

**Business Meeting
33rd Annual Meeting (2007)
Southeastern Fishes Council
Chattanooga Marriott and Convention Center
Chattanooga, Tennessee**

The 2007 meeting of the Southeastern Fishes Council was called to order by Chair Noel Burkhead at 5:33 P.M. This was the first stand-alone meeting of the Southeastern Fishes Council. Ninety-eight people were in attendance. Ballots were passed out to each attendee. The following officers were elected:

Gerald Dinkins--Chair Elect
Rebecca Blanton Johansen--Secretary
Anna George-Treasurer

Secretary's Report

Brett Albanese noted that minutes from last year's business meeting had previously been approved electronically by the membership.

Treasurer's Report

Kyle Piller discussed our financial situation and provided a hard copy of the following report to Executive Committee members. He noted a recent increase in membership and a healthy bank account.

Dues and Contributions: July 2006 through 6 November 2007:

EARNINGS

Dues: (1 January 2007 through 6 November 2007)	\$1,390.00
Back-dues (2005, 2006 dues)	\$40.00
Forward dues (2008 dues)	\$40.00
Donations & miscellaneous (old reprint purchase)	\$55.00

TOTAL:	\$1,525.00
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EXPENDITURES (JULY 2006 THROUGH 6 NOVEMBER 2007)

Proceedings # 49, printing/postage cost (August 2007)	\$1,325.11
TN Secretary of State (annual report)	\$20.00

TOTAL:	\$1,345.11
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CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE AS OF 6 NOVEMBER 2007	\$11,043.85
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TOTAL ASSETS	\$11,403.85
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Notes:

Membership (individuals and organizations) on 5 June 2007, distributed as follows:

Paid through 1998: 6
Paid through 1999: 12
Paid through 2000: 30
Paid through 2001: 31
Paid through 2002: 47
Paid through 2003: 57
Paid through 2004: 93
Paid through 2005: 55
Paid through 2006: 51
Paid through 2007 & lifetime members: 78 (64 regular members, 4 life-members, and 11 students)

Respectfully submitted, Kyle R. Piller

Editors Report

In the interest of time, Marty did not present this report at the annual meeting. Martin O'Connell and Chris Skelton are preparing the next issue and are lining up other manuscripts for publication in the Proceedings, including one from Royal Suttkus and Jim Williams. Marty would be very happy if some of the presenters at the meeting would submit manuscripts to Proceedings. Directions for submission are on the SFC website.

Old Business

Mel Warren asked if all Proceedings had been put on the website. Marty O'Connell and Noel Burkhead replied yes. Noel added that the website has a password protected feature that will enable members to download the current issue of the Proceedings. The intent of website revisions is to provide more services to the members and to provide more information about Southeastern fishes.

New Business

Electronic Only Journal:

Mel Warren suggested that we do not print the Proceedings anymore and only generate a PDF copy for web posting. He argued that it would save cost and paper. A few members argued that they really enjoy the hardcopy and cited possible technical challenges for some members. A hybrid solution would provide the hardcopy by default, but give the members the option of receiving the PDF only. There was a motion for the Executive Committee to study the issue in further detail, with the options being: 1) Electronic media only (no print), 2) Both electronic and printed editions of Proceedings (membership cost to any member wishing printed edition of Proceedings would be slightly higher). The motion was seconded and passed with no dissensions.

SARP:

Jay Troxel gave an introduction to SARP, the Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership. The Partnership includes 14 states, several federal agencies, private companies, and conservation groups. SARP wants us to become a partner and possibly assist on their technical committees. They also formally invited us to their meeting in mid-November.

Noel Burkhead suggested that participation in SARP would be a good opportunity for SFC to help direct resources toward the conservation of southeastern fishes. Peggy Shute asked if SFC could see a list of projects funded by SARP. Noel began reading a list of current projects, which included a GIS project in the Tennessee-Cumberland, a restoration partnership with NOAA, a project to coordinate high priority State Wildlife Action Plan priorities across states, a spring restoration project in the Altamaha, and Pilot watershed conservation plans for the Altamaha, Roanoke, Pascagoula, and Duck Rivers.

Rachel Muir spoke about how SARP fits into the National Fish Habitat Initiative. This national initiative, modeled after the highly successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan, can support regional conservation efforts through funding and coordination activities. SARP is one of 5 regional partnerships currently approved under the initiative.

Mel Warren likes the idea of a formal partnership with SARP, but he would like to see our role more clearly defined. Brett Albanese added that we should proceed carefully, because participation in SARP will likely involve a lot of time for some SFC members. Someone mentioned that would not necessarily have to go to every SARP meeting.

Jim Williams motioned that we send a letter a letter of interest to SARP and send some one to the meeting to explore the idea of a partnership. Jim's motion was seconded and passed with no votes against. Bernie Kuhajda agreed to modify our letter to SARP accordingly, which will express our interest in developing a partnership as opposed to agreeing to partnership status now.

The Drought

Given the negative publicity rare aquatic species have received during the drought, Jim Williams suggested that SFC develop a Resolution or a White Paper on considering rare aquatic species in water supply planning. He asked Bud Freeman to discuss some of the less damaging alternatives for a reservoir. Bud discussed two options. The first option involves building a reservoir off-channel (i.e., in a dry valley) and filling it from a river during high flows. One problem with this design, however, is the incentive to fill off channel reservoirs during low flows. The incentive occurs because sediment laden flood waters are expensive to treat. Apparently, the Bear Creek Reservoir near Athens has been operated in this manner. The second option involves raising the height of existing dams, which still may require filling from a river.

Mark Cantrell said he would not like to see us providing reservoir guidelines without strongly emphasizing the need for greater water conservation. He also mentioned that reservoirs increase evaporative losses.

Peggy Shute recommended that we identify a list of high quality streams that should not be dammed under any circumstances. Jim Williams was concerned that such an effort would leave the impression that rivers not on the list would be fair game for reservoir development. Jim suggested that the Executive Committee appoint a drought resolutions committee.

Andrew Sheldon pointed out that a group out of the RiverBasin Center at UGA already completed a white paper on water supply development a few years ago. Mary Freeman confirmed this.

Mary Freeman offered that it would be difficult for us to articulate detailed policy on water supply issues, but that we could do a resolution or white paper showing the true economic and ecological costs of reservoir building.

Coal Fines:

Citing the unacceptable conditions (i.e., frequent "blackwater" events) in the Clinch River, Jim Williams suggested that we send a resolution on coal fines to the EPA, USFWS, OSM, and to the States of Tennessee and Virginia. Lee Barclay pointed out to Jim a 1996 Biological Opinion which OSM may cite in defense of the current activity.

Than Hitt suggested that we comment on a current proposed "buffer rule" related to mountain top mining.

Peggy Shute suggested that opportunities to comment occur regularly and suggested that the SFC become more active in responding to time-sensitive environmental issues.

Bryn Tracey suggested that we send a letter to the state of Virginia first. An unknown person suggested that we send our resolutions to the paper and issue a press release. Bernie confirmed that press releases would be a standard component of all resolutions.

Than Hitt and Lee Barclay agreed to help the SFC officers (or the Resolutions Committee) comment on the proposed buffer rule.

Regional Reports:

These reports are now posted on the webpage.

Closing Comments:

Noel thanked Jim and Anna and the other executive committee members for setting up a very successful meeting and welcomed Bernie Kuhajda to the chair position.

Chair Kuhajda adjourned the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Albanese, Secretary