

**Monthly Conference Call Notes**

Thursday, January 19, 2017

Participants:

Kim Ponzio (SWS), Gillian Davies (SWS), Adrienne Sponberg (ASLO), Susan Park (CERF), Shelly Arnot (ASLO), Randy Fuller (SFS), Tim Nelson (PSA), Jesse Trushenski (AFS), Doug Austen (AFS), and Tom Bigford (AFS)

Guest: Jeremy Tiemann (FMCS)

**Meeting notes**:

1. Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society interest in joining CASS
	1. Discussion continued from December call, including a call with FMCS on January 11.
	2. Jeremy Tiemann provided an overview of FMCS; visit [www.molluskconservation.org](http://www.molluskconservation.org) for details about their 20-year history, annual meeting/workshop schedule, and more.
	3. Doug Austen noted AFS Symposium Publication #30 on fish and mussel restoration costs, published in partnership with FMCS and now being reviewed/revised for re-publication in 2017.
	4. The group decided to use the same CASS process used to welcome AFS and CERF. It was agreed that such process should be added to the CASS MOU to affirm the process. With a formal invitation, FMCS will discuss at its spring board meeting and respond to CASS. Procedure will be that FMCS leadership will be meeting in March and, if they decide to request membership in CASS, they will write a letter requesting the CASS consider FMCS joining the consortium. The CASS partners will then meet and deliberate on the request at the next available monthly call.
2. Policy intern/fellow opportunity – continued discussion
	1. For background, see December notes and Doug Austen’s proposed fellowship description attached to his email on January 11.
	2. CASS members offered mixed support. Most societies recognized the value of added capacity but SFS, PSA, and SWS had questions about financial costs. Also the issue was raised of non-U.S. membership of many organization where support for a U.S. focused policy fellowship may be lacking.
	3. Costs prompted a lengthy discussion of financing options – asking CASS members how much they can contribute, seeking grants to ease society costs, partnering with a university or others for more of an internship than post-graduate fellowship. It was left that Kim Ponzio will investigate partnering with American University and/or Johns Hopkins, we’ll share information on the February call, societies will discuss during spring board or ex-com meetings, and we’ll continue the discussion on the March or April call.

	Task: Each Society should discuss with board or leadership their desired policy engagement goals. Also each society should explore possible outside funding options for policy engagement through foundations or other entities that may have an interest in providing support for CASS engagement in aquatic science-policy issues. AFS should also share with CASS additional information on the AFS Policy Fellow program as another model to explore.
3. MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences)
	1. Underrepresentation is a shared priority. SWS plans to participate in the annual conference on March 29 – April 1, 2017, in Pittsburgh.
	2. Agreed to considera CASS booth at MANRRS and other events (such as SACNAS) in the future, though timing for 2017 MANRRS did not work out. SWS will have a booth at 2017 MANRRS and will display the CASS banner.
4. Diversity Joint Venture (DJV)
	1. Doug Austen provided a quick summary of a federal agency effort to increase staff diversity. He will follow-up with more detail soon.

	Task: Austen to send CASS partners information on DJV and provide briefing following DJV work session January 24-26.
5. Congressional briefings
	1. The email exchanges from the past month were summarized. All agreed that briefings are valuable. Also, letters to Congress or agencies can serve a specific purpose.
	2. The most recent CASS effort was in 2015 on EPAs “Waters of the United States “ rule by SWS and AFS, with the Environmental Law Institute and The Coastal Society.
	3. The only topic suggested to date is Bob Hughes’ idea about showcasing EPA programs on aquatic resource surveys.
	4. Regarding CASS letters, it was agreed a template would be helpful and a suitable task for a CASS intern or fellow.

	Task: CASS letter template needs to be created. No assignment made.
6. Booth exchanges
	1. It was readily agreed that CASS societies would offer free exhibit space to other CASS members at meetings, within financial reason. However, details on this were not resolved.
	*Questions - Would this be one booth for all CASS partners to share? Does this come with waived registration (often part of a booth package)?*
	2. At non -CASS events, CASS members could join to organize one CASS booth with materials from all members.
	3. It was agreed that if the CASS MOU is revised to capture the process to welcome new societies to CASS we would also include a section on booth exchanges.
7. U.S. Science and Engineering Festival
	1. The Festival is April 6-8, 2018, but space registration deadline for discount pricing is February 15, 2017.
	2. SFS, PSA, SWS, and ASLO are interested. We’d likely need a double booth, as in 2016. Adrienne Sponberg has agreed to be the CASS lead in organizing the group.

	Task: Adrienne should contact CASS partners to identify which partners will be involved and handle the early registration submission for two booths
8. CASS web site
	1. AFS web coordinator Beth Beard will work on a CASS web site, acquire the name rights and develop an initial home page and some basic material. CASS partners may be asked to pay a limited amount to cover some costs.
9. Google Drive
10. AFS established a Google Drive for use by CASS partners. Look for the link and details in an email from Doug Austen on January 11.

Next call will be at 2:30 p.m. EST on Thursday, February 16, 2017.