

Proposed OFWIM Bylaws Changes, June 2009

To comment on the changes, you may:

1. Register for the OFWIM portal (if you haven't already) by emailing Lisa Zolly at lisa_zolly@usgs.gov. The Bylaws changes are posted under the Bylaws Committee, where you can download them and then add your comments on the Discussions page. You will also be able to read and comment on other members' comments.
2. Email your comments directly to the chair of the Bylaws Committee, Sabra Schwartz (sschwartz@azgfd.gov).

OFWIM BYLAWS

Name

Section 1. The name of the organization shall be the Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers.

Mission

Section 2. The mission of the Organization shall be to promote the management and conservation of natural resources by facilitating technology and information exchange among managers of fish and wildlife information.

Purpose

Section 3. The Organization is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC).

Memberships

Section 4. The Organization has **four** membership categories:

Comment [SS1]: Changes number of memberships from two to four.

Individual Member: a person with an interest in the Organization and its objectives. The annual membership fee of ~~\$25~~**\$30** is for the Calendar Year in which dues are paid. Payment of the annual membership fee entitles an Individual member to one (1) vote.

Comment [SS2]: Raising the individual membership fee from \$25 to \$30 a year.

Student Member: a person currently enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student at a college or university, who has an interest in the Organization and its objectives. Student membership requires the signature and email address of an advisor at the institution where the student is currently enrolled. The annual membership fee of \$10 is for the Calendar Year in which dues are paid. Payment of the annual membership fee entitles a Student member to one (1) ~~vote~~.

Comment [SS3]: Addition of a student membership level with a rate of \$10 a year.

Organizational Member: a government or non-government organization with a mission that involves the management of fish and wildlife populations or habitat.

The annual membership fee of ~~\$100~~150 is for the Calendar Year in which dues are paid. Payment of the annual membership fee entitles each Organizational member to the equivalent of six (6) Individual memberships, with all of the rights and privileges of full membership. An organization may purchase more than one Organizational Membership per Calendar Year.

Comment [SS4]: Raising organizational membership fee from \$100 to \$150 a year.

Sustaining Member: a government or non-government organization with a mission that involves the management of fish and wildlife populations or habitat. The annual membership fee of \$500 is for the Calendar Year in which dues are paid. Payment of the annual membership fee entitles each Institutional member to the equivalent of thirteen (13) or more Individual memberships, with all of the rights and privileges of full membership.

Comment [SS5]: Addition of Institutional Membership to allow a company or organization to have more than 12 members with one payment.

All voting members are eligible for the following membership benefits: 1) to hold office in the Organization; 2) to apply for OFWIM awards; 3) to apply for travel grants to attend the Organization's Annual Meeting; 4) to receive a password enabling participation in the OFWIM Members Portal Community; 5) to receive quarterly newsletters; 6) to participate in web-based training opportunities conducted by the Training and Education Committee; and 7) to participate in networking opportunities conducted by the Organization throughout the year. The President may appoint members or delegates to serve on committees as he or she deems necessary.

Comment [SS6]: Added clarifying language added to more fully enumerate membership benefits, including explanation of new benefits that have resulted from adoption of recent technologies such as the Portal Community and web-based training.

Membership Fee

Section 5. There shall be no initiation fee, but all members of the Organization shall pay the annual membership fee specified in Section 4, per Calendar Year or part thereof. The annual membership year is January 1st to December 31st. The full membership fee is payable upon joining the Organization for the Calendar Year specified or part thereof.

Comment [SS7]: Correct the spelling of joining

Reinstatement

Section 6. If an Individual or Student member fails to pay the full membership fee for a period of six (6) months after the same is due and payable, he or she shall *ipso facto*, cease to be a member of the Organization and his or her name shall be stricken from the Registry; however, an Individual or Student member may be reinstated on full payment of the annual membership fee. Individual or Student members stricken from the Registry after failure to pay dues will no longer be eligible for membership benefits as specified in Section 4.

Comment [SS8]: Add new membership category for consistency.

Comment [SS9]: Add new membership category for consistency.

Comment [SS10]: Explains members stricken from Registry are not eligible for membership benefits.

If an Organizational or Sustaining member fails to pay its annual membership fee for a period of six (6) months after the same is due and payable, it shall *ipso facto*, cease to be a member of the Organization and its individual member names shall be stricken from the Registry; however, the Organizational member may be reinstated on full payment of the annual membership fee. Organizational and Institutional members and their associated individual members stricken from the Registry after failure to pay dues will no longer be eligible for membership benefits as specified in Section 4.

Comment [SS11]: Same as comment 10.

Officers

Section 7. The officers of the Organization shall consist of a President, a President-Elect, a Treasurer, a Secretary, the Past President and a Member-At-Large. The term of office shall be approximately one year for the President, President-Elect, Past President, and Member-At-Large, and approximately two years for the Treasurer and Secretary. Officers are installed in office during the Organization's annual business meeting, immediately following the election. At installation, the current President-Elect assumes the role of President, and the current President becomes the Past President; both officers shall serve in these positions until the next annual business meeting.

If an elected officer cannot complete the term of office, the Executive Committee may appoint a replacement ~~until an election can be held to serve the remainder of the~~ **term**.

Comment [SS12]: The only elections are at the annual meeting. Rather than holding a special election, the Executive Committee will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term vacated.

President

Section 8. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Organization and chair the Executive Committee. He or she shall have general charge and supervision over all affairs of the Organization and make appointments to committees as hereinafter authorized. The President acts as spokesperson for the Organization and serves as Vice-Chair of the Elections, Nominations, and Awards Committee.

President-Elect

Section 9. The President-Elect shall be nominated and elected by majority vote from the members in good standing (i.e. the annual membership fee is paid in full). The primary duty of the President-Elect will be to assist the President as necessary in carrying out the business of the Organization. The President-Elect shall succeed the President during the year following his or her term as President-Elect and coordinate all aspects of the annual meeting (including logistics, arrangements, and program) as Chair of the Meeting Planning Committee.

Past President

Section 10. The President shall serve as the Past President during the year following his or her term as President. The Past President shall act as an advisor to the Executive Committee and assist the President as requested. The Past President serves as a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee. **The Past President will also serve as liaison between the Executive Committee and all other committee chairs, hosting committee chair meetings as necessary.**

Comment [SS13]: This makes the responsibility permanent and ensures the committees are active throughout the year.

Treasurer

Section 11. The Treasurer shall monitor and report on the finances of the Organization, its bank account and collection of annual dues. The Treasurer will also provide the President with a list of paid up members at the beginning of the annual business meeting. The Treasurer is responsible for filing a tax return with the IRS if OFWIM revenues exceed the threshold amount that requires filing in any given year. The Treasurer also serves as the Vice-Chair of the Membership Committee.

Secretary

Section 12. The Secretary prepares the minutes of the annual business meeting and Executive Committee meetings of the Organization. The Secretary shall also maintain the Organization's mailing list and on-line Membership Registry and provide updated lists to the newsletter editor prior to each newsletter mailing; to Committee Chairs for special announcements and membership drives; and to the Executive Committee and Meeting Planning Committee for correspondence related to the annual business meeting. The Secretary serves as the Vice-Chair of the Communications Committee.

Member-At-Large

Section 13. The Member-At-Large serves as advisor to the Executive Committee and coordinates special projects at the direction of the President or Executive Committee. The Member-At-Large also serves as Vice-Chair of the Data Standards and Technology Trends Committee. Member-At-Large is responsible for coordinating the Hacker's Ball at the annual meeting in coordination with the President-Elect (including logistics, arrangements, and program).

Comment [SS14]: Brings the Bylaws in line with the change of the committee name.

Comment [SS15]: Makes permanent the duties for the Hacker's Ball.

Meetings

Section 14. The Organization shall meet each Calendar Year for the purpose of electing officers, conducting official business, and planning future meetings. Each member or delegate in good standing shall be entitled to one vote, in person, by authorized proxy, or by pre-meeting ballot. Both hardcopy and electronic ballots are acceptable for voting prior to the meeting. Members and delegates may participate in discussions and are eligible to vote on business matters and election of officers.

Ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing constitute a quorum for transacting Organization business at pre-announced annual or special meetings, excluding regional meetings.

The order of business and parliamentary procedures at meetings of the Organization shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.

Decisions at meetings shall be made by a simple majority of members and delegates in good standing who vote in person, by authorized proxy, or by pre-meeting ballot.

Before an annual business meeting, the Executive Committee shall mail, email or web post a ballot bearing nominations for President-Elect and Member-At-Large to all members and delegates in good standing. Every second year, the Executive Committee shall also mail, email or web post a ballot bearing nominations for Secretary and Treasurer to all members and delegates in good standing. There must be a least one nominee for each officer. Members will be allowed at least 30 days from the date of the correspondence to return ballots to the Chair of the Elections, Nominations and Awards Committee or vote online. The nominee who receives the largest number of votes for each office is elected. If a tie occurs, the Executive Committee makes the selection by majority vote.

Comment [SS16]: This updates the Bylaws to reflect new methods of voting.

Regional Representatives

Section 15. The Executive Committee shall appoint one (1) Regional Representative in each of the following regions of North America: ~~Northwest/West Coast, Southwest, Midwest, Mid-east/Great Lakes, Southeast, and New England/Mid-Atlantic~~ West, Midwest, Southeast,

Northeast. Regional Representatives may also be appointed for other areas or regions of North America, such as Canada and Mexico. Regional Representatives report to the President and serve a term of two (2) years. Within their respective regions, the Representatives shall: (a) serve as designated OFWIM representatives and liaisons; (b) promote fish and wildlife information management; (c) promote the OFWIM as a management service organization; and (d) provide a regional voice to, and sounding board for, the Executive Committee through participation as members of the Membership and Outreach Committee.

Comment [SS17]: OFWIM Regions were changed in 2007. This brings the Bylaws in line with the Regions currently displayed on the OFWIM website.

Comment [SS18]: This makes the responsibilities of the Regional Representatives more explicit.

Committees

Section 16. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Member-At-Large, and Regional Directors. The President serves as Chair of the Executive Committee.

Comment [SS19]: Regional Representatives will serve on the Membership and Outreach Committee, rather than the Executive Committee.

The President shall appoint and direct committees that have general charge and supervision over matters of the Organization entrusted to their care. The President may also appoint temporary committees as deemed necessary.

Dissolution

Section 17. Upon dissolution of the Organization, the Executive Committee shall distribute the assets of the accrued income of the Organization to one or more organizations that subscribe to the objectives of the Organization. Assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes set forth in IRC Section 501 (c) (3) or a corresponding section of any future Federal tax code; or distributed to the Federal, state, or local government organization for public purpose.

Amendment of Bylaws

Section 18. The Constitution and Bylaws may be altered or amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the entire membership, in person, by authorized proxy, by mail ballot, or by electronic ballot at any regular meeting of the Organization, provided written notice of proposed changes has gone to all voting members at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting. A method for submitting comments on the proposed changes will be made available in advance of the meeting to members who are unable to attend the annual meeting in person. Requests for changes to the Constitution and Bylaws may be submitted to the voting membership for action by a 2/3 majority vote of voting members present at any annual meeting, by written petition of 5 percent of the voting members, or by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Comment [SS20]: This clarifies that the 2/3 majority must be of the entire membership.

Comment [SS21]: This adds the requirement that members who may not be able to attend the Annual Meeting in person will still be able to comment on proposed changes to the Bylaws.

Comment [SS22]: This makes the final sentence clearer.

Limit of Powers

Section 19. No part of the net earning of the Organization shall be used for the benefit of, or distribution to, its members, trustees, representatives, officers or other private persons, with the following exception: the Organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions for the purposes set forth in IRC Section 501 (c) (3). No substantial portion of the Organization's activities will be conducted for the purpose of spreading propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Organization shall not participate or

intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office (including the publishing or distributing of statements).

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution and Bylaws, the Organization shall not conduct or carry on any activities that are not permitted under IRC Section 501 (c) (3), IRC Section 170 (c) (2), or a corresponding section of any future Federal tax code.

Originally approved and adopted by the membership, September 6, 1995, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Amended September 25, 2004.

Revisions approved and adopted by the membership at the annual business meeting, Tallahassee, FL, on October 17, 2005.

Signed and Officially Recognized by:

Bruce Schmidt, President
Amy Martin, Secretary