



THE LATERAL LINE

Oklahoma Chapter of the
American Fisheries Society

December 2022

Volume 41(1)

OKAFS Officers:

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President's Message:

Greetings, OKAFS members. Although the Oklahoma Chapter includes members with a diversity of careers, from young students to grizzled professors and agency folks, I imagine we've all had similar moments of doubt when we wondered about the gravity or purpose of our chosen profession: fisheries. Whether it's crippling impostor syndrome, where the challenges of your studies, career, or profession ahead seem an impossible task for someone with your skills and experience... or the opposite... where you wonder if your job and your efforts went away, would anyone actually notice? Or would mother nature just keep on trucking? No, you're not on the verge of a mental crisis. I think it's healthy for all of us to do some self-reflection on occasion. Thinking about why you are in the profession of fisheries... what are the realistic (lasting?) impacts of your concentrated thoughts and efforts? All those hours/years thinking about fish, collecting data, writing reports or papers... what will come of it? Hopefully, positive change. Change that lasts long after your career is over. Sometimes, it seems, the challenges are too big for one person to really make an impact. However, when the efforts of a bunch of fisheries folks are aggregated, say within the Oklahoma Chapter of American Fisheries Society, the positive impacts are multiplied.

It's crazy for one person to try to confront alone the environmental and other challenges to the fisheries within our state, much less worldwide. If we were all so blessed to be responsible for our own little spring-fed lake, shielded from outside influences, we could research, restore, augment, whatever that aquatic ecosystem and its fisheries community to our heart's desire. The impacts would likely be readily observable. Perhaps the trout or bass anglers on Facebook would actually be satisfied. In reality, we as fisheries professionals are dealing with complex ecological systems—global climate change (with its increasing floods and shifting thermal/discharge patterns), water shortages, and invasive species—in addition to myriad other anthropogenic impacts on those systems.



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2023 OKAFS Annual Meeting

August 28-30, 2023

Lee's Resort

Grand Lake

Grove, Oklahoma



Details on registration, lodging, and the call for abstracts will be sent out via the OKAFS listserv.

*We hope to see
you there!*



You may have seen a recent study on the essentially universal detection of “forever chemicals” at harmful levels in the flesh of freshwater fishes across the United States. It’s reasonable to wonder if the amazing aquatic biodiversity of our state’s waters will eventually yield to intersex copi-riding zebra mussels in a warm, oily soup of lead, microplastics, and PFAs. While this is hopefully a farcical prediction and a dramatic deviation from the little spring-fed lake of angler bliss, our current and future reality in Oklahoma fisheries likely lies somewhere in between.

In a 1970 article, Barry Commoner, a prominent environmentalist and the author of *The Closing Circle*, stated that, “The first law of ecology is that everything is connected to everything else,” encapsulating a concept perhaps pondered by even the earliest in fisheries. An optimist would view the fact that everything is connected in fisheries as an ease of one’s burden as a lowly fisheries student/professor/biologist/etc. in tackling the massive challenges highlighted above. Just as everything is connected in the ecosystems we love and study, those connections expand to include us, as fisheries professionals. The collective efforts, knowledge, and experience of fisheries professionals, additive and perhaps multiplicative since time immemorial, are daily making us better equipped to confront these challenges. The Oklahoma Chapter of the American Fisheries Society serves as an aggregating network to connect all of us as fisheries professionals in this state. It exists as a local extension of the parent society to foster scientific interaction, cooperation, and local advocacy for the fishes. Together, we are better equipped to confront challenges that are bigger than ourselves. I look forward to another year of collaboration and networking with fellow members of OKAFS. Thank you for being part of this organization and I hope to see you at the annual meeting August 28-30, 2023 at Lee’s Resort on Grand Lake, if not before then.

Keep up the great work.

-Jason



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OK AFS Committee Chairs

Awards Committee

Eric Brennan

ODWC Northeast Region
Fisheries Technician
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Student Concerns

Anthony Rodger

ODWC Fisheries Biologist
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Continuing Education

Dr. Dan Shoup

OSU Associate Professor of
Fisheries Ecology
Daniel.Shoup@okstate.edu

Environmental Concerns

Elaine Ewigman

ODWC Fisheries Biologist
Elaine.Ewigman@odwc.ok.gov

Activities

Trevor Starks

ODWC Fisheries Biologist
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Communications

Dr. Jim Long

OK Coop Fish and Wildlife
Research Unit Leader
LongJM@okstate.edu

FINANCIAL UPDATE

| As Of: | 7/30/2021 | 8/28/2022 | 1/19/2023 |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Cash | \$ 144.00 | \$ 144.00 | \$ 149.00 |
| Checking Account | \$ 23,896.41 | \$ 31,146.25 | \$ 25,124.59 |
| Mutual Funds | \$ 25,529.40 | \$ 24,936.86 | \$ 25,696.23 |
| Total Assets | \$ 49,569.81 | \$ 56,227.11 | \$ 50,969.82 |

2022 Disbursement Highlights

OSU Subunit Support: \$1000.00
 ODWC Division Meeting Support: \$483.30
 Barry Bolton Retirement Plaque: \$57.77
 Four Student Annual Meeting Reimbursements: \$404.18
 Jimmie Pigg Scholarship: \$1000.00
 Annual Meeting at Lake Murray Lodge: \$5173.30
 2023 SDAFS Meeting Sponsorship: \$500.00
 AFS Warmwater Streams Committee Support: \$200.00
 James K. Schooley Scholarship: \$250.00
 -Ashley Nealis





NOMINATIONS AND AWARDS

OKAFS awards history (partial)

Submitted by Eric Brennan, Awards Committee Chair

2022 Fisheries Worker of the Year:

Cliff Sager

Previous recipients: Jimmie Pigg (1985), Gene Gilliland (1986), Kim Erickson (1987), Jim Smith (1989), Al Zale (1990), Jeff Boxrucker (1991), Bill Matthews (1993), Garland Wright (1995), Ken Collins (1996), Harold Namminga (1998), Bill Fisher (1999), Greg Summers (2000), Jack Harper (2002), James Vincent (2003), Paul Balkenbush (2004), Jim Schooley (2005), Tim Patton (2006), James Vincent (2007), Brent Gordon (2008), Ike McKay (2009), Gary Peterson (2010), Robert Wichers (2011), Jim Burroughs (2012), Jason Schooley (2013), Brandon Brown (2014), Jay Barfield (2015), Kurt Kuklinski (2016), Shannon Brewer (2017), Dan Shoup (2018), Daniel Fenner (2019), Jon West (2020), Richard Snow (2021)

2022 Jimmie Pigg Student Scholarship Award:

Benjamin Kelly

Previous Recipients: Andrew Taylor (2014), Joey Dyer (2014), Trevor Starks (2015), John Datillo (2017), Skylar Wolf (2019), Garret Kula (2019), Graham Montague (2020), Doug Zentner (2021), Briant Nguyen (2021)

2022 James K Schooley Best Student Presentation Award:

Tanner Scholten

Previous Recipients: Bob Mollenhauer (2015), Ryan Gary (2020), Doug Zentner (2021)

2022 Lifetime Achievement Award: None

Previous Recipients: Greg Summers (2014), Gene Gilliland (2014), Bill Shelton (2016), Bob Martin (2019)



COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CONTINUING EDUCATION

There was no activity for the committee this calendar year. As always, the committee would value suggestions from the membership about potential future workshop topics that would be useful to the chapter.

-Dr. Dan Shoup 405-744-9671
dshoup@okstate.edu

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Over the past year, we did not have any new business or additional notes from activities. As for changes: I relieved myself as chair for the activities and Trevor Stark took over. I would like to thank him for volunteering his time and taking over this committee.

-Clayton Porter
clayton.porter@odwc.ok.gov

STUDENT CONCERNS

There was no activity for the committee this calendar year. In the past, our annual event was the student mentor lunch at the Oklahoma Natural Resources Conference, but this event has not happened in recent years. I plan to reach out to the Oklahoma State AFS student subunit to see if there are any pressing concerns and determine how this committee could better serve current students in the upcoming year.

-Anthony Rodger
anthony.rodger@odwc.ok.gov

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Environmental Concerns doesn't have anything to report. Planning on getting this group in motion in this upcoming year. Suggestions relating to environmental concerns are welcomed.

-Elaine Ewigman
elaine.ewigman@odwc.ok.gov



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The OK AFS Communications Committee (Jim Long [chair], Abby Johns, Daniel Fenner, Jon West and Nathan Copeland) met on October 31, 2022, to discuss the status of the new email listserv, ways to increase member engagement with each other and the chapter, and the status of the newsletter. The listserv operated by eMailDodo was compromised, and AFS set up chapters with access to a new service: SimpleLists. Posts have already been conveyed through SimpleLists, so it appears to be working well. If a member wants to post something to the list, an email can be sent to any of the chapter ExComm or the Communications Committee Chair. Posting by the membership at large is not enabled.

Member engagement is a focus of President Schooley, and the committee talked about the Twitter handle that the chapter maintains, the webpage, and the newsletter (The Lateral Line). The Twitter page is not very active, but keeping the handle for the future, such as when the chapter will be in charge of an SD AFS meeting, may be useful. With the pandemic, the webpage became stagnant, but we've updated it with current content. Check it out at <https://units.fisheries.org/okafs/>. In the future, we hope to work on additional tools for engagement. Emails, even from the listserv, can become overwhelming if a lot of content is delivered that way. Currently, the committee is looking into alternatives such as Slack channels (<https://slack.com/>) or creating a discussion board, such as the kind used by the North American Native Fish Association (<http://forum.nanfa.org/>). The listserv is a good mechanism to deliver information to the membership from the top down, which is necessary, but an additional tool to encourage more interaction among members would need to be something different. Let us know if you have any opinions about these options for helping members engage with each other.

Lastly, we spoke with the OSU Student Subunit, who produces the newsletter. They intend to put out a newsletter twice per year. Depending on when the annual meeting occurs, the newsletter is meant to provide a mechanism to distribute information before the meeting, including information such as dates and venues of the meeting, including a call for presentations. Also, the newsletter will serve as a vehicle for letting the membership know what happened at the last meeting (officer election, status of funds, award winners, etc.).

If anyone has comments about the work of the committee, please let chair Jim Long know.

-Jim Long
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OKLAHOMA CHAPTER AFS
was chartered on September 8, 1968.

The mission of the chapter is:

- To promote conservation, development, and wise use of the aquatic and fishery resources of Oklahoma.
- To promote and evaluate the development and advancement of all aspects of fisheries science and management in Oklahoma.
- To gather and disseminate scientific, technical, and other information about fisheries science and management to Chapter members and the general public through publications, meetings and other forms of communications.
- To encourage competent teaching of fisheries science and management in Oklahoma colleges and universities and promote the continuing education of Oklahoma fisheries workers.

OKLAHOMA AFS MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME: _____(Last) _____(First)

AFFILIATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____(Dept., Bldg., Office, Street, PO Box, etc.) _____(City) _____(State) _____(Zip)

DAY PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: 1 Year (\$5)_____ 2 Years (\$10)_____ 3 Years (\$15)_____ Life (\$50)_____

MEMBERSHIP STATUS: Professional_____ Student_____

COMMITTEES (please choose at least one): Activities_____ Awards_____ Continuing Ed._____ Environmental Concerns_____ Fundraising_____ Program_____

Detach, make check payable to OKAFS, and send to: Ashley Nealis, OKAFS
Secretary/Treasurer, 417 S. Silverdale Lane, Ponca City, OK 74604. Phone: (405)255-5153.
Email: ashley.nealis@odwc.ok.gov





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ODWC Internship Opportunities

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has established an Internship Program to help students that are majoring in wildlife related fields to gain work experience. The Department has a limited number of internship positions available. Positions are seasonal and vary by location and duration.

Internships are primarily in the spring and summer, with occasional fall positions. Locations are state-wide. Work schedules will be determined by the supervisor. Positions will be limited to two terms not to exceed 975 hours per term. (a term is a 12-month period starting with the hire date). A 3rd term may be worked only if the Intern is continuing their education. Verification must be submitted if rehired for a 3rd term. Lodging is not provided.

Intern applicants must be actively pursuing a degree, or have obtained a degree, in the following college majors:

- Wildlife Conservation Science
- Wildlife Ecology Education
- Biology
- Zoology
- Other related wildlife degrees

Graduate degree candidates, seniors, juniors, and sophomores with majors in wildlife conservation and those with previous related work experience in fisheries or wildlife will receive preference. To find the application or more information about other job requirements go to the ODWC's website at <https://www.wildlifedepartment.com/odwc-careers>. Also, the ODWC has created a promotional video about the Internship Program that can be found on their website.

STUDENT SUBUNIT

The goal of the Oklahoma State University Student Subunit of the American Fisheries Society this past year was to become more involved in the University. To be more involved we formed multiple intramural sport teams, participated in the homecoming parade, and entered a campus-wide chili cookoff. We are excited for the Spring semester and are planning to host a fisheries techniques seminar at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, we are going to focus on professional development for our students by inviting more guest speakers to our monthly subunit meetings. We hope to help our student members find opportunities in the American Fisheries Society and the broader field of fisheries.

-Abigail Johns

President:

Abby Johns

Abigail.Elizabeth.Johns@okstate.edu



Vice President:

Tanner Scholten

Tanner.Scholten@okstate.edu



Secretary/Treasurer:

Ben Kelly

Benjamin.Kelly@okstate.edu



Faculty Advisor:

Dr. Dan Shoup



Faculty Advisor:

Dr. Jim Long

