

ESTUARIES SECTION
NEWSLETTER
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Although our annual Estuaries Section Newsletter was little late in coming the bright side is that the mid-year AFS Governing Board meeting has already taken place thus, information regarding this meeting was able to be included.

Nashville, Tennessee was the site of the 2009 annual AFS meeting. I trust a good time was had by all. Meeting friends and colleagues, discussing current topics in fisheries science plus all the night time entertainment was truly a recipe for a successful meeting. Two very important functions of our Section are to promote participation of students, through the student travel awards, and to promote the dissemination of scientific information about estuarine fisheries by sponsoring symposia at the Annual Meeting. I believe we have been successful with both of these activities.

Fred J. Genthner, President,
Estuaries Section, American Fisheries Society

2009 Annual Business Meeting

Our Annual Business meeting was held September 1, 2009 during the annual AFS meeting. As usual our meeting was in conjunction with our friends from the Marine Fisheries Section. The delicious beverages and hors d'oeuvres were proof positive that we can mix business with pleasure.

Fred Goetz completed his two year term as President of the Estuaries Section. The Executive Committee and Section members greatly appreciated the great job he did during his tenure in this leadership position. Fred Genthner began his term as President.

Tom Bigford presented the Dr. Nancy Foster Habitat Conservation Award to Charles “Si” Simenstad of the University of Washington’s School of Aquatic Fishery Sciences. Dr. Simenstad, an authority in coastal marine ecology, was a pioneer in recognizing the vital nature of near shore and estuarine habitats.

A Habitat Section of AFS was formed in 2009. Tom Bigford will serve as liaison between the Estuaries and Habitat Section.

It was decided that we should have another look at our strategic plan; a few bullets will suffice as our strategic plan. Any assistance with this endeavor would be greatly appreciated.

SAML Travel Award Winners

Erik T. Lang is currently working toward an M.S. degree in Coastal Sciences at the University of Southern Mississippi where his research interests are focused on estuarine fishes, particularly of the family *Fundulidae* (killifish). Their habitat preference, reproduction and development are of main interest, and further knowledge on these topics could provide insight to further understand patterns of saltmarsh ecology.

Jeanne-Marie Havrylkoff is currently working towards an M.S. degree in Coastal Sciences at the University of Southern Mississippi. Her research focuses on the ecology of juvenile gulf sturgeon, *Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*, with emphasis on the identification of essential nursery habitats within the Pascagoula River and Mississippi sound. To identify critical habitats, Jeanne-Marie is coupling acoustic tracking of individual fish with dietary analysis and prey-availability data from benthic samples.

Bridgette Froeschke is a Ph.D. candidate at the Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University. Her dissertation focuses on using mathematical modeling as a tool to predict future abundance of estuarine fishes (specifically southern flounder) and to determine essential nursery habitat using abiotic and biotic factors. Her research interests include ecophysiology, fish ecology, behavioral ecology, reef fish ecology, marine ecology, fisheries management, climate change and ocean law and policy.

Edward J. McGinley was the recipient of the Estuaries Section student travel award. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. from West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV. His project goal is to determine if fatty acid signatures are useful in examining the diets of striped bass.

In Nashville the Estuaries and Marine Fisheries Section co-sponsored a symposium entitled “Energy Production and Fisheries in the Coastal Zone”. As organizer of this symposium I wish to thank the speakers for stimulating presentations and the audience for providing insightful questions.

New Business

An election for the officers was held during October 2009. None of the offices were contested. Your officers this year are as follows:

President, Fred J. Genthner, PhD. Fred is a microbiologist with the US EPA and a past recipient of EPA's Science Achievement Award in Biology/Ecology which is presented jointly with AFS for his work on non-target effects of intentionally released microorganisms on aquatic animals.

Lee Benaka, President-elect. Mr. Benaka is a Fishery Management Specialist and National Coordinator of the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program. He has worked for NOAA Fisheries since 1999, first for the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program and currently in the Domestic Fisheries Division of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries. Prior to that, Mr. Benaka worked as a contractor in the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Division of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries. In addition, Mr. Benaka was the first American Fisheries Society (AFS)/Sea Grant Fellow, and in that capacity he edited Fish Habitat: Essential Fish Habitat and Rehabilitation (AFS 1999).

Abigail Franklin, Secretary. Our current Secretary is running for a second term. Abigail received her MS in Wildlife & Fisheries Conservation from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and is currently a John A. Knauss Sea Grant Fellow working in National Marine Fisheries Service Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Treasurer, Anthony Overton, PhD. Our current Treasurer is also running for a second term. Dr. Overton is an Associate Professor at the Harriot College of Arts and Science, Department of Biology, East Carolina, University, Greenville, North Carolina.

Mid-year governing board meeting

Abigail Franklin attended the mid-year AFS Governing Board meeting. Below are some of the issues discussed.

- The Executive Committee is very proud of the Marine and Coastal Fisheries Journal, it's the first open access journal that AFS has had and the first new journal in 15 years. They regard it as a "journal of the future" as it accepts video and databases. The number of submissions is still low. They are going to add a moderated debate function so that policy and management issues can be addressed.
- Membership of Young Professionals is down. That could reflect people going back to school and becoming student members, or lack of state and federal agency funds to support their membership.
- AFS makes money from library subscriptions for journals and these funds support almost all of the other activities of the Society. In essence, the librarians are the ones supporting us. As librarians are cutting back on subscriptions in order to save money, please provide get feedback from your librarians to please not cut the AFS Journals.

- The Governing Board approved motions to proceed with draft AFS policy statements on "climate change" and "lead in sport fishing tackle," as presented by the Resource Policy Committee.

2010 Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh (12-16 September)

The plan is again to have our 2010 Annual Business meeting jointly with the Marine Fisheries Section. This year the Estuaries Section is scheduled to begin the joint meeting. Lee Benaka our President-elect will chair our Sections business meeting in Pittsburgh.

Our Section will again sponsor a symposium at the annual meeting entitled "Stock Assessment Methods for Data-poor Situations". This symposium focuses on the development, evaluation and application of assessment methods and models that are appropriate when the available data are extremely limited, with an emphasis on example cases. Doug Vaughan, Michael Prager, John Hoenig, Todd Gedamke and Alec MacCall are the organizers. It is anticipated that this symposium will be an entire day of oral presentations.

Finally, Steve Jordan will be putting in a request to the Southern Association of Marine Laboratories for \$1,000.00 to support travel awards. Anthony Overton expects our Section can provide \$1,500.00 for Student Travel Awards.