



## California-Nevada Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Executive Committee Retreat

Location: Davis Community Pool Building  
Date: December 4, 2021  
Time: 9:00am – 5:05pm  
Call-in: Zoom link sent to ExComm

1. Call to Order and Introductions (Matt Young)
2. Verification of Quorum (Nicole Kwan) – 9:10
  - 3 elected officers and 3 standing committee chairs
    - Elected officers: Matt Young, Dave Lentz, Jose Setka, Eva Bush, Nicole Kwan
    - Standing committee chairs: Kathleen Berridge, Cynthia Le Doux-Bloom, Gary Sprague, Wayne Lifton, Esther Tracy, Rob Titus\*, Zach Bess
    - Student Sub-Units:
3. Agenda Review (Matt and ExComm)
  - No items to add
4. President's Plan of Work 2021 (Matt)
  - Matt reviewed his President's Work Plan, main goals include:
    - Facilitating a return to in-person meetings to help engage with membership more
    - Highlight student subunits and support student membership and involvement in the annual meeting
    - Support professional growth of membership through events, the annual meeting, and using new virtual tools to offer workshops, socials, etc.
    - Work to implement select recommendations of the Western Division D&I committee
      - Matt shared the 2021 D&I (Diversity & Inclusion) Committee Recommendations documents which was also sent out via email with the retreat agenda

- **Action:** Esther and the ExComm will use tools, such as one DWR produced, to ensure award and grant language does not have any gender bias
- Kathleen mentioned that our early career standard is within 5 years in the field, which helps avoid age bias but can be confusing for some people to interpret; Cynthia and Eva suggested adding more clear language or definitions for early career may help more people feel included
- Matt and Rob discussed the challenges with enforcing the AFS Code of Conduct for membership and that should be the job of Society, not Cal-Neva, but that we can make sure that officers and committee members model appropriate conduct and inclusive behavior
- Matt highlighted the need to communicate the actions we plan to take to membership so they know we are taking things seriously
  - Facilitate communication and engagement
- **Action:** Matt will define acronyms in the Work Plan based on ExComm feedback

#### 5. 2022 Budget Review (Jose, Matt)

- 2021 budget review
  - Income: \$30,820 between annual meeting revenue and growth from the Merrill Lynch account
  - Expenses: \$25,542 between annual meeting, chapter expenses, student subunit support, fees, small grants
  - Net: \$297,818 (based on previous year carryover, 2021 income and expenses)
- Proposed 2022 budget
  - Starting year with \$289,774 carryover
  - 2022 will be the last year the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP) uses Cal-Neva support for their Workshop
    - \$14,000 of the proposed budget belong to IEP and they will need to find a way to spend this during their annual workshop
    - Cynthia suggested extra funds could go towards a joint Cal-Neva/IEP D&I training event
  - Main expected income:
    - Conservative annual meeting income: \$45,000
    - Membership rebate: \$2,500
    - Merrill Lynch account: \$7,000

- Main expected expenses:
  - Annual meeting: \$45,000
  - Added \$14,000 for possible IEP expenses/payment
  - Donations: \$500
  - ExComm travel: \$4,950
  - Annual meeting registration for officers: \$600
  - Membership dues for Presidents: \$300
  - ExComm midyear meeting: \$1,000
  - ExComm monthly meetings: \$1,125
    - Discussed potentially having quarterly in-person meetings in 2022
  - Student and student subunit support: \$5,000 (\$500 per subunit + proposed \$2,500 in additional student chapter travel grants to encourage conference attendance)
    - Student subunits mentioned that how to apply for and receive grants can be confusing, ExComm can work on clarifying this in future calls
  - Miscellaneous: \$5,075
  - Other expenses: \$7,000 (includes small grants, continuing education, outreach events, discretionary, etc.)
    - Can possibly include social events to get membership together before or after the annual meeting
  - Wayne suggested adding in cost for a conference phone to facilitate hybrid meetings, this will be wrapped into the meeting planning budget
- Expected net income: \$54,508, expected net expense: \$85,175

**Break 10:35 – 10:58**

2022 Budget Planning continued (Jose, Matt)

- Matt highlighted that ExComm will need to be comfortable operating in a deficit for 2022 and “business as usual” might not be a reality for a while longer and proposed some changes, including:
  - Cutting some of the ExComm midyear and monthly meeting costs, given how little was spent there last year and the fact that many meetings in 2022 will remain virtual
  - Removing sponsorship and external socials & meetings support

- The ExComm discussed its comfort taking a loss in 2022 given the overall strength of the reserves and carryover. The general consensus was taking a loss in the coming year would be acceptable but is not a trend that we would be comfortable with repeating multiple years in a row
  - **Action:** Gary suggested reevaluating the budget in March, depending on revenue/loss from the annual conference
  - The ExComm approved the updated budget
6. 2022 Meeting Planning (Eva Bush and ExComm)
- Meeting budget
    - Draft budget based on the 2020 meeting in Folsom
    - If deciding to livestream the event, that will add ~\$7,000 for AV
      - Would be hosted on YouTube or Facebook Live
      - Kathleen shared Survey Monkey results (n=14) and most people wanted to attend in person but this was sent around prior to the news of the new variant and CDFW in-person attendance restrictions
      - If we stuck to in-person there was a need to cancel last minute, we would have to forfeit our \$9,500 deposit
    - One way to potentially save money is to reduce coffee/snack provision and/or catering costs
      - Cynthia suggested providing snacks up front in a goodie bag and maybe look into donations
      - Don't provide 8am coffee, just communicate this upfront to attendees
    - There is still interest in providing boxed lunches for the student mentor lunch
    - The Wednesday banquet budget can be adjusted to reflect reduced attendance
      - There was discussion as to whether the banquet should be a separate ticket but there is concern that a separate banquet ticket will not be reimbursed, so ExComm will keep the banquet in the normal registration cost
  - Registration platform and timing
    - Norm is figuring out the Eventbrite login so this could be used instead of CVENT and is willing to run this registration or provide staff to help
      - Can be done this week
      - **Action:** Eva needs to provide Norm with registration and event/workshop costs

- Discussed finalizing a price based on new banquet number projections – Eva will make these changes to put together a projected price
- Dave mentioned that given the uncertainty, we might not expect as much attendance
- ExComm discussed whether planning a virtual option is needed but there is trepidation about losing in-person attendance and the complication of creating different registration costs dependent on type of attendance
  - As a back-up, if it is necessary to cancel presenters could be asked to record their talks for posting/providing to membership

### **Lunch 12:05 – 12:15**

#### 2022 Meeting Planning (Eva Bush and ExComm)

- Program development
  - Plenary speakers: hoping to have 3-4 people who could speak to the theme: Centering Diversity and Resilience in Fisheries Science
  - Suggestions include (with start with top 3):
    - Katherine Seto
    - Solomon David or Andrew Rypel
    - Keith Parker – Cynthia will reach out to him and introduce him to Eva
    - Daniel Swain
    - Sarah Yarnell
    - Tessa Hill
    - Maria Rey
    - Beth Middleton Manning
    - SCMBAS presenters
  - Cynthia suggested including paying respect to tribal land the conference is hosted on – SRF has an opening prayer given by a local tribal member at their conferences
  - Matt suggested an invited symposium to invite members of different tribal communities to present on their perspectives
    - Cynthia likes this idea but suggested doing this instead as a virtual symposium to ease potential tensions
    - ExComm agreed to pursue this in a venue outside of the conference so there is more time to put into planning

- Symposium
  - Matt would like to see if Damon can put together a native fish session
  - It sounds like there is a Striped Bass session in the works
  - Kathleen is considering a climate change through the state topic
  - Cynthia is considering a marine ecology topic
  - Other suggestions/notes:
    - Dave suggested Genetics symposium
    - Cynthia suggested Hatcheries symposium; Matt and Dave mentioned that they have been wanting to reengage hatchery professionals
      - **Action:** Jose offered to organize a Hatchery Science session and will start reaching out to potential speakers
    - Cynthia shared that Dam Removal symposium at SRF got cancelled, not enough interest
    - Kathleen asked how to get Nevada folks and topics involved and Dave offered that he has a network of Nevada contacts; Matt suggested this could tie into an Eastern Sierra Nevada Fishes symposium that he and Nick Buckmaster are working on
- Eva suggested pushing out the deadline for the Call for Symposia until we have a draft program we can distribute
- Student engagement
  - Matt and Eva met with student subunits on 12/3 to learn more about what the student subunits want to see and what the major barriers to participation are
  - 3 main action items that came out of this include:
    - Financial support for travel and registration (notes: Oregon Chapter doesn't charge students for registration; hotel cost is usually the biggest hurdle)
    - Very clearly communicating what kinds of support are available (ex. awards, grants)
    - Sharing promotional materials for the student subunits to share with their members
  - Subunits committed to running the student professional event (SCMBAS), the student social (Sac-Davis), and making sure the student symposia happens (other subunits)

- Kathleen mentioned that the student grants and scholarship tab on the website needs updating – **Action**: Matt, Kathleen, and Shawn will discuss updating the website grants page
- Dave suggested that maybe ExComm could comp a couple of hotel rooms for each student subunit and several members of ExComm liked this idea
- **Action**: Matt and Eva will go back to the subunits and see what individual subunit preferences are regarding either receiving \$500 or to comp 2 rooms for 2 nights; different subunits can choose different options depending on their situation
- Fundraising/sponsorship update
  - Nearly time to get a fundraising and sponsorship email out, substantial sponsorship would be appreciated this year in particular
  - **Action**: Eva will check in with Andrew (fundraising/sponsorship) and Russell (raffle)
    - Large amount of raffle items leftover from previous years
- Continuing education
  - Tour options:
    - Nimbus Hatchery – fish ladder and viewing window, potential for small group to go into interpretive center
    - Sailor Bar – parking was easy, some walking involved, have someone who can facilitate
    - Ancil Hoffman – easy walk, good educational opportunity for questions and observation, have someone who can facilitate
  - Will be able to do all 3 on one day, February 14<sup>th</sup>
  - Cynthia is wondering how we charge for tours, will we caravan, do we need bag lunches?
    - Matt and Kathleen shared that the Chapter has charged in the past
    - ExComm agreed on asking folks to bring their own lunch
    - Sailor Bar and Ancil Hoffman have parking fees but Cynthia will see if these can be waived for the nonprofit
    - Matt mentioned maybe Cal-Neva could provide a van
      - Kathleen and Cynthia think this might be too much of a COVID liability
      - Decided to move forward with not providing transportation
    - Cynthia would like to be able to provide water
    - Cynthia suggested charging \$30-35 for all 3 tours

- Dave mentioned that without providing transportation people might be reluctant and ExComm convened around charging \$25 for the field tours
- o Workshop ideas include:
  - R – both intro and advanced; **Action**: Eva will check in with former R course instructor about offering the training again
  - ExComm thinks that for a computer based training doing it virtually instead of at Lake Natomas Inn makes sense
  - Kathleen and others discussed offering these types of workshops and seminars more regularly
  - Workshop sessions would occur the same day as the field tour at a cost of \$50
- Poster session
  - o Old poster boards are ruined from water damage
  - o Full-service rental would cost \$138/4x8 poster board – probably ~\$1,000 total for the numbers needed
  - o Nicole mentioned that it was a challenge to work with the old poster boards Cal-Neva had and would suggest not building something like that again
    - There are other poster board styles that might be easier to move around and store
  - o Rob mentioned the transportation, especially to further meetings, can be a problem
  - o ExComm agreed to rent boards this year
- Other items of interest:
  - o Swag bags: repurpose old swag
  - o Spawning run: charge \$15, no new shirts provided but can give away “vintage” older merchandise
  - o Banquet idea from Dave: fish shirt contest
- **Action**: Next planning meeting will be December 16<sup>th</sup> during the normal ExComm period (since the retreat covers the usual monthly ExComm meeting for December)

## 7. Officer Updates

- Secretary (Nicole Kwan)
  - o Membership update from November 30<sup>th</sup> has Cal-Neva membership at 369 members; Nicole also shared figure showing membership changes throughout 2021



- Nicole highlighted the change to a Google Group/listserv for ExComm communications and explained how to find individual member emails through Google Groups
- Nicole incorporated edits and suggestions into November ExComm meeting minutes
- ExComm voted to approve November ExComm meeting minutes
- Treasurer (Jose Setka)
  - Discussed as part of 2022 budget planning item
- President (Matt Young)
  - WDAFS had held their virtual retreat recently
    - Society annual meeting will be combined with WDAFS and WABC and held August 22<sup>nd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> 2022 in Spokane
    - D&I committee updates were shared
    - Working on engaging with division membership, which is hard to track through the Chapters
    - Idaho is having an in-person meeting but all other are either virtual or hybrid based on membership polls (overall negative towards an in person meeting)
    - Kat organized Division student colloquium
    - Many Chapters are moving towards some kind of enterprise data service for storage and creation of an institutional email and budget management tools
      - Currently Chapter or Division specific, no umbrella guidance or support from Society
      - **Action**: Matt will be bringing back up the topic of enterprise data services in March/April for further discussion
- Past President (Dave Lentz)
  - Making progress on the Chapter report card going over what activities and elements were accomplished in relation to the Strategic Plan
    - Getting updates from Committee Chairs for this 2021 report card
  - Chapter Strategic Plan followed the Society Strategic Plan, Society revamped their plan for 2020-2024
    - The Cal-Neva Chapter Plan will need to be reconfigured to better match the new Society plan and Dave has begun to review the Strategic Plan and see where changes/updates can be made

- A committee was also formed earlier this year and has started making process
- Dave would like a volunteer to start re-drafting the Chapter's Strategic Plan or can focus on re-writing come March, when his schedule opens up
  - Cynthia offered to help since spring semester course was cancelled
- Dave highlighted that one of the new Society strategies (2.2) is to "encourage fisheries directors and supervisors to allow and encourage their staff to participate and present information at professional meetings" and that may be something the Chapter wants to roll into its new Strategic Plan and/or reach out to departments using this as a platform to highlight the importance of these professional societies
- Another item Dave would like to highlight is the plan to take better advantage of the Chapter's social media platforms; suggests creating a new committee chair or rolling into Communications a designated role/consistent approach for ensuring the Chapter can reach more people, especially students, this way
  - Kathleen mentioned that she has been adding information to Facebook, which didn't receive a lot of response but posting to the student sub-unit pages did get responses; in general it is hard to get engagement back
  - Jose suggested seeing what membership would like to see on our social media accounts
  - Eva suggested providing opportunities for people to provide information to us
    - Kathleen mentioned a "submit your research highlight" monthly call
    - Cynthia likes this idea as it develops our future forward goals
    - Matt suggested providing a template/more specific request
  - Dave presented Rob, Eva, Jose, and Kathleen with awards of appreciation for their help planning the 2020 meeting (also has other awards for some not in attendance)
- President-Elect (Eva Bush)
  - Discussed as part of meeting planning agenda item

**Break 2:40 – 2:55**

8. Student Sub-Unit Updates – given by Matt based on information provided in advance

- Santa Cruz Monterey Bay Area (Emily and Molly)
  - Preparing for Student Colloquium in Santa Cruz
- Davis/Sacramento (Kim Luke)
  - Will be facilitating student social at the annual meeting
- Humboldt (Z Zenobia)
  - In the middle of busy end of the quarter tasks but hoping to participate at the annual conference
- Irvine (Matea Djokic)
  - Working on formalizing bylaw language, last step in student subunit approval
  - Matt confirmed that Irvine is included in student subunit funds for the 2022 budget
- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (Hayley Mapes)
  - Still in process of writing bylaws and getting approved by the university
  - Planning to attend annual meeting

## 9. Committee Updates

- Time and Place (Kelly Souza) – not present
  - Matt shared that Kelly has been arranging a site visit (Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>) for 2023 location that Matt, Kelly, and Eva will attend
- Continuing Education (Cynthia Le Doux-Bloom)
  - Kathleen and Cynthia sent out a poll to membership that has received 4 responses (was sent/posted in Newsblast, Facebook account, and on website)
    - Was a response for field tours
    - Interest in more and diverse opportunities
    - Cynthia suggested hard copies and a suggestion box at the conference
    - Jose suggested that ambassadors whose job is to reach out and connect with folks could help, maybe do this at the annual meeting
    - Nicole suggested something like Mentimeter to survey people at a specific moment during the conference
- Conservation (Gary Sprague)
  - Western Division RPECC edits on Snake River paper were made and the paper was supposed to be submitted to Fisheries and Science very recently

- Matt shared that at WDAFS it was brought up that several Chapters don't have conservation committees in the same way Cal-Neva and the Division do and there was interest in getting together among chapters to discuss how active ones have been working
- No updates on the Recovering Americas Wildlife Act, suspects it might not have moved forward this year
- Communications (Kathleen Berridge)
  - Keeping up on website content and updates, **Action**: please send any updates or job postings to Kathleen
  - Quarterly Newsletter usually goes out in December, items the upcoming one could include:
    - Annual meeting information
    - Call for award nominations
      - Save recipients acknowledgement for the conference
    - President's work plan highlights
    - Call for nominations for President and Secretary
    - Matt suggested highlighting "members at work" highlight that was mentioned earlier
    - **Action**: Kathleen will reach out to remind people she needs information from for the Newsletter
  - Opportunities for Cal-Neva's social media platforms
    - Interested in knowing if folks are aware of people who might want to help and be involved in this
  - ExComm expressed their appreciation that Kathleen stepped up to head this committee in Lisa's absence
- Bylaws and Nominations (Ramona Swenson) – not present
  - **Action**: Ramona was unable to make it but Matt reminded everyone to keep looking for potential candidates and reach out to Ramona, need names/people by mid-January to provide enough time before the business meeting announcement
  - Kathleen mentioned it would be good to expand our reach outside of just the Central Valley
- Grants (Shawn Acuña) – not present
  - Matt shared that Shawn and Kathleen are working to get these announcements out

- Mentioned need to figure out how to support student travel this year based on new goals; Matt will coordinate with student subunits as soon as possible
- Kathleen clarified which grants are no longer active (carryover from former meetings) so she can remove them from the website
- Merchandise (Chris Parker) – not present
- Exhibits/Fundraising (Andrew Hampton) – not present
  - Matt shared that Andrew will be available to help plan for conference fundraising
- Policy and Resolutions (Sheena Holley) – not present
- Finance (Wayne Lifton) – no updates
- Chapter Historian (Jim Hobbs) – not present
  - Would be good to get his input on institutional storage and update on Cal-Neva storage unit
- Awards (Zach Bess)
  - Zach was curious if any person or group are of interest as nominations for this year's round of awards
    - Matt asked for clarification on how things happen in the past. Zach explained that generally we put a call to membership for nominations and the ExComm determines eligibility of these nominees
  - **Action:** Kathleen and Zach will coordinate to get a call for nominees in the next Newsletter
  - Dave asked about special contribution awards for Lisa and Stephanie
    - **Action:** Zach will generate special contribution awards; the sitting President for that meeting will sign these
    - Zach and Dave discussed including a REI gift card as part of the awards
    - These will be distributed at the conference
- Outreach and Diversity (Esther Tracy)
  - Was present earlier in the meeting and expressed interest in reviewing award language
- Native Fishes (Damon Goodman) – not present

#### 10. Final Comments/Happy Hour

- Given the uncertain future, improving communication, outreach, and events will be important

- New tools now exist and have been explored which can be used in the future to expand communication and attendance
- Maybe try and create more opportunities for regional tours
- Many members of ExComm were strongly encouraged to join AFS early in their career and this push/draw seems to have faded a bit
  - It may be beneficial to highlight how AFS has benefitted its members, as a way to encourage joining
- Future actions
  - ExComm brainstormed how to strategically address:
    - Off-cycle seminars/workshops
    - Expand social opportunities
    - Increase social media presence
  - Ideas to accomplish this:
    - Identify individuals with local knowledge who can identify or have connections for regional opportunities for tours, etc. and create a list of contacts
    - Create a strategic idea for each year and pull in new recruits to help ExComm accomplish these goals
    - Eva suggested rotating through the student subunits to get content for social media accounts
    - Cynthia highlighted the need for accountability and measurable goals
    - Jose mentioned bringing in people/groups with different perspectives
    - For membership surveys, include check boxes for if they are part of ExComm so we can distinguish voices of general members from ExComm members (who already have a platform to share their opinions in the monthly meetings)
    - Use prizes to incentivize (extra swag, such as the 2018 meeting dry bags)
    - Be committed and consistent to making these changes/improvements
    - For social media, start slowly (monthly) and build from there
  - Ideas for events
    - Trainings to support membership needs (MOCC, Wilderness First Aid)
    - Fish Fridays
    - Dave suggested seeing if the student subunits could host tours in their regional areas

- Discussed bringing back Native Fish Workshop and Cal Academy of Sciences Tour
- Reboot event ideas that were in motion before 2020 (Earth Day social, etc.)
- Working through contentious situation training (something CDFW has offered in the past) & soft skills for professional development
- Training that incorporates engagement of trainees

**ADJOURN 5:05pm**