

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY, AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY,  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY COOPERATIVE RESEARCH UNITS,  
AND U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a collaborative working relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), The Wildlife Society (TWS), the American Fisheries Society (AFS), and the U.S. Geological Survey Cooperative Research Units (CRU).

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this MOU is to 1) develop and exchange biological information for natural resource managers; 2) encourage, promote, and increase scientific professionalism and excellence among FWS, TWS, AFS, and CRU; 3) encourage, promote, and increase learning and professional development of staff within the organizations; and 4) work collaboratively to plan appropriate symposia, sessions, workshops and other relevant events leading up to the 2019 joint meeting of The Wildlife Society and the American Fisheries Society.

**II. AUTHORITIES**

This MOU is entered into under the following authorities:

The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, 16 USC 742f et seq.; and

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 USC 661 et seq.

**III. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND BENEFIT**

The mission of FWS is “to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.” This is accomplished through the dedicated efforts of more than 8,000 FWS employees. Half of those employees are trained scientists and many are biologists and managers. To accomplish the mission of the FWS effectively, those professionals must have access to scientific knowledge and interact regularly with other scientists, both inside and outside the FWS. In addition, FWS employees should be recognized nationally and internationally for their scientific professionalism, which includes not just technical achievements and contributions, but also participation and contributions to professional societies, contributions to scientific journals and the scientific literature in general, and collaborative ventures and partnerships with other scientists and resource managers inside and outside the FWS.

The mission of TWS is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitats through science-based management and conservation. This mission is

accomplished through member networking among wildlife professionals, conferencing, publications, policy analysis and assessment, and outreach and engagement with the natural resources community.

The mission of AFS is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

The mission of CRU is to 1) conduct research to address actionable science needs of cooperators; 2) provide technical guidance and training to cooperators in the application and interpretation of emerging science; and 3) develop the future workforce through graduate education.

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

To actively promote the goals of this MOU, the Parties agrees to the following:

**A. TWS will:**

1. Provide FWS with opportunities to offer perspectives by publishing articles and leadership letters in *The Wildlife Professional*; use the magazine as a way to promote and enhance scientific professionalism within FWS.
2. Work with FWS to make articles published in the Society's journals available to FWS biologists.
3. Encourage and facilitate FWS participation in technical sessions, panel discussions; promote FWS through agency sponsorship of the TWS annual Conference, as well as TWS regional and chapter meetings.
4. Address FWS science needs through reviews, policy papers, position statements, task forces, working groups, etc.
5. Work with FWS to use TWS communications channels to address agency issues.
6. Work with FWS to identify resource management challenges and the science and technology needed to address them.
7. Work with the signatory organizations to promote diversity in the fish and wildlife professions.

**B. AFS will:**

1. Provide FWS with opportunities to offer perspectives by publishing articles, leadership letters or other appropriate content in *Fisheries*; use the magazine as a way to promote and enhance scientific professionalism within FWS.
2. Work with FWS to make articles published in the Society's journals available to FWS biologists.
3. Encourage and facilitate FWS participation in technical sessions, panel discussions; promote FWS through agency sponsorship of the AFS annual conference, as well as at AFS regional and chapter meetings.

4. Address FWS science needs through reviews, policy papers, position statements, task forces, working groups, etc.
5. Work with FWS to use AFS communications channels to address agency issues.
6. Work with FWS to identify resource management challenges and the science and technology needed to address them.
7. Work with the signatory organizations to promote diversity in the fish and wildlife professions.

C. CRU will:

1. Support staff participation in Chapter, Section, Division, National, International, Working Group, and other meetings of TWS and AFS.
2. Support staff involvement as elected officers of TWS and AFS, in conformance with Federal ethics statutes and regulations and Department of the Interior policy.
3. Work collaboratively with the FWS to identify science, technical assistance, and workforce development needs.
4. Work collaboratively with the FWS to co-sponsor symposia and other dissemination opportunities at TWS and AFS meetings.
5. Utilize the CRU cooperator network to engage other cooperators (e.g., state fish and wildlife agencies; universities; U.S.G.S. Science Centers) in collaboration with the FWS and Societies on elements 3 and 4.

D. FWS will:

1. Support staff participation in Chapter, Section, Division, National, International, Working Group, and other meetings of TWS and AFS, in conformance with Federal travel statutes and regulations and Department of the Interior policy.
2. Support staff involvement as elected officers of TWS and AFS, in conformance with Federal ethics statutes and regulations and Department of the Interior policy.
3. Suggest scientific topics that are particularly relevant to natural resource managers, especially those directed at scientific professionalism, and assist TWS and AFS in framing and addressing those topics in society publications and other communication outlets.
4. Work collaboratively with the CRU network to co-sponsor symposia and other dissemination opportunities at TWS and AFS meetings and conferences.
5. Identify executive leaders and staff scientists to participate in the MOU working group described in Section E-6.

E. TWS, AFS, CRU, and FWS mutually agree to:

1. Promote membership and participation in professional societies to encourage continuous learning, lifelong education, and professional development for wildlife and fish biologists and managers.
2. Work with colleges and universities to identify ways in which these institutions can better educate and train students for resource agency employment.

3. Work cooperatively to identify, develop, and implement recruitment and retention strategies for the agency workforce of the future.
4. Work cooperatively to increase human and cultural diversity in the fish and wildlife professions by leveraging and connecting current and future career and job pipeline programs.
5. Work collaboratively to plan appropriate symposia, sessions, workshops, and other relevant events at TWS and AFS conferences, particularly the 2019 joint meeting of TWS and AFS.
6. Define a working group of representatives from the signatory organizations to meet semiannually to review the MOU, determine appropriate activities that will support full implementation of the MOU, and develop cooperative agreements, contracts, or other administrative constructs as appropriate to support the implementation of such actions. The purpose of this working group is to collaborate on the implementation of this MOU and is in no way intended to serve as an advisory group under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 USC App.

**V. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AND UNDERSTOOD BY AND BETWEEN THE SAID PARTIES THAT:**

1. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties of this MOU will be administered in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures. Such endeavors will be documented in separate agreements or contracts made in writing by the representatives or the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority.
2. This MOU may be modified or amended upon written consent of all parties or may be terminated by any party with a 30-day written notice to the other parties.
3. The working group defined in section IV E(6) will be established within 60 days of the effective date of this MOU, in order to develop specific goals and action items to further the aims of the agreement. Each party will designate members to this group that are mutually acceptable to the parties. The parties agree to annually review and evaluate the effectiveness of the program and the MOU.
4. This MOU in no way restricts the parties from participating in similar activities or arrangements, or promoting public policy activities with other public or private agencies, organizations or individuals.
5. In carrying out the terms of this agreement there shall be no discrimination against any persons because of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or disability, in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions contained in titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as

amended; the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and other nondiscrimination statutes, namely, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, and in accordance with the policies of the Department of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service.

## VI. DURATION

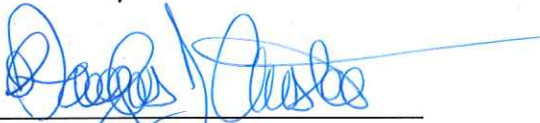
This MOU shall become effective as of the date of approval and shall continue in effect for a period of five years or until modified by mutual agreement of the Parties or terminated by action of one or more of the Parties.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this MOU as of the last date written below:**



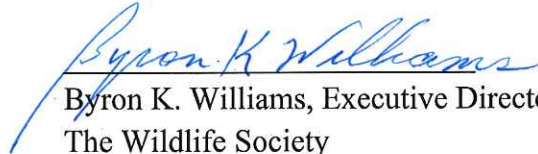
Daniel M. Ashe, Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date: 03/11/2016



Doug Austen, Executive Director  
American Fisheries Society

Date: 3-16-16



Byron K. Williams, Executive Director  
The Wildlife Society

Date: 03/16/2016



Anne Kinsinger, Associate Director  
U.S. Geological Survey

Date: March 16, 2016