



*From the Desk of the NCD President  
Ramblings by Sandy*

*March 2017*

I had the pleasure of participating in the AFS mid-year meeting remotely this week. Several topics were discussed and I want to share a couple things that excited me. First is a review of all AFS journals. The Society is looking for ways to increase their relevance and reach. Several things were discussed including length of time from submission to print, issues with finding reviewers, and problems with costs. The Society will continue working through issues and ideas and will meet again in Tampa at the AFS meeting to make some recommendations. A couple things during the discussion that peaked my interest was discussion about creating some sort of publication that was science based but presented in a format and tone that was more friendly to the public and schools. This is very exciting and there was discussion of either taking articles from AFS journals and reworking them or having entirely new submissions. A lot of discussion that still needs to happen and concerns about increasing workload on current AFS staff and costs need to be considered. Another topic that came up was the grey literature database. Several folks on the call that are employed by state agencies chimed in that this would be very beneficial. Hopefully, we will be hearing more about these ideas in the future.

Another thing that was discussed in length was the need to increase diversity among our members and the profession. Steve McMullin AFS President-Elect has made increasing diversity one of his top objectives as President. This comes at a good time as Doug Austin reported that AFS is joining several other groups including TWS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, and others to create a joint venture to improve diversity within the natural resource profession. Steve talked in great length about if our profession is going to be relevant in the future our workforce needs better reflect the diversity of our country. We talked about different ways to recruit more minorities and women into the profession and what barriers exist. This topic will also play a large part of discussions in Tampa.

The final topic that was very relevant and urgent is what and how AFS can play a larger part in national policies that affect aquatic resources. In the past AFS has been very retroactive in responses to legislation, policies, budgets, and political activities. Before the 2017 presidential election AFS began the move to be more proactive in these areas. That involved creating the FUTURE OF THE NATION'S AQUATIC RESOURCES Recommendations for the New Administration. This document was thoughtfully developed with key recommendations that need to be addressed in order to support the conservation, enhancement, and management of our nation's aquatic resources and systems—freshwater and marine.

Since the election it has become obvious that natural resource policies, laws, and budgets are going to be under attack. AFS is working quickly to adjust and find out where it can play a part in protecting our aquatic resources. There was a long discussion about what that advocacy should look like but most agreed AFS needs to be more preemptive on meeting with legislators, policy makers, agency staff, and partners to make sure that AFS is represented and there providing the science. This was most recently demonstrated in a letter issued by AFS and its partners to the White House in support of the Clean

Water Rule. [https://fisheries.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/SocietiesLetterSupportWOTUSAmiciCuriaeBrief\\_ToPresidentTrump.pdf](https://fisheries.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/SocietiesLetterSupportWOTUSAmiciCuriaeBrief_ToPresidentTrump.pdf).

<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/03/wetlands-scientists-speak-out-against-trumps-move-undo-water-rule>

I have often wondered about the value of being a parent society member and after this call I can clearly see how AFS is needed and is providing services to me as a fisheries professional. I think in this political climate it is more important than ever to have a strong voice advocating on the national stage about the importance of conserving and protecting our aquatic resources.

Stay safe,

*Sandy*