

# The Newsletter of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

Fall 2024 Newsletter  
Volume 50, Issue 2

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CELEBRATING 50 YEARS: FROM FOUNDING TO THE FUTURE

BY STEVEN BARDIN



Picture it, Dr. Perkin sitting at his desk, penning a letter. He calls an unsuspecting undergrad student and hands them the letter. The student takes off up the Brazos on a kayak shouting “The meeting is coming, the meeting is coming”. This is exactly what it was like pre internet.

The meeting is in fact coming in January, we'll gather in College Station, the birthplace of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. To celebrate our founding there is no better place for our annual meeting. I imagine those inaugural members sitting in a room back then, likely debating the need for an organization and how to effectively promote fisheries science in Texas. Their conversations probably balanced intense formalities with the excitement of laying the foundation for something truly impactful.

The founders were guided by the objectives of the American Fisheries Society, as laid out in Article I of the Constitution: to promote conservation and wise use of fisheries,

advance fisheries science, and share knowledge. To these, our Texas Chapter added a critical piece—encouraging the exchange of information among members with a professional interest in fisheries within the state. I'm certain they discussed the importance of sharing knowledge and maybe even considered fundraising and student scholarships, but I doubt they envisioned the endowment we proudly maintain today. Thanks to the efforts of past leaders like Dave Terre and now Brian Van Zee, this endowment stands as one of our chapter's greatest accomplishments, enabling us to support the next generation of fisheries scientists in ways the founders could only dream of.

While they likely didn't predict a future with 14 committees and absolutely no one spoke of websites, social media of the “Internet Committee,” the spirit of their work lives on in every aspect of our chapter today. From fostering collaboration to advancing science, the work of our committees is a testament to their vision and commitment.

Our 2024 meeting in Nacogdoches, the oldest town in Texas, was a celebration of history in its own right. Now, as we gather in College Station, we return to our roots. As a history enthusiast, I encourage you to explore the excellent work of Ray Matthews and Michele Nations on the chapter's history, available on our website. It's a fascinating journey through the people, events, and milestones that shaped who we are today.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President messages.....	1-7
2025 Meeting info .....	8-9
ExComm meeting minutes .....	10-12

### ITEMS OF NOTE

- 2025 TCAFS Annual Meeting to be held in College Station January 16-18th. Register [here](#) today!
- TCAFS memberships can be completed online now! Click [here](#) to start or renew a membership today!

TCAFS 2024

PRESIDENT  
MESSAGES

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(CONTINUED)

Our founders set us on a path, but it's through the passion and dedication of our members that their vision has flourished. At this year's meeting, we'll build on their legacy with the full array of modern activities: continuing education, a service project, student socials, poster and research presentations, an awards banquet, an auction, a business meeting, and an election. These events embody the community and collaboration they envisioned 50 years ago. I will encourage you as always to bring to the meeting the desire to create community, mentor and be mentored, and share the experience with as many colleagues as you can.

If you love the chapter's history as much as I do, it's time to be part of that history. Volunteer for a committee. Run for office. Let's honor the past by shaping the future.

See you in College Station!

Steven Bardin

President, Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society



# PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE

BY JOSH PERKIN

From the desk of the President-Elect,

To my friends and colleagues of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. It is my pleasure to announce that our next annual meeting will be held in College Station, Texas, January 16-18, 2025. Now some of you may be thinking “weren’t we just there like 6 years ago?” and my response to that question would be “well, yes, but that was pre-pandemic and we’re all different people now.” Plus, College Station is a different person now – or place that is. Our student enrollment has increased by 10,000+ since then and that is literally like taking a different small town and dropping it into College Station. But more importantly, this next meeting marks 50 years since the establishment of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society and that event occurred in College Station – so what better backdrop to showcase the amazing membership we’ve grown into.



The executive committee has been working very hard to bring together a meeting that I’m certain we’ll all cherish. Our President Steven Bardin and Past President Chris Mace have provided excellent guidance on how to organize a meeting; and for security reasons we have all avoided being in the same place at the same time. Stephen Curtis, our treasured Treasure, has been infinitely patient and I can say from first-hand accounts that he is an amazing negotiator. In the Lifetime movie made about TCAFS, Stephen should be played by Arnold Schwarzenegger. Matt Troia, our secretary that’s second-to-none, has provided outstanding coordination and communication. Recognition for all the successes in planning this meeting goes to these colleagues and any failures should be noted and mailed to the Perkins Family Restaurant.

Perhaps the most exciting part of planning our next meeting has been to see the committee chairs spring into action. Beth Silvy and the awards committee are currently reviewing nominations for awards. Blake Thornton has lined out excellent continuing education sessions focused on fisheries management, native fish conservation, and aquatic plant identification. Dave Buzan and Preston Bean have compiled abstracts for poster and oral presentations and are assembling a program now. Abstracts are due Friday December 6, 2024, and Remember to register for the meeting and reserve a room at the Hilton College Station & Conference Center—early registration and room registration end Wednesday December 25, 2024. Brian Van Zee continues to manage growing endowments, meaning Jennifer Butler and her committee can continue to offer highly funded scholarships to our students. Many thanks to Ryan Seymour and Haley Kokel for their tremendous work sharing news and information through the website and social media. It is also very heartening to see new committee chairs step into their roles, including Tommy Johnson now chair of the Membership committee and Carmen Montaña now chair of the Student Outreach Committee. I know we are excited to see the outcome of the amazing (and intense) behind the scenes work that Dillon Kwak, Thea Fredrickson, and Zoe Nichols are doing on the Publicity and Exhibits Committee. This has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me, and I hope many of you will consider being nominated for leadership of our chapter; I know Greg Cummings on the Nominating committee would be glad to hear from you.

Finally, because everything is bigger in Texas and most anglers brag about large fish, I’ve developed a tour of our hotel and conference center accompanied by the largest freshwater fish in Texas. The Alligator Gar pictured below (named Garth Algar) is elegantly handled by Jake Wolff and Tom Dodson and can be yours if you attend the

## TCAFS 2024 PRESIDENT MESSAGES



## TCAFS 2024

## PRESIDENT MESSAGES

### PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE

(CONTINUED)

auction and place the winning bid! I'm serious – my son and I made it, and my wife wants it out of the garage. For this newsletter, Garth will serve as a scale to give reference to the spaciousness of the hotel and conference center. Come with me, let's tour the incredible space where our group will celebrate 50 years of existence (but only 49 officially recognized).

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The Hilton College Station and Conference Center offers spacious hallways for impromptu mingling and catching up with old friends and colleagues.

Photo Credit: Joshua Perkin



The ballrooms are vast and offer plenty of space to enjoy sharing fisheries science information by day and socializing by night.

Photo Credit: Joshua Perkin





# PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE

(CONTINUED)

For those interested in smaller sessions, the hotel offers rooms like this one – look, the tables are one gar unit wide and allow for just the right amount of personal space.

Photo Credit: Joshuah Perkin



The hotel offers cozy lounges, some with hidden secrets. This couch is less than one gar unit in length.

Photo Credit: Joshuah Perkin



## TCAFS 2024 PRESIDENT MESSAGES



## TCAFS 2024

## PRESIDENT MESSAGES

### PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

Even the elevators are spacious and can accommodate the largest freshwater fish in Texas with plenty of room for your friends.

Photo Credit: Joshua Perkin



You can discuss your water-based research near the outdoor pool and bar. Hotel management mentioned in passing that no boat has ever been launched in this pool – could we be the group to fix that?

Photo Credit: Joshua Perkin





# PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

There's an outdoor area for mixing it up under the lights and around the firepit.  
Photo Credit: Joshuah Perkin



There is even a rooftop bar that offers panoramic views of all the water towers in College Station.  
Photo Credit: Joshuah Perkin



TCAFS 2024  
PRESIDENT  
MESSAGES

## TCAFS 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

◇ REGISTRATION  
AND ROOMS

◇ ABSTRACTS

◇ NOMINATIONS  
AND  
SCHOLARSHIPS

## REGISTRATION FOR 2025 MEETING

Registration for the 2025 TCAFS Meeting and hotel room reservations for the Hilton College Station Hotel and Convention Center can be accessed on the meeting webpage [HERE](#).

## ABSTRACTS FOR ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Abstract submission closed on December 6th and the Editorial Committee is at work assembling the program for the 2025 TCAFS Annual Meeting.

## AWARD NOMINATIONS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Awards and Nominations Committees have received awards nominations and scholarship applications. Stay tuned for announcement of awardees and scholarship recipients at the 2025 TCAFS Annual Meeting.



The Hilton College Station Hotel and Convention Center—Venue for the 2025 TCAFS Annual Meeting.



## CONTINUING EDUCATION

### **Forward Facing Sonar in Fisheries Management Workshop**

with Steven Bardin

### **Aquatic Plant Identification Workshop**

with Haley Kokel

### **Fish Collection Tour and Native Fish Conservation**

with Kevin Conway and Gerard Kyle

## 2ND ANNUAL TCAFS SERVICE PROJECT

### **Non-native Plant Removal at Wolf Pen Creek**

in College Station



Wolf Pen Creek—Site of the 2025 TCAFS Service Project.

Photo Credit: City of College Station

## TCAFS 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

- ◇ CONTINUING EDUCATION
- ◇ SERVICE PROJECT
- ◇ STUDENT MIXER EVENT



TCAFS 2024  
FALL EXCOM  
MEETING  
MINUTES

## SEPTEMBER 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### TCAFS ExCom/Officer Meeting Minutes September 23, 2024

#### Attendees:

S Bardin, J Butler, S Collins, S Curtis, T Fredrickson, H Kokel, D Kwak, C Mace, R Mathews, C Montaña, Z Nichols, J Perkin, K Scribner, R Seymour, B Silvy, B Thornton, M Troia, B Van Zee, A Velasquez

#### Call to Order (S Bardin):

Meeting called to order by S Bardin at 10:01 AM

Determination of a quorum – Yes, by S Bardin.

Motion to Approve 13 May 2024 Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve by R Mathews; Second by R Seymour; Minutes approved by S Bardin.

#### ExCom Reports:

President (S Bardin) - Nothing to report.

President Elect (J Perkin) - Nothing to report.

Secretary (M Troia) - Nothing to report.

Treasurer (S Curtis) -

- Taxes filed last month.

- Current balance in PayPal and Edward Jones accounts is \$19k.

- Transferred \$17k from money market account to endowment account; most of these funds were generated by the raffle and auction at February 2024 TCAFS meeting.

- S Bardin - How does \$17k revenue compare to previous years? S Curtis - This is the highest amount on record.

#### Committee Chair Updates:

- **Awards (B Silvy)** - No updates; ready for nominations anytime during the year.

- **Continuing Education (B Thornton)** - Contacted several individuals about continuing education events for the 2025 TCAFS meeting, including topics of aquatic plants and fisheries management; S Bardin - recommended that individuals should reach out to B Thornton if they are interested in contributing.

- **Editorial (D Buzan)** - D Buzan not present.

- **Endowments (B Van Zee)** - Transferred \$17k into endowment account; Current balance is \$575,746.74; Year-to-date return on investment is 11.61%; Sportsman's Club of Fort Worth and Guadalupe River Trout Unlimited both agreed to increase scholarship amounts from \$1500 to \$2000 for 13 scholarships per year. R Mathews - Asked if Hubbs scholarship will also increase; B Van Zee confirmed that Hubbs scholarship amount has and will continue to match other scholarship amounts.

- **History (R Mathews)** - Thanked M Nations for her service; Indicated that B Silvy is curating photos; Continuing to write history of the TCAFS and has finished year 2020; Indicated issues with Dropbox account, having to make \$120 payment and possibly additional future payments; R Seymour will work with R Mathews to resolve the issue; S Bardin - requested S Curtis arrange payments for Dropbox, S Curtis recommended other no-cost cloud storage service; B Van Zee recommended TCAFS reimburse R Mathews for \$120 payment;

- **Internet (R Seymour)** - Will start building 2025 TCAFS meeting page after today; R Seymour now maintains the listserve.

- **Audio Visual (R Seymour)** - Will start recruiting volunteers to assist with A-V tasks at 2025 TCAFS meeting; S Bardin indicated he will share list of volunteers; R Seymour will set up a Dropbox submission system for presenters to upload their talks at 2025 TCAFS meeting.

- **Social Media (H Kokel)** - Nothing new to report.

- **Issues (S Bardin)** - S Bardin will serve as Chair and has recruited Carly Rotzler and Christopher Hernandez; The committee will meet this fall; Envisions a committee that will function regularly rather than 'as needed'.

- **Membership (vacant, previously M Nations)** - S Bardin reached out to several individuals willing to serve on committee but declined nomination to serve as Chair.

- **Newsletter (M Troia)** - Post-meeting newsletter went out last month; will be recruiting student contributions for pre-meeting letter to showcase summer fisher-

# SEPTEMBER 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

ies experiences such as graduate research and internships

- **Nominating (G Cummings)** - G Cummings not in attendance.
- **Pond Management (T Sink)** - T Sink not in attendance.
- **Publicity and Exhibits (D Kwak)** - Excited to begin serving in this role; designing Guadalupe bass mugs for raffle at 2025 TCAFS meeting.
- **Scholarships (J Butler)** - Committee is reviewing the current application template and questions; Will have R Seymour distribute the application to TCAFS members soon; Looking for co-chair; S Bardin opined that co-chairs are favorable for committees for contingency and continuity.
- **Student Outreach (Montaña)** - Reached out to all student subunit presidents over summer and updated names and contacts for all seven subunits; UT-Tyler has not been active recently, but making effort to recruit; C Montaña is brainstorming activities for 2025 TCAFS meeting; R Seymour has updated TCAFS web page with contact/social media for all seven subunits; S Bardin - indicated importance of student subunits and encouraged remote meetings to bring subunits together, particularly for speakers.

## Student Subunit Updates:

- **Tarleton State (L Scribner)** - Transitioning to President; recruiting new members; hosting speaker this week; completed clean-up event on Bosque River last weekend; Soliciting speakers from the ExCom meeting attendees.
- **TAMU College Station** - Update by faculty mentor J Perkin - Subunit meets every month with typical attendance of 30 students; Completed alligator gar survey even on the Brazos River last weekend; inviting speakers and have and will continue to invite other subunits to virtually attend these speaker events.
- **TAMU Corpus Christi** - Not in attendance.
- **Texas Tech (O)** - Update from faculty mentor S Collins - Currently have ~15 members; actively recruiting new members; completed one meeting this academic year and planning more events; completed river cleanup in spring 2024 semester; Proposed idea of coordinated river cleanup day across all student subunits; S Bardin recommended that S Collins and C Montaña coordinate this event; S Curtis recommended reaching out to John Botros to obtain cleanup bags.
- **UNT** - Not in attendance.
- **UT-San Antonio (A Velasquez)** - Recruiting; Completed one meeting this academic year and one sampling event on the Guadalupe River; attempted to arrange events among subunits over summer, but was challenging with busy schedules of student members across subunits.
- **UT-Tyler** - Not in attendance.

## New Business:

### Planning 2025 TCAFS meeting (J Perkin)

- Corresponded with past presidents about meeting locations.
- Identified coastal venues of Lake Jackson and Victoria, but these were not viable.
- Identified College Station as most viable option; Completed informal site visit and solicited proposal from the hotel and conference center
- Proposed schedule: January 15th-18th (Wednesday to Saturday); Set up Wednesday evening, continuing education on Thursday, concurrent sessions on Friday all day and Saturday morning, business meeting Saturday afternoon.
- C Mace - Opined that the venue would be great and that it is getting late to explore other venues
- R Seymour - Indicated that the venue would be relatively low cost, which is beneficial to individuals planning to attend the parent society meeting in San Antonio later in 2025.
- C Mace - Moves to nominate the venue; R Seymour seconds; all members present in favor; no members opposed; S Bardin confirms that the motion passes.
- S Curtis - Suggested that cost and attendance number are confirmed before disseminating save-the-date to TCAFS members.
- J Perkin and S Curtis will finalize cost and attendance number
- J Perkin - Indicated interest in a continuing education event on fish conservation, will work with B Thornton.

### Donation Request from SDAFS

- S Curtis - Donation amount is typically \$250-500 per year.

TCAFS 2024

FALL EXCOM  
MEETING  
MINUTES





## TCAFS 2024

### FALL EXCOM MEETING MINUTES

## SEPTEMBER 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

- S Curtis - Recommends \$500 donation.
- B Van Zee - Asked if TCAFS supports student travel to SDAFS; S Curtis indicated that travel is supported via the best student presentation award at each year's TCAFS meeting.
- B Van Zee - Moves to donate \$500 to SDAFS; J Perkin seconds; all members present in favor; no members opposed; S Bardin confirms that the motion passes.

#### ***Eesel rental to Delaney Event Management (C Mace)***

- Meg Bora requested rental of 80 easels FOR Wind Wildlife Research Meeting November 12-15.
- C Mace - Solicited feedback on the rental proposition to the TCAFS ExCom.
- S Bardin - Noted that easels are in need of repair/replacement and rental fees could fund this.
- B Van Zee - Asked if rental to others will become a regular task for TCAFS; Noted that we should confirm that easels are returned in good condition.
- S Bardin - No need for motion; Dan Daugherty will coordinate easel pickup; Treasurer should send invoice.

#### **AFS Hutton Summit**

- R Seymour - Cynthia Holt and R Seymour will host the summit in the summer of 2025; will reach out for support from local professionals after Hawaii Parent Society Meeting.
- J Butler - Supervised in previous years, indicated that the summit is usually 4 days; Seymour replied that 3 days with a travel day before and after to avoid week-end travel.

#### **San Antonio Parent Society Planning**

- S Bardin - Requested S Donovan be included in future ExCom/Officer meetings so he can provide updates.

#### **Electing additional President Elect**

- Would facilitate the TCAFS meeting planning one year in advance.
- Need to change bylaws; proposed bylaws change for 2025 TCAFS meeting; first vote for additional President Elect would be at the 2026 TCAFS meeting.
- B Van Zee - Indicated that this change would be helpful given that meetings are increasing in size and planning is more challenging.
- S Bardin asked question about bylaws change process:
- Edit bylaws via track-change editing
- Send edits to Parent Society Management Committee
- Send out to TCAFS members for vote
- Send back to Parent Society to finalize
- M Troia will start drafting bylaws revisions.

#### **Other new business**

- J Perkin - Asked if TCAFS members will be limited to one meeting this year and will have to choose between TCAFS meeting in February and Parent Society meeting in August.
- B Van Zee - Opined that travel to both conferences is possible for TPWD given that travel is in-state; C Mace agrees.
- C Mace - Moves to adjourn; R Mathews seconds; all members present in favor; no members opposed; S Bardin confirms adjourn.

#### **Adjourn:**

**11:29am**

## BEHIND THE SCENES

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT .....Steven Bardin  
PRESIDENT-ELECT.....Joshuah Perkin  
PAST PRESIDENT .....Chris Mace  
TREASURER .....Stephen Curtis  
SECRETARY .....Matthew Troia

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS

AWARDS .....Beth Silvy  
CONTINUING EDUCATION .....Blake Thornton  
EDITORIAL.....Preston Bean  
.....Dave Buzan  
ENDOWMENTS .....Brian Van Zee  
HISTORY.....Ray Mathews  
INTERNET .....Ryan Seymour  
.....Haley Kokel  
ISSUES .....Steven Bardin  
MEMBERSHIP .....Tommy Johnson  
NOMINATING .....Greg Cummings  
POND MANAGEMENT .....Todd Sink  
PUBLICITY/EXHIBITS.....Dylan Kwak  
SCHOLARSHIP .....Jennifer Butler  
STUDENT OUTREACH.....Carmen Montaña

### STUDENT SUBUNITS

Texas A&M – College Station  
Texas A&M - Corpus Christi  
Tarleton State University  
Texas Tech University  
University of North Texas  
The University of Texas at San Antonio  
The University of Texas at Tyler

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Matthew Troia

TCAFS  
BEHIND THE  
SCENES:

EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE  
CHAIRS AND  
MEMBERS

STUDENT  
SUBUNITS

# TEXAS CHAPTER AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY PURPOSE AND GOALS

The general purposes and responsibilities of the Texas Chapter are as follows:

1. Support AFS Parent Society objectives. Specifically:
  - A. Promote the conservation, development, and wise use of the fisheries;
  - B. Promote and evaluate the development and advancement of all branches of fisheries science and practice;
  - C. Gather and disseminate to Society members and the general public scientific, technical, and other information about fisheries science and practice through publications, meetings, and other forms of communication; and
  - D. Encourage the teaching of fisheries science and practice in colleges and universities and the continuing education and development of fisheries professionals.
2. As the smallest geographically defined unit recognized as being operationally independent in the Society's Constitution, a Chapter shares the purposes of the Society but is intended to advance the Society's objectives over a more localized area than the Divisions, in this case, within the state of Texas.
3. The Texas Chapter generally provides for interaction among professionals within Texas. The Texas Chapter is a unit of the Southern Division.
4. Facilitate communication among members (by newsletters and other means) regarding fisheries science issues and the conduct of the fisheries profession within the Chapter's region.
5. Hold meetings, publish works, and perform other activities on a technical and semi-technical level that advance the status and performance of the fisheries profession within the Chapter's region.
6. Determine the views of members relative to professional topics affecting their performance, for example, by conducting surveys and considering resolutions.
7. Present the views of Chapter members to the Division membership, the AFS membership, and to the general public and government agencies within the Chapter's boundaries.
8. Hold annual meetings at which all Bylaw responsibilities are carried out.
9. Serve as technical and professional advisors to government agencies within the Chapter's region.
10. Promote the fisheries profession within the Chapter's boundaries through active and positive relations with journalists, government officials, special interest groups, other professional organizations, and the general public.
11. Promote proper use of aquatic resources by initiating and participating in special projects that increase public awareness, expand participation, improve habitat, and protect fragile resources.

## **A message from the newsletter team:**

**If you have ideas for stories or photographs from the field you would like to share please email Matt Troia (troiamj@gmail.com). We can help develop and write stories, so please reach out, even if the idea is not completed yet.**

## **TCAFS**

The Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is committed to the conservation, development, and wise utilization of recreational and commercial fisheries, the promotion of all branches of fisheries science and practice, and the exchange and dissemination of knowledge about fish, fisheries, and related subjects.

## **TCAFS NEWSLETTER**

Newsletter Editor—Matt Troia  
troiamj@gmail.com

