

No. 42	External Affairs Committee	Walt Duffy / Cleve Steward
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TO: John Borman, President AFS
FROM: Walt Duffy and Cleve Steward, Co-Chairs, External Affairs Committee
DATE: August 12, 2013
Subject: Annual Activity Report of External Affairs Committee

I. Motion Report

No motions are recommended.

II. Activity Report

(A) Student Writing Contest.

The committee updated advertised the writing contest in the January 2013 issue of *Fisheries*, through announcement to Division Presidents and newsletter editors, and through a posting on the AFS Facebook page. The response from students was strong but not overwhelming, 13 students submitted articles for consideration.

In response to the number of submissions in recent years, the committee restructured its process for reviewing student submissions. We employed a two-step process in which 1) each committee member reviewed one-half of all submissions and 2) the committee convened via a conference call to determine final selections. Scoring provided clear separation among the top three students.

Abigail Lynch of Michigan State University, whose paper addressed designing a climate change decision support system for Great Lakes whitefish, was recommended by the committee for best student paper. Two students, Patrick Cooney of North Carolina State University and Gerard Camona-Catot, University de Girona, Spain were recommended for second place recognition.

(B) Public Outreach Award

The response to our call for nominations for the Excellence in Public Outreach award was strong. The nominees included Kara Anlauf-Dunn, Herb Drier, Guillermo Giannico, Luke Roffler, Rashid Sumaila, and Lauri Monnot. Each of these AFS members have distinguished themselves and earned the respect of their peers by raising public awareness and effectively promoting fisheries through variety of communication techniques.

The committee recommended Lauri Monnot and Rashid Sumalia for the 2013 award. Ms. Monnot, formerly with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, served as Chairperson of the

Public Education Committee of the Idaho Chapter of the AFS for several years. She has demonstrated outstanding commitment to educating the public and school children about fisheries. Rashid Sumaila is Director of the Fisheries Centre at the University of British Columbia. He is a prodigious writer of popular articles on worldwide issues in fisheries and a valuable mentor to numerous students. The committee was impressed by the accomplishments of both individuals and the heartfelt support they received from their peers.

(C) Develop a procedure for translating technical scientific papers published in AFS journals for dissemination to non-technical audiences.

The committee was charged by AFS President John Boreman to write example press release that might serve as a model for promoting technical articles in AFS journals. However, due to the time devoted to the Hill briefing, this charge was not fulfilled. This initiative will be revisited by the Committee in the next year.

(D) Assist in planning a "Briefing on the Hill" in Washington

With the help of the Potomac AFS Chapter, the committee successfully organized and hosted a briefing on "Climate Change and Fisheries" for House and Senate staffers on Capitol Hill in May 2013. AFS President John Boreman introduced the briefing and provided an overview of AFS position. President Boreman was followed by four speakers representing academia, federal agencies and Native American tribes. Committee member Sarah Gaser and Potomac Chapter member Ward Slacum moderated.

Post briefing responses from speakers and attendees indicate that the briefing was well received. Planning has been initiated to host one or two similar briefings each year.

(E) Develop a media database.

The committee was charged by AFS President John Boreman to compile a list of National and Regional media contacts consisting of science, environment, outdoor reporters and perhaps other writers. Again, due to the time devoted to the Hill briefing, this charge was not fulfilled.

(F) Recommendations for further consideration

The External Affairs Committee has been capably chaired for the past several years by Dr. Walter Duffy, who recently decided to step down as committee co-chair. Under Walt's leadership, the Student Writing Contest and Excellence in Public Outreach award have generated strong interest among AFS members, resulting in the recognition of exceptional individuals within the organization. Walt deserves similar recognition, both as an educator and as an AFS volunteer.

Cleve Steward served as co-chair in 2012-2013 and will reprise that role in 2013-2014. He will seek another senior AFS member, possibly including one of the current committee

members, to serve as co-chair. He will also recruit other individuals to the committee who are creative, energetic, and committed to promoting positive interaction between AFS and the public through social media and other emerging forms of communication are desired.

The committee will convene early this fall to develop a work plan that can be implemented over the next year. We will provide a range of goals, initiatives, and activities at that time for consideration by the incoming AFS President and Executive Committee.