Services Advisory Board	Inactive	
Ethics and Professional Conduct	Brian Missildine (Chair)	brian.missildine@dfw.wa.gov
Financial Planning and Procedures	Troy Brandt (Chair)	tbrandt@riverdesigngroup.net
Hutton Oversight	Kathy Guindon (Co-Chair)	kathyg22@vt.edu
	April Croxton (Co-Chair)	april.croxton@noaa.gov
Imperiled Aquatic Species	Ginny Adams (Co-Chair)	gadams@uca.edu
	Amanda Rosenberger (Co-Chair)	arosenberger@tntech.edu
Meetings Oversight	Paul Venturelli (Co-Chair)	paventurelli@bsu.edu
	Gary Whelan (Co-Chair)	whelang@michigan.gov
Membership	Abigail Archer (Co-Chair)	aarcher@capecod.gov
	Lian Guo (Co-Chair)	lwguo@ucsd.edu
Names of Aquatic Invertebrates	Inactive	
Names of Fishes	Tom Dowling (Chair)	thomas.dowling@wayne.edu
	Juan Schmitter-Soto	jschmitt@ecosur.mx
Nominating	Eric Fetherman (Chair)	eric.fetherman@state.co.us
Professional Development	Heidi Blasius (Chair)	hblasius@blm.gov
Publications Overview	Steve Midway (Chair)	smidway@lsu.edu
Resource Policy	Leanne Roulson (Chair)	lroulson@fisheries.org



## **Appendix D**

### **Electronic Services Advisory Board Procedures**

Purpose: Periodically evaluate AFS electronic membership services to assess effective and efficient functionality, information content, ease of use, timeliness of information, attractiveness, and implementation of new media. Additionally, the Electronic Services Advisory Board (ESAB) will provide for broadscale representation of member interests in electronic services by facilitating quality control of online data management, media, and communications and facilitating technical guidance (e.g., annual workshops on electronic services) for units, Sections, Chapters, and individuals.

Composition: Includes the AFS President-Elect, eight other persons with staggered two-year terms, and appointed AFS staff. Each AFS President shall appoint one member each from the Publications Overview Committee, the Meetings Oversight Committee, the Education Section, and the Computer Users Section. In addition, each AFS Division president shall appoint a single representative. Two Division and one Section representative shall serve staggered terms. Each AFS President shall designate a chair from within this committee other than the AFS President-Elect.

All members of this advisory board are voting members with the exception of the AFS staff.

Duties:

1. Provide guidance and strategic direction for the development, use, and maintenance of the AFS member-centric database.
2. Provide guidance and strategic support for development of an integrated member-centric website as part of the AFS Web page.
3. Continually monitor the AFS website to assess its attractiveness, information content, ease of use, appropriateness of linkages, and timeliness of information. Develop policies and recommendations to provide AFS staff with guidance on the AFS website and other electronic services regarding
  - a. Content,
  - b. Technical issues (e.g., quality control of information technology policies and procedures),
  - c. Ethical and professional standards (e.g., advertising, accessibility, and copyright issues),
  - d. Outsourcing (e.g., using Internet service providers versus self-hosting, using contractors),
  - e. Promotion (e.g., increasing use by membership and general public, increasing search engine hits), and
  - f. Education (e.g., providing technical guidance on websites, listservs, online voting, and other electronic services to Divisions, Sections, Chapters and other units).

4. If the Board deems that immediate substantial changes are needed, these should be transmitted directly to the AFS President. If the Board deems that minor corrections to the Web pages are needed, these should be transmitted directly to the Executive Director and appropriate AFS staff for their attention.
5. Review and advise the AFS President and Executive Director on new technological tools that may be available to enhance format and function of electronic services of AFS membership.
6. Provide a summary of assessments to the Governing Board for the Mid-Year and Annual meetings, and more frequently to the AFS President if appropriate.
7. Review the five-year plan for the AFS website and draft a schedule to implement recommendations outlined in the plan that have not been previously implemented.

Operational Guidelines:

1. ESAB will meet by conference call at least twice each year at the discretion of the Chair.
2. The ESAB will have responsibility for organization and implementation of an IT workshop held each year at the AFS Annual Meeting to discuss developments in information technology and AFS electronic member services.

## **Appendix E**

### **Names of Aquatic Invertebrates Committee Procedures**

Purpose: Reviews matters pertaining to the common and scientific names of aquatic invertebrates; prepares checklists of names to achieve uniformity and avoid confusion in nomenclature; coordinates its activities with those of other organizations worldwide. Chair is the custodian of the master checklists.

Composition: Chair plus any number of others, as deemed appropriate by the chair, who are specialists in invertebrate taxonomy and nomenclature.

#### Duties:

1. Chair maintains master file of common and scientific names of invertebrates.
2. Prepares and updates AFS publications on common and scientific names of invertebrates.
3. Monitors the scientific literature to determine needs for changes, clarifications, or systematic revisions of names or naming systems of invertebrates.
4. Provides advice to AFS members and units regarding invertebrate name problems.
5. Coordinates activities with similar organizations worldwide and with the Names of Fishes Committee.
6. Develops implementing direction and agenda for the AFS Strategic Plan.

Operational Guidelines: None specified at this time

**Appendix F**  
**Summary of 2023-2024 Accomplishments Reported by AFS Standing Committees**

Audit	Reviews of the audit and AFS financial status submitted annually. Close coordination with the Financial Procedures & Planning Committee and Deputy Director.
Awards	None shared
Board of Appeals	See Board of Professional Certification
Board of Professional Certification	Nothing new recently. Since I have been involved with the committee we have modified certification requirements a few times to better meet needs of members and employers.
Communications	In the final phases of completing the rebranding of the Society.
Development	Our committee presented ideas to increase funding from the membership and externally, but also asked GB members to think of priorities important to AFS with regard to funding needs. We also requested that GB members become donors, not just dues-paying members, to set an example and make it easier to ask for donations from others.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Working on developing an organizational structure for strategic planning to re-engage with membership and committees structures. Representing the DEI Comm for national efforts lead by ACCESS+, WEPAN, Respectful Meeting Workgroup, EOS, Fisheries Magazine, and others.
Ethics and Professional Conduct	None shared
Financial Planning and Procedures	We hold quarterly meetings with AFS staff to review financial information and provide input. As the committee chair, I also attend semi-annual meetings of the Governing Board and Management Committee.
Hutton Oversight	We have successfully recruited and selected Hutton Scholars for 2024 using a new application and updated scoring rubric. We are working on finalizing the Hutton Mentor pairings with Scholars for 2024. Training meetings were held with application reviewers. We are planning the Hutton Summit for Georgia this summer. We outlined a communications plan with the entire Hutton Standing Committee after April researched various communication plan components and suggestions from other fields and industry. We actively engaged the committee at our last meeting to come up with "key messages" intended for our identified "target audiences" to improve the awareness and understanding of the benefits of the Hutton Scholarship program to each audience, to better target students using recruitment strategies, and for securing funding sources. Having the team work on the document at the same time was a great way to keep everyone engaged. April and Kathy are working to condense the responses into one document. Ashley Berniche is co-chairing a symposium in Hawaii and will present on the Hutton Program. Kathy is submitting a proposal to present on the Hutton Program during a second symposium.
Imperiled Aquatic Species	We updated the spreadsheet and solicited the feedback from a working larger committee for fishes, still a large task
Meetings Oversight	None shared (inactive because of special circumstances)

Membership	Designed and implemented a survey to the membership and began a draft action plan based on the results of that survey. Lead a session at the Spring Governing Board meeting to get their feedback on the draft action plan items, meeting with relevant committees to discuss their thoughts on membership action plan items.
Names of Fishes	Published most recent edition of the Names of Fishes volume
Nominating	"Between July 2023 and current, the committee worked together to identify and run two great candidates for AFS Second Vice President in 2024, Marlis Douglas and Lori Martin. In addition, we have worked to interview several of the folks contacted this year that turned down the nomination to run to determine why folks may be saying ""no"" and see if changes are needed to the officer requirements and time commitments to encourage more folks to run. All of this work was performed during Jeff Kopaska's time as Chair and me as Vice Chair. I have just started to my time as Chair and hope to continue the legacy set by the Chairs and committee members prior to my time in this position.
Professional Development	A workshop was held April 15-18, 2024, in Virginia with attendance from Doug Austin and Lauren Maza and outside agencies and organizations to re-think and develop a new strategy for the AFS Professional Development program. AFS is hosting the workshop with Ben West facilitating. We will review past efforts and assess needs of the committee and how it can better serve members.
Publications Overview	None shared
Resource Policy	Submitted 2 letters for actions to the GB and officers- both were passed and letters were signed on to by President Jennings