

**Minutes of the 29th Annual Meeting of the
Mississippi Chapter of the American Fisheries Society**

**Delta State University
Cleveland, MS
February 7, 2003**

President Todd Slack called the meeting to order at 8:40 am. There were 25 people present. A quorum was determined by President Todd Slack and seconded by Eric Dibble.

Todd Slack asked for additional items to the agenda; there were none.

Todd Slack asked if there were any changes/corrections to the 2002 Annual Meeting minutes before being put up for approval. Eric Dibble specified there was no line item in the treasurer's report for the student caucus. Kevin Hunt said he would investigate and get back to the membership after meeting with Don Jackson. No other changes/corrections were suggested.

Todd Slack made a motion for approval; motion was seconded by numerous members and the minutes were approved.

Kevin Hunt gave the treasurer report for Secretary/Treasurer Don Jackson who was absent. Steve Ross questioned what happened to the proceeds from the sale of his book as no item was specified in the income for the Chapter. Kevin Hunt said he had some talks with Don Jackson about this that the money was included in the income, but was not specified. Kevin said he would check with Don and verify/change statement. Kevin Hunt said he would be revamping the webpage and would soon have internet survey capability to obtain updated name and address info, and to poll members on important issues.

Larry Bull talked about the chapter's Certificates of Deposit (CD's) and presented the chapter with a handout indicating status of each.

Todd Slack brought up the issue of membership renewal to the Mississippi Wildlife Federation. Renewal was discussed. Chapter approved renewal. Eric Dibble asked to have his name removed as representative and to remove him from mailing list.

No new resolutions were brought up.

Email communication was discussed - try to track down previous members including retired. Possible reunion. Marc Peterson - Possible invite to old members to give presentations on history of the chapter and videotape to archive for posterity. Possibly create committee to investigate this was brought up by Todd Slack

New Business

Jim Franks nominated Larry Pugh for the position of President-elect. Larry Pugh accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made for president-elect. Larry Pugh was elected by the members.

Current President-elect Larry Bull nominated Kevin Hunt for the position of Secretary/Treasurer; Kevin accepted. No other nominations were made for Secretary/Treasurer. Kevin Hunt was elected by the members.

Historical Committee

Marc Peterson suggested previous abstracts and papers be placed in Adobe PDF and saved to CD-Rom for posterity. Steve Ross said he had many of the previous proceedings. Kevin Hunt said he would investigate a searchable database for the webpage. Also, Kevin Hunt said he would ask members if they had previous proceedings in the address update survey spoke of in the secretary/treasurer report. Larry Pugh asked who makes up the Historical Committee besides Dennis Riecke. Jack Herring and Larry Barkley were specified as the other committee members. The issue of former chapter members was brought back up as well. Jim Franks said he has an old list, and being that it was the 30th year of the chapter he volunteered to spearhead Alumni investigation. A motion was made to make the ad-hoc Historical Committee a full committee. Members approved and specified the following members: Dennis Riecke (Co-chair), Jim Franks (Co-chair), Members: Larry Pugh, Keith Meals, Garry Lucas.

Dam Removal Study Committee

Steve Ross presented members with a draft resolution from the AFS (Appendix A). After some discussion of the term "Resolution," it was changed to "Position Statement". It was suggested that river be added to the statement in addition to free-flowing streams. Steve Ross said that the terminology of streams was meant to be all-encompassing. There was a lot of further discussion on the issue of having a position which is against all dam building in Mississippi. Various points were made on the future need for surface water in Mississippi, recreation, protection of stream habitat, protection of fish species, and the ecological and economic values of free flowing streams. Ron Nasser suggested that we consider changing the focus of the statement to one of sustainable development and wise management. There was some discussion and the membership decided to rework the statement to take into account the various opinions of its members. Steve Ross agreed to spearhead the revisions and Kevin Hunt agreed to help after both consulted the Parent's society's position statement. Kevin Hunt said he would make draft available on the website 90 days prior to the 2004 meeting for comments, discussion, and a possible vote by the membership at that meeting.

AFS Home Site

Bubba Hubbard said the AFS Home Site, a wall at the new state fish hatchery promoting the history and members of the Mississippi Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, was going okay. He said the new hatchery welcomes the wall and that the MSAFS files from Turcotte could be stored there as well. Todd Slack suggested an annual donation be made by the chapter..

MSU Student Sub-Unit

Sam Shephard, President of the MSU Student Sub-unit, said participation was falling at MSU due to the decline of fisheries students at MSU. Sam said James Shewmake was working on the sub-unit website. Also, he spoke of the student retreat and advocated continuing this endeavor in the future. He indicated the sub-unit also had a social event in Fall 2002 with the MSU Chapter of The Wildlife Society; embracing the multidisciplinary aspect of natural resources management.

MSAFS Student Caucus

Eric Hoffmayer, Student Caucus Ex-Com member gave the report for the Student Caucus. Eric thanked the chapter for monetary support for the retreat and travel funds. He indicated that 19 students registered for the retreat. Eric said they would attempt to use the money from this year's meeting to go for retreat without AFS help, unless needed. Bryant Bowen was nominated to become the new student representative to Ex-Com. Rocky Smiley pointed out that the retreat was student initiated should be recognized.

Warmwater Streams Video. Todd Slack gave report on the video for Dennis Riecke who was absent. Todd said the Chapter has 4 copies of the 28 minute 30 second video. It was suggested that we make numerous copies to distribute to various organizations statewide. Also, it was suggested that we investigate DVD's as well as video. Ron Nasser and Todd said they would help with distribution after February

Website problems - Read Don's email, will investigate. Kevin will take over as webmaster.

Chapter Bylaws

Jim Franks indicated that he went back into the records from previous years; some amendments were approved by the chapter and appeared in the by-laws. Nevertheless, he couldn't find any communication with the parent society to indicate that the chapter submitted these changes for approval. He indicated that changes from 1991 and 1999 were the amendments in question. Also, the copy at the parent society was from 1991. Eric Dibble suggested that this was already done and the mix-up must be with the parent society. He said he would try to find his correspondence to get this straightened up. Eric Dibble, Jim Franks, and Larry Bull said they work together to get the problem solved. Bubba Hubbard inquired whether the parent society also reviews resolutions or position statements. Jim Franks indicated that nothing is final until

the parent society approves.

C.A. Shultz Award

Todd presented the background on the C.A. Shultz Conservation Award (Appendix B) and indicated the need to set up qualifications for the award, and how applications/nominations would be evaluated. Todd Slack said others have indicated that they will make financial contributions to the award. Todd Slack volunteered to Chair an exploratory committee to investigate these issues. Mark Peterson and Bubba Hubbard said they would assist Todd in these efforts.

Future Issues of Concern

Todd Slack asked the membership whether there were any issues that the Chapter should address in the future. Keith Meals indicated he had concerns with rapidly expanding exotic fishes, especially various carp species in Mississippi River oxbows and those in the Yalabusha River drainage. Todd Slack asked if he witnessed any declines in other species and whether he and others were collecting sample. Keith said there was not enough information to quantitatively show any adverse impacts, and that they weren't equipped to handle preserving exotic species. Todd espoused the need for samples to document the presence of exotics and for specimens; primarily for verification and storage at the MMNS, and volunteered his assistance. Todd said he was coordinating with other states to document the spread and prevalence of exotics. Larry Pugh suggested that GPS readings be taken if possible. Steve Ross further made the point on the importance of specimens to verify identifications made in the field.

Lower Mississippi River Conservation Commission

RON NASSER of the LMRCC gave his impressions on the political & cumbersome process of legislation in America, that politics was an interactive sport, and that 50 or 100 letters would sway issues in Congress. Pet peeve - NR hammered to pieces on nr issues. We have no voice, we are not organized. Passed out LMRCC handouts and ACTION ALERT - discussed wrda of 2000, ACOE is behind 100%. Loss of OXBOW habitat, we must save what we have and build on it. Reference Section 402 is critical. Write chairs of the senate and house appropriations committee. Don't send a form letter. Send a personal one. River is being managed solely as flood control system. This must change. Need to figure out some way to coalesce a group to lobby for money. (What about grass roots). Wants Presidents of various organizations to spearhead efforts. Encouraged people to attend the meeting. Developing paddlefish and sturgeon. Motion was made to have excom approve letter to congress - approved. Larry Bull said that he would draft the letter.

Next Year's Meeting (2004)

After much discussion, the membership decided to make the 2004 meeting a celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Chapter rather than a joint meeting with another state. The Museum of Natural Science was chosen as the site for next year's meeting. Various members, especially

those from the northern portion of the state suggested that a change in meeting date be considered until later in the Spring. Todd will investigate Museum availability before we make a decision on date. Kevin Hunt said he would ask for a vote via email or internet survey once the time comes.

New President-elect Larry Pugh said he would investigate a joint meeting with the Tennessee Chapter of the AFS with Tunica, Memphis, or Pickwick State Park as possible venues. Eric Dibble suggested a possible tri-state meeting with Arkansas and would investigate interest with them. Eric also specified that the student members views be represented in meeting sites, and agendas

Awards

Steve Rees (Student Travel Award)
Randall Kidwell (Student Travel Award)
Eric Hoffmayer (Student Travel Award)
Jonathan Ledford (Student Travel Award)
Matt Thomas (Student Travel Award)

Jonathan Ledford (Best Paper Award)
Mark Dugo (Best Paper Award)

Other awards:

Larry Bull recognized the following and presented plaques:

James Shewmake for his work on the chapter webpage
Sam Shephard for his work as Sub-Unit President
Eric Hoffmayer for his work as Student Caucus Representative

Todd Slack adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.