

AFS – Computer User’s Section, Volume XVIII, Number II



AFSCUS

Winter 2005/2006

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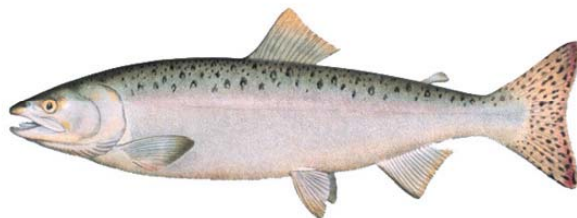
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**CUS Annual
Meeting in
Lake Placid
has been
scheduled for
Monday, Sept.
11, 2006 from
1-3 PM**



President's Byte

I was sitting in a meeting in November planning the Second National Database Summit. The meeting was progressing as meetings to plan other meetings usually do. Then it hit me: the team of people that I was working with were some of the Big Names in my profession. The group included Doug Beard, Dirk Miller, Stu Shipman, Andy Loftus, and Stan Allen. These guys have been leaders tackling fisheries issues at the regional, national, and even international level for a long time. Doug, Dirk and Stu are Computer User Section Past Presidents. It seems like Andy has been the Secretary-Treasurer for the Section forever and we'll all be lucky if he never steps down from that position. Stan is an active member of the Organization of Fish & Wildlife Information Managers (OFWIM). These folks are all enthusiastic and provide extremely capable leadership for the Section. With all of that said I just want the membership to know how much of an honor it is for me to become President of the Section. I have big shoes to fill but I have a lot of support in this group as does the rest of the membership.

During that meeting in November, Stan Allen asked why data managers like me weren't members of OFWIM and naturally I didn't have an answer. Maybe because I have been trained as a biologist and my professional organization was AFS. I also have fought hard through the years to remind people that I am a biologist and not just a technology guy. Some of you know how fast your fisheries colleagues will shun you if they think all you deal with is computers! So since Stan posed that question I thought about it some more. I see the agenda for OFWIM's annual meeting year after year and it is full of topics I am interested in. I went to the OFWIM web site to find out more about the group and I think there is a lot I could learn by becoming a part of the organization. Maybe I could contribute something as well. I have decided to become a member in 2006 and I suggest other data managers in the Section should consider membership as well.

I had to go back to the resume that I submitted when I ran for President-Elect to remind me what I

promised you. My priority has always been to get technology in the hands of the people on the ground doing fisheries work. Our resources will be much more effectively managed when decision makers have more and better data available to them. We have to find tools that make biologists more efficient at collecting the data they need, and then combine that data with appropriate analysis tools. I will share evaluations of hardware and software that field biologists and analysts have found useful in Texas and have incorporated into their daily business in upcoming newsletters and on our web site. I'll also be soliciting information about technology that the membership has found useful. The final step (one that most people don't think about) is taking all of those data collections and making them available in some reasonably-accessible fashion. That way we will be able to combine the specialized data from a variety of sources so we can try to detect larger-scale changes over time. The Section is going to host Fisheries Database Summit II, Data to Support the National Fish Habitat Initiative, in October-November 2006. The objective of the Summit is to identify the necessary steps to make information from state and federal agencies available (as identified by the NFHI Data and Science Workgroups) to support the implementation of the National Fish Habitat Initiative. The Summit will bring together the data people from state and federal entities as well as universities to get input on how we can aggregate data at large scales. Attendees will be able to go back to their organizations with a better understanding of existing information systems, how they can contribute to NFHI, and a long list of contacts to collaborate with in the future.

Congratulations go to Bradley Harris of the University of Massachusetts. Bradley won the CUS "Best Student Poster Award" for 2005 for his poster "*Mapping benthic substrate on the Northwest Atlantic Ocean continental shelf with underwater video surveys*", which was presented at the Annual Meeting in Anchorage. A variety of technology was used in his project and I'm sure it was exciting to keep it all working! I'd also like to encourage CUS members to remind students that the award is available. The award includes a \$100

check and recognition from the Section and the Parent Society.

I'd like to finish by reiterating my desire to make the Computer User Section as valuable to members as I possibly can. During 2006 I plan to informally survey members to give myself a better understanding of the diversity of interests that are

CUS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH USGS PROGRESSES

Work under the cooperative agreement between CUS and the U.S. Geological Survey's National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) (see CUS Newsletter XVIII, Number I, Summer 2005) continues to proceed. Since the summer, work began on developing the assessment of American eel information systems. In December, meetings were held with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) to gain an initial understanding of what information issues they have faced with the development with their fishery management plan for American eel. A peer review of the most recent iteration of the plan was held. At the time that the official plan is released in February 2006, we will work with ASMFC to finalize recommendations to incorporate into a "needs assessment" to assist NBII in determining what role they may be able to play in assisting agencies with information exchange in the management of this species.

Progress on the NBII MidAtlantic Node (Chesapeake/Delaware drainages) component continued, with CUS providing input into the strategic plan for this program. Additionally, CUS will leverage another component of the USGS cooperative agreement, the Multistate Aquatic Resources Information System (MARIS) to support three states in the region (Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York) to refine or upgrade their systems to improve the exchange of data between states in the region and to also contribute to the MARIS project.

CUS president Fred Janssen has asked past-president Stu Shipman to continue coordinating this agreement on behalf of CUS to provide continuity to the program. Under the arrangement

out there. I'm sure you are all doing innovative things with the technology that you have in place and I would like to recognize you for it and pass it along as a possible solution for the rest of us. If you have anything you would like to pass along or have any questions or comments, please contact me at fred.janssen@tpwd.state.tx.us. I hope you all have a productive 2006.

with NBII, most of the direct expenses of these projects and some administrative costs are covered. Questions about the projects can be directed to Stu Shipman (sshipman@dnr.in.gov) or Andrew Loftus (ALoftus501@aol.com).

CUS PROVIDES FREE MEMBERSHIPS TO STUDENTS IN 2006

As part of CUS' contribution to the parent Society's efforts to recruit and retain more student members, the CUS membership approved a motion to provide AFS student members with free membership in the section during 2006. In order to receive this membership, the student will need to check off the "CUS" membership box on the registration form. The registration fee will be automatically deducted from the bill. "More than ever, fisheries managers and researchers are depending on information technology to do their job," remarked CUS president Fred Janssen. "By offering free membership to the fisheries professionals of tomorrow, we hope to better prepare them for the challenges that they will face and in turn, hope that they will become active participants in shaping the Section to serve their needs."—*Andrew Loftus*

RECIPIENT OF CUS BEST STUDENT POSTER AWARD ANNOUNCED

CUS president Fred Janssen has announced that Bradley Harris of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth has been awarded the CUS "Best Student Poster Award" for 2005 for his poster, *Mapping Benthic Substrate on the Northwest Atlantic Ocean Continental Shelf with Underwater Video Surveys*. His poster was judged to be the best presentation by a student of the application of computer/electronic technology in fisheries

management and research during the 2005 AFS Annual Meeting in Anchorage.

Bradley's research employed a centric, systematic underwater video survey of benthic substrates and macroinvertebrates to map the distribution of benthic substrates covering 60,000 km² of sea floor in the Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank. The results will aid in the development and management of special fishery management zones, including marine protected areas, and habitat areas of special concern. Janssen said that Harris' poster was brought to the attention of the selection committee when he responded to the call for award consideration put out by CUS last summer. "Although there were a number of fine posters that met our criteria, Bradley's collection of data using ArcPad and incorporation of it into GIS and technology brought several innovative information technology components to bear on solving a fishery management issue," noted Janssen in making the award. The award is accompanied by a \$100 stipend to offset education and travel costs.— *Andrew Loftus*

FISHERIES DATA SUMMIT II RECEIVES THE GREEN LIGHT-MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

In early December, CUS past-president Stu Shipman received official notification that funding has been approved for CUS' proposal to host "Data Summit II" to support the information needs of the National Fish Habitat Initiative. Core funds will be provided through the Multi-state Conservation Grant Program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Federal Assistance Program. An initial step in the grant process is the approval by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, composed primarily of the Directors of state natural resources agencies. Additional funding is expected from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance, the USGS National Biological Information Infrastructure, and other partners.

In 1998, the "Freshwater Fisheries Data Summit" garnered the participation of information managers

from 47 states and many federal agencies, and was generally thought of as a huge success. "Our hope is that by modeling this second fisheries Summit after that successful event, we can focus the expertise of a broad array of fisheries information professionals on addressing the unique information sharing needs that will be required as the National Fish Habitat Initiative gets underway," remarked Shipman. "We are even more pleased that support for funding the Summit comes from state directors as well as federal partners."

A steering committee, chaired by Shipman and involving representatives from CUS, the USGS, USFWS, IAFWA, state agencies, and interstate fishery commissions has been formed to guide the effort. It is anticipated that the Summit will occur in October 2006, so put it on your calendar and watch the CUS list serve for updates as they become available.— *Andrew Loftus*

CONTINUING EDUCATION AT THE AFS MEETING IN ANCHORAGE

The CUS sponsored the Introductory and Advanced GIS for Fisheries Biologists Workshop at the Anchorage, Alaska annual meeting. The section appreciates the work contributed by Jodi Whittier (Kansas Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit) and Brad Harris (University of Massachusetts) assisting Mickey Porter with updating the course materials and teaching the workshop. The course introduces fisheries professionals to GIS concepts with exercises focused on essential skills using ArcGIS (ESRI). The course remains popular, and has been submitted for inclusion as a Continuing Education for the 2006 annual meeting. Section members should watch the website for GIS tips and recommendations in the coming months.—*Mickey Porter*

CUS SPONSORED FISHERIES GIS SYMPOSIUM AT AFS ANNUAL MEETING

The CUS sponsored a symposium titled "Geographic Information System and Geospatial Analyses in Fisheries Research and Management" at the 2005 AFS Annual Meeting in Anchorage,

Alaska. The objective of the symposium is to provide current applications of GIS and geospatial analysis in fisheries research and management. Bill Fisher, Jeff Waldon, Fred Janssen and Stuart Shipman assembled a group of 22 presenters from across the North American continent. The symposium featured 19 oral presentations and 3 posters on a variety of topics ranging from mapping fishing grounds in central California to assessing spatial patterns of smallmouth bass in Oklahoma to relating sea surface temperatures to Atlantic bluefin tuna locations. A listing of all of the symposium presenters, presentation titles and abstracts can be found at the AFS 2005 Annual Meeting website:

<http://www.wdafs.org/Anchorage2005/afs/symposia.php?symposium=Geographic%20Information%20System%20and%20Geospatial%20Analyses%20in%20Fisheries%20Research%20and%20Management&&date=Thursday>.

By all accounts, the symposium was a huge success. There was both depth and breadth to the presentations and an opportunity for everyone to learn about GIS applications that were either very management oriented or on the cutting edge of geospatial research. Plus, it provided an opportunity for symposium participants to meet and talk with people from around the continent who are applying GIS and geospatial analyses to help solve fisheries problems. The CUS sponsored a similar symposium at the 2000 AFS annual meeting in St. Louis, and I suspect that the time will be ripe for another GIS/geospatial symposium in 2010.—*Bill Fisher*

MICROFISH UPDATE

According to CUS Software Librarian Andy Loftus, over the years one of the top 5 selling software packages that CUS offers has been MicroFish. Originally offered in 1988, the DOS-based software has been the most popular program for generating population estimates from electrofishing removal data. Now, software developer Jack Van Deventer has announced that a Windows-based version is under development and shortly will be available to the public. An advisory committee composed of fisheries biologists as well as technical professionals is reviewing the software application, and it is hoped

that it will then be made available through the CUS website (www.fisheries.org/cus). Announcements will be made on the CUS list serve when the software becomes available.

MICROFISH 3.0 FOR WINDOWS IS NOW AVAILABLE

MicroFish 3.0 is software that quantifies fisheries abundance by weight and by maximum-likelihood population estimate. Statistics summarizing fish length and fish weight by species are generated as well. MicroFish 3.0 is a Windows version of the earlier MicroFish software first released in 1985.



Jack Van Deventer demonstrates the new windows-based version of Microfish to be offered through CUS.

There are two versions of the MicroFish 3.0 software. The “Demonstration Version” is free and can be downloaded from www.MicroFish.org. The “Basic Version” creates results files that can be imported into Microsoft Excel. The latter version can be purchased for \$100 at the same Web site.

For more information contact John S. Van Deventer at jsv@MicroFish.org or (509) 993-0722.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION

The following software information was contributed by Michael Porter at Mickcoyote@newmexico.com or

mporter@uc.usbr.gov. Any questions regarding these software should be directed to him.

Here are some links for data recovery products/services. The emphasis is data recovery from Compact Flash Memory used in digital cameras:

<http://www.ultimateslr.com/memory-card-recovery.php>
<http://www.datarescue.com/photorescue/>
<http://www.eprovided.com/>

These websites are for aerial photography to use in GIS applications:

<http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/NextPage.asp>
<http://seamless.usgs.gov/>
<http://www.apfo.usda.gov/>

Must have free software:

Picasa is a free photo manager software available from Google: <http://picasa.google.com/index.html>

Use your web browser to view, manage, edit and print your digital photos. It includes advanced features with one-click changes and effects. The features are comparable to CompuPic and other commercial software. They recommend using Internet Explorer for your browser, but Picasa functions very well with FireFox.

Geographic Information Systems:

The Computer User Section will be redesigning the Geographic Information Systems web pages to include more links to online resources for base map imagery, useful extensions, GIS tips and tricks, and other groups emphasizing GIS.

I would appreciate receiving feedback from section members on features and content for the new pages and including in future newsletters. What are your favorite information sources? Which extensions do you regularly use when working with GIS? Has anyone used Google Earth? Send your tips and suggestions to Michael Porter (mporter@uc.usbr.gov).

Base map imagery:

The **USGS website** has a variety of aerial imagery available at <http://seamless.usgs.gov/>. The site includes high resolution black and white images and DOQQs. Smaller images can be readily

downloaded with a high speed internet connection. Keep all the windows open and active until you finish downloading the images. Traffic patterns vary and your request may be in a queue for a while before downloading begins. This is a good site to obtain basemap imagery.

The **USDA resources** are at:

<http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/NextPage.asp>.

Type in the state and county of interest to see what imagery is available. The user interface is not as friendly as the USGS site.

Google Earth – Explore, Search and Discover

<http://earth.google.com/>

The Google Earth site combines satellite imagery, maps and the power of Google Search to put the world's geographic information at your fingertips. This is a free site. The company also offers Google Earth Plus (\$20) with GPS and other format data import capability. The Google Earth Pro (\$400) appears to be a new entry into GIS software with terabytes of aerial and satellite imagery, search functions, and some basic GIS functions.

Extensions for ArcGIS:

Hawth's Analysis tools is a great set of tools for performing spatial analysis and other functions that are not included with ArcGIS.

<http://www.spatial ecology.com/htools/tooldesc.php>

The tools emphasize ecological applications including movement analysis, resource selection, predator prey interactions and trophic cascades. They have broad application for a variety of disciplines. These tools do not support on-the-fly projection changes. Make sure all the layers in your map (mxd) are the same projection.

There are three types of tools:

Simple tools for automating mundane tasks.

Tools that are designed to be part of an analysis workflow.

Ecology related analyses (for instance, various movement model applications).

With continual updates and additions to the tools, check this website from time to time for more recent versions.

XTools

There are several versions of Xtools available. The original extensions were developed for ArcView 3.x:

<http://arcscripts.esri.com/details.asp?dbid=11526>

Xtools Pro 3.0 for ArcGIS 8.x/9.x:

<http://arcscripts.esri.com/details.asp?dbid=11731>

is the latest version.

XTools Pro is one of the most popular ArcGIS desktop extensions with a variety of Geoprocessing functions. Many of the tools now run from ArcToolbox or from the command line in

ArcMap (for models and scripts). XTools is the most popular scripts download at the ESRI site.

GIS Training Source

This GIS training provider has a Resources page:

<http://www.gistrainingsource.com/resources.html>

with a couple of useful guides for new users learning basic ArcGIS 9 tasks like Georeferencing

(<http://www.gistrainingsource.com/Resources/Georeferencing.pdf> and Digitizing

(<http://www.gistrainingsource.com/Resources/Digitizing.pdf>).



*****Reminder: CUS Annual Meeting will be held during the AFS Annual Meeting in Lake Placid, NY on Monday, Sept. 11, 2006 from 1-3 PM.*****

**AFS Computer User Section Annual Meeting Agenda-
Sept. 12, 2005, Anchorage, Alaska
Noon to 1:30 pm- “Aspen Room at the Hilton**

Report on Software Review: Gary Ash

Newsletter: Angie Benson

Website: Mark Rogers

Report of the Secretary, Treasurer and Software Librarian: Loftus

Report from the Governing Board: Shipman

Old Business: Action activities for the last year:

FAR grant activity-

FAR guidance committee meeting- Loftus

Report of the USGS Cooperative Agreement - Loftus and Shipman

Host GIS Symposium for 2005- Bill Fisher

Continued to Serve on WEAB for Society-Shipman

IAFWA Multi-State Conservation Grant Program (MSCC), Beard

Fisheries Database Summit II, Data for the National Fish Habitat Initiative

Best Student Poster use of Technology (article in Fisheries- Notification to student subunits about award)- Janssen

Election- Janssen

New Business: Fred Janssen

Revise and update Strategic Plan

MicroFish for Windows, Jack Van Deventer

Open discussion and comments from the floor:

Adjourn:



The CUS Annual Business Meeting was held in September in Anchorage, Alaska.

**AFS COMPUTER USER SECTION
ANNUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 12, 2005
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

President Stu Shipman convened the meeting at 12:15 pm with introductions from the meeting participants (see attached list).

Shipman asked for a motion to approve the 2004 meeting minutes. Gary Ash motioned, seconded by Bill Fisher. No discussion and minutes were approved.

He followed with a newsletter report from newsletter editor Angie Benson. The newsletter will get back on schedule this fall, with a fall/winter and spring/summer edition. Benson will continue to be editor. She encourages everyone to contribute to the newsletter and wants to get the listserv a bit more active in contributing ideas for the newsletter.

Software Review Committee

Gary Ash provided a report of the software reviews conducted in the last year. Only two reviews were conducted: 1) FishWare Hatchery Management and 2) FishWare Age and Growth. Shipman added that the software developer was not completely satisfied with the outcome of the reviews and based on communication with the developer Shipman decided not to post the software to the CUS library.

Website

Fred Janssen indicated that the webmaster, Mark Rogers, wants to do more with the current CUS website. He reported that there are approximately 3,000 visitors to the site each month who download 50-60 Megs of files. "Palm" and "PDA" are search words most often used to bring people to the site.

Software Sales

Andrew Loftus reported that the FAST software continues to be the primary software of interest to CUS customers. In the first seven months of 2005, 24 copies were sold as compared to 12 in the same time period of 2004 and 25 in that period 2003. Total sales since inception of this program are:

1/1/05 – 7/31/05	24
1/1/04-12/31/04	32
1/1/03–12/31/03	33
1/1/02-12/31/02	60
1/1/01-12/31/01	45

Total Sold since December, 2000=194

In April 2003, CUS signed an agreement with Ball State University to distribute their FishBC software. CUS retains \$16 of each copy sold to offset shipping and handling costs. Sales of FishBC are:

1/1/05 – 7/31/05	9
1/1/04 – 12/31/04	16
10/1/03 – 12/31/03	6

Total since April 2003=31

In February, 2005, CUS entered into an agreement with Texas Parks and Wildlife to distribute their age and growth DVD set. The cost of the software is \$12 with funds being split evenly between CUS and TXPWD. Through 7/31/05 CUS has sold 10 copies of the software.

Sales of other software offerings are minimal.

Earlier this year, due to several cases of substantially delayed software shipments (and lost shipments in one case) to foreign countries (including Canada and Mexico) the Section officers agreed to a policy to ship software to foreign destinations only via U.S. Postal Service Express Mail. An additional surcharge of \$18.00 is assessed on these shipments to cover this cost. This is the lowest cost service that allows us to track the shipment. Domestic shipments (within the U.S.) continue to be shipped with USPS Delivery Confirmation or Certified Mail, with cost of those services being included in the software price. CUS will continue to explore lower cost alternatives to ship international orders.

Dana Schmidt suggested ftp downloads to solve the issue of having to ship the software. Doug Beard suggested that the AFS parent society could handle it.

ACTION ITEM: It was decided that Fred Janssen, Jeremy Corff, and Mark Rogers would explore ftp downloads for international orders, keeping in mind that such a practice would likely require the approval of the software developer where distribution agreements exist (FAST, FishBC, and Age & Growth DVD).

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report

Submitted by Andrew Loftus

Membership

As of December 31, 2004, AFS records indicated that CUS membership stands at 151 individuals. Below is a comparison of membership for the past four years:

	<u>March 2002</u>	<u>June 2003</u>	<u>May 2004</u>	<u>September 2005</u>
U.S. Members	246	251	219	229
Foreign Members	38	34	38	29
TOTAL	284	285	257	258

Other News

- ◆ The cooperative agreement with the USGS National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) program which the Section entered in May 2004 continues to proceed well. This agreement allows CUS to aid the NBII with administering three information-related projects. The agreement is actually in effect for 5 years, providing more opportunities to assist them in the future.
- ◆ CUS entered into an agreement with Texas Parks and Wildlife to distribute their fish age estimation instructional video and known-age otolith. Under the agreement, the software sells for \$12/copy, with proceeds split evenly with the two entities. This arrangement allows both parties to recoup some of the costs associated with production and distribution of the software.
- ◆ The section will reinstate the “Best Student Poster Award” at this annual meeting (2005) after a one year hiatus. This provides an award and \$100 prize for the best student poster demonstrating the use of computerized technology in fisheries management.
- ◆ CUS is sponsoring a symposium “Geographic Information System and Geospatial Analyses in Fisheries Research and Management” at this years’ Annual AFS meeting.

- ◆ Regular contact between the officers continues, but no gathering of the officers (outside of the CUS Annual meeting) has been held in the past year.

Finances

Attached is a statement summarizing the financial activities of the Computer User Section of the American Fisheries Society for the period January 1, 2004-December 31, 2004. Additionally, an updated cash flow statement covering the current year (1/1/05-7/31/05) is attached. This year-to-date statement also includes a summary of the portion of the Section's cash flow in each category that is attributable to the cooperative agreement, which the Section has with the USGS NBII program.

The financial position of the Section improved slightly in 2004, due primarily to a reduction in outflows (expenses). To date in 2005, the cash position of the Section has continued to increase slightly.

Governing Board Report

Shipman provided a synopsis of key items discussed by the AFS Governing Board. He reported that the Society is in good financial health. The reserve fund will be fully funded to cover annual operating costs as determined by 3-5 year average, currently \$2.1 million. This AFS meeting is the largest attendance in history. Student membership will drop to \$19 and will include access to InfoBase. Sections need to explore ways to increase or redefine membership. Other news includes:

- A new Chapter has been approved – Mexico Chapter.

There is a significant focus on income from publications. Dues have been stable for a long time and will remain unchanged.

- The Society is looking at adding a journal for the marine fisheries.

Shipman offered that the Governing Board briefing book was open to any CUS member who wanted to review it or obtain more information on any item discussed.

Old Business: Action activities for the last year

GIS Symposium

Shipman acknowledged the hard work of Mick Porter and Bill Fisher on assembling the GIS Symposium that CUS is sponsoring at this year's AFS meeting. Fisher reported that the symposium runs most of the day Thursday and that it has 19 speakers and 3 posters. Fisher, Shipman, Janssen, and Jeff Waldon all had a hand in putting it together.

USGS/CUS Cooperative Agreement

Shipman and Loftus reported on the cooperative agreement that CUS has entered into with the USGS National Biological Information Infrastructure. Through this agreement, CUS will assist the NBII program on various projects, including:

Fisheries and Aquatic resources Node-Implementation Committee – CUS organized and hosted a meeting of this committee in January 2005 to help guide this program.

Status of American Eel Information – this project has yet to be implemented, but is a small project designed to help NBII with a “needs assessment” to determine what they may be able to do under the auspices of their program to assist in information transfer about this species.

MidAtlantic Node – this effort is involved with assembling agencies/organizations in the MidAtlantic region in a cooperative effort to develop a shared freshwater fisheries information system. A scoping meeting was held by CUS in April 2005 on this.

MARIS – The Multistate Aquatic Resources Information System is designed to link various state agency fisheries system through a common interface to share fisheries data pertaining to status and trends of fish population. CUS will help to coordinate meetings and provide assistance to states to carry out this project.

Shipman noted that this cooperative arrangement has worked well so far and helps both CUS and NBII to carry out their respective missions. Under the arrangement, NBII covers most of the direct expenses of these projects and some administrative costs. CUS provides the linkages to state information managers/professionals and administrative capabilities to carry out the projects. He noted that Secretary/Treasurer Andrew Loftus donates all of his time required to administer these projects for CUS. However, for non-administrative duties associated with these projects (i.e., project execution), some compensation is paid to him from the funding provided by USGS.

GIS Continuing Education Courses

Mick Porter reported that two CUS-sponsored GIS courses (basic and advanced GIS) are again being offered at this year's AFS meeting after a one year lapse last year. He is being assisted by Brad Harris and Jodie Whittier. CUS pays for some of the upfront costs and travel but shares the profits from the course with AFS. Basically, it results in a "break-even" situation for CUS. The courses both had full attendance and he has received very positive feedback. Loftus added that he has heard very positive feedback from course participants in prior years.

Web Advisory Board

Shipman continued to serve on the parent society's Web Advisory Board that is chaired by Brad Eggold from Wisconsin. This guides the AFS web site development, but hasn't been too active in the past year. Fred Janssen will assume this role in the coming two years.

Multistate Conservation Grant Proposal

Shipman reported that for the second year, CUS has submitted an application to the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Multi-state Conservation Grant Program to host a "Database Summit II" to support the information needs of the National Fish Habitat Initiative. Database Summit II would help to facilitate sharing of information across states. The first Summit was held in 1998 and involved information managers from 47 states and many federal agencies, and was generally thought of as a huge success. Janssen noted that he got a lot out of the first Database Summit and would like to see this held again. George Spangler asked if Data Summit I included any reference to FishBase. Loftus explained the four key areas addressed (Metadata, Model Database Structure, Data Security, and Internet Applications) and mentioned that it didn't focus on any particular information system.

Student Poster Award

The CUS Executive Committee decided that the posters last year didn't hold up to standards and intent of the Student Poster Award and so did not issue an award. Janssen, Nancy Nate, and Fisher will evaluate posters again this year and indicated that if anyone wanted to help them they were welcome.

Elections

Shipman reported that the elections were held and that Bill Fisher had been elected as "president-elect" for the next two years. Loftus retains the Secretary/Treasurer position.

New Business

The office of president was turned over to Fred Janssen who assumed chair of the meeting. His first order of business was to thank Stu Shipman for two years of work on behalf of CUS and presented him with an award of recognition for his service.

Janssen indicated that he will begin working on development of 2005-2007 plan of work to coincide with AFS strategic plan. CUS needs to continue providing services to the society such as software development information sharing, etc.

MicroFish Update

Jack Van Deventer provided an update on the modification of MicroFish. Loftus noted that MicroFish is still popular with users but that it is still DOS-based. Van Deventer noted that he originally wrote it in 1983-84 to analyze electrofishing data. He received a request from the National Park Service to update MicroFish for a Windows based environment. It will be available to the public in a few weeks. He has had an advisory committee working with him – fisheries biologists as well as technical professionals from Microsoft, Sun, etc. He ran through a demonstration of the new system. Shipman has asked the current reviewers of the software To do a CUS review so that it can be made available on the CUS website.



CUS President Fred Janssen presenting an award of appreciation to outgoing president Stu Shipman.

Student Memberships

Janssen noted that the AFS Governing Board has requested that sections investigate how to better serve and integrate students in the subunits. AFS president Chris Kohler wants more outreach to students. He asked for discussion on whether CUS should offer free student memberships. Gary Ash motioned that CUS provide students with free membership to CUS.

Second: Porter.

Discussion: Porter emphasized that we need to find ways to get students more involved other than just being a member. Maybe we should offer a forum at the next meeting to get students together to discuss technical computer-related issues. Fisher observed that students “live for data analysis” and that technical issues should be attractive to them.

The general consensus was that we should provide free memberships to any student that signs up for CUS for the next year. The motion was approved unanimously. Loftus will work with AFS to offer this in 2006.

New Members

Porter Motioned that CUS provide people who were enrolled in this year’s GIS Continuing Education Course a 1 year membership in CUS free. Shipman: Seconded and the motion was approved. Loftus will work on this with Porter.

Other Business

George Spangler asked what more CUS could do to promote software development. Do we have an idea who is doing programming for statistical fisheries development? Is there a way to coordinate this through CUS to produce modules that would be useful in fisheries research?

Discussion – most development is being done in a proprietary system. It would be good to have an inventory of who is doing what across the country; survey of systems and development.

Gary Ash asked if people would be willing to register their systems in some type of information system. Mike Costello noted that he is seeing state DNR’s restricted in their ability to develop software due to IT functions being assumed by statewide agencies that set the standards.

Perhaps this is an idea that can be explored further if funding is provided for Database Summit II.

Hearing no further discussion, President Janssen asked for a motion to adjourn. Moved and seconded, approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

**Computer User Section of the American Fisheries Society
ANNUAL MEETING ATTENDANCE
September 12, 2005
Anchorage, Alaska**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Gary Ash	Software Review Coordinator; Golder Associates	gash@golder.com
Doug Beard	AFS/CUS immediate Past President; USGS National Biological Information Infrastructure	dbeard@usgs.gov
Jeremy Corff	American Fisheries Society	jcorff@fisheries.org
Mike Costello	SAS Institute	Mike.costello@sas.com
Bill Fisher	Oklahoma State University/OK Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit	wfisher@okstate.edu
Michael Hansen	University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point	mhansen@uwsp.edu
Steve Hurst	New York DEC, Bureau of Fisheries	sshurst@gw.dec.state.ny.us
Fred Janssen	Texas Parks and Wildlife	fred.janssen@tpwd.state.tx.us
Andrew Loftus	AFS/CUS Secretary-Treasurer; Loftus Consulting	Aloftus501@aol.com
Mark Maunder	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission	mmaunder@iattc.org
Dirk Miller	Wyoming Game and Fish	dirk.miller@wgf.state.wy.us
Nancy Nate	Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources	nancy.nate@dnr.state.wi.us
Bill Perry	National Park Service, Florida	William_b_perry@nps.gov
Michael Porter	AFSCUS past president; U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	mporter@uc.usbr.gov
Dana Schmidt	Golder Associates	dschmidt@golder.com
Stuart Shipman	AFS/CUS President; Indiana Department of Natural Resources	sshipman@dnr.in.gov
George Spangler	University of Minnesota	spangool@umn.edu
Jeff Stein	University of Illinois	jastein@uiuc.edu
Jack Van Deventer	MicroFish	jsv@microfish.org

AFS CUS Ledger Comparison
1/1/03 Through 12/31/04

Category Description	1/1/03- 12/31/2003	1/1/04- 12/31/2004	Amount Difference
<u>INFLOWS</u>¹			
Continuing Education	2,325.00	0	-2,325.00
Contract & Grant Income	0	5,193.98 ²	5,193.98
Dues Payment	1,588.00	1,506.00	-82.00
Interest Income	23.87	12.01	-11.86
Software Sales ³	2,793.49	2,118.68	-674.81
TOTAL INFLOWS	6,730.36	8,830.67	2,100.31
<u>OUTFLOWS</u>			
Award	125.00	0	125.00
Continuing Education	627.33	0	627.33
Donation	500.00	0	500.00
Meeting Expense	0	882.07 ⁴	-882.07
Office	61.46	11.66	49.80
Office supplies	41.60	0	41.60
Postage	220.56	102.46	118.10
Software Comm-Auburn	2,600.00	2,145.00	455.00
Software Commission	144.00	384.00	-240.00
Software purchase	181.89	0	181.89
storage space-web hosting	240.00	200.00	40.00
Travel	3,790.32	3,173.75 ⁵	616.57
per diem	350.00	807.00 ⁶	-457.00
TOTAL Travel	4,140.32	3,980.75	159.57
Bank Charge	-9.13 ⁷	0	-9.13
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	8,873.03	7,705.94	1,167.09
OVERALL TOTAL	-2,142.67	1,124.73	3,267.40

¹ Dues payment and Continuing Education revenue figures from 2003 were revised from that reported in the 2003 report due to an error in categorization.

² USGS cooperative agreement funds.

³ An additional \$173 and \$1,158.01 (approximate) in receivables is outstanding at year end for 2003 and 2004 respectively..

⁴ All meeting expenses were covered by USGS funds

⁵ Only \$14.24 of travel was attributable to CUS, the remainder being reimbursed with USGS funding.

⁶ Only \$128 of per diem was attributable to CUS; the remainder being reimbursed by USGS funding.

⁷ Positive bank charge (i.e., negative expenditure) in 2003 results from reimbursement of bank charges incurred in 2002 by Bank of America.

M&T Bank Account Summary 12/31/04

Business Checking: \$ 3,442.19
Business Savings: \$ 4,422.23

AFS COMPUTER USER SECTION
Cash Flow 1/01/05 through 7/31/05

<u>INFLOWS</u>	1/1/04- 7/31/2004	1/1/05- 7/31/2005	Difference 2004-2005	2005 Amount Attributable to USGS Contract
Contract & Grant Income	0.00	7,573.32	7,573.32	7,573.32
Dues Payment	923.00	477.00	-446.00	
Interest Income	8.11	6.40	-1.71	
Software Sales	1,434.58	3,221.79	1,787.21	
TOTAL INFLOWS	2,365.69	11,278.51	8,912.82	7,573.32
<u>OUTFLOWS</u>				
Bank Chrg	0.00	10.00	-10.00	
Contract & Grant Expense	0.00	5,595.00	-5,595.00	5,595.00
Meeting Expense	882.07	115.88	766.19	115.88
Office	11.66	7.19	4.47	
Postage	46.56	117.19	-70.63	
Software Comm-Auburn	715.00	1,430.00	-715.00	
Software Commission	240.00	234.00	6.00	
Supplies	0.00	69.53	-69.53	
Travel	2,679.05	1,465.77	1,213.28	915.49
per diem	615.00	386.00	229.00	258.50
TOTAL Travel	3,294.05	1,851.77	1,442.28	1,173.99
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	5,189.34	9,430.56	-4,241.22	6,884.87
OVERALL TOTAL	-\$2,823.65	\$1,847.95	\$4,671.60	\$688.45

CLOSING BALANCE 7/31/05: \$9,712.37

Account Balances

M&T Checking \$ 5,283.74

M&T Savings \$ 4,428.63