

**AFS**  
**CALIFORNIA/NEVADA**  
**CHAPTER DOCUMENTS**  
**1994**



# *American Fisheries Society*

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## **Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting California-Nevada Chapter, American Fisheries Society Red Lion Inn, Eureka CA March 21, 1994**

**Call-to-Order:** Chapter President Jennifer Nielsen called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

**EXCOM Members Present:** EXCOM members present included Jennifer Nielsen (President), Tom Taylor (Past-President), Susan Ellis (President-Elect), Terry Mills (Secretary), Dave Lentz (Policy and Resolutions), Wayne Lifton (Bylaws and Nominations), Jean Baldrige (Membership), Ed Cheslak (Treasurer), Kevan Urquhart (Awards), Dennis McEwan (Conservation), and Alan Baracco (Newsletter).

**Verification of Quorum:** A total of 31 Chapter members were present, 11 more than the minimum requirement of 20 members.

**President's Report:** Jennifer Nielsen reported that the Eel River Symposium report is available to attendees and to others for a nominal cost of \$15. She also reported that the Western Area Fish and Wildlife Agencies proceedings will be out soon.

Jennifer reported on issues addressed by the EXCOM in the past year. Issues included the licensing of biologists, our opposition to the Healthy Forest Initiative to license forest management, opposition to "Peer Review" of preliminary or "in-house" type technical draft materials from consultants or other authors, and initiation of a more aggressive membership campaign. Jennifer also pointed out the nomination base for Chapter offices is very slim, and that each standing committee should have 3-5 individuals participating, not just one as we have now.

Jennifer congratulated Susan Ellis for making the Annual Meeting happen.

**Secretary's Report:** Terry Mills distributed minutes of the July 27, 1993 Annual Business Meeting held at the Red Lion Inn in Sacramento, CA. A motion to accept the minutes without change was made and accepted. The minutes of the 1993 Annual Business Meeting were accepted unanimously. Terry also led an introduction of present EXCOM members to the other members present at the meeting.

**Treasurer's and Finance Report:** Ed Cheslak reported that the Chapter has about \$45,000 in the Continuing Education fund and about \$12,000 in our regular account. Ed has been attempting to implement a bookkeeping program which will assist with the budgets and the committees. Ed is trying to gain "tax exempt" status for our Chapter from the State. We believe we already have that status for the Federal government through the National Organization. Ed reported that 290 people had signed up to attend this year's conference. Dave Lentz provided information regarding the Western Area Fish and Wildlife Association

meeting held last July. Our Chapter incurred \$4,331 in expenses and received \$4,469 in income for a profit to the Chapter of \$138.

Ed also broached the subject of increasing Chapter dues. A discussion among the membership ensued. Items discussed included the costs associated with reproducing and mailing issues of *Pisces*, raising dues to \$10 per year, the need to have a lower rate for students, and other issues. Alan Baracco felt that the Chapter needed a budget since we do not have one in place at this time. Larry Week moved that the EXCOM complete an accounting and to decide if the EXCOM can raise the dues or whether a membership vote was required. A quick review of the bylaws (Section 9, part B) indicated that dues can only be changed by the majority vote of the membership. Additional discussion ensued and several motions were presented, none of which passed. A final motion directing the EXCOM to review the budget and to determine if expenditures meet income was seconded and passed.

**Membership:** Jean Baldrige reported that the recruitment of Cal-Neva members was directed through the National office in December. Individual requests for applications have been filled by both the National and Cal-Neva Membership chair since the beginning of January. Presently, our membership stands at 370, an increase over 300 at this time last year.

This spring, Cal-Neva membership, along with the Sacramento Sub-unit, will host a barbecue at the University of California, Davis campus. The purpose of the event is to present an opportunity to share information about AFS and to recruit students into the Cal-Neva Chapter and the Sacramento Sub-unit.

Membership is also preparing a major recruiting campaign throughout the California Department of Fish and Game and the State Water Resources Control Board. We are currently seeking volunteers in each of the respective State offices to serve as information sources and to assist with membership enrollment. Each office volunteer will be provided with a packet of materials to aid in the recruitment of fellow biologists. In addition, most State departments will reimburse each of their employees for membership dues in professional organizations such as AFS. Therefore, each of the office volunteers can also assist colleagues in obtaining their reimbursement for joining AFS and the Cal-Neva Chapter.

In an effort to further increase membership, we are considering two additional membership "recruitment" mailings. The first would be directed to all former "non-renewal" members since 1991. The second would be in conjunction with Continuing Education. We will explore the possibility of obtaining mailing lists containing names of professionals within agencies and targeting a direct mailing to those individuals. Agencies include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Forest Service. We believe this has a great potential for the recruitment of new and former members and provides greater opportunity for direct lines of communication regarding Cal-Neva educational events.

Jean has also been working with the National Office on a more efficient means of maintaining and revising the actual membership list on a timely and consistent basis so that all information regarding names, addresses, and membership status are current at all times.

**Bylaws and Nominations:** Wayne Lifton reported that since the 1993 Annual Meeting, we have completed the election for the positions of President-Elect and Treasurer. Ballots were sent out to the entire current membership and a period of six weeks was allowed for receipt of returns. Less than one-half of the membership actually voted. Both elections were closely contested. Susan Ellis was elected President-Elect and Dr. Ed Cheslak was elected Treasurer.

For 1994, we have had difficulty soliciting candidates for office. The offices of President-Elect and Secretary are up for election. An announcement was run in *Pisces*, however, no nominations were received through that avenue. Numerous Chapter members were approached about running for office. There has been a significant reluctance on the part of many to dedicate the time and effort that is needed to take an active role in our Chapter. This has made it difficult to obtain candidates for office and delayed our efforts in sending out the ballots. Therefore, those who have volunteered to run for office and take on those responsibilities should be given special recognition for the willingness to take an active role in their professional society. For our 1994 election, we have two candidates for President-Elect. These are Dr. Andy Jahn and Mr. Ed Bianchi. For Secretary, we have only one candidate: Ms. Lesa Meng.

Ballots for the 1994 election are set to go out shortly. We will allow a four-week period after the mailing prior to counting the ballots. The results will be announced in *Pisces*.

**Awards:** Kevan Urquhart provided a written report for the Annual Business Meeting.

Chapter Award for Distinguished Professional Achievement. Last year the Chapter approved an new award called the "Chapter Award for Distinguished Professional Achievement". Selection criteria for this award are:

"The Chapter Award for Distinguished Profession Achievement recognizes a long-standing pattern of superior on-the-job accomplishments by a member of the Chapter and Parent Societies, which benefits the fisheries of the two states and/or led to significant advances in fisheries management or science."

Chapter Awards. The Chapter received no nominations for the Chapter's Award of Excellence. We received one nomination for the Conservation Achievement Award too late for consideration. That nomination will be held over for consideration next year. We received no nominations for our Award for Special Contributions. **Conservation Achievement awards were presented to Bill Jennings (Committee to Save the Mokelumne River) and Jim Edmunson (Cal Trout). Eric Gerstung received our Chapter Award for Distinguished Professional Achievement.**

**Bill Jennings** served as the head of the "Committee to Save the Mokelumne River. He dedicated much time and effort to ensuring that instream flows for fisheries maintenance have been provided and by addressing the adverse water quality problems arising from the heavy metal discharge from the abandoned Penn Mine. These efforts required Mr. Jennings to work with the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and its staff, the State Water Resources Control Board and its staff, the Department of Fish and Game, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. He is knowledgeable in both fisheries and water quality issues and has well served our interests by becoming the catalyst for the protection of the resources associated with the Mokelumne River. Through his efforts, the level of protection provided for the Mokelumne has been advanced significantly in recent years.

**Jim Edmondson** is well respected for his efforts to protect and maintain a diverse range of fisheries ranging from coastal streams and ocean-going steelhead to wild brown trout population in high elevation creeks. As one of California Trout's regional managers, Jim has acted as a catalyst in the protection and conservation of the fishery resources within his area. He has been most effective a mobilizing support and generating changes to benefit the fishery resources. Jim is hard-working, zealous, and tireless when it comes to protecting and preserving the fishery resource and in battle to increase streamflow releases to benefit fish and their habitat. Jim has been active in the restoration of streams in California. He is a court-appointed voting member of the committee for the restoration of Mono Basin tributaries. He established a public education and interpretive center at Hot Creek, Mono County, one of California's most productive trout fisheries. Jim has made a long-term commitment to the restoration of Mono Basin, and his persistent support has been instrumental in the success of this effort.

**Eric Gerstung** has been an active and outspoken biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game for over 33 years. He continues to be one of our strongest advocates of protecting our fishery resources. Eric has earned a reputation over the years for his intimate, first-hand, statewide knowledge of stream and lake fishery resources, especially resident trout and steelhead. He has spent many days both on and off the job in remote areas making observations and documenting information on inland and anadromous fishes. His willingness to share this knowledge has been invaluable in assisting other fishery professionals to make informed fishery management decisions. Eric regularly goes the extra mile in making sure that fishery concerns are presented. He has recently served on a suction dredge review committee to assist in preparing a suction dredge EIR and new dredging regulations. He has been involved in determining the impacts of grazing on fisheries and evaluating the effects of fencing projects and instream habitat structures on fishery production. He investigated the effects of water project development and logging on fisheries resources in numerous river systems. He has served as the Conservation Chairman of the Sierra Club since 1963 and on their Executive Committee since 1964. He is on the Board of Directors for the Save the American River Association. He is also a member of the National Audubon Society, Isaac Walton League, Save the Redwoods League, National Wildlife Federation, American Fisheries Society, American Forestry Association, and other organizations. Among his many credits, Eric authored the Fishery Management Plan for

Lahonton Cutthroat Trout in California and Western Nevada Waters and the Lower Hat Creek Wild Trout Management Plan, which are guiding fishery management efforts to this day.

**Newsletter:** Alan Baracco reported that the Chapter's newsletter, PISCES, was produced and distributed three times since the last report period. The Summer 1993 issue, eight pages in length, contained information on the Western Division meeting in Sacramento, and article on licensing of biologists, and a training questionnaire. The Fall 1993 issue, sixteen pages in length, reported on the Chapter's sponsorship of the 1997 National AFS meeting, a financial statement, various committee reports, and the initial announcement of the present annual meeting and Klamath symposium. This issue was distributed to all Cal-Neva, Humboldt, Oregon, and North Pacific chapter members (over 1,500 in all) to announce the meeting and symposium. The Spring 1994 issue, sixteen pages in length, contained the program for the meeting and Klamath Symposium, an announcement of a conference on evolution and the aquatic ecosystems in May 1994 in Monterey, announcements for two Chapter-sponsored IFIM training courses, and various committee reports. This issue was mailed to all Cal-Neva, Humboldt, and Oregon chapter members.

**Conservation:** Dennis McEwan reminded everyone that the Conservation committee serves to alert the Chapter membership and Executive Committee of upcoming and continuing aquatic environmental issues so that informed decisions can be made. One of the most important roles of the Conservation Committee is to provide the EXCOM with information so that the chapter can act as another forum to provide expert opinion on a particular issue. If you feel that your agency, firm, or university is not acting in the best interest of the aquatic resources on a particular issue, please feel free to contact the Conservation Committee Chair.

The Conservation Committee has been involved in a number of issues since last July. Some of the things we have been doing are highlighted as follow:

### **Endangered Species**

Longfin Smelt and Sacramento Splittail Petition. In November 1992, the Chapter joined with the Natural Heritage Institute (NHI) and other organizations to petition to list the Sacramento splittail and longfin smelt which inhabit the Sacramento-San Joaquin delta and estuary. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a proposed rule to list the Sacramento splittail as Threatened on January 6, 1994, however, they did not designate Critical Habitat.

Also on January 6, the FWS published a 1-year finding that listing the longfin smelt was not warranted. They based this finding on the fact that this population does not appear to be biologically significant to the species as a whole and population trend data is not available for more northern populations. On February 15, NHI filed a FOIA request to obtain the Administrative Record upon which the decision was based.

Southern Steelhead Petition. We had been working with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund to develop a listing petition for southern steelhead. This has been put on hold due to the filing of a petition of February 14, 1994 by the Oregon Natural Resources Council to list all steelhead stocks in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and California, including southern steelhead stocks.

Southern California Freshwater Fishes Petition. We had been working with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund to develop a cluster petition to list several southern California freshwater fishes.

Giant Garter Snake. In 1990, the Chapter petitioned to list the giant garter snake (GGS). A proposed rule was published in December 1991 to list it as endangered. As of September, 1993, the final decision was nine months overdue, so we sent a letter to the FWS voicing our concerns. We were also concerned that influential landowners and congressmen were attempting to intervene and circumvent the process. A final rule listing the GGS as Threatened, without designating critical habitat, was published on October 20, 1993.

### **Forest Issues**

We provided comments on the Draft EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl. We support the inclusion of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy in whatever alternative is adopted. Specifically, we endorse provisions for establishing riparian reserves and Key Watersheds, and prohibiting new roads and reducing existing road mileage within Key Watersheds.

We provided comments on both the Klamath National Forest and the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans.

We provided comments on a proposed grazing allotment revision for Silver King Creek in the Toiyabe National Forest.

We sent a letter in support of a Wild and Scenic Rivers study in the Tahoe National Forest, and designation of appropriate rivers.

### **Aquatic Habitat Mitigation and Restoration Fund**

We joined with the Natural Heritage Institute and several other organizations to petition the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to establish a fee assessment on all water users that divert from the Sacramento-San Joaquin system. This assessment, which is essentially a resurrection of the mitigation fund that would have been established by SWRCB Decision 1630, would be used to fund the state's share of the habitat restoration costs of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act and other mitigation and restoration measures. The SWRCB has deferred consideration of the petition until they take up the Bay-Delta proceedings again.

**Policy and Resolutions:** Dave Lentz discussed a proposed peer review policy statement. The proposed policy is as follows:

**Chapter Policy on Review of Draft Documents**

**WHEREAS** the California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is the leading organization representing fisheries professionals in California and Nevada; and,

**WHEREAS** the Society and the Chapter represent the collective expertise of many fisheries scientists, managers, and researchers in California and Nevada and the Society's opinions are valued for their knowledge and insight of fishery resources issues; and,

**WHEREAS** the Chapter is frequently requested to review and provide comments for many studies, documents, and reports concerning fishery resources issues and since the Society and Chapter do not control the final editing, content or distribution of these reports and documents:

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that it is the policy of the California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society that when responding to requests for comments and critique on behalf of the Chapter to provide those comments only for public-review draft documents and final documents; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, if so decided by the Chapter's Executive Committee, the Chapter may facilitate a review of draft versions or any other types of documents by identifying appropriate people willing to perform a technical review that may not be endorsed by the Chapter.

The proposed policy statement was seconded and passed by the members present.

**Continuing Education:** Kathy Heib provided an up-to-date table of continuing education courses planned for 1994-95. The Chapter sponsored one course in early 1994, Technical Report Writing, facilitated by Randy Baxter. Upcoming courses include: Introduction to Instream Flow Incremental Methodology (two sessions), Introduction to the California Environmental quality Act, Swiftwater Rescue, and Technical Report Writing.

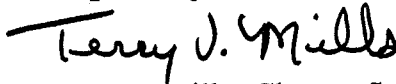
Kathy reported that a course catalog will be distributed as soon as most of the additional courses are finalized. Chuck Knutson has offered to continue as the Continuing Education treasures. The Continuing Education balance is \$47,032.09 (March 18, 1994). The Chapter netted \$1,234.84 from the Technical Report Writing class.

**Exhibits:** Robert Reavis reported that seven exhibitors had signed up and were displaying their products. Exhibitors included Hydrolab, Biosonics, the U.S. Forest Service, Sea Challengers, Reiff Manufacturing, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Smith-Root.



**Sacramento Subunit:** Tom Ambrosini provided a written report of the activities of the Sacramento Subunit. Since the last annual meeting, July 1993, the Subunit has met three times. Each meeting is structured around a featured speaker. At the July 1993 meeting, Dr. Marty Brittan presented details of his recent trip to Thailand where he traveled with professors from Khon Khan University and explored issues related to fisheries in urban and rural areas. At the October 13, 1994 meeting, Jim Canady (State Water Resources Control Board) discussed the status of Mono Lake and the pending action against Los Angeles Water and Power and their current water rights to streams which are tributary to Mono Lake. At the February 3, 1994 meeting, Mark Gard (U.C. Davis) discussed the manner in which smallmouth bass have altered an assemblage of native fishes, including squawfish, hardhead, roach, and threespine stickleback in a stream that was altered by mining operations.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry J. Mills". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first name.

Terry J. Mills, Chapter Secretary



# *American Fisheries Society*

ORGANIZED 1870 | INCORPORATED 1910

*McClanahan*

608 38th St.  
Sacramento, CA. 95816

July 14, 1994

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

The California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is a professional organization of over 500 fishery biologists and aquatic scientists working in California. We are very concerned about the degradation of fisheries and aquatic resources that is occurring throughout the state.

We were sorry to learn that the Senate did not include acquisition funds for the North Fork American River (Tahoe National Forest) in their proposed Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) appropriations. Fortunately, the House of Representatives recommended an appropriation of 1.0 million dollars for this purpose.

We are asking for your support to obtain the needed appropriation by urging the House-Senate Conference Committee to allocate 1.0 million from the LWCF to the North Fork American River.

The issue is particularly urgent because the landowner, High Sierra Properties, has filed a Timber Harvest Plan with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to log 640 acres at Watson Crossing, the most environmentally sensitive area of the North Fork American River Wild River Zone. The river in this section supports a premium wild rainbow trout fishery and is a component of the California Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) Wild Trout Program. Both DFG's Wild Trout Management Plan and the Forest Service's Wild River Plan for this river recommend acquisition of private inholdings.

Adverse effects resulting from logging on steep slopes are well documented: impacts such as increased sediment inputs and increased water temperature will undoubtedly affect this river for many years.

Timber harvest will probably commence sometime after next April when the Trust for Public Land option to purchase the property expires. The landowners have indicated that they do not plan to renew the option. For this reason, urgency is needed. This will probably be the last chance to preserve this pristine area.

Thank you for considering this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dennis McEwan', written in a cursive style.

Dennis McEwan  
Conservation Committee Chair  
California-Nevada Chapter,  
American Fisheries Society

cc: Ms. Jennifer Nielsen  
President, California-Nevada Chapter,  
American Fisheries Society

Ms. Pamela McClelland  
Policy and Planning Coordinator  
American Fisheries Society