

No. 66	Coastal Society and Coastal Zone Conferences Liaison	Tom Bigford
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TO: John Boreman, President
FROM: Tom Bigford, AFS Liaison to The Coastal Society and the Coastal Zone Conferences
DATE: June 19, 2013

I. Motion Report – none

II. Activity Report

Efforts to coordinate across the coastal and ocean professionals have diminished in recent years. After 25 years, the biennial Coastal Zone conference did not happen in 2013. The Coastal Society, which convenes its own biennial conference in even-numbered years, had a smaller than usual meeting in 2012 and is considering options for 2014 and beyond. In this era of budget tightening, I have been working since 2012 with those organizations, the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF), Coastal States Organization (association of state coastal management agencies), Restore America’s Estuaries, and others to consider alternatives to the usual societal conference. Several discussions could be of interest to AFS.

(A) Summary of Outcomes and Accomplishments Organized by Focus Area in Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: Global Fisheries Leadership – Fish issues in coastal watersheds, estuaries, and oceans are relevant to professionals in many societies and associations. The long history of AFS, coupled with its large membership and diverse interests, enable our society to become a *de facto* leader with fish as common ground. With fewer large coastal conferences on the planning horizon, joint or regional meetings could open opportunities for AFS members to network with specialists in allied fields. Connections could be through AFS units and/or with the parent society. In the past year I pursued opportunities for AFS to join with The Coastal Society. A more recent effort involves TCS and the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation. The AFS/TCS effort didn’t materialize but did set the stage for a partnership at the CERF 2013 conference. If approved, a technical

session chaired by a Past President of TCS will involve papers by AFS members on sea-level rise and fish habitat.

Goal 2: Education/Continuing Education – These efforts with TCS and CERF will strengthen professional connections for AFS, its units, and members. The joint effort at CERF 2013 will be an initial test, with other efforts in 2014.

Goal 3: Value of Membership – AFS members will benefit from increased knowledge of activities in other societies. Members of other societies will learn more about AFS, and perhaps be inclined to join our society.

(B) Recommendations or Suggestions for Future Consideration.

These efforts with The Coastal Society and the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation could lead to opportunities for coastal groups to participate in AFS events or for AFS to engage more with coastal professionals. With sea-level rise as a shared interest, CERF 2013 will provide a barometer for possible partnerships in the future. Regional efforts might be pursued in 2014 as travel restrictions are likely to limit participation in national conferences.
