



American Fisheries Society

Arkansas Chapter

AGENDA

Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

February 22, 2024

Holiday Inn Convention Center, Texarkana

The Chapter President, Brie Lusk, welcomed everyone to the business meeting, introduced officers, and acknowledged past presidents in attendance.

Officers:
Past-President: Christy Graham
President: Brie Lusk
President-Elect: Dylan Hann
Secretary: Allison Asher
Treasurer: Sean Lusk

Determination of Quorum – Allison Asher determined that a quorum was met with 58 members attending this year's business meeting. The number of active, paid members totaled 132 members at the time of the business meeting. This meant 44 members needed to attend the meeting in order to conduct business.

Review and Approval of 2023 Annual Business Meeting Minutes – Allison Asher posted the 2023 business meeting minutes online last year following the meeting for members to review. Kyler Hecke (ATU) motioned to approve the minutes and JJ Gladden (AGFC) seconded the motion.

President's Report – Brie Lusk reported that 114 people attended this year's meeting. The total number of attendees consisted of 69% professionals and 31% students, respectively. Twelve students and 17 professionals gave oral presentations, and 13 students and 4 professionals showcased their research via poster presentations. Brie thanked the moderators of the oral presentations for doing a great job of keeping sessions on track. Brie also highlighted the three excellent workshops offered this year. Workshops offered this year included the intermediate R and chatGPT workshop (facilitated by Ryan Gary and Sean Lusk), a student workshop (3rd year; facilitated by Chelsea Gilliland), and the AFS Futurecasting workshop (facilitated by Marlis Douglas). Coley Turner and Lindsey LaBrie from Arkansas Tech University received student scholarships awarded by the chapter.

Treasurer's Report – Sean Lusk reported that the chapter's income totaled \$18,098.80 from this year's meeting and dues. Disbursements for this year's meeting totaled \$8,514.41 for a total balance of \$22,191.44 as of February 23, 2024 (see treasurer's report below for detailed income and disbursement allocations). Sean explained that the chapter originally invested \$10,000 dollars into an investment account which now totals \$11,090.15. The account accrued the additional \$1,090.15 which

will fund student scholarships next year. Continuing to grow the investment account will allow the chapter to increase student scholarships in the future. The 50/50 raffle raised an additional \$1,100 for the student scholarship fund. Jacob Martin (AGFC) motioned to approve the treasurer's report and John Jackson (ATU) seconded the motion.

ARAFS – 2024 EXCOM Treasurer's Report

Balance Brought Forward (12/16/2023):	\$12,607.00
INCOME	
Interest	\$10.00
AFS Dues/Registration	\$11,735.00
Raffle/Silent Auction	\$5,253.80
50/50 Raffle	\$1,100.00
Total Income	\$18,098.80
SUBTOTAL	\$30,705.85
DISBURSEMENTS	
Conference expenses	\$3,271.03
Awards	\$655.55
Raffle Purchase	\$602.25
Meeting Supplies	\$2,073.05
AFS Reimbursement	\$115.00
EXCOM Meeting	\$248.95
Scholarship	\$750.00
Fees	\$298.58
Conference change	\$500.00
Total Disbursements	\$8,514.41
Balance as of February 23, 2024:	\$22,191.44
Investment Account Balance as of December 16, 2023	\$11,090.15

Appointed Officer Reports

Newsletter – Please reach out to Katie Thomsen (AGFC) if you have any content for the newsletter. Additionally, if someone is not receiving the newsletter via email, please reach out to Katie.

Webmaster – Tyler Thomsen (AGFC) began the process of creating a page on the chapter's website where old meeting minutes and programs, treasurer reports, and chapter newsletters can be viewed from the last 10 years. Please reach out to Tyler for any website needs.

Committee Reports

Nominating and Awards Committee – Christy Graham provided a recap of the awards presented at the banquet. Awards included:

Best Student Subunit Member Awards

- University of Arkansas - Lindsey LaBrie
- Arkansas State University - Ethan Saffle
- University of Central Arkansas - Alivia Mayes
- Arkansas Tech University - Seth Drake
- University of Arkansas Pine Bluff - Ben Johnson

Best Student Subunit Award

- Arkansas Tech University (2nd year)

Natural State Fisheries Scholarship (2nd year)

- Coley Turner (Arkansas Tech University)
- Lindsey LaBrie (University of Arkansas)

- The chapter awards the scholarships based on academic excellence, professional activities, and promise of future professional involvement. In 2023, undergraduate recipients of the award received \$250 and graduate recipients received \$500.

Best Student Poster

- Jimmy Hall from Arkansas Tech University - Mussel Communities of Two Impacted Tributaries in the Arkansas South Central Plains Ecoregion

Best Student Presentation

- Sarah Sorenson from the University of Arkansas - Hydrologic variability drives environmental and geospatial relationships in Smallmouth Bass distribution

Best Professional Presentation

- Kendall Moles from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (3rd year) - Clearing The Way For Some Dam Work: The Great War Eagle Creek Mussel Rodeo

The Robert M. Jenkins Conservation Achievement Award - recognizing organizations that show outstanding achievement or contribution to their field.

- Columbia County Rural Development Authority

The Joe Hogan Award for Individual Achievement - recognizing individuals that have made enduring contributions to professional aquatic resource conservation.

- Hailey Robinson

Activities and Raffle Committee – Josh Melton (AGFC) expressed gratitude towards everyone that helped out with the silent auction and raffle – he emphasized keeping the 50/50 card game for the scholarship. He also announced that Will Lancett will be replacing him as the raffle chair.

Jacob Martin provided a recap of the plant workshop and thanked Matt Horton for all his work to organize that workshop. Jacob also discussed the virtual fishing challenge and announced that the next

virtual challenge has officially started and will run until next year's meeting. If anyone has ideas for future workshops or activities, please reach out to Jacob.

Environmental Affairs Committee – Dr. Erin Thayer (UAPB) did not have updates for the committee.

Education Liaison Committee – Chelsea Gilliland (AGFC) emphasized the great communication established between the committee and the subunits this year. To illustrate this, Chelsea reported that she received officer information from all subunits this year. In the fall, Chelsea talked to both UAPB and ATU subunits at one of their subunit meetings. EXCOM wants more involvement from student membership and are willing to visit with subunits that are looking to get more involved with the chapter. Please send all ideas for student involvement to Chelsea. Students, please do not hesitate to reach out to have an AFS member visit your student subunit!

Thirty students (86% of students who attended the meeting) participated at the third, highly rated and hugely successful student workshop! Chelsea thanked the 6 panelists who attended and stated that feedback from the workshop evaluations was great. The workshop ran an hour longer than last year, but students continue to request more time for the workshop! Chelsea will work with EXCOM to carve out more time for the student workshop at next year's meeting. She also discussed creating a student subunit at Southern Arkansas University. Brie thanked Chelsea for her excellent work as the Education Liaison. Lastly, Chelsea asked the students judging science fairs to contact her after the meeting to pick up awards for the fairs they are attending.

Subunit Reports

University of Central Arkansas

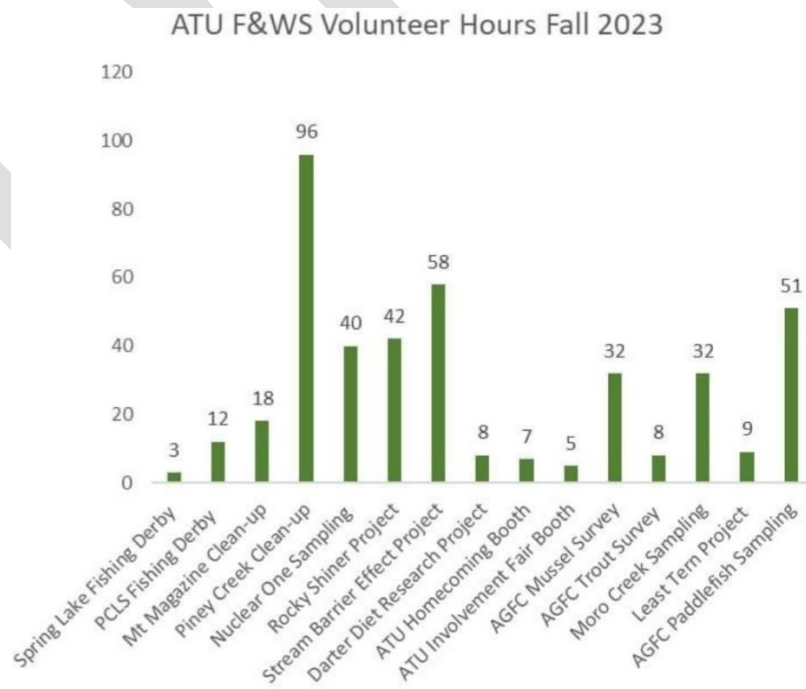
- The subunit inducted new officers at their general meeting on April 18, 2023. Seven subunit members presented posters on their original research at UCA's annual College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics poster symposium. The subunit celebrated Earth Day by collecting fish for the native fish tank that the subunit maintains in the Lewis Science Center. The subunit co-hosted the second "Macros and Molly" aquatic macroinvertebrate ID workshop with former officer Molly Wozniak. The subunit also did a group hike to destress and decompress together before finals week. Members of the subunit set up a booth at the Foothills Scout Expo to teach Boy Scouts about fish and reptiles. This also included venomous snake safety. Members spent an afternoon at Vilonia Elementary where they taught students about the importance of biodiversity. Graduate students of the subunit held a Q & A session to answer undergraduate questions about pursuing a masters degree and the natural resource workforce. Vic DiCenzo spoke to the subunit regarding volunteer opportunities with AGFC, current agency projects, and building a career in resource management. Members set up a booth at the City of Conway's Arbor Day Festival as public outreach and to teach about the importance of tree and riparian health to aquatic communities. The subunit held a resume/CV workshop which focused on building a resume/CV, searching for jobs and graduate assistantships, and interview tips. Subunit members attended the Southeastern Fishes Council (13 students), Southern Division AFS conference (4 students), and the Arkansas Chapter AFS meeting (6 students). The subunit cumulatively gave 9 oral presentations and 10 poster presentations at those conferences.

University Arkansas Pine Bluff

- Ryan Mozisek thanked Chelsea for speaking at a subunit meeting. Ryan highlighted that the subunit helped to host the AFS Hutton Scholars for the annual summit which was held in Pine Bluff this past year. The group planted willow in a local backwater of the Arkansas River. The subunit also hosted a fish fry as an outreach event to interest new potential members and worked with the AGFC's Delta Rivers Nature Center in Pine Bluff to collect fish for the center's fish tanks. One student attended SEAFWA and multiple students attended the Southern Division AFS meeting. Subunit members also helped at the nature center's Halloween event.

Arkansas Tech University

- The subunit closed out spring semester with a subunit cookout. Members attended national, southern division, and chapter AFS meetings. Members also attended the annual Beast Feast at ATU which raised a record breaking \$6000. Members also assisted AGFC with a Walleye spawning project on the Kings River, Brown Trout marking at the Norfolk National Fish Hatchery, backpack electrofishing on Dry Run Creek, annual paddlefish sampling on the Arkansas River, and a mussel survey on the Spring River. They also conducted a spring cleanup of Teagle Creek and Delaware Bay on Lake Dardanelle. Students volunteered as part of the Piney Creek WMA Habitat Improvement Cooperative and with a Spring Lake Fishing Derby put on by the US Forest Service. Many members were able to assist Dr. Hecke with radiological fish sampling on Lake Dardanelle. Members attended the 2023 Southeastern Fishes Council Annual Meeting in Chattanooga, TN. Some members also helped with a fishing derby for home-schooled kids at Pleasant View Park Pond. The subunit hosted a chili-cookoff and had a screening of the documentary "Hidden Rivers". The subunit volunteered 421 hours of community service over the past year towards research projects, assisting AGFC, local derbies, and local Arkansas Tech outreach events. See figure below illustrating all of the areas where subunit members volunteered their time.



University of Arkansas

- Currently, the subunit consists of 17 people, but only 5 showed up for their December meeting (only 1 person not on their executive team). The current executive committee includes Kearstin Findley (President), Lindsey LaBrie (Vice President), Sarah Sorensen (Treasurer), and Leah Bayer (Secretary). Last semester, the subunit held one regular meeting in December. They compiled a list of fundraising and event ideas. The subunit plans on hosting (or volunteering for) at least one outreach event this summer or fall. They are very excited about some of the ideas shared at this conference and will be discussing how they can apply those ideas to their subunit at their next meeting in March. Three subunit members attended this year's chapter meeting: Kearstin and Sarah both gave oral presentations and Lindsey presented a poster. Sarah received the honor of Best Student Presentation and Lindsey received the University of Arkansas Best Student Subunit Member Award and the Natural State Fisheries Scholarship. The subunit also will be starting a sticker fundraiser for the subunit soon.

The current active membership for the subunit is very low, and the executive committee are looking for ways to boost membership. If anyone has ideas on bolstering engagement, (specifically getting undergraduates to participate) please reach out to the subunit's executive committee!

Arkansas State University

- Dr. Brook Fluker reported that the subunit has struggled after Covid but is gaining momentum after the Fisheries and Wildlife Society subunits were combined again this past year. The subunit members participated in the campus community fair and provided a casting competition. Elizabeth Kimble (AGFC) came to speak to the subunit this past year. Some students attended the Southeastern Fishes Council meeting. Also, subunit members visited local schools to talk about careers in fisheries and wildlife.

Brie followed updates by acknowledging the great work by the student subunits this past year!!

Old Business – Last year the logo was updated to incorporate the new national AFS logo into the Arkansas Chapter logo. EXCOM worked to update logos on all Chapter materials, but if anybody sees the old logo on something, please let EXCOM know. The price for WildApricot is going up again, but this software is worth the price since everything is all in one package. One issue is the website has a 250 member limit on current plan. We do have some members with double emails and others that aren't involved anymore with the chapter. What is the cutoff term for archiving profiles from the contact list? Is two years after no membership an okay deadline? John Jackson suggested sending an email out to inactive members and those with multiple emails listed and if no response is received then they can be removed. JJ said two years of not paying dues is a reasonable timeframe to archive an email address. Christy asked Micah if contacts could be merged and he said yes, but someone will need to reach out to those members with multiple profiles and ask for their preferred email contact. Brie thanked the Chapter and expressed that it was a pleasure to serve as president. She turned the meeting over to Christy to announce the new officers and to Dylan to discuss new business.

Officer Election Results – Christy announced candidates for both the president-elect and secretary positions with EXCOM that needed filling. Positions became open this year with Allison Asher reaching the end of her term as secretary and Dylan Hann moving from president-elect to president of the

chapter. Candidates for president-elect included Jeremy Risley (AGFC) and Chris Middaugh (AGFC). Nominees for secretary included Joe Kaiser and Jacob Martin from AGFC. Chapter members elected Chris Middaugh to president-elect and Joe Kaiser to Secretary.

Introduction of New President and Recognition of Outgoing Officers – Dylan Hann was introduced as the chapter president. Dylan presented plaques to the Allison Asher and Brie Lusk and thanked them for their services as secretary and president of the chapter.

New Business

Judging Criteria – Dylan brought up the topic of judging criteria and the need for feedback from judges and students. This was the first year for an online judging form. Christy explained that EXCOM are considering posting the criteria for judging and asked the Chapter about their thoughts on posting that on the website. The group agreed that posting online is a good idea. Brie asked what is a good way for judges to give feedback and can judging sheets be given to presenters? JJ suggested giving a summary of the scores, but not individual score sheets. Christy suggested creating an option at registration for presenters to select if they want to be sent judging results or not. Marlis Douglas said in class she has students judge each other in class and they have to provide at least one constructive comment. She suggested having an option for students to provide comments to one another. Brie asked if the poster session was too long and how presenters felt about the length of time of the session. Brook Fluker said they have the same problem at other meetings where poster sessions overlap with meals and socials. He suggested setting up a time for presenters to eat and then do poster presentations. John Jackson asked how difficult would it be to assign 10-15 minute intervals for the judges to come in and talk with students about their posters. Brie expressed concern that the presenters would only show up for the 15 minutes. Marlis suggested a buddy system and have fellow presenters bring food or beverages to presenters during the poster session.

Fieldwork Collaboration – Dylan spoke about a way to share field work schedules so that students and professionals know what type of work is happening and how the chapter can work together and students can get more experience through volunteering. He suggested a map of what sampling or research is planned. Lindsey LaBrie talked about the cooperators meetings at U of A and suggested other universities create similar models. Allison suggested a calendar on the website and Dylan suggested a shared AFS google calendar. Jim Wise brought up a great point that if multiple people are unknowingly going to the same area to sample within a short time frame, this could impact data collection for one or both projects. It would be beneficial for members to not sample the same areas independently but instead work together to collect data.

Future Workshop Needs

- Jacob Martin suggested AI applications in fisheries.
- Lindsey LaBrie suggested early career mentoring workshop or career building.
- Someone suggested offering another aquatic plant workshop since many didn't get to attend the first one. JJ Gladden stated that we tend to look for something different but sometimes revisiting old workshops that worked well is a good idea too.
- Tyler Thomsen suggested a presentation matters type workshop. John Jackson suggested reaching out to Steve Lochmann to do a presentation matters workshop.
- Katie Thomsen suggested a mussel or macroinvertebrate workshop or naturalist building workshop. Tyler Thomsen suggested including crayfish.

- Lindsey LaBrie suggested holding a stakeholders meeting to learn how the AFS Chapter could help stakeholders.
- Tara Schnelting suggested a first timer's symposium that would provide immediate feedback to those attending their first meeting and presenting.
- Kendall Moles suggested an evolving series to empower students which focuses on providing feedback about presentations and research.

Open Floor – Brook Fluker gave details about the upcoming 50th anniversary meeting of the Southeastern Fishes Council hosted by ASU and UCA on November 21-22th, 2024. He expressed that the meeting is not just about fish, but also mussels and crayfish. It will be held in Little Rock and this is the first time the meeting will be in Arkansas. Registration should open in September. Brook asked if the Chapter would consider making a donation to the meeting. Christy explained for an officer of the Southeastern Fishes Council to submit a formal request and EXCOM would consider. JJ asked if the donation request is more than \$500, would the Chapter need a motion to approve. Brie explained that if the donation request was over \$500 that it would be emailed out for a separate vote. Lastly, JJ Gladden reminded the Chapter about intern and Hutton opportunities for this year.

Jimmy Barnett motioned to adjourn the meeting and JJ Gladden seconded the motion.