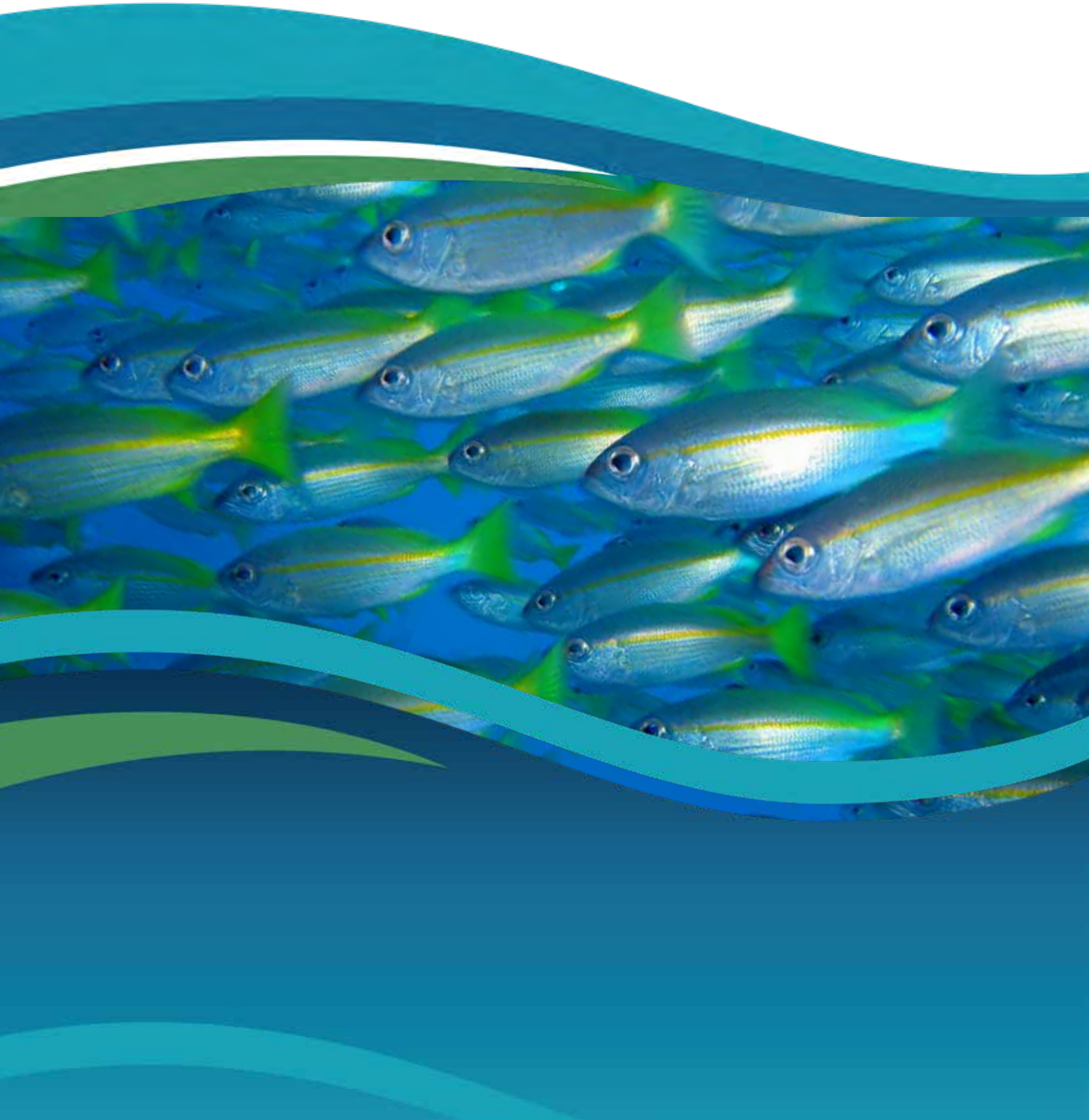


2024 Annual Report



American Fisheries Society



What Is AFS?

Founded in 1870, AFS is the leading source of fisheries and management information across North America and around the world. Learn more about our thousands of members, regional Chapters and Student Subunits, topical Sections, international scientific conferences, five prestigious journals, and hundreds of book titles on our website at www.fisheries.org.

Our Mission

The mission of the American Fisheries Society is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

Our Vision

To address our mission, AFS needs to advance fisheries knowledge and strive to be the home society for all fisheries disciplines. In that pursuit, AFS seeks to be recognized as the pre-eminent organization providing fisheries information to decision makers in all arenas. While fulfilling our vision, we will recruit and develop new fisheries professionals by offering learning and training opportunities crucial to maintaining a well-trained profession, support programs and efforts to increase diversity and inclusion, and enhance the value of AFS professional certification. (The Vision Statement is an excerpt from the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.)

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2025 Annual Meeting - Join Us in San Antonio!

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President's Letter



Greetings fellow AFS members,

Before I begin this farewell address and update you on some of our key accomplishments this year, I herewith express my sincerest gratitude for the opportunity to serve as skipper of the AFS ship while we navigate uncertain waters in an everchanging world. I am deeply honored to have been chosen for this important task and humbled by the opportunity to serve in that capacity from August 2023 until September 2024. As promised, I have worked diligently and steadfastly to maintain and enhance AFS's relevancy, efficacy in promoting fishery science and developing fishery professionals, and in being responsive to emerging challenges to the profession and the opportunities they represent. If measured by the old adage of time flying while having fun, the 13-months of my presidency were fun-filled, because my tenure came and went in a figurative blink of the eye! Your patience permitting, please allow me to share some of the important tasks we accomplished in furtherance of the goals outlined in our mission statement.

In the interest of space, I will forgo a detailed cataloging of everything we accomplished during my presidency. However, please know that I, the other officers on the leadership team, our dedicated AFS staff, and a very large group of volunteers accomplished a lot on behalf of our membership and our mission. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to these people, without whose help much of what is reported here would not have been possible. As you can imagine, an organization the size of ours has many moving parts that need daily or weekly attention to keep society-level operations running smoothly. I refer to these myriad tasks as "keeping the lights on" and they are as important as the high-profile tasks that garner a lot of attention. These tasks are the kind that go unnoticed if done well, but are very visible if done poorly or left incomplete. So, to the extent that you didn't notice anything untoward during my tenure, I herewith acknowledge the support and contributions of AFS staff and members around the country in helping me advance our mission.

Planning and hosting the annual conference is one of the major responsibilities of the AFS President. This was true for me as well, and I was very involved with planning the 2024 annual meeting, even before I assumed the presidency. For example, I represented AFS at the Hawaii Conservation Alliance Meeting in Honolulu (June 2023) to facilitate the growth of the new Pacific Islands Chapter and promote the 2024 annual conference planned for Honolulu. After assuming the Presidency, I, in conjunction with the Pacific Islands Chapter, the Western Division, and volunteer members from around the country planned and successfully executed a very successful 2024 annual meeting. I was directly responsible for many aspects of this meeting, including meeting theme and logo



Cecil Jennings delivers remarks at the World Fisheries Congress.

AFS is a member of the World Council of Fisheries Societies (WCFS) and hosted the 9th World Fisheries Congress in Seattle, Washington, in March 2024. I collaborated with and supported our Executive Director in hosting the Congress. My role was largely ceremonial and included offering an opening "Welcome" to the Congress on behalf of AFS and hosting receptions for special guest such as award winners and representatives from other WCFS members. AFS also has Memoranda of Understanding with a number of other WCFS members in which the two societies exchange officers at each other's respective annual meetings. Attendance at these meetings is a good-will gesture in support of each society's mission and maintenance of collaborative efforts in areas of joint interests. In this role, I represented AFS at the annual meeting of the Society of Canadian Aquatic Sciences in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, in February 2024, and delivered the plenary address to their assembled membership. I also represented AFS at the annual conferences of the Japanese Society for Fisheries Science in Tokyo, Japan, in March 2024, and the Fisheries Society of the British Isles in Bilbao, Spain, in July 2024. At these latter meetings, I offered greetings, congratulatory remarks, updates on future AFS meetings and other activities, and well wishes from AFS. I also privately discussed areas of common interest (e.g., negotiating publishing contracts) with each society's leadership at their business meetings and at banquets.



Cecil Jennings delivers remarks at the JSFS banquet.





Many of the duties of the AFS President are outlined in our Procedures Manual, but special challenges and opportunities or irregular events may arise that demand special attention to address. Such was the case with during my Presidency, and I charged six special committees to achieve specific goals in support of AFS's mission.

These special committees were tasked with the following charges:

- Recruit a new executive director to fill the vacancy created when the former ED retired;
- Evaluate and recommend options to replace an expiring publications contract;
- Draft a new strategic plan for the period 2025–2029 to replace the current plan whose expiration was imminent;
- Address AFS's historical artifacts and recommend options for archiving items deemed worthy of keeping if our office building is ever sold;
- Develop guidelines for the use of Generative AI (like ChatGPT) in creating content for publications in AFS journals; and
- Evaluate the status of the standing committees with a focus on their relevance and current charge.

Some of the deliverables from the work of these special committees include:

- Jeff Kopaska was hired as AFS' Executive Director effective August 30, 2024;
- AFS did not renew its contract with Wiley Publishing, but instead entered into a new 7-year contract Oxford University Press, which began January 1, 2025;
- Draft strategic plan for 2025–2029 has been produced and reviewed—it is undergoing revisions in anticipation of presentation to our Governing Board for approval or additional revisions as appropriate; and
- Guidelines were created that govern the use of AI technology to generate content for AFS publications.

These deliverables were critical to maintaining AFS workflow on many fronts and for maintaining or enhancing momentum on fulfilling our mission.

More with Cecil Jennings...

One of the perks of being President of AFS is the opportunity to communicate directly with our membership on topics that I find interesting or important. During my term, I penned 10 such essays in *Fisheries* on a variety of topics. Some tackled politically sensitive subjects such as DEI activities in our Society and profession [*Fisheries* 49(5):199–200] and the increasingly controversial practice of land acknowledgements [*Fisheries* 49(6):247–248]. Others addressed challenges such as flat or declining membership [*Fisheries* 48(8):351–352], underutilization of our Professional Certification Program [*Fisheries* 49(2):51–52] and potential remedies [*Fisheries* 49(7):295–297] thereto. Obviously, there were others, but modesty dictates that I not list them all here. However, perhaps this short sample of topics might entice you to peruse the others. These thought pieces were sometimes challenging to write, but the research and discussions that supported them were always fun. I very much appreciated the opportunity to share my thoughts with our members and truly enjoyed doing so.



During my presidential term, I traveled far and wide in support of AFS's mission. Although the traveling was tiring sometimes, I was always refreshed and energized when I encountered old friends and made new ones. I appreciated the opportunity to engage with members who shared their appreciation for or concerns about AFS. Some of these conversations were difficult, but they were always respectful and frequently resulted in newfound appreciation of other viewpoints. All the members with whom I interacted were happy that an AFS officer attended their meeting, and many reported enhanced feelings of integration into the Society. Even our international partners, one of whom referred to AFS as its "big brother" fisheries society, appreciated an AFS representative at their conference. This positive feedback from representing AFS enhanced my appreciation for the opportunity to serve our Society and made the traveling worthwhile.

I close this farewell address by reiterating my sincerest gratitude and deep honor for the opportunity to serve as the President of our Society and for the widespread support and encouragement I received by our members far and wide. Gratias tibi omnis.

Cordially,

Cecil A. Jennings



El Presidente



In Honolulu, AFS Welcomed the 2024–2025 President—Miguel Garcia!

Miguel Garcia, elected as Second Vice President in July 2021, assumed the role of AFS President during the Business Session at the Honolulu meeting. Accompanied by his wife Lourdes, Garcia stepped up to the podium and emphasized his top priority: “to make AFS the most welcoming society.”

One strategy Garcia said that he would use to achieve this goal was to become actively involved with the “most important” fisheries focused-organizations in Central and South America, fostering collaboration by asking, “What do they need from us?” Additionally, he plans to keep working in the development of a Latin American and Caribbean Fisheries Unit. In his speech, he detailed his Plan of Work and outlined specific objectives to accomplish his goals for the 2024–2025 term.



Incoming AFS President Miguel Garcia, escorted into office in Honolulu by his wife Lourdes.

Saying Goodbye to Executive Director Doug Austen, AFS’s Fearless Leader, After 11 Years

The Honolulu meeting was bittersweet for Doug Austen, who had served as AFS’s Executive Director for the past 11 years, as he knew it would be his final AFS meeting in that role. The meeting’s final day marked the official start of Austen’s retirement.

During his tenure, Doug led AFS through some difficult times, the most challenging being the pandemic that began in March 2020. All in-person meetings had to be shut down, leading to changes to office life, the annual meeting, and more. He instituted work-from-home policies and guided AFS through its first hybrid annual meeting—the combination live and virtual meeting held in Baltimore of 2021.

“Doug helped us keep AFS efforts moving forward during that difficult time when the pandemic literally shut down all live AFS meetings. He was the institutional memory and organizational driver that kept Governing Board affairs on-track and effective. I could always count on Doug for sound guidance on AFS procedures and wise counsel on how to handle sensitive matters. His steady personality often helped defuse emotional situations, and his clear thinking and persuasive way helped us get to fair and reasonable resolutions. When the pandemic waned, Doug and staff pulled together the return to live format at the unique ‘vaccinated and masked’ 2021 Baltimore meeting,” said Brian Murphy, AFS President from 2020 to 2021.

Doug’s extensive career in fisheries, along with his long-standing membership in AFS prior to becoming Executive Director, provided him with invaluable institutional knowledge that enabled him to guide the Society toward continued success. As a former Fish Chief, he had the expertise to foster strong relationships with federal and state agencies, effortlessly connecting with colleagues by both “walking the walk” and “talking the talk.”

“Besides being a long-time good friend, Doug’s leadership skills and work ethic made him indispensable to me during my time in AFS leadership. Doug simplified the sometimes-overwhelming task of AFS officership, and he made it fun! AFS will definitely miss him, but I am certainly glad that he was Executive Director during my term!”

— Brian R. Murphy, AFS President 2020–2021

President Miguel Garcia’s Plan of Work:

- Leading AFS towards a more international and multi-ethnic society, by attracting members from a broader geography and baiting them with relevancy.
- Cultivating and strengthening Fisheries Science and Practice, including engagement with other fisheries-focused and aquatic societies.
- Supporting the continuation and implementation of the Strategic Positioning initiative and teaming up with new Executive Director as he guides the Society into the future.
- Increasing the levels of communication between all AFS units and better conveying the relevance of Society to its members and their employers (Continuation from Jennings POW).
- Enhancing support to diversity initiatives within the Society as well as improving messaging to membership about the value of diversity of all kinds (Continuation from Jennings POW).

Garcia’s #1 Goal:
Work with members, staff, and officers to make AFS the most WELCOMING Society

Who’s Retiring? This Guy!



Honolulu Breaks Records

Meeting Theme: “Conserving Fishes and Fisheries Traditions Through Knowledge Co-Production”—A Focus on Past, Present, and Future of Fisheries Conservation and Management

The 154th AFS Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, held Sept. 15–19, 2024, was the best-attended meeting in years. More than 2,230 attendees from North America, the Pacific Islands, and 42 countries throughout the world gathered to share science and learn under the meeting theme “Conserving Fishes and Fishing Traditions through Knowledge Co-Production.” The theme was supported by 11 independent symposia, as well as an interview on a local radio station with Cecil Jennings, the AFS President at the time of the meeting, discussing the importance of elevating indigenous voices at an international conference.

The meeting hosted several student and mentoring events. Eighteen students were given the opportunity to attend by being awarded student travel awards.

The plenary speakers, all residents of Hawai‘i, explored the importance fisheries have traditionally played in Hawaiian culture and the vast resources that need to be carefully managed to preserve Hawai‘i’s delicate tropical ecosystem. The meeting addressed the need for relationship building to foster a global community of Indigenous Peoples and allies, brought together by their common love for Pacific waters and fish.

This meeting was a great opportunity to amplify Indigenous voices and highlight how Indigenous knowledge can enable the restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of aquatic habitats.

- 2,419 total, including attendees and guests!
- 39 countries represented
- All 50 US states represented
- 60 exhibitors
- 201 posters
- 2,088 abstracts
- 600 gallons of coffee consumed!
- 18 student travel awardees

5K Spawning Run/Carcass Crawl

270 runners participated in this year’s 5K Spawning Run/Carcass Crawl that took place at the majestic Ala Moana Beach Park. AFS’s own Doug Austen participated, proudly sporting this year’s custom t-shirt. This run held special significance for the outgoing AFS Executive Director, who played a key role in establishing the Spawning Run tradition in 1984. He collaborated with Doug Carlson, who helped organize the inaugural event at the 114th AFS Annual Meeting in Ithaca, NY.



Local Culture Acknowledged and Respected

Attendees learned about Native Hawaiian culture and how to be educated and respectful visitors to the islands. Being a good guest also includes learning local etiquette, supporting locally owned businesses, and following best practices to protect the unique and fragile ecosystem.

Student and Indigenous Networking Events Highlight Conference

“The Student Networking Trivia Mixer was a huge success, bringing together nearly 400 students and professionals for a fun-filled night of tacos and fish-themed trivia,” said event organizer MeiLin Precourt.

The Honolulu meeting also included an Indigenous Networking Event, designed to foster community among Indigenous attendees through shared food, storytelling, and cultural exchange.

“It was really special to have so many Indigenous fisheries professionals in a single space and making connections in ways that are meaningful for them.”

— Lian Guo, PhD, University of California San Diego and event organizer

Aquatic Film and Photo Festival



Many fisheries professionals combine their passion for science and the environment with art, and never before has this concept been showcased so prominently and spectacularly than it was at the Honolulu meeting. During the tradeshow, this magnificent display featured art inspired by fish, fisheries, and the aquatic environment. The exhibit included all types of visual art including paintings, mixed media, photography, textile/fabric, jewelry, graphic/vector, and sculptures.



A total of 150 attendees took part in a “Beach Clean-Up Day,” successfully removing over 255 pounds of trash from the shore!



2024 Annual Meeting

Efforts to Engage with Indigenous Members and Tribes Leads to Creation of Respectful Meetings Working Group

During the 2023 Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, conversations with Indigenous attendees indicated that our professional society needs to increase efforts to engage with and create space at the table for Indigenous members and the Tribes or Nations where annual meetings are hosted. In 2024, several AFS members volunteered to develop the Respectful Meetings Working Group (RMWG) to improve Indigenous inclusion and participation at future AFS meetings, beginning with the 2024 meeting in Honolulu. The RMWG had two main goals that shaped their initiatives: being better guests on Indigenous lands, and welcoming, valuing, and celebrating Indigenous Peoples and Knowledge.

To support AFS members in being better guests on Indigenous lands, the RMWG collaborated with Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA), a local nonprofit organization and community-based initiative for protecting, restoring, and caring for Hawai'i. The RMWG worked closely with KUA to organize three individual service learning projects throughout the conference, two activities at local fish ponds and one beach cleanup, which were collectively attended by over 40 individuals. They worked closely with the AFS President to invite Indigenous plenary speakers and presenters. They also educated non-Indigenous AFS members about local Indigenous communities and respecting local protocols by publishing three articles, published in *Fisheries Magazine*, alongside a guide to being a good guest, published on the conference website.



One of the speakers presenting during the "Quantifying the Influence of Indigenous Fish House Construction on Nearshore Fisheries" symposia.



Respectful Meetings Working Group (Continued)

The RMWG created opportunities for direct engagement with local, Native Hawaiian-run organizations by providing three no-cost tables in the trade show. Additionally, they worked with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement to promote Indigenous-owned businesses near the convention center to conference attendees. To welcome, value, and celebrate Indigenous Peoples and Knowledge, the RMWG fundraised for and provided Indigenous travel grants so that more Indigenous individuals could attend. They raising a total of \$66,640, to cover the travel and conference registration for 18 Indigenous individuals, with nearly two-thirds of the funds supporting Indigenous student travel. The RMWG also collaboratively organized a conference session, Celebrating Indigenous Fisheries Stewardship, alongside Dr. Kawika Winter from the University of Hawai'i and AFS President Cecil Jennings. In addition, the RMWG promoted 11 Indigenous-themed conference sessions to conference attendees, and provided a private room specifically designated for Indigenous attendees to ensure access to safe spaces. Finally, the RMWG organized an Indigenous networking event at a local Native Hawaiian-owned venue that was attended by 136 individuals.

"I am so grateful to have received a travel award for the 2024 annual meeting. Without this support, attending the event would not have been possible. This opportunity allowed me to connect with fellow indigenous researchers, explore novel research, and discover new techniques and tools that I look forward to incorporating into my work with native migratory fish in Aotearoa."

— Siobhan Nuri, Travel Award Recipient

Introducing FishCAST!

A Special Committee of AFS, formerly known as the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, was recently renamed the Fisheries Community Advocacy for (and) Sustainability Team, or for short—FishCAST. It has a new name, but the goals and objectives remain the same—to make every member of AFS feel safe, welcome, and included. FishCAST provides oversight for AFS efforts to increase and maintain diversity in membership and the fisheries profession, and to ensure that all AFS activities and programs are fully inclusive. FishCAST will annually assess AFS initiatives and programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and make 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 as appropriate.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Mahalo i nā Hui Kāko'o

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Sponsorships Give Students Opportunities That Will Impact Them for a Lifetime: 18 Students Granted Travel Awards to Attend Honolulu Meeting

“

Myself and a couple other Tamamta fellows were fortunate enough to have been awarded the travel award; it was amazing to have been chosen alongside them. Having the opportunity to be invited, travel to, and welcomed to the Hawaiian peoples 'Āina and learn Aloha 'Āina gave me a sense of completeness. It made me feel whole. Our Tamamta group hosted a session, and not only did we hold space for other Indigenous scholars to present their work on their or their kin's homelands, we also held space for our Elders we brought from every region of Alaska. During our session, they were able to impart their experiences and wisdom to those that had the opportunity to sit with us and listen. As an Indigenous scholar myself, I felt so much pride for my kin, to see them work in these spaces because of that love. We do not simply do this work because we are stakeholders, just showing an interest in certain issues, we do this work because the issue is so close to home and our hearts. We are always guided by our people, our Elders, our Ancestors, and our non-human relatives. I hope to see even more Indigenous representation, and especially collaboration, in future AFS meetings.”

— Tazia Wagner, Travel Award Recipient



World Fisheries Congress



AFS Hosts the World Fisheries Congress —First-Ever Held in the United States!

Early in the year, AFS had the honor of hosting the 2024 World Fisheries Congress in Seattle, Washington—the first Congress ever to be held in the United States. More than 1,500 research scientists, educators, students, resource managers, and others from all over the globe gathered to exchange ideas and perspectives about new research, emerging issues, scientific breakthroughs, and governance related to fisheries science, industry, conservation, and management.

The event's theme—Fish and Fisheries at the Food–Water–Energy Nexus—focused on symposia related to sustainability, fish and aquatic ecosystems, fisheries and society, and innovations in fisheries.



Seattle Aquarium was a Star Attraction of the WFC Events

An attendee favorite was the Grand Networking Event at the Seattle Aquarium, home of six major exhibits: Window on Washington Waters, Life on the Edge, Pacific Coral Reef, Birds & Shores, the Underwater Dome, and Marine Mammals.

Fisheries Networking Hits Global Proportions



Performers at the opening ceremony.



Members of the Suquamish Tribe, Indigenous to the state of Washington, performed a traditional song in regalia to open the Congress.



Ed Johnstone, Chair, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Myriad High-Profile Aquatic Topics Addressed in Symposia

The Congress included more than 1,200 oral presentations and posters across 60 sessions. Topics included high-profile issues such as climate change, plastic pollution, aquaculture, animal welfare, stakeholder collaboration and citizen science, ghost fishing and bycatch, offshore wind development, shark depredation, distant water fleets, seafood traceability, recreational fishing, eDNA, fisheries enforcement and observers, fair trade, and highly imperiled freshwater fisheries. Topics of particular regional interest include Tribal fisheries, dam mitigation and removal, and important local species such as salmon and trout, rockfishes, and halibut.

A highlight of the meeting, the prestigious International Fisheries Science Prize was awarded to Ana Parma, Argentine National Scientific and Technological Research Council.



Pictured left: A U.S. federal agency panel discussion featuring Janet Coit, Assistant Administrator, NOAA Fisheries, and Dave Applegate, Director, USGS.



Pictured right: Lucas Griffin, Univ. of MA, Amherst, during his abstract presentation at WFC.



World Fisheries Congress Sponsors

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Member Support for AFS

1870 Society Donations

During 2024, 120 donors made personal gifts totaling over \$65,000 to support AFS initiatives including the Hutton Program, policy work, travel awards for the annual meeting, and other areas of need. Of the 120 donors mentioned, 44 joined the ranks of the 1870 Society for 2024. The 1870 Society recognizes AFS's generous donors who invest in the Society's important programs and operations with an annual gift of \$150 or more. Members of the President's Circle are part of an elite group who make an annual gift of \$1,000 or more.

Thank you to all who supported AFS programs through a generous gift in 2024! Check out all the donor names on the following pages.

Sponsorships

Sponsors of AFS meetings truly make these events successful; we couldn't do it without them. Thirteen sponsors supported the World Fisheries Congress in Seattle, Washington, with over \$55,000 in contributions.

The 154th Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i, received over \$250,000 in support from 42 sponsors. Through these sponsorships, AFS was able to award over \$40,000 for 18 students and early career professionals to attend the meeting, support the Ingenious Networking Event, provide three service-learning projects, and much more.



Thomas Bigford, Co-founder,
Adelman-Bigford Fund

“

My planned donation to the Adelman-Bigford Fund was inspired by my deep commitment to the AFS mission, a hearty appreciation for the dedication of society members, and sincere hopes that the Society will remain a leading force in fisheries policy arenas. Fish and their habitat demand our vigilance and action. I hope my contribution will encourage others to include AFS and the Adelman-Bigford Fund in their financial plans.”

“

As an AFS travel award recipient, I experienced being a panelist for the first time, which provided a meaningful and engaging conversation with the participants. Attending AFS networking events and coffee breaks was a great way to network with others in multidisciplinary fields, who I may not have met otherwise. I am grateful to have been included in some of the AFS business meetings and to join my Alaska Chapter group to receive the 2024 Outstanding Chapter Award.”

— Kristen Reece, Student Travel
Award Recipient

“

I was set to present at this conference but was worried that my department would not be able to fund all of my travel needs. Without this scholarship, I would not have been able to attend the conference nor present there, so I am extremely grateful for the opportunity. I was also able to attend the indigenous gathering where I was privileged to meet many people from other countries and got to hear their traditional songs and learn about the culture and customs. I will surely carry this experience with me through the rest of my career as a fisheries biologist, as well as through the rest of my life. Thank you, American Fisheries Society!”

— Anthony Capetillo, Student Travel
Award Recipient

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— Jenna Hanks, AFS Development Director 21

Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program

Stimulating Interest in Fisheries and Aquatic Science Among Underrepresented Groups in the Profession Today

The Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program (Hutton Program) is an educational program sponsored by the American Fisheries Society (AFS) for high school students. The principal goal of the Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program is to recruit high school students from traditionally underrepresented communities in the fisheries profession and introduce them to the field of fisheries and aquatic science.

The Hutton Program is a paid summer internship and mentoring program for rising high school seniors and graduating seniors interested in pursuing science disciplines associated with natural resource and environment management. Under the Hutton Program, selected students benefit from an eight week, hands-on fisheries science summer experience in a marine and/or freshwater setting.

The 25th Hutton Program class included 37 Hutton Scholars placed in 19 US states. Our Hutton Scholars worked alongside biologists from 12 different state agencies, four federal agencies, three universities, and three non-governmental organizations (nonprofits or private sector).

The Hutton Program hosted the fourth annual Hutton Scholar Summit, July 15–18 at The Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Mansfield, Georgia. Twenty-two students from 17 states came together for two full days. Programming consisted of a career panel, networking opportunities, student presentations, a stream survey with the Georgia DNR Stream Team, and an otolith aging workshop with the University of Georgia. During the Summit, Hutton Scholars participated in engaging discussions on topics such as pursuing graduate degrees, navigating work opportunities, and the shared experience of being underrepresented in conservation and environmental science. Each student gave a five-minute presentation on the work they completed over their internship.

A handful of AFS members, unit leaders, and staff were on hand to connect with the Hutton Scholars and share ways AFS has shaped both their academic and professional careers. The Hutton Scholar Summit aided in introducing the Hutton Scholars to different aspects of the fisheries profession and creating connections between themselves and AFS's membership.



AFS Publications

AFS Books Program

Notably, *Standard Methods for Sampling North American Freshwater Fishes*, second edition, was published in late 2024. For the second edition,

new methods were added, a small number of those in the first edition were modified after rigorous scrutiny, and as many as possible were kept the same. Standard methods for additional North American water bodies were added, including those for the Laurentian Great Lakes, wetlands and swamps, and cenotes. Standardized environmental DNA sampling methods, separate expanded chapters on statistics and database design as they relate to standardization, and greatly expanded data summaries of common indexes from fishes across North America, which contained more species than the first edition, were also included. [page xxix]

This essential resource contains contributions from state, provincial, and federal agencies; numerous academic institutions; and nongovernmental organizations from the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Other Great Book Releases Available in the AFS Book Store



The Soft-Shell Clam *Mya arenaria*: Biology, Fisheries, and Mariculture

Victor S. Kennedy and Brian F. Beal, editors

AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

The soft-shell clam not only plays an important role in soft-bottom food webs but is also highly valued as human food. However, habitat loss, overfishing, and environmental factors have threatened clam fisheries in recent decades.

This book takes a deep dive into the mariculture efforts that have been successful in culturing populations for commercial fishery and restoration efforts.

This comprehensive volume assembles and synthesizes published data on various aspects of soft-shell clam, including anatomy, genetics, threats, history, and culture techniques, making this publication useful for students, researchers, fishery managers, and mariculturists.

By the numbers

3

formats (hardcover, paperback, & PDF)

105

authors

868

pages



STANDARD METHODS
for
Sampling North American
Freshwater Fishes
Second Edition

Scott A. Bonar,
Norman Mercado-Silva,
Kevin L. Pope, editors

American Fisheries Society


Journals Program and Fisheries Magazine

Throughout 2024, the AFS journals and *Fisheries* magazine published and promoted manuscripts covering aspects of fisheries science from around the world.

Meet AFS’s New Publisher!

Following an extensive search, AFS announced a new publishing agreement with Oxford University Press, which began in January 2025.

Outgoing AFS Executive Director Doug Austen said, “For more than 150 years, AFS journals have served as the best platform for fisheries professionals to communicate their important research. We’re delighted to partner with a distinguished nonprofit publisher that values the mission of scientific societies and will help us continue to grow and better serve both our members and our critical fisheries and aquatic resources.”



OXFORD
ACADEMIC

In January 2025, the AFS Journals Program launched its partnership with Oxford University Press. Every manuscript published with AFS helps support the Society’s broader mission and programs to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems.

By the numbers

1

magazine

5

journals

44

issues

135

editors

861

reviewers

310

manuscripts published

4,219

pages published

592,610

articles read online



“AFS journals are home to some of the world’s best fisheries science, and our partnership with Oxford University Press—a venerable science-focused nonprofit publisher—will allow us to provide exceptional service to our authors and reach the widest audience possible.”

— Steve Midway,
Journals Editor

Professional Development

Continuing Education—the Cornerstone of Developing Future Fisheries Professionals

Continuing Education (CE) is an important and growing member benefit provided by the American Fisheries Society, which fulfills the Society’s mission to help fisheries scientists develop professionally and learn continually. A great opportunity for taking CE classes (or units) is at the annual meeting. Twelve CEU’s were offered at the 2024 meeting in Honolulu, Hawai’i.

- Communicating Research with Effective Data Visualization & Effective Storytelling
- Data Wrangling using the Tidyverse in R
- Genetics 101 for Fisheries Professionals
- Incorporating Antenna Detections into Population Models to Estimate Migration, Abundance, and Survival
- Interpreting Reproductive Histology: Female Maturity and Reproductive Phases
- Introductory ArcGIS/QGIS for Fisheries Biologists
- Introductory Bayesian Inference with JAGS for Fish Biologists
- Intermediate Bayesian Inference with JAGS for Fish Biologists
- Plain, Simple, and Concise Writing
- Side Scan Sonar: Cutting-Edge Tools and Techniques for Managing Habitat and Fisheries
- Structured Decision Making for Fisheries Conservation and Management Decisions
- Science Communication for Fisheries Professionals: Skill-building for More Effective Outreach & Engagement



Advancing Fisheries Education



Develop Professionally, Learn Continually

Webinars—Access Learning Opportunities Without Ever Leaving Your Desk!

This past year, AFS held several webinars—the recordings of which are available on the AFS website. As a matter of fact, you can access *all AFS webinars ever held* on the AFS website! Two webinars are highlighted below:

Exploring your Communications Mindset

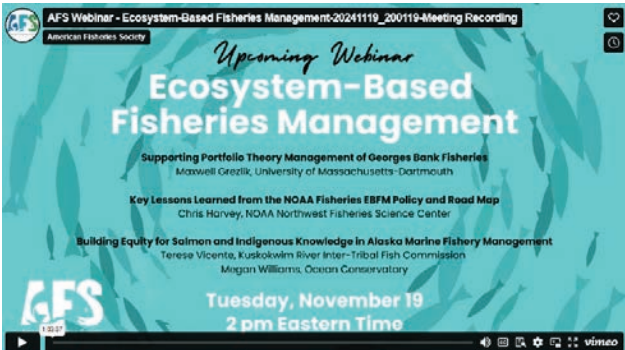
- Hosted by the Science Communication Section
- Presented by Julie Claussen, Fisheries Conservation Foundation, and Kamden Glade, MN DNR



Science communication is a crucial aspect of our work, whether we’re sharing our research findings with others or educating stakeholders about why management changes are necessary. However, we often don’t take time to pause and consider our own mindset about how best to communicate. This presentation explored attitudes about how scientists communicate and provided ways to improve our approaches.

Data-Driving, Community-Guided: The Future of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management

This webinar was a compilation of three presentations from the 2024 Annual Meeting symposium.



Three Presentations:

- Supporting Portfolio Theory Management of Georges Bank Fisheries
- Key Lessons Learned from the NOAA Fisheries EBFM Policy and Road Map
- Building Equity for Salmon and Indigenous Knowledge in Alaska Marine Fishery Management

Professional Certification—Take Your Career to the Next Level!

There are many reasons for seeking professional certification. For some it represents achievement of a career goal while for others it represents a credential necessary to perform their job. Objectives of certification as follows:

- 1) to provide governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations, private firms, courts, and the general public with a definitive minimum standard of experience and education for fisheries professionals; and
- 2) to foster broader recognition of fisheries professionals as well-educated and experienced, acting in the best interest of the public.

There are many levels of certification and AFS is the only organization that provides professional fisheries certification. There are currently 334 active certified fisheries professionals, and AFS records show that between all certification levels, including renewals, it has issued nearly 1,500 certifications since 1972. For more information or to apply, go to fisheries.org/membership/afs-certification.

Policy and Advocacy in Action

Science-based Policy Engagement on Capitol Hill

Throughout 2024, AFS worked on numerous policy issues that impact fisheries including the removal of the Lower Snake River Dams, America’s Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Reauthorization Act of 2024, expansion of sustainable aquaculture, the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act, and more.



NFHP Board members, including AFS First Vice President Gary Whelan (right), visited Capitol Hill in April.

ACE Act Is Signed Into Law

AFS supported America’s Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Reauthorization Act of 2024, a bill that reauthorizes the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnerships (NFHP), the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, and the Chesapeake Bay Program.

The bill was led by Environment and Public Works Chair Tom Carper (D-DE) and Ranking Member Shelly Moore Capito (R-WV) in the Senate and Representatives Rob Wittman (R-VA), Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Jen Kiggans (R-VA) and Mike Thompson (D-CA) in the House. Congress passed the bill in late December and President Biden signed without delay.

AFS Urges House to Maintain Science-based ESA and Adequately Fund State-led Conservation of Imperiled Species

In response to a U.S. House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries hearing in July on the Endangered Species Act, AFS submitted comments on the importance on a science-based Endangered Species Act for imperiled fish and other aquatic resources. Last Congress, a bill was introduced that would weaken the scientific foundation of the law. In addition, AFS expressed support for the America’s Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act and the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act, as a cost-effective tool to prevent species from reaching the point of needing ESA protections.

Unfortunately, while the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act enjoyed broad bipartisan support in the Senate, it faced headwinds in the House. AFS continues to support robust, dedicated funding for state fish and wildlife agencies to address the 12,000 species identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

AFS Supports Sustainable Salmon Aquaculture in Washington

In November, in response to Washington State’s proposed ban on net pen salmon aquaculture, AFS urged consideration of recent science and cited the growing need for U.S. seafood and the advancement in best management practices in environmentally sustainable salmon production. AFS noted the lack of scientific evidence to support either a partial or full ban of net pen aquaculture in the State of Washington or else-where in the United States and highlighted the persistent, troubling falsehoods regarding the environmental footprint of net pen aquaculture. AFS explained that net pen aquaculture can be accomplished without causing adverse impacts to the surrounding environment or wild fish stocks through proper regulatory oversight, adherence to best management practices, and well-sited farms. In spite of the science, the state adopted a rule to prohibit commercial finfish net pen aquaculture on state-owned aquatic lands managed by its Department of Natural Resources. Lawsuits challenging the decision are pending.



AFS Calls for Removal of Lower Snake River Dams to House Committee

In early January of 2024, in response to a Water, Wildlife and Fisheries Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources hearing titled “Examining the Biden Administration’s Efforts to Eliminate the Pacific Northwest’s Clean Energy Production,” AFS submitted testimony highlighting the decades of rigorously peer-reviewed published reports and manuscripts that demonstrate that removing the four Lower Snake River dams is essential to restore critically at-risk populations of wild Snake River salmon and steelhead. AFS notes that Snake River populations are currently hovering on the brink of extinction. AFS cited the 2022 AFS policy statement on Snake River dams and urged policymakers to embrace the science, implement urgent actions to breach the four Lower Snake River dams to help recover salmon and steelhead at critical risk of extirpation, and take additional actions to replace dam services.

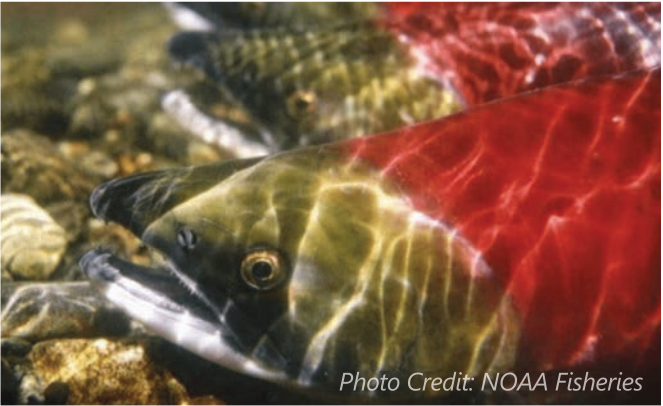


Photo Credit: NOAA Fisheries

AFS Capitol Hill Briefing—Advances in Science and Technology Leading to More Sustainable Aquaculture

On May 1, AFS hosted an online virtual Congressional briefing on advances in science and technology that have allowed for more sustainable aquaculture. The briefing brought together scientists in the field to share insights on aquaculture feed innovations, including the use of single-cell proteins, advanced cage technology to reduce escape risks during severe weather, and AI-powered cameras for precision feeding and monitoring. Additionally, they discussed methods to protect water quality and ensure fish health. The briefing highlighted the need for better solutions for feed ingredients that are that are scalable, affordable, and sustainable, as climate change will increasingly impact traditional feed ingredients. AFS has long supported the expansion of U.S. aquaculture in the open ocean and continues to highlight the advances in science and technology that makes aquaculture one of the most sustainable forms of protein production. Research into feed is vitally important for sustainability, particularly in light of climate change. As more severe weather events and warming waters impact traditional feed ingredients, it is critical to build resilience in the supply chain for our feed ingredients, just as we just do in our seafood supply chain.

What's New at AFS?

AFS BENEATH THE SURFACE

A deep dive in the programs and people at the American Fisheries Society



AFS has a Podcast!

Have you listened to the new AFS podcast? Launched in January of 2024, "AFS Beneath the Surface" takes a deep dive into the programs and people of AFS. Catch up on AFS news and enjoy interviews with AFS members such as Past President Cecil Jennings and current President Miguel Garcia. Now available on PodBean (<https://americanfisheriessociety.podbean.com/>), as well as Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, and Amazon Music.

Have an idea for a podcast?
Contact Lauren Maza at lmaza@fisheries.org

A Sampling of AFS's Podcast Episodes

- AFS Sections Roundup: Science Communication Section
- Introduction to Development at AFS
- AFS Sections Roundup: Fisheries Management Section
- Meet the 2024–2025 AFS President: Miguel Garcia
- AFS Award of Excellence: Francis Juanes
- Book Preview—Standard Methods for Sampling
- Introduction to the AFS Hutton Program
- Introduction to the AFS Membership Committee
- Climate Ambassadors Program—Group Interview
- Meeting Planning 101



AFS Welcomes New Executive Director Jeff Kopaska

After a nationwide search, AFS President Cecil Jennings announced that Jeff Kopaska was selected as the next Executive Director of the American Fisheries Society, succeeding Doug Austen. Retiring in September 2024 immediately following the Honolulu meeting, Austen served in the role as Executive Director for 11 years.

Prior to becoming the new ED, Kopaska was Fisheries Biometrician for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. In this position, he performed a wide range of responsibilities including designing, developing, and managing data systems, web sites, and technology products; communicating and engaging with stakeholders; supervising employees and assisting in fisheries management activities, project development, and grant writing; and performing fiscal and planning activities including contract oversight and budgeting.

Prior to joining the Iowa DNR, Kopaska held various research and science roles at Iowa State University. He holds a BA from Dordt University and an MS from Iowa State, and is a Certified Public Manager.

Kopaska Comes to New Position with a Strong AFS Resume

“

I'm humbled by this opportunity to direct the operations of this prestigious society that I've already given so much of my time," said Kopaska. "I'm looking forward to working with the Officers, Governing Board, and staff to build upon our 150-year heritage of conserving our aquatic resources and serving the fisheries profession."

Long before becoming the ED, Kopaska was already a well-known and active AFS member. He was President of the North Central Division and the Iowa Chapter, President of the Data and Technology Section, President Elect of the Fisheries Management Section, and he has served on numerous committees, often as chair. He has also served on the Governing Board of the Society three times and is currently on the Management Committee.

“

We couldn't be more pleased to find a candidate who is both so well-versed in AFS and also brings such a great skill set to this position. We are confident in his ability to lead the multi-faceted operations of our Society, help us face any current and future challenges, and take advantage of opportunities to grow this historic organization."

— Cecil Jennings,
AFS Past President

Membership Survey Results

Perceptions on AFS Membership and Recommendations for Action Based on 2022 Survey Results

In 2022, AFS conducted a survey of its members, as well as non-members, to identify current perceptions and preferences regarding the value of American Fisheries Society (AFS) membership and its associated benefits, assess the effectiveness of AFS initiatives and communication efforts, provide insight into the role of AFS in career development, and document motivations for membership in other societies. The membership survey included participation from current AFS members (1,486) as well as non-members (799) with interests in the fisheries profession. Survey results were summarized in total, and broken down by membership type.

What Benefits Are Most Important to Members?

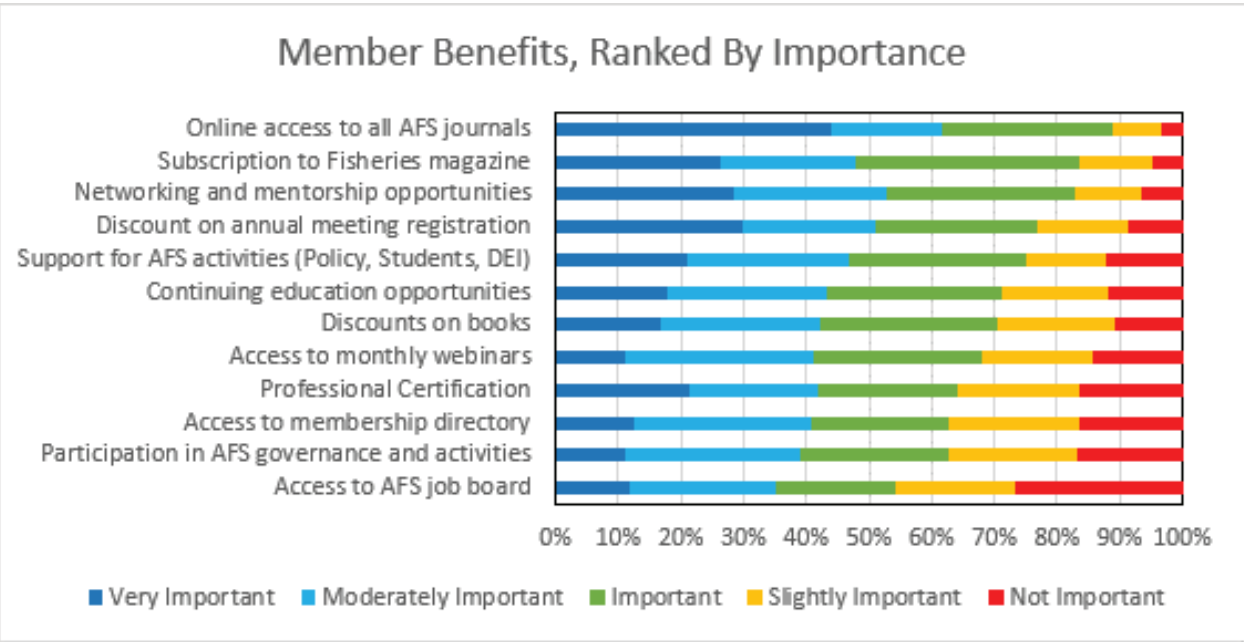
TOP 3

- Online access to AFS Journals
- Networking and mentorship Opportunities
- Subscription to *Fisheries*

BOTTOM 3

- Access to saved searches on job board
- Participation in AFS Governance
- Access to membership directory

Importance of AFS membership benefits from the member survey



Other Takeaways About Membership Benefits

- Discounts on annual meetings were more important to students, early career, and low and middle income
- Job boards were more important to students and early career
- Continuing education and certification more valued by low and middle income
- Life and retired members valued the membership directory

Good News!

When asked on a scale of 0-100 how likely they were to recommend AFS to a friend or colleague, the median value was 85!

A Note of Thanks!

AFS would like to recognize the members of the AFS Membership Committee who initially created the Membership Survey, particularly Amanda Croteau, the 2022–2023 Membership Co-chair, for the inordinate amount of time and effort she spent analyzing the data, compiling results and developing the results presentations for the Governing Board as well as writing the full article for *Fisheries* magazine (December 2024 edition).

Next Steps

The AFS Membership Committee spent most of 2024 translating the survey results into action. The Committee received feedback from several Sections, the Governing Board, and past Membership Committee members to develop the Membership Recruitment and Retention Action Plan. In 2025, the Membership Committee will spend much of its time working with relevant AFS Staff, Committees, and leadership to take action on the tasks that are identified as the highest priorities.

More Takeaways

- AFS needs to provide more equal value to all members regardless of career stage or region.
- Members need to be made aware of value outside of meetings.
- Lack of employer support is a barrier to membership.
- Members would like AFS to get a new database.
- Members prefer email and newsletters as form of communication.
- A majority of members are also members of other societies.
- Webinars are the preferred form of continuing education.
- Policy advocacy at the federal level on fisheries issues was highest ranked outreach and advocacy activities.

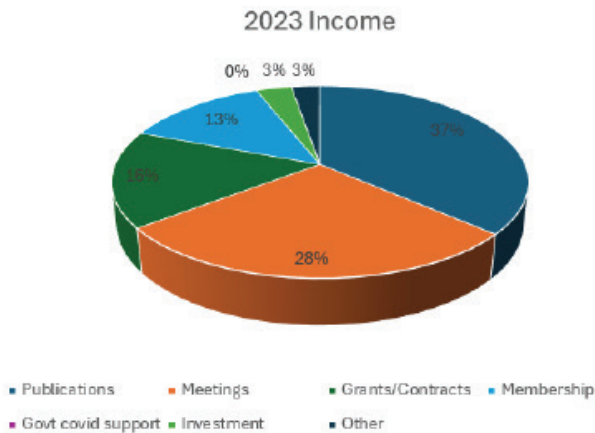
AFS Financial Update

2023 Financial Report

The 2024 Financial Report is currently being finalized and will be available in the second half of 2025. Below is the income statement for 2023.

Operating Statement	2023	% of Income	2022	% of Income
Publications	\$ 1,358,318	37%	\$ 1,239,491	22%
Meetings	1,041,366	28%	2,667,347	47%
Grants/Contracts	606,955	16%	666,704	12%
Membership	493,251	13%	466,094	8%
Govt covid support	-	0%	340,000	6%
Investment	121,015	3%	87,053	2%
Other	98,582	3%	162,227	3%
Totals	3,719,487	100%	5,628,916	100%
Meetings	1,268,298	34%	2,485,781	44%
Publications	724,607	19%	713,332	13%
Grants/Contracts	561,002	15%	540,533	10%
Membership	418,506	11%	405,485	7%
Other	326,995	9%	390,237	7%
Totals	3,299,408	89%	4,535,368	81%
Management / General	584,912	16%	631,017	11%
Total Expenses	3,884,320	104%	5,166,385	92%
Operating Net Change	(164,833)	-4%	462,531	8%
Investment gain (loss)	429,074	12%	(920,598)	-16%
Change in Net Assets	\$ 264,241	7%	\$ (458,067)	-8%

2023 Income

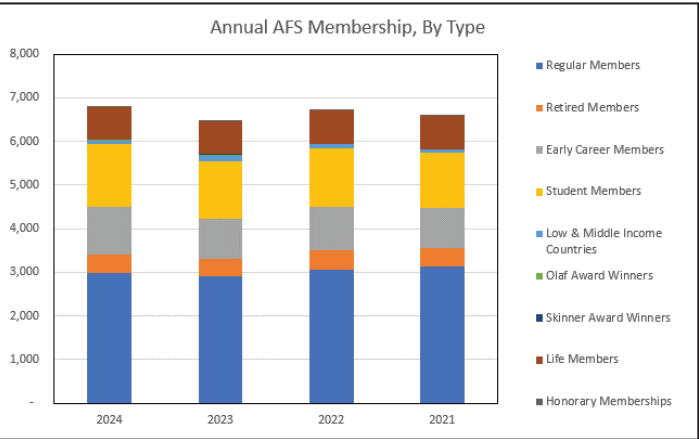


2024 Membership Report

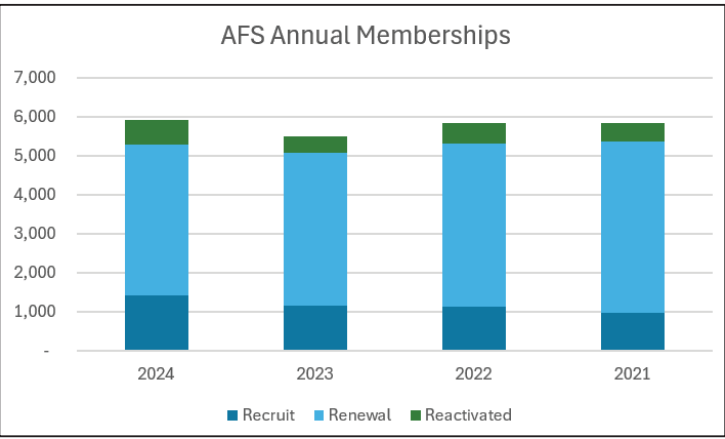
The total number of members was up by more than five percent (5%) in comparison to 2023 as of the fiscal year cut-off date of Aug. 31. Membership numbers were consistently even with 2023 numbers until summer when registration for the annual meeting became a driving factor for the increase in membership.

The membership campaign — “Connect, Advance, and Save with AFS Membership” continues to drive recruitment and retention efforts. AFS will continue with membership campaigns, as well as implement action items from the AFS Membership Recruitment and Retention Action Plan (based on results of the 2022 Membership and Non-member Survey) to garner renewals and new members in 2025. We are hoping that history repeats itself and registration for the San Antonio meeting will help impact membership numbers for 2025. AFS is continuously trying improve the value of AFS membership to bring more members into the fold.

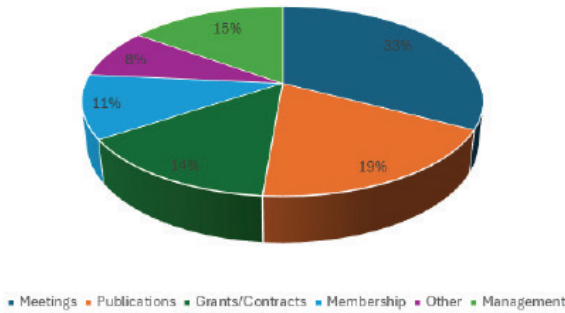
AFS Member Counts — All Types 2021 through 2025



New vs. Renewed vs. Rejoined Members 2021 through 2025



2023 Expenses



Financial Position Statement	2023	% of Assets	2022	% of Assets
Cash	\$ 268,941	5%	\$ 124,744	2%
Receivables	280,626	5%	384,915	7%
Inventory	158,171	3%	170,843	3%
Investments	4,689,367	80%	4,519,559	80%
Property	302,095	5%	314,396	6%
Prepays	160,164	3%	146,713	3%
Total Assets	5,859,364	100%	5,661,170	100%
Payables and accruals	316,601	5%	312,981	6%
Due to Subunits	177,295	3%	125,934	2%
Unearned member dues	132,845	2%	163,766	3%
Deferred Revenue	605,864	10%	385,048	7%
Line of credit	-	0%	350,000	6%
Investments of Subunits	337,384	6%	298,307	5%
Total Liabilities	1,569,989	27%	1,636,036	29%
Without restrictions	1,124,626	19%	881,205	16%
Board designated	730,170	12%	936,154	17%
With restrictions	2,434,579	42%	2,207,775	39%
Total Net Assets	4,289,375	73%	4,025,134	71%
Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 5,859,364	100%	\$ 5,661,170	100%

AFS Membership Campaign — Connect, Advance, and Save with AFS Membership!



Connect, Advance, and Save with AFS Membership!



Communications Platforms and Statistics

Communications is one of the core functions of any scientific society. At AFS, this includes websites, social media, newsletters, while also assisting Units with their communications platforms. Communications is also essential in supporting other AFS activities, such as conferences and policy. Using funds from a multi-state grant, we are about to venture into providing a new platform for information exchange—the Fisheries Research Collaboration Network, also known as Fishbook.

AFS HQ websites managed:

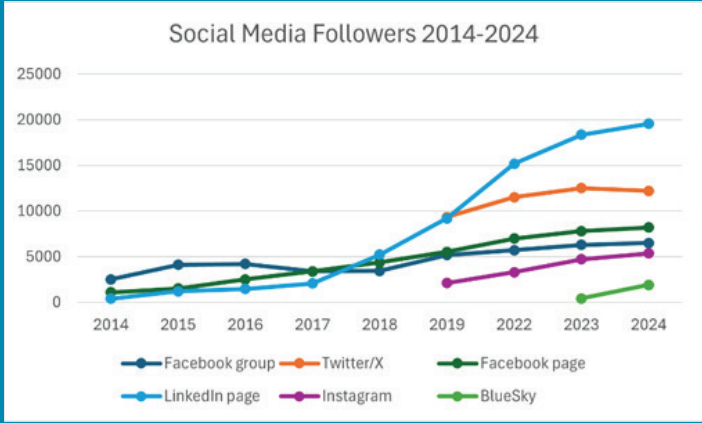
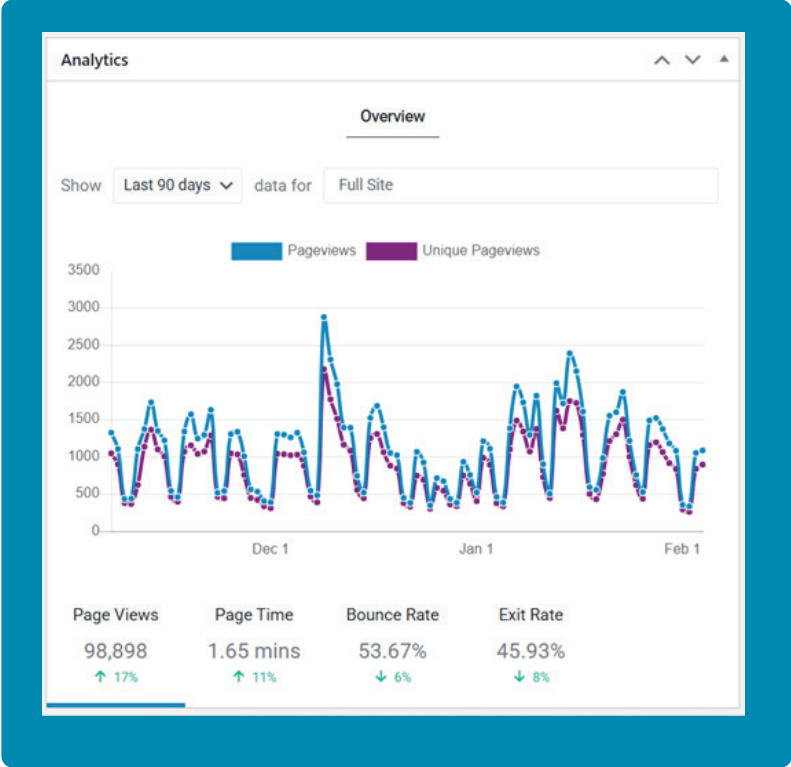
- Main AFS website (1,700 pages) fisheries.org
- Annual Meeting website afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org
- Climate Change website climate.fisheries.org
- Diversity website diversity.fisheries.org
- Fishbook Fisheries Research Collaboration Network (launching soon!) fishbook.fisheries.org

Unit websites:

- 46 Unit websites on AFS WordPress multisite
- 22 stand-alone Unit websites on AFS server

Unit listservs:

- 25 listservs
- 13,225 subscribers total



Rebranding Update— Unit Logos

In celebration of our 150th anniversary, AFS rebranded with a new logo in 2021. Since then, AFS Units have shown off their creativity in developing their own revamped logos that clearly connect to the new branding. Our goal is to have nearly all Units join in with new logos by the end of 2025

Check out a few of the new AFS Unit logos!



Follow AFS on Bluesky!

Bluesky has been around since 2019, but it's just recently gained in popularity as the alternative to X, formerly known as Twitter. AFS was among the first scientific societies to join Bluesky back in 2023 and now the platform is showing promise as the new social media home for the scientific community. Stay up to date on AFS activities and the latest science by joining our 2,200 followers!

Follow AFS

[@amfisheriessoc.bsky.social!](https://amfisheriessoc.bsky.social)

AFS Launches Its Very Own Social Networking Platform—"Fishbook"

The Fisheries Research Collaboration Network, also known as Fishbook, has completed beta testing and will be ready to launch to a wider audience soon. Fisheries professionals can post their current research projects, get feedback, and collaborate with scientists and managers in other states and provinces. The platform also includes online groups where AFS Units or ad hoc groups can converse and share documents and photos.



fishbook.fisheries.org

AWARDS

Congratulations to the 2024 AFS Award Recipients! The following awards were presented during the AFS Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i, September 15–19, 2024:

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The Society's highest award for scientific achievement is presented to a living AFS member for original and/or outstanding contributions to fisheries and aquatic biology.
Francis Juanes, University of Victoria

PRESIDENT'S FISHERY CONSERVATION AWARD

Presented for singular accomplishments or long-term contributions that advance aquatic resource conservation at a regional or local level.
Oneida Lake Association

WILLIAM E. RICKER RESOURCE CONSERVATION AWARD

Presented to an individual or organization for singular accomplishments or long-term contributions that advance aquatic resource conservation at a national or international level.
Duane Chapman

CARL R. SULLIVAN FISHERY CONSERVATION AWARD

Presented to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to the conservation of fishery resources.
Apache Trout Recovery Implementation Team

DOUG AUSTEN MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Presented to an individual for loyalty, dedication, and meritorious service to the Society throughout the years and for exceptional commitment to AFS's programs, objectives, and goals.

The Meritorious Service Award was renamed in Doug's honor at the 2024 Annual Meeting, upon his retirement as the AFS Executive Director.
Douglas Austen, American Fisheries Society, retired



Pictured left: Cecil Jennings presenting the Outstanding Large Chapter Award to the Alaska Chapter.

Pictured right: Jennings presenting Doug Austen, the outgoing AFS Executive Director, with award the named in his honor—the Doug Austen Meritorious Service Award.



AWARDS

EMMELINE MOORE PRIZE

Named after the first female AFS president, Emmeline Moore (1927–1928), this award recognizes career achievement in the promotion of demographic diversity in the Society.
Courtney Carothers, University of Alaska

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Recognizes outstanding contributions of time and energy for special projects or activities by AFS members.
Laura Hendee, American Fisheries Society

OUTSTANDING CHAPTER AWARDS

Recognizes outstanding professionalism, active resource protection and enhancement programs, and commitment to the mission of the Society.
Alaska Chapter—Large Chapter
Georgia Chapter—Small Chapter
University of Maine Student Subunit—Student Subunit

EXCELLENCE IN FISHERIES EDUCATION

Recognizes excellence in organized teaching and advising in the field of fisheries.
Dana Infante, Michigan State University

AFS FELLOWS—CLASS OF 2024

Doug Austen, American Fisheries Society
Yushen Chen, Chinese Academy of Sciences
Andy Danylchuk, University of Massachusetts–Amherst
Bronwyn Gillanders, University of Adelaide
Dana Infante, Michigan State University
J. Wesley Neal, Mississippi State University
Gayle Zydlewski, Maine Sea Grant & University of Maine
Joseph Zydlewski, USGS Maine Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Promotes the development of future leaders of the Society, and the fisheries profession as a whole, by providing selected candidates an opportunity to participate for one year in activities of the AFS Governing Board.

Pictured right with Cecil Jennings:
Manuel Coffill-Rivera, University of Southern Alabama
Hadley Boehm, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Sarah Vogel, University of Maine
Zachary Beard, Arizona Game & Fish Department



AWARDS

JOHN E. SKINNER MEMORIAL FUND

The Skinner Fund was established to provide monetary travel awards for deserving graduate students or exceptional undergraduate students to attend the AFS Annual Meeting.

Recipients:

Thomas Bustamante, Virginia Tech
 Hannah Gottesman, University of Florida
 Veronica Groves, McGill University
 Kadie Heinle, Montana State University
 Terra Martinez, New Mexico State University
 Matthew Mensinger, University of Maine
 Carolyn Merriam, University of Maine
 Samara Nehemiah, University of Maryland for Environmental Science
 Joseph Nolan, University of Georgia
 MeiLin Precourt, University of Hawaii
 Benjamin John Schall, South Dakota State University
 Quinn Smith, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Shannon Smith, Virginia Institute of Marine Science
 Justin Sturtz, South Dakota State University
 Levi Umland, University of Missouri
 Claire Vaage, University of Washington
 Nicholas Voss, University of Idaho
 Caroline Wiernicki, University of Delaware
 McLean Worsham, University of Hawaii
 Kaylyn Zipp, University of Maine

Jennings pictured with the Steven Berkeley Marine Conservation Fellowship Runner-Up award winner, Annie Innes-Gold.

Jennings pictured with the William R. Mote Fisheries Fellowship award winner, BJ Schall.



Jennings with the Best Student Poster Presentation winner, Kent Glover.

“

The Skinner Award allowed me to attend the national meeting in 2024, where I was able to share my research and connect with other fishery professionals. I credit AFS and the people I've met through it with where I am today, so to be able to attend this meeting and make some lifelong fisheries friends and share my research meant the world to me. Now, I hope to take the things I learned at the national meeting and pay it forward and help the next generation of fisheries professionals. Thank you AFS!”

— Quinn Smith,
John E. Skinner Award recipient



JOHN E. SKINNER MEMORIAL FUND (Continued)

Honorable Mentions:

Samantha Alaimo, Rutgers University
 Ivy Baremore, University of Exeter
 Matthew Maldonado, University of North Dakota
 Christopher Rounds, University of Minnesota
 Hunter Torolski, Oklahoma State University

J. FRANCES ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to a female AFS Member and doctoral candidate who is conducting aquatic research.
 Samara Nehemiah, University of Maryland for Environmental Science
 Runner-up: Marta Ulaski, Simon Fraser University

STUDENT WRITING CONTEST

Best paper:

Ryan Bohen, University of Wisconsin Stevens-Point
 Centenarian Longevity in the Midwest

Runners-Up:

Manuel Coffill-Rivera, University of Southern Alabama

“

I am very grateful to have been a recipient of the Skinner award. This award has a prestigious history of promoting the careers of students in fisheries related sciences and made it possible for me to attend the 154th annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society. This conference was a great networking opportunity and stepping stone for me and because of this award I left the conference feeling very well positioned for the next chapter in my career.”

— McLean Worsham,
John E. Skinner Award recipient

AFS Staff

Call or email us at any time if you have a question or need anything.
The AFS staff is here to serve you all your membership needs!

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Dan Cassidy | 301-464-6644 | dcassidy@fisheries.org

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— *Fisheries* Magazine
— Gray Literature

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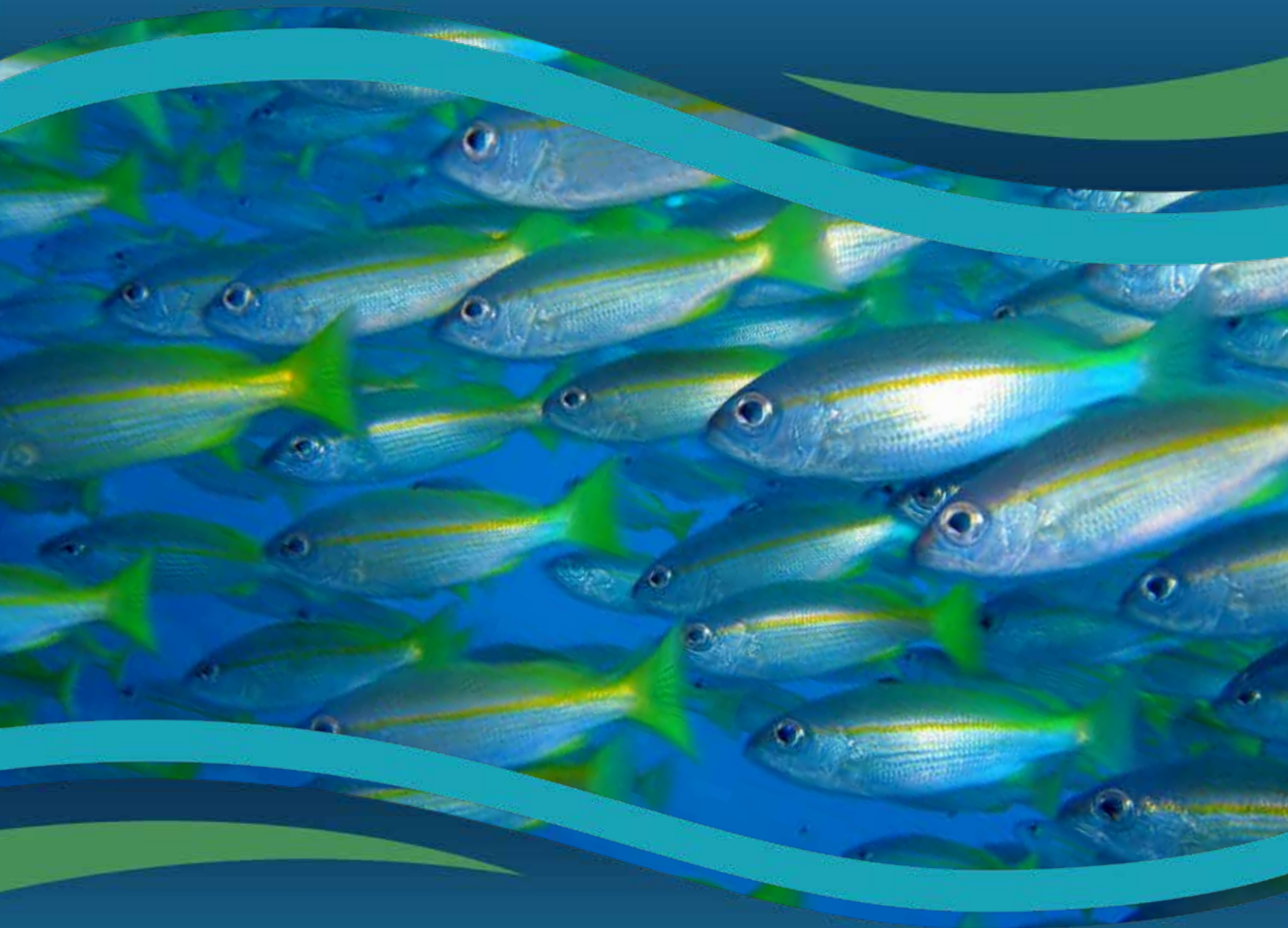
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