



# American Fisheries Society

## Arkansas Chapter

### EXCOM Meeting September 2022

President Christy Graham welcomed the group and called the meeting to order. Those in attendance were Christy Graham, JJ Gladden, Brie Olsen, Micah Tindall, Allison Asher, Chelsea Gilliland, Jessica Feltz, Sean Lusk, Ginny Adams, Cade Richesin, Autumn Henry, Derek Owens, and Jeff Stevens.

#### Officer Reports

##### *Secretary's Report – Allison Asher*

Minutes from the EXCOM meeting in May were shared with EXCOM in June. Members provided comments and edits. Brie motioned to approve the minutes and Micah seconded the motion.

##### *Treasurer's report – Micah Tindall*

#### ARAFS – 2022 EXCOM Treasurer's Report Covering 5/12/22 – 9/7/22

<b>Balance Brought Forward (5/12/2022):</b>	<b>\$17,786.56</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	
AFS Dues	\$15.00
Interest	\$6.94
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$21.94</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,808.50</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	
Crawfish Workshop	\$268.07
EXCOM Meeting	\$66.31
Fees	\$1.04
WildApricot	\$667.44
Hotel Issue Reimbursement	\$96.00
VA Chapter AFS Donation	\$500.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$1,598.86</b>
<b>Balance as of September 7, 2022:</b>	<b>\$16,209.64</b>

## **Appointed Officer Reports**

### *Newsletter – Jessica Feltz*

Jessica reported that the Spring/Summer newsletter went out in July. She reminded everyone that the Chapter has social media accounts with a decent amount of participation. Most social media accounts have content in waves, but it would be best to be more consistent with posts. Posts can be about anything chapter members do, including work, winning awards, travel, etc. These accounts are followed by student Subunits and the AR AFS account follows the Subunits as well. Chelsea asked the students in attendance what types of social media posts would benefit students most and Cade Richesin replied that celebrating students' awards, travel, and activities would be good. If anyone has content to share, photos and other content should be texted to Jessica (501-607-9001). Texts are best since it is easier to upload photos from the phone directly to social media apps.

Since only one Subunit report was provided for the newsletter, Subunit reports were not included in the last newsletter. The group discussed ways to increase responses from Subunits, which included creating a standard Google form with questions, including Subunit advisers in the process, and requesting reports earlier. Moving forward, submitted student Subunit reports will be included in the newsletters, regardless of how many reports are received. For Subunits that don't submit a report, the newsletter will respectfully reflect that no report was provided.

Lastly, research highlights are needed for the newsletters and Jessica encouraged students to submit a research highlight. Research highlights are not restricted to completed projects and can highlight progress reports too. Ginny suggested creating a template with standard questions that would help prompt students on what to include in the research highlight. Ginny also suggested that Outstanding Subunit Member Awardees who have research projects be required to provide a research update for the newsletters, which many EXCOM members agreed is a great idea. Jessica also encouraged research highlights from professionals as well.

### *Webmaster – Dylan Hann*

Dylan didn't have anything new to report. Christy added that officer information on the Southern Division AFS website and AR AFS is out of date. Christy will work together to get the information for the SD AFS updated. JJ reminded everyone that there is a fishing competition on the AR AFS webpage.

## **Committee Reports**

### *Nominating and Awards Committee – JJ Gladden, Chair*

JJ reported that no nominations have been received yet. The group discussed nominations for the Southern Division awards and Christy explained that the winner of the Chapter's award is nominated for the Southern Division and SEAFWA awards. The group also decided to create an AR AFS Subunit of the Year Award. The application will mimic the Southern Division application and EXCOM will nominate the Chapter winner for the Southern Division Best Student Subunit Award. Jessica added that the Southern Division doesn't recognize dual units, so when filling out applications, subunits should clarify that they are an AFS subunit within a dual fisheries and wildlife club.

### *Activities and Raffle Committee – Jordan Lindaman, Chair*

Given this is the slow part of the year for this committee, Jordan didn't have anything new to report.

### *Environmental Affairs Committee – Dr. Sue Colvin, Chair*

Sue reported that an email was sent out by the AR AFS Chapter encouraging members to support the Recovering America's Wildlife Act 2021 (RAWA).

### *Education Liaison Committee – Chelsea Gilliland, Chair*

Chelsea updated the contact information for all but one subunit. Chelsea has shared announcements for opportunities for students to apply for scholarships, awards, and travel grants. She asked for suggestions to keep

students engaged. The group discussed the following ideas: seminars on applying to graduate school or crafting an effective resume, a bioblitz event, encouraging students to submit research highlights that can be shared via social media or in the newsletter, workshops with professionals from multiple state and federal agencies and NGOs, and providing opportunities for students to practice talks before professional meetings. Ginny Adams suggested a meeting with all subunit presidents to solicit input on the type of events that would be most beneficial for students.

### **Ad-hoc Committees**

#### *Scholarship Fund- Sean Lusk/Micah Tindall*

Earlier this year, the Chapter invested \$10,000 to create a scholarship fund. The plan was to fund a scholarship once \$500 in profit was earned, which occurred in August 2022. EXCOM voted via email to transfer \$500 to a separate account. The group debated whether two-\$250 or one-\$500 scholarship should be awarded and what criteria (academic achievement, chapter/subunit involvement, financial need) would be considered when awarding the scholarship. Multiple members suggested contacting other state Chapters about their selection process. Christy and Sean will research the process other chapters use. JJ added that we should hold a virtual meeting in early November to go over the information collected about other Chapters' scholarships.

### **Subunit Reports**

#### *Arkansas Tech University*

President: Autumn Henry

The 2022-2023 year has been very busy. In the spring semester, the Subunit held a fundraising event, Beast Feast, in late April. We have also held trivia nights and cookouts for members and hosted a resume night where graduate students came to help students apply for internships and build their resumes.

This semester, the Subunit has several things planned. The first meeting of the semester had almost 50 students attend. Members will volunteer at the Bowjam event in Holla Bend. Students will attend a volunteer event called Piney Creek Clean up and habitat improvement project. Members will camp out. Friday will be spent meeting with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission officials and professionals from the National Turkey Federation.

The Subunit is hosting a beginner fly-tying class in October, a camping trip with a local herpetologist, and a Dutch oven class. We also plan to take some of our members out to go backpacking shocking on a campus stream to see what they may be doing later in their courses. Lastly, in November, officer elections for the 23-24 school year will be held and some members will be attending the South Eastern Fishes council in Athens Georgia to present research. Also, members Parker Brannon, Seth Drake, and Anthony Zenga, are presenting at the Arkansas Wildlife Action Plan Symposium on their Arkansas darter work.

#### *The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*

President: Derek Owens

Vice President: Jeff Stevens

This past spring was a successful and productive semester for the UAPB subunit. Many subunit members presented research at various conferences, including ARAFS, SDAFS, and the Association of 1890 Research Directors Symposium. Several members (Andrew Althoff, Hannah Knuckles, Derek Owens, and Jeffery Stevens) won awards at these conferences. On top of monthly meetings, the subunit also held our annual White Bass Bonanza, a fishing tournament held in Caney Bayou in Pine Bluff. Subunit advisor Dr. Steve Lochmann placed 1<sup>st</sup> with a total of 6 White Bass caught during the event. UAPB staff member Dave Brewer submitted the largest White Bass of the event (2.45 lbs.).

This summer, the subunit did not hold official events, but members assisted on a variety of research projects including Brown Trout hooking mortality on the Little Red River, Silver Carp movement in the Arkansas and White Rivers, Silver Carp population demographics across the Lower Mississippi River Basin, and fish community assemblages in the Mississippi River.

This fall will be a busy semester for the subunit. We plan to host speakers during monthly meetings and hold post-meeting socials to increase member connection and exposure with our speakers and their various fields. In September, we will hold a "Welcome Back" fish fry to meet new students and introduce them to the subunit at large. In early October, the subunit will assist with the UAPB Aquaculture Station's annual catfish sale by seining fish from the hatchery ponds and transporting them to holding tanks. The Subunit will also clean fish during the sale as a fundraiser for the Subunit. We have several members signed up to assist the Delta Rivers Nature Center with their annual Wildlife and Wetlands festival in late October. We also plan to host a least one stream cleanup here in Pine Bluff.

*University of Central Arkansas*

President: Cade Richesin

The University of Central Arkansas and Arkansas State University will cohost the Southeastern Fishes Council Meeting in 2024. The student subunit will help with the meeting.

*University of Arkansas*

No Report

*Arkansas State University*

No Report

## **Old Business**

Donations- The Chapter donates \$2,000 annually with a maximum of \$500 per individual request. The Chapter needs to better define what types of donation requests will be considered and when these will be awarded. The Chapter has historically donated to Jimmie Pigg Memorial Outstanding Student Achievement Award and the Chapter hosting the annual SDAFS meeting. Following a short discussion on how to advertise these opportunities and if donations are made on a first-asked, need, or merit basis, the group decided to create two deadlines for the donation requests, the first of which will be December 1, 2022. The Chapter Bylaws outline priorities for donations, but advertising these opportunities more often and adding deadlines will provide more transparency and publicity for these awards.

The group discussed quarterly webinars. Topics for the webinars included meeting your AFS Chapter officers, professional development, or activities for students. The topic was tabled for further discussion, with the group pushing to focus on student activities.

## **New Business**

Christy proposed that the Chapter sponsor Hutton Scholars at the annual Chapter meeting. This could be one item that is considered for the \$2,000 that the Chapter donates each year.

### *2023 Chapter Meeting*

Brie has researched places for the 2023 Chapter meeting. Previous discussions had leaned towards Russellville, but that location lacks an adequate venue for the meeting. She also considered various resorts but couldn't identify one that could accommodate the number of rooms needed. She also made contact with the Arkansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society regarding a joint meeting, but the Wildlife Society has already chosen a venue

and scheduled their next meeting. Brie is now considering the Haywood by Hilton in El Dorado, which has a hotel with ample meeting space that is close to many restaurants. The hotel allows outside food and beverage services. She proposed three meeting dates: Feb 15-17, 22-24, or March 8-19. The majority of the group preferred the March dates.

EXCOM will have a virtual meeting in early November. Agenda items for the meeting will include awards nominations, Chapter donations, and an update on the 2023 Chapter meeting.

JJ moved to adjourn the meeting and Micah seconded the motion.