



Ohio Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 6th, 2025

3:00 - 4:30 pm

Oglebay Resort, Wheeling, WV

1) Call to Order

- a) Determination of quorum: Yes (8+ members)
- b) Meeting called to order at: 3:02 PM
- c) Attendance – *See Appendix 1, attached.*

2) Welcome by Steven Gratz, OCAFS President

- a) Thanks to those attending in-person and virtually
- b) Thanks to Eugene for providing equipment
- c) Sign-in sheet going around
- d) Introductions
- e) If you have questions, please raise hand or interrupt – I want this to be open discussion
- f) Gary Whelan –
 - i) Logo for Columbus meeting 2026
 - ii) Slogan for habitat

3) NCD Report (Steven Gratz on behalf of Dan Isermann, NCD President)

- a) Annual business meeting held at Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in St. Louis, MO in January
- b) Jeff Kopaska (previously Iowa DNR) is new Parent Society Executive Director
- c) Kevin Irons (Illinois DNR) congratulated as next NCD Vice-President
- d) Distributed thousands of dollars worth of travel awards and scholarships (MAFWA travel awards, Janice Lee Fenske, Joan Duffy, various technical committees)
- e) Winners of NCD awards:
 - i) Meritorious Service Award – Joe Conroy (Ohio Department of Natural Resources)
 - ii) Fisheries Excellence Award – Dave Clapp (Michigan Department of Natural Resources) and the late Chris Vandergoot (formerly director of the Great Lakes Acoustic Telemetry Observation System; GLATOS)
- f) Booth at the Midwest to promote technical committees and silent auction to raise funds for Student and Early Career Professional Affairs Committee
- g) Passed a resolution to provide up to \$500 per year to various student-focused endowments and scholarship funds that were created in honor of prominent fisheries people within the NCD - if

you have one or more of these endowments within your state please let us know so we can start to distribute these funds to these great endeavors

- h) Request: take the time to update your chapter's information on the NCD website and reach out to student subunits to do the same
- i) Transition from Wiley to Oxford as the publisher for journals – past relationship rocky, but this one less financially rewarding with 25% revenue reduction with Oxford in 2025
- j) (AFS update) Focus on reauthorization of Sport Fish Restoration Act – essential for funding grad student projects and agency work
- k) (AFS update) Support for the Mississippi River Basin Fisheries Commission
- l) (AFS update) Current membership data system is inadequate; improvements promised by late summer/fall 2026.
- m) (AFS update) Improving continuing education and professional certification
- n) (AFS update) Expanding webinars as a member benefit; non-members will need to pay for access.

4) Officer Reports

- a) President (Steven Gratz)
 - i) Successful joint OH-PA-WV AFS meeting – lots of planning and coordination with other states
 - ii) Weekly e-mail updates – less frequent (will become bimonthly), schedule ahead of time
 - iii) Apply for travel awards, nominate for OCAFS awards, and recognize achievements
 - (1) NCD Technical Committee awards that could be matched by OCAFS: Percid (\$300 up to three awards), Esocid (\$500 up to two awards), Salmonid (\$250 up to two awards), and Centrarchid (\$250, one award) Technical Committees
 - (2) Often have few people apply to them
 - (3) Plan to publish names by year of award winners on OCAFS webpage to recognize the accomplishments of the recipients
 - (4) Plan to work with NCD leadership to streamline the awards page and make it possible to see the contributions/achievements of award recipients
- b) President-Elect (Taylor Hunkins)
- c) Past-President (Jeremy Pritt)
- d) Secretary/Treasurer (Zak Slagle)
 - i) See Appendix 2, attached.
 - ii) Minor (?) – can we ask students for expected graduation date – let's ask A. Foley if possible
 - iii) Membership and parent society discussion: Ludsin – how many members would we lose if we forced them to be members of the parent society? Gratz – Western Division mandates this, could compare to them. Pritt – (?) Eugene – recruiting in the past; sometimes fisheries professionals *cannot* be member of parent society and chapter-only membership allows them to be on committees. Foley – we will lose membership if parent society forces parent society membership. Kinter – Kopaska has pushed back on this idea before (as NCD pres.), he is now Exec. Dir. So maybe he will push back again. Parent society hurting for cash, maybe that changes things. Wagner – parent society may need to demonstrate benefits they provide, but they might be in a tight spot.
 - iv) Finances – Ludsin – how much money do we typically have? Slagle – Average \$6K over 14 years. Bump from 2020 profit sharing. Comfortable with expenditures. Ludsin – be aware that a failed meeting (e.g. fed scientists get fired) could put us in the hole.

5) Student Subunits

- a) Bowling Green State University (Minor)
 - i) Active w/ trash cleanups, White Bass fishing, help with Maumee River Walleye egg take(?)

- b) University of Toledo (Mikayla)
 - i) New officers. Maddie Tomczak speaking this year, had biologist speak last year
- c) The Ohio State University – no report

6) Standing Committee Reports

- a) Ohio Fisheries Leadership/Webmaster (Andrew Foley)
 - i) Updated Governing Board on website
 - ii) Will be updating awards page with historical winners, e.g. Milt Austin, Fisheries Excellence, etc.
 - iii) Professional sign-up on website isn't great. Need new form and collect more info.
 - iv) Kylee (?) – job board on site? Gratz – possible if Foley agrees. Pritt – emails are likely easiest way. Foley – not many site visitors until meeting time. Ludsin – Early Life History section wasn't able to keep a similar board updated. Easier for quarterly emails. Add lab page to site? ELH has one, might be helpful. Gratz – no emails on site b/c we got phishing attempts.
- b) Education/Continuing Education (Eugene Braig)
 - i) Milt Austin Award
 - (1) Will award to high school students (\$150-1st place, \$100-2nd place, \$50-3rd place) and middle school students (two \$50 honorable mentions) presenting at the Ohio Academy of Science State Science Fair. Judging April 7-14. Eugene will solicit for judges in late April, early May
 - (2) Group projects? If so, full award to whole group – No.
 - (3) Do we want to recognize elementary school students? Tentative no.
 - (4) Diminishing relevant projects; had to consider all projects but they were only weakly related to aquatic ecology.
 - ii) Stone Lab Fish Sampling Techniques scholarships – tries to keep workshop full
- c) Value of Member/Social Media (Kylee Wilson)
 - i) 'Member Monday' segment highlighting OCAFS members on Facebook going well
 - ii) More follows! No one is filling out the link recently, need more members to highlight!
 - (1) [Submit your info here](#)

7) North Central Division Technical Committee Reports – *not presented to save time*

- a) Centrarchid (Zak Slagle)
 - i) Published manuscript in FME on regional factors affecting bass recruitment in Midwestern reservoirs
 - ii) Increased CTC budget to ~\$1,500
 - iii) Awarded the first \$250 CTC student travel grant to Hannah Lenning for attending the MFWC
 - iv) Began talks with TPWD to help with hosting the 2025 Black Bass Symposium at the Annual Meeting
 - v) Andrya Whitten will take over as chair of the CTC after the MFWC
- b) Esocid (Curt Wagner)
 - i) Awarded Ryan Eastman with a \$500 travel scholarship for Midwest
 - ii) Changed the term of chair position from one to two years
 - iii) Received \$1000 sponsorship for future scholarships
- c) Ictalurid (Jacob Bentley)
 - i) Committee work is rewarding and not a big lift.
- d) Reservoirs (Joe Conroy)
- e) Rivers and Streams (Taylor Hunkins)
 - i) Kevin Gaston took over as chair from MJ Oubre; Madison Myers is our Secretary/Treasurer
 - ii) Spring meeting will be March 26-27, 2025 at the Rock Island Conservation Club in Milan, IL.

- Abstract submissions (<https://forms.gle/n7u2fwdeors5Dzzk8>) and registration (<https://forms.gle/fj3Dm56f2z1fGUGn8>) are currently open. Feel free to reach out to Kevin Gaston (KGaston1@idem.IN.gov) with any questions or problems with the Google forms.
- iii) Looking at creating a logo for the committee in 2025. Logo ideas can be submitted online until February 28, 2025 (<https://forms.gle/6pPQo63vEkPkLFLAA>). Guidelines are found on the submission form. Online voting will occur prior to the spring meeting with the winning logo being revealed at the meeting for further discussion.
 - f) Salmonid Technical Committee (Paul Pira)
 - i) New STC-sponsored Salmonid Award for two students to attend the Midwest F&W Conference. 6 applicants total. Kamden Ball (SDSU undergrad) and Gwendolyn Phillips (Lake Superior State University undergrad) were the 2025 award winners. Winners will receive a \$250 check and framed award.
 - ii) Symposium at the 85th Midwest F&W Conference in St Louis. The 2-day session is entitled *"Building Resilient Salmonid Populations with Multi-faceted Management and Research Approaches"*
 - iii) STC secretary has sent a website format update to Brian Borkholder, AFS website manager.
 - g) Student and Early Career Professionals Affairs Committee (SECPAC; Steven Gratz)
 - i) April Simmons (MIAFS) will co-chair with Hannah Mulligan for the next few years
 - ii) Co-hosted a presentation feedback session with the Science Communication and Education Sections
 - iii) Co-hosted student conclave on January 18 prior to Midwest F&W Conference with Michigan AFS and supported by Missouri Department of Conservation with 13 attendees
 - iv) Join our email list: <https://forms.gle/Pp4bGk7jD91K19MY7>
 - h) Urban & Community Fishing (Tory Gabriel)
 - i) First election for Vice Chair will be this spring. Tyler Stubbs will move out of the chair position and Laura Schmidt (WI) will move into the chair.
 - ii) New South Dakota State grad student working on an urban fisheries project. We will be looking at ways to not only help that person but to also advocate for more urban fisheries research in general and ways to help with funding.
 - iii) A new logo was developed.
 - i) Walleye (Jeremy Pritt)
 - i) Summer Workshop Meeting was held at the Alice L. Kibbe Life Science Research Station in Warsaw, Illinois from July 23-25 along with the Centrarchid and Esocid committees. The continuing education workshop included presentations focused on large river ecology in the Upper Mississippi River and designated time sampling river.
 - ii) The WTC decided to remove \$2,523.00 from the investment account, leaving approximately \$7,000.00 in the account. This money helped boost the funds in the WTC account to help with meeting costs and student travel awards.
 - iii) There is support from WTC membership to pursue holding Percis VI in conjunction with the 2026 AFS Meeting in Columbus, Ohio. Several members expressed interest in helping assist with this effort, but it was decided WTC would not be the lead.
 - iv) The 2025 summer workshop meeting will be held at the Central Michigan University research station on Beaver Island. The meeting will be held during the first week of August and more details will be completed in the next few months.
 - j) Nongame and Native Species (in revival mode)
 - i) Aiming to host a symposium at the next Midwest meeting
 - ii) Collaboration with Southern Division discussed
 - k) Invasive Species (in development mode)
 - i) Interest gathering for this new NCD Technical Committee

- ii) Held planning meeting at Midwest

8) Additional Business

- a) A Guide to Ohio Streams book revision (Randy Sanders)
 - i) Brief history of Ohio Streams Guide
 - ii) Governor wants this fast-tracked and will be similar to the previous version from early 2000s, but with different photos and a new chapter about the H2Ohio program
 - iii) They would like involvement and support from AFS, likely through the contribution of expertise and photos
 - iv) Flyers developed to solicit orgs to support/get copies
 - v) New sections: land rush, quest for species; H2Ohio and other restoration programs
- b) Upcoming meetings
 - i) IAGLR – June 2-6, 2025, Milwaukee, WI
 - ii) International Conference of Fish Telemetry – June 8-13, 2025, Traverse City, MI
 - iii) Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (JMIH) – July 9-13, 2025, St. Paul, MN
 - iv) American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting – August 10-14, 2025, San Antonio, TX (includes Black Bass Symposium 2025)
 - v) Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference – January 25-28, 2026, Fort Wayne, IN
 - vi) Joint Meeting of Aquatic Sciences Societies, 2028, Honolulu, HI
- c) Award recognition
 - i) Meritorious Service Award (OCAFS) – Joe Conroy
 - (1) Joe Conroy (Ohio Department of Natural Resources) selected as 2025 recipient
 - (2) This award will recognize extraordinary service to the AFS by an OCAFS member. Nominations could be based on a single outstanding achievement or a variety of service activities.
 - ii) Fisheries Excellence Award (OCAFS)
 - (1) Chris Vandergoot (formerly director of the Great Lakes Acoustic Telemetry Observation System; GLATOS) selected as 2025 recipient
 - (2) This award will be given to someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the fisheries profession. This contribution may be a single activity or a collection of achievements over the individual's career.
 - iii) Best Student Paper Award (OCAFS; OH-PA-WV Joint Meeting)
 - (1) Kylee Wilson selected as Ohio recipient for the joint OH-PA-WV AFS Meeting
 - (2) Overall winner across three chapters – Emily Bierer (Duquesne University, PA Chapter)
 - iv) Best Student Poster Award (OCAFS; OH-PA-WV Joint Meeting)
 - (1) Andrew Foley selected as Ohio recipient for the joint OH-PA-WV AFS Meeting
 - (2) Overall winner – Andrew Foley!
 - v) Other awards
 - (1) MAFWA Travel Award (\$500 MAFWA) – Gus McAnally (U. Cincinnati); Jacob Bentley (Ohio State U.)
 - (2) Joan Duffy Travel Award (\$200 OCAFS & \$200 NCD) – Andrew Foley (Ohio State U.)
 - (3) Percid Travel Award (\$300 NCD Walleye Technical Committee & \$100 OCAFS) – Andrew Foley (Ohio State U.)
 - (4) Stone Lab Fish Sampling Techniques Workshop (two \$350 scholarships) – Karlee Lewicki and Liam White
 - (5) Best Chapter Communications (NCD) – Ohio Chapter
- d) Past-president recognition
 - i) Thanks to Jeremy for serving as OCAFS President 2022-2023 and Past-President 2023-2025
- e) President-Elect voting results

- i) Dr. Stu Ludsin (Ohio State U.) was voted by membership as next OCAFS President-Elect
- f) OCAFS Letter of Support for Sea Grant Program (Slagle)
 - i) [Link here](#)
 - ii) Discussion: T. Gabriel: thanks for mentioning. Online form that is pretty easy. Pritt: may need top-down support from within ODW. Ludsin: cannot do in official (OSU) capacity, he signed as citizen. Maybe just sharing form? Need to ask higher-ups in AFS and ODW. Amendment (Ludsin motions, ? seconds): wait for approval from parent society and ODW. If they agree, the chapter will send a letter. **Motion:** write letter of support in favor of Ohio Sea Grant funding conditional on approval from parent society and ODW. **All in favor, motion passes.**

9) Closing Remarks

- a) Successful joint OH-PA-WV AFS meeting – lots of planning and coordination with other states beginning in September 2024 with many lessons learned; Good primer to preparing for AFS Annual Meeting in Columbus, OH in 2026
- b) Remove posters
- c) Leave nametags in basket at registration desk
- d) Evening social in Fort Henry Room – JackBoxTV and appetite for fun.
- e) T. Hunkins installed as President.
- f) Meeting adjourned: 4:28PM.

Appendix 1. Meeting participants.

Name	Affiliation
Josh Kocik	ODNR-DOW
Alexandra Marshall	Bowling Green State University
Andrew Foley	Ohio State University
Ashlynn Benedict	University of Toledo
Brian Alford	OSU - Stone Lab
Brian Zimmerman	Ohio State University
Bryan Kinter	ODNR-DOW
Chris Aman	ODNR-DOW
Curt Wagner	ODNR-DOW
Ed Lewis	ODNR-DOW
Elizabeth Anderson	University of Toledo
Eugene Braig	Ohio State University
Everett Johnson	ODNR-DOW
Jack Kinsey	ODNR-DOW
Jacob Bentley	Ohio State University
Jacob Shandler	Soltitude Lake Management
Jeff Miner	Bowling Green State University
Jeremy Pritt	ODNR-DOW
Joseph Toth	Bowling Green State University
Kelsea Downs	ODNR-DOW
Kylee Wilson	Ohio State University
Lena Bauer	University of Toledo
Lindsey Bruckerhoff	Ohio State University
Mikayla Kindler	University of Toledo
Nakiah Dague	Bowling Green State University
Nathan Weyand	Ohio University
Nick Radabaugh	ODNR-DOW
Randy Sanders	Midwest Biodiversity Institute
Rich Carter	Midwest Biodiversity Institute
Samantha Truckly	ODNR-DOW
Stephen Tysko	ODNR-DOW
Steven Gratz	ODNR-DOW
Steven Siron	ODNR-DOW
Stu Ludsin	Ohio State University
Taylor Hunkins	ODNR-DOW
Tory Gabriel	Ohio Sea Grant
Will Bell	Bowling Green State University
Zach Steffensmeier	Ohio State University
Zak Slagle	ODNR-DOW

Appendix 2. Secretary-treasurer report.

2025 OCAFS Winter Meeting – Secretary-Treasurer Report

Transaction Category	Total Expenses
<i>Beginning Account Balance (1/1/24)</i>	\$8,165.76
Meeting expenses	-\$3,530.93
Awards	-\$1,450.00
Travel support	-\$450.00
Disbursement to OSU subunit	-\$419.00
Donation	-\$100.00
Cash Withdrawal	-\$1.00
Awards Received	\$30.00
Dues	\$641.00
Meeting and Dues	\$4,283.99
<i>Net 1/1/24-3/6/25</i>	<i>-\$995.94*</i>
Account Balances	
OSU Student Subunit Funds (in Huntington Acct)	\$0.00
Paypal Balance	***
Current Huntington Account Balance	\$7,169.82
OCAFS Available Funds (as of 3/6/25)	\$7,169.82

Notes:

- **Awards** represent Milt Austin awards, scholarships for the Stone Lab Fisheries Workshop, and Joan Duffy and Percid Award matches
- **Meeting expenses** represents the 2024 Winter Meeting
- **Travel support** for Gratz to go to the 2024 Midwest meeting
- **OSU Student Subunit Funds** represent money raised in Silent Auction at the 2019 Midwest Meeting. These funds were (finally) disbursed to the OSU subunit.
- **OCAFS Available Funds** represents closing balance in Huntington account
- *Have not yet received parent society reimbursement, roughly \$300 expected
- **Paypal account balance = \$34,636, *but* it is being used for the Joint AFS Meeting. Roughly ~\$40 of that is chapter dues and the rest are Joint Meeting funds.

Membership:

- g) 73 current members (March '25): 30 parent society, 44 students
- h) Dec 2024: 106 members (52 parent society)
- i) Compared to Dec 2023 – 175 members (likely inflated high due to subsequent membership purges)

Submitted March 6, 2025

Zak Slagle

OCAFS Secretary/Treasurer