



## President's message

Hey folks! First off- thank you for the opportunity to serve as MOAFS President. It was work, but it was rewarding.

THANK YOU to all the folks who have made this year a success. Your time, commitment, and passion does not go unnoticed. Big thanks to Ben Havens for serving as President in 2024, to Emily Tracy-Smith for running as President in 2025, and for Mary Culler taking on the Legislative Affairs Committee role.



I'm happy to see new faces taking on leadership roles in the Chapter- thanks to Cade Lyon for running as Treasurer, to Cara Coates for chairing Rivers and Streams Committee, Brittany Harried for chairing our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and John Schulte, our new representative to NCD's Urban and Community Fishing Technical Committee.

Our annual Business meeting will be February 6<sup>th</sup>, at Margaritaville, and I hope you'll be able to make it. I came into this position focused on serving members, serving partner organizations, and supporting students and early career professionals. I'm proud of the work we've done in 2023, and hope the Business Meeting will reflect the progress made on those fronts. I'm especially proud of the engagement we've sustained within and beyond the Chapter, and with our AFS Divisions.

In 2023, students and early career professionals were struggling to navigate the federal job application process. In response, MOAFS members developed a program to help applicants get their foot in the door.

Students at University of Central Missouri were curious about careers in natural resources. In response, MOAFS members put together a panel of professionals, and spent an evening answering their questions.

Many members recognized our Chapter Newsletter wasn't meeting the needs of membership. In response, we are developing a Communications Committee, and exploring new ways of engaging members.

## Chapter Officers

President: Tom Boersig

President Elect: Ben Havens

Secretary: Kat Lackman

Treasurer: Chris Rice

Past President: Jacob Westhoff

## Committee Chairs

Anglers with Disabilities: Mary Scott

Awards: Jacob Westhoff

Chapter Historian: Joe Dillard

Communications: Tom Boersig,  
Emily Tracy-Smith, Dan Metcalf

Continuing Education: Brad Farwell

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:  
Brittany Harried

Finance: Ben Havens

Information Technology/Website:  
Kat Lackman

Legislative and Environmental  
Concerns: Mary Culler

Membership: Jenna Stiek

MNRC Steering: Mike Allen

Publicity: Joe McMullen, Trish  
Yasger

Rivers and Streams: Cara Coates

Student Support: Jennifer Gironde

## Student Subunits

Missouri State University:  
Madyson Neff

University of Central Missouri:  
Libby Troutwine

University of Missouri:  
Katherine Cullinane

Members across the board recognized recruiting and developing qualified professionals across subject areas and backgrounds is critical to our mission of advancing the conservation, stewardship, and wise use of Missouri's aquatic resources. The Chapter's ongoing student support, the work members are doing to stand up the Johnny Morris Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems, as well as developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, demonstrate the commitment MOAFS is making to cultivate professionals in this state.

From the Parent Society to individual Chapters, the American Fisheries Society is having frank, serious discussions about the way we do things- developing new tools, programs, policies and practices to be a more effective organization and maintain relevancy with today's professionals. Some of those efforts will succeed. Some of them will fail. No matter the outcome, the end result is a stronger organization that better serves you.

If I learned anything in this year, it is just how essential your feedback is in running this show. Doesn't matter where you are in your career, area of expertise, or the agency you work for- the experiences and insight you bring to the table are invaluable. If something's working, let us know. If something could work better, let us know. The Chapter and the Parent Society exist to support your professional experience, and your feedback is the surest way of making that happen. So, please- share.

Thanks again for all the work you do protecting and managing this state's aquatic resources.  
I'll see you at MNRC!

*Take care,*  
Tom



## Treasurer's Report: January 1-December 31 2023

By Chris Rice, MOAFS Treasurer

The Chapter's general funds grew steadily during 2023, largely due to the Fishes of Missouri poster sales along with a handful of donations. These revenues contributed to a \$3,890.00 increase in the Chapter's Operational Savings Account balance. Our Student Support Trust Fund (SSTF) accounts also performed well during 2023. An updated SSTF Investment Management Plan was approved in early 2021 and is being carried out as outlined. The plan called for a two-investment vehicle portfolio comprised of a Money Market Saving Account and Vanguard equities with a goal of maintaining a Money Market to Vanguard ratio of 35:65%. The original Vanguard investment of \$45,000 in 2015 and another investment of \$36,000 in 2021 brings the total investment amount to \$81,000. During 2021, \$6,286.09 in Vanguard equities were sold and deposited into the Money Market account in accordance with the updated profit taking strategy. Profits were not taken during 2022 because market trends were unfavorable and equity values depreciated. However, steady economic growth during 2023 permitted the sale of \$3,500.00 in Vanguard equities. As of December 31, 2023, the current value of our Vanguard equities is \$83,506.48, and no additional profits will be taken until Vanguard equities represent more than 65% of SSTF funds. Moving forward, market forecasts suggest that 2024 may be favorable for continued profit taking in accordance with the SSTF Investment Management Plan.

## Account Balance on 12/31/2023

<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total: \$30,949.11</b>
MOAFS Operational Savings	\$26,553.26 (+ \$3,890.00)
MOAFS Operational Checking	\$4,294.99 (+ \$990.79)
MOAFS Special Projects Checking	\$100.86 (+ \$0.26)
<b>Student Support Funds</b>	<b>Total: \$129,709.22</b>
SSTF Money Market (Savings/ Buffer fund)	\$45,910.54 (- \$409.56)
SSTF Checking	\$292.20 (+ \$0.33)
<b>Total Stock Market Funds</b>	<b>\$83,506.48 (+ \$12,526.34)</b>
Stock Market Index Fund (VTSAX)	\$64,300.14 (+ \$10,135.49)
International Stock Index Fund (VTIAX)	\$19,206.34 (+ \$2,390.85)

## MNRC 2026 Steering Committee update

MOAFS will be hosting the 2026 Missouri Natural Resources Conference, and planning is already underway. Current MNRC Steering Committee members include:

Chair(s): Mike Allen, April Sevy  
 Publicity: Joe McMullen  
 Treasurer: Brad Farwell  
 Registration: Kendra Swee  
 Presentations: Darby Niswonger, Tom Boersig  
 Program: Kathi Moore  
 Arrangements: Samantha Clary  
 Social: Jenna Stiek  
 A/V: Vacant  
 Job Fair: Ben Havens  
 Exhibits/Sponsors: Vacant  
 Website: Kat Lackman  
 Prayer Breakfast: Blake Stephens

If you are interested in serving on the MNRC Steering Committee- especially as A/V/ or Exhibits/ Sponsors chair, please contact Mike Allen ([Mike.Allen@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Mike.Allen@mdc.mo.gov)) or April Sevy ([April.Sevy@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:April.Sevy@mdc.mo.gov)).





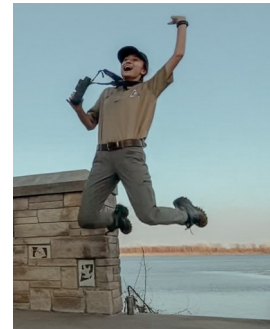
## Rivers & Streams Committee

Introducing Cara Coates the new Chair of the Rivers and Streams Committee. Cara grew up outside of St. Louis, in a little town along the Mera-mec River. It was there that she developed a love for the outdoors and a passion for conservation. She achieved her Bachelors of Science from Murray State University in Wildlife Biology & Conservation Education while competing all four years as a collegiate rower and coxswain.

Cara started with the Missouri Stream Team Program in March of 2022 after working in the St. Louis region as a Natural Resource Assistant for over a year. In her position she delivered public programs on a variety of nature topics and outdoor skills, helped with large events, and assisted with wildlife monitoring. Before starting her career with Stream Team, she worked in the interpretive division of the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources, where she taught a variety of audiences about streams, caves, and wildlife. While working on her

Bachelors, she gained experience as an undergraduate research assistant, analyzing samples of aquatic invertebrates to maintain a long-term dataset of a stream's water quality. In her current position, her primary responsibilities are assisting Stream Teams in the North, Kansas City, and Central Regions, and serving as the Missouri Stream Team's Communications Lead.

Cara is also a water enthusiast in her free time; besides rowing, she likes to fish and wakeboard. She was married to her husband Ryan in September of 2023 and also has a dog, Fjord, who is her best friend and comes on all her adventures with her.



## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Introducing Brittany Harried the new Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Brittany Harried is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Missouri (Columbia, MO) and the Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. Her background is in stream fish ecophysiology and functional traits.

Brittany volunteered for the chair position of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in December 2023 and will be working during 2024 to establish specific missions and goals for this committee that will take place at the annual meeting and throughout the year. The first action by this committee was to share a survey with MOAFS members to assess the DEI needs of our members. These results will be shared at the 2024 business meeting and will inform the early decisions and initiatives for this committee. Brittany's goal is to add relevant programming and opportunities at the 2025 annual meeting and to provide resources outside of the annual meeting.

If you are interested in learning more about the MOAFS DEI Committee or would like to be involved in any capacity, please contact Brittany at: [blhf39@missouri.edu](mailto:blhf39@missouri.edu)

# NCD Student & Early Career Professionals Activities Committee (SECPAC) Update

By: Kamden Glade & Hannah Mulligan, Committee Co-chairs

In 2022 the previously defunct NCD Student Affairs Committee was re-established as the SECPAC to also include early career professionals. We meet approximately monthly, and the year of 2022 was largely devoted to amending committee bylaws and objectives, developing subcommittees, building membership, finding state representatives, and filling subcommittee chairs and team members. However, 2023 has seen a rapid increase in SECPAC organized activities and our membership and student/ECP involvement continues to grow! Here are a few highlights from last year and plans for 2024...

We started 2023 by hosting two events at the Midwest conference in Kansas. The first event was a short social hour where current and interested members could network and learn more about what SECPAC does and how to get involved. Several members of NCD ExCom were present to offer their support and to hear ideas from the group. We also hosted a symposium and panel discussion focused on providing constructive feedback to new conference presenters. Attendees were asked to provide written feedback for the presenters, and there was time for verbal feedback following each presentation. The session concluded with a panel of more experienced presenters offering tips, tricks, and best practices when giving presentations. This symposium was a hit, and we look forward to hosting a similar session at the 2024 meeting in South Dakota. If you are interested in viewing the 2023 panel discussion as you prepare for upcoming winter conferences, a recording is located [here](#). During the upcoming Midwest conference we are also planning to attend a Stampede hockey [game](#) on 1/30 at 7 pm, so we invite you to attend for an opportunity to network and enjoy the game.

Because so many of our members are students with busy courseloads and ongoing research, SECPAC has taken a “many hands make light work” approach by organizing subcommittees to focus on specific tasks and provide opportunities for varying levels of involvement to members. We have designated chapter reps from most chapters to help facilitate communications between SECPAC and chapter members that may be interested in our activities. Our Midwest conference team has been instrumental in organizing symposia each of the last two years. Our Membership team has been busy updating our list of contacts from each chapter and the universities within NCD that offer fisheries-related degrees (if you are student or faculty member at a college or university without a subunit, please reach out to Kamden or Hannah if you would like to be added to our email listserv and/or become a member). Our Communications team has also been sending weekly summaries of graduate school, employment/internship, and grant/scholarship opportunities to our members. Our Continuing Education team is in the process of setting up a few virtual webinars that we will host over the coming months, the first of which we are co-hosting with the Fisheries Management Section about mentoring on 2/13 from 1-2 pm (for info contact [Elizabeth.Renner@state.sd.us](mailto:Elizabeth.Renner@state.sd.us)). Most recently, we’ve been working with a few folks from the Michigan chapter who are interested in setting up a student conclave for the NCD. Stay tuned for more details.

If any of these activities sound interesting to you, we’d love for you to join us! This is a good opportunity to network with other students/ECPs, gain practice working as a team and in professional society involvement. We welcome all levels of participation ability/availability, and we are always looking for motivated students/ECPs to join in and help maintain the momentum we’ve built over the past couple years. If you’re interested in joining, just want more information, or would like to be added to the email listserv to receive job/scholarship/grad position postings -please contact Kamden ([kamden.glade@state.mn.us](mailto:kamden.glade@state.mn.us)) or Hannah



## Continuing Education Committee

By: Brad Farwell

The Continuing Education Committee is working on several workshops to support student professional development. These will be coordinated at student meetings at local AFS chapters.

These workshops are likely to include training on how to apply for various jobs, interviewing skills, and how to develop a resume and cover letter.

If you would like more information or would like to volunteer to help with this committee, please contact Brad Farwell: [brad.farwell@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:brad.farwell@mdc.mo.gov)



## Communications Committee

One of the primary goals of MOAFS is to facilitate the distribution of relevant information to the membership. As a result MOAFS ExCom decided to form a new Communication Committee, that will be an expansion of the previous Newsletter Committee with a purpose of developing content (updates on Chapter business, news, and activities) and coordinating distribution through the Chapter website, email list and social media platforms.

This committee will be working on new ways to increase communication, including adding an Instagram account, communicating more through email and Facebook and delegating specific communication tasks to committee chairs so that information is being shared on a more timely basis. We are also revamping the newsletter, to both serve as a historical archive for MOAFS activities and news, but with more frequent distribution to membership.

If you are interested in learning more about the MOAFS Communications Committee or would like to be involved in any capacity, please contact Tom Boersig at: [thomas.boersig@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:thomas.boersig@mdc.mo.gov) or Emily Tracy-Smith at: [Emily.TracySmith@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Emily.TracySmith@mdc.mo.gov)





## Legislative & Environmental Concerns Committee

By: Mary Culler

Mary Culler will be stepping into the role of chair of the Legislative and Environmental Concerns Committee. Mary has served as the Executive Director of Stream Teams United since 2018. Prior to that, Mary worked for 11 years for the state of Missouri, working first with the Missouri Department of Conservation on statewide crayfish research projects and then as a fisheries management biologist at the Southwest Regional Office. Mary then worked for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources at the Northeast Regional Office, in both the drinking water and water pollution programs. Mary received an M.S. in Water Resources from Iowa State University, where she conducted research about fish passage and macroinvertebrate communities in southwest Iowa streams, under the Iowa Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. Mary's undergraduate degree was completed at her hometown university of Southwest Missouri State in Springfield. Mary is a life member of MOAFS.

As Chair of the MOAFS Legislative and Environmental Concerns Committee, Mary will be working to share state and federal legislative issues with MOAFS membership. With Stream Teams United working daily to track state and local advocacy issues in Missouri, this will be an extension of



her work at Stream Teams United. Mary will also be reviewing information from the parent society, to learn more about national issues of concern.

With the 2024 legislative session currently in full-swing, the main issue of concern this year so far are two bills that seek to redefine Missouri's "waters of the state", in a way that would remove intermittent streams and cause great uncertainty on the protection of wetlands and groundwater in Missouri. Stream Teams United has more information and an interactive platform set up at <https://www.streamteamsunited.org/stop-bad-waters-of-the-state-bills.html>.

MOAFS has partnered with Stream Teams United in the past three years to host a day to visit the Missouri State Capitol. This year's "Great Rivers State Day" is scheduled for April 18th. Consider attending this day as a member of MOAFS!



*Salt River Cleanup*



# Historian Report

By: Joe Dillard

**History (his-to-ry)** – “that branch of knowledge dealing with past events. a continuous, systematic narrative of past events as relating to a particular people, country, period, person, organization, etc., usually written as a chronological account.” Or, more accurately - “History, N. an account, mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools.” (Ambrose Bierce, 1911) and “History is too serious to be left up to historians.” (Iain Macleod, 1961).

You may wonder what ever possessed me to undertake compiling the history of the Missouri Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (MOAFS). A few reasons that come to mind include: having really good records to work with, a sense of duty, attending all of the meetings except two, lack of good judgment, and too much time on my hands. Did I mention having a mini-stroke?!



MOAFS has one of the most complete archives of their history as any other AFS chapter. It is archived at the State Historical Society of Missouri (SHSMO) facility at 605 Elm Street, Columbia, MO 65201. Anyone, by advanced request, can review that collection (Accession Number CA6574) on site. It currently consists of 10 boxes, 6 computer discs, 1 video cassette, and 1 oversize item (our original Charter from AFS dated 1964). I donated all of MOAFS records that I was able to find to the State Historical Society on 7 July 2020. Additional records were donated on 15 December 2020 and 31 May 2023.

One of our records at SHSMO is our book, “Still hooked - Our First 50 Years: 1964-2014” coauthored by Amanda Rosenberger, Emily Tracy-Smith and me. It is 288 pages and to most folks dull as dishwater. It is a compilation of all things MOAFS including all of the officers, presentations given, significant events, awards given and received, annual meeting minutes, etc. from the first meeting in 1963 (was not officially a chapter at that time) through 2014.

Now for a bit of history about the History Committee:

From the January 3, 1991 EXCOM Planning Meeting Minutes – “We decided to create the Presidentially-appointed position of Chapter Historian. Current long-term records are excessive, disorganized, and often redundant. It was not clear whether the historian should be on a short-term (1-2 years) or long-term (5-10 years) appointment; but it was made crystal clear that the first person to assume this position has a major job ahead of them. For this reason, it may be desirable to appoint an experienced member to this position and allow them sufficient time to develop a standard format for archiving important Chapter documents.”

Since I had attended all of the meetings and had most of the records (I inherited a lot of the early records from the John L. Funk, MOAFS Founder), I volunteered, and have served, as the Chair of the History Committee (some years by myself, other years with various MOAFS members) since 1991. At an Executive Committee meeting in 2016, I asked to be replaced as Chair and be given the designation of Historian Emeritus which was granted.

Guess what; I am still serving as the Historian and will probably do so until the “Big One” hits or I am forcibly removed. Whichever happens, my fond hope is that whoever accepts the lead of this committee will carry on the strong tradition of collecting, compiling and preserving MOAFS history.

History happens but it is becoming increasingly hard to capture and archive with the advent of the digital age. Your help is encouraged.

Joe G. Dillard





## MSU AFS Chapter Report

By: Madyson Neff

The Missouri State University subunit did several events over the course of last semester:

- Toured Jordan Creek—an underground creek that runs through downtown Springfield. Sponsored by The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks.
- Participated in a small research study students at Ozark Technical Community College put on. We assessed different macroinvertebrates and aquatic vertebrates in different areas of a stream. Some areas were heavily polluted while others were relatively pristine.
- Partnered with the Wildlife Society and toured Wonders of Wildlife for behind-the-scenes encounters.

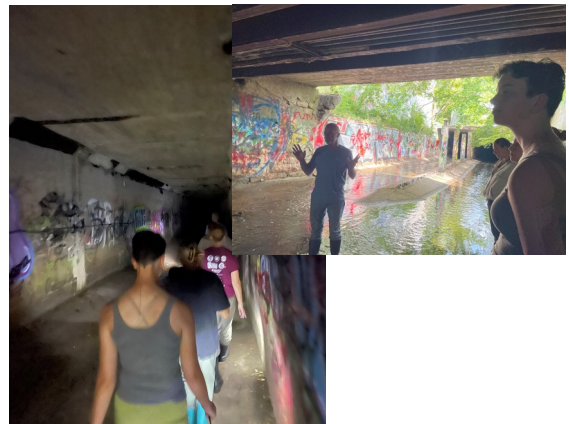
We also hosted two guest speakers. Ashley Connor spoke about her journey from Missouri State University to Dogwood Canyon and eventually to MDC. Tyler Ham spoke about the history of the James River Watershed.



*Animal encounters at WOW*



*Jordan Creek underground tour*





## UCM AFS Chapter Report

By: Libby Troutwine

The University of Central Missouri subunit has a new executive board for 2024 and did several events throughout the year.

Some highlights include touring different hatcheries nearby, and applying various fisheries techniques such as electrofishing and seining. We also had guest speakers from MDC talk about their careers and potential professional development.

In addition, our membership expanded significantly in the last year because of our joint meetings with The Wildlife Society.



*2024 Executive Board*

*2023 Homecoming Float*



*Fisheries Techniques and Identification*







## MU AFS Chapter Report

By: Katherine Cullinane

FASS is continuing to try and recruit new members through the University of Missouri Ichthyology class, and other courses. They currently have about \$300 on hand, and are using some of the money to send a few members to the job fair at MNRC. They are working with the MU Bass Fishing Team to coordinate a fishing tournament this spring, are planning a hatchery tour, and are meeting this week (2/8) to plan other activities for the semester.

*Earth Day Outreach Event  
April, 2023 in Columbia, MO*



*FASS Stream Team #442 Grindstone Creek*

