

2018 AFS Annual Meeting

Atlantic City, NJ

Unit Leaders Session

Michael Allen was in attendance, representing the Missouri Chapter of American Fisheries Society (MOAFS), at the request of MOAFS president Clint Hale. Topics discussed during the meeting were services available from AFS, policy updates, and speed networking of the 150th anniversary meeting, communications, diversity/equal opportunities, student chapters, effective meetings, and policy.

All attendees of the meeting were most concerned with membership, or lack there-of. Many ideas were brought to the table including: joint meetings with other chapters and units, inviting legislators to meetings, making meetings more relatable to members and students. Retaining members was also brought up. I informed the group of the member spotlight program and it was well received. Many questions were asked and discussed during this session of the meeting.

Services available

- Better diversity facilitation
 - Communications of ideas for recruitment of members of diverse backgrounds, from AFS staff to chapters
 - Strategic plan for diversity in members is in the works and will be send to unit levels from parent society
- Continuing education
 - AFS leadership is developing a course program to help students with interactions
 - Courses will instruct on interpersonal relationships, public interactions, interview skills, communications and messages, and how to make fisheries more relatable to public
 - Will be taught at the chapter and unit levels
- Publications
 - How to get more publications into AFS related periodicals
 - More entries to allow for better selection of quality, relatable material
 - Got to AFS publications first
- Electronic Services
 - Member services survey
 - Gray literature database project
 - Website and unit website template development
 - Developing workshop for web master at next year's AFS meeting
 - No need to have good experience with new format, template is fillable so unit and chapters can have similar format
 - Possibility of webinar or webex for those who can't attend national meeting
- AFS general services updates
 - Updates brochure- "take your career farther"
 - Table top booth display
 - Leader guide-unit leader guide

- Unit resource center
 - Downloadable on AFS website
 - Website security
 - Internal and external security features
 - Will be a fee to use from parent society
- Financial services
 - Meeting contracting
 - Professional meeting advisory and contracting services
 - No fee for these services
 - Chapter insurance program
 - \$2 million coverage to chapter for general liability
 - \$150 annual premium
 - Unit investment program

Policy update

- Recovery of American Wildlife Act
 - Advanced legislation to provide dedicated funding to conservation of imperiled species
 - \$1.3 billion from oil and gas revenues
- Waters of the United States-clean water act
 - Administrations trying to replace 2015 rule- all waters (including headwaters) are determined to be waters of the United States. This rule is being contested through legislators
 - AFS is in support of 2015 rule
 - AFS developing a headwaters stream working group
- Magnuson-Stevens Act
 - AFS is working to develop policy recommendations to inform congressional efforts to re-authorize and amend federal fish legislation
 - AFS developing a special committee of marine fisheries professionals

Speed networking

- 150th anniversary meeting
 - 2020, Columbus, OH
 - Pre: social media blitz, merchandising, historic displays from chapters
 - During: history, time capsule, birthday cake, railcar demonstration and history
- Communications/social media
 - No “webmaster” required
 - AFS website template
 - Social media guidelines from AFS
 - Communications committee
- Diversity/equal opportunity
 - Travel award for undergraduate/grad students of color to attend annual meeting, \$500
 - Tool kit available from AFS to recruit diverse members, available for various levels (chapters, units, etc.)
 - Partnering with other natural resources and non NR organizations

- Find gaps in outreach and education for diverse members
- Policy
 - Utilize AFS for any national concerns that might affect chapters
 - Determine bylaws for utilizing AFS in government advocacy
 - Local issues can go directly through chapter, but consultation through AFS is suggested