Happy New Year, OFWIM! Not only is it a new year, it’s a new DECADE! Ten years ago, I decided my life would not be complete without experiencing New Year’s Eve in Times Square with a million of my best friends. I was right. It was one of the best experiences but, I have no desire to repeat!

New Year’s Eve reminds me how quickly time flies by, and taking time to reflect on the journey is important. The same is true for our organization. OFWIM’s very first annual meeting occurred in 1993 in St. Louis, Missouri. We recently held our 27th annual meeting at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

As OFWIM approaches its third decade, we will take some time to consider our origins (past), where we are (present), and where we want to go (future). OFWIM is an amazing organization that does a tremendous amount of good work. Pausing to assess our goals is simply choosing to be intentional about continuing to do great things long into the future.

The Executive Committee developed a strategic thinking plan for 2020 that involves asking the following key questions (in the figure) about our past, present, and future:

- **Who** does OFWIM serve?
- **What** does OFWIM provide?
- **Why** is OFWIM important?
- **How** does OFWIM reach its desired constituents?

We will rely on our membership, records, and committees to provide valuable feedback that will help identify future goals. The effort to develop actionable strategies for these goals will likely continue into 2021. These strategies may be as simple as polishing our vision and mission, adjusting our outreach scope, or strengthening the benefits we wish to provide. We will document all results and strategies for easy future reference.

The success of a strategic thinking effort like this relies on member participation. How can you help? There are many ways! Take time to provide thoughtful answers to the member survey that will come out in the next few months. Help your committee complete its strategic thinking committee report. Our Communications, Outreach, and Membership committee will be featuring OFWIM members from various phases of the organization. As you read these, think about your own story: what brought you to OFWIM, what keeps you here, what would you change or persist as we look to the future?

Strategic thinking aside, we still have business as usual in OFWIM. If you are a new member, welcome! Consider joining a committee—it is not too late and this is a great way to get involved, network, and share your talents. Check out Groupsite, our venue for members to interact and share information. All members: remember to renew your dues for 2020 and encourage a colleague to join, too. Membership runs on a calendar year.

OFWIM is also an excellent group in which to build leadership skills. Contact the Elections, Nominations and Awards committee chair (jim.husband@dgif.virignia.gov) if you are interested in running or want to nominate someone for Treasurer, Member-at-Large, or President-Elect. And of course, mark your calendars for our 28th annual meeting in Fort Collins, Colorado, from October 4 – 8, 2020!

I am thankful that OFWIM is a part of my journey. Here’s to another decade, let’s make it one to remember!

Karen Horodysky
It’s time to renew your OFWIM membership for 2020!

Leadership
Grow leadership and service skills by running for office or chairing a committee

Development
Pursue professional development through committee involvement and training opportunities

Collaboration
Collaborate with other related societies, like AFS FITS and AFWA

Discounts
Benefit from lower annual meeting registration rates

Networking
Network with information managers on Groupsite and through the newsletter

Red fox
John J. Mosesso/NBII

Rainbow trout
USDA
OFWIM Past, Present, and Future:

Heather Konell
Senior Fisheries Data Coordinator, ACCSP/ASMFC

When and why did you join OFWIM?
I joined OFWIM in 2017 and became the Vice Chair of the Data Standards and Technology Trends Committee during my first year of involvement. Joining OFWIM was important to me because, through existing members at ACCSP, I was made aware of the benefits of membership. Leadership, collaboration, development, and networking are just a few of the benefits of membership that I was most excited about.

How do you feel that being a member has benefitted you?
Being a member of OFWIM has given me networking opportunities with organizations and agencies across America and Canada. I have been able to travel to annual meetings to present the work I’ve done with OFWIM. I have also interacted with, and gained knowledge from, fish and wildlife information managers to whom I would not have otherwise been exposed.

Why have you stayed a member of OFWIM?
My continued involvement with OFWIM is due to the responsibilities I’ve undertaken while being a member and the personal connections I’ve made with other members. I am now a member of the Communications, Membership and Outreach Committee, which has given me the opportunity to explore graphic design tools that will be used for outreach and available on the website and the OFWIM YouTube channel.
What message do you have for non-members?
I would say "JOIN!" There is no downside to being a member and you can make your membership as meaningful as you would like.

What have you done to contribute to OFWIM?
As I’ve previously mentioned, I have been an active Vice Chair for the Data Standards and Technology Trends Committee and I am a member of the Communications, Membership and Outreach Committee. I’ve been using Vyond Video Software to create interactive videos to promote OFWIM and encourage membership. Also, I’ve been able to attend the past two annual meetings where I’ve presented.

What opportunities has being a member given you and what opportunities would you like OFWIM to give you that you don’t think are available?
O_FWIM has given me the opportunity to explore both skills and places that I would not have experienced in my normal daily work life. I have taken advantage of the opportunity to work with graphic design and outreach and had the pleasure of visiting non-Atlantic coast regions such as Oregon and West Virginia. I think OFWIM could benefit from greater diversity in the membership and increased participation from non-profit agencies that may be able to bring a different perspective to the organization.

Do you think you will remain active with OFWIM and why?
My intentions are to continue to be very active with OFWIM. I love the relationships I’ve built with the members of this organization and I have a few projects that I would like to see completed during the course of my membership.
2019 Annual Conference Photos

OFWIM 2019
October 7 – 10, 2019

Wildlife management is comparatively easy; human management is difficult.

[Image of people at conference]

[Image of presentation]

[Image of outdoor setting]

[Image of animals]

[Image of group photo]

[Image of group photo with tiger]

[Image of group photo with tiger]

[Image of group photo with tiger]

[Image of group photo with tiger]
2019 Best Presentation
Daniel McGarvey
Virginia Commonwealth University
“Look at me — I have something I want to share with you.”

2019 Best Poster
Christine Verdream
James Madison University
“Habitat utilization and impacts of flooding on James spinymussel (*Parvaspina collina*) populations in Virginia streams.”
I would like to express my sincere gratitude to OFWIM for the generous scholarship which allowed me to attend their annual meeting in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Attending the meeting allowed me to introduce my graduate research on the effects of non-native species and land-use change on long-term trends in native fish species abundance in tributary streams of the New River basin to a broader audience of professionals interested in GIS applications for such ecological research. The opportunity to network with GIS and wildlife professionals to learn about exciting new datasets, their own research and potential career paths was extremely valuable.

I am planning to complete my M.S. research at Virginia Tech in the spring semester of 2020. Upon graduation, I will be seeking employment as a GIS specialist with a state or federal conservation agency, where I hope to continue to apply my skills to monitor and strategically protect the incredible diversity of life present within the freshwater streams of the United States. I am also looking forward to attending next year’s OFWIM meeting in Fort Collins, CO to present the results of my graduate research and once again interact with other researchers and wildlife conservation professionals.

Due to time constraints placed upon me by teaching duties at Virginia Tech, I was only able to attend one day of meeting activities this year. Next year, I hope to attend the full conference to take advantage of the entire experience that the OFWIM annual meeting provides!
- Logan Sleezer
2019 Student Research Scholarship Award
Recipient: Brittany Bajo

Thank you OFWIM for awarding me the 2019 Student Research Scholarship Award!

I am so grateful I was invited to the annual conference in October at the NCTC in Shepherdstown, WV. We had some really amazing opportunities including visiting the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute where we got a tour of the facility and insight into some of the conservation research projects they are currently working on. The Herp Tracking and Technology workshop got us into the field where we learned about some new techniques for tracking rare turtles. We also got a behind the scenes tour of the NCTC!

The conference gave me an opportunity to present some preliminary data on my current master’s project: Modeling Fundamentally Suitable Freshwater Mussel Habitat for the Duck River Drainage, TN. As a novice to GIS, and a brand-new master’s student (August 2019) I was nervous about presenting preliminary data, but everyone was not only understanding, but also extremely helpful and provided encouraging advice and even some data sources!

Not only was the location absolutely beautiful but the members of OFWIM were incredibly welcoming and a vast source of information. They truly make you feel like part of a community! One of the best parts of the conference was the connections and conversations with the other members. It is such a close-knit but diverse group that makes discussions about difficult environmental issues really interesting and creative. I’m really excited to return to some familiar grounds for the 2020 annual meeting in Fort Collins, Colorado! Hope to see you all there!
JOIN OFWIM THIS YEAR IN
FORT COLLINS, CO!

October 4th-8th, 2020

The 2020 Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers Annual Conference and Business Meeting is heading to Colorado!

FORT COLLINS WAS NAMED ONE OF THE 14 BEST PLACES TO TRAVEL IN 2019 BY FORBES!

Situated at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, 60 miles north of the Denver Airport, Fort Collins has recreational opportunities, diverse cultural attractions and a vibrant nightlife. Fort Collins prides itself on the many restaurants and outdoor activities, a picturesque downtown and of course, the beer. Fort Collins is always full of things to do, no matter the season.
Innovation Award 2020: Application Announcement

The Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers (OFWIM) invites individuals and conservation agencies/organizations to apply for the OFWIM Innovation Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize excellence in the advancement of fish and wildlife information management technology or processes.

Nominated projects/applications will be evaluated for their technical accomplishment, innovation, success in meeting their stated goals, and/or success in developing and sustaining a partnership.

Eligibility for this award is open. Nominees may be individuals or agencies/organizations, but the nominee must have retained creative control over any website or technical application. This form may be used to nominate the submitter’s work or that of others.

The winning individual or organization will receive a 1-year free membership to OFWIM, as well as recognition at the 2020 Conference in Colorado, and on the OFWIM website.

Please find the Innovation Award 2020 Application at: http://www.ofwim.org/awards/

Send the completed nomination form (electronic submission) to:

Jessica D. Perkins, GISP
GIS & Technical Support Program Manager
Wildlife Resources Section, WV DNR
E-mail: jessica.d.perkins@wv.gov

For additional information, please contact Jessica Perkins @ 304-637-0245 extension 2042 or at Jessica.D.Perkins@wv.gov. For more information about OFWIM, visit www.ofwim.org.

Nomination Deadline: August 1, 2020.

The award winner will be notified at the OFWIM 2020 Conference, October 4 - 8, 2020.
**OFWIM Officers**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Karen Horodysky</td>
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<tr>
<td>President Elect</td>
<td>Chelsea Krause</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Susan Watson</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Michael Barbour</td>
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<td>Member-At-Large</td>
<td>Andrew Treble</td>
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<td>Past President</td>
<td>Rebecca Scully</td>
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**OFWIM Committees**

**Communications, Membership, & Outreach**
- Julie Defilippi Simpson (Chair)
- Susan Watson (Vice-Chair)
- MaryEllen Wickett
- Chris Gerecke
- Donald Schrupp
- Dyanne Cortez
- Heather Konell
- Karen Horodysky
- Jordan Holtswarth
- Julie Prior-Magee
- Mike Bialousz
- Liz Clark

**Conference Planning**
- Chelsea Krause (chair)
- Amy Ewing
- Andrew Treble
- Beth Stys
- Rebecca Scully
- Brittany Bajo
- Don Schrupp
- Dyan Pursell
- Jordan Holtswarth
- Karen Horodysky
- Keith Hurley
- Lynn Barrett
- MaryEllen Wickett
- Sabra Tonn
- Susan Watson
- Michael Barbour

**Elections, Nominations, & Awards**
- Jim Husband (Chair)
- Beth Stys (Vice-Chair)
- Kyle Kaskie
- Ross Scott
- Jessica Perkins
- Mack Frantz
- Dyan Pursell
- Sabra Tonn
- John Taylor

**Training & Education**
- Michael Barbour (Chair)
- Amy Ewing
- Keith Hurley
- Rebecca Scully
- Ross Scott