

Proposed Revisions to the Society for Freshwater Science By-Laws

Prepared April 11, 2025 by Caleb J Robbins (SFS Constitutional Revision Committee Chair).

Incorporating suggestions from Past-President Sherri Johnson, Past-VP Erin Hotchkiss, President David Arscott, VP Wil Wollheim, and CRC members Jeffrey Muehlbauer and Sarah Whorley.

Summary of Proposed Revisions:

Former presidents can be re-elected after completing Past-President role

Former presidents will be “eligible to run for reelection once their Past-President service commitments are completed.” Former society presidents are presently *ineligible* to be reelected. The justification for the proposed change is that it is very challenging to find candidates for President, but we have Past-Presidents who might be interested in being candidates. Multiple other scientific societies have Presidents who serve two-year terms. See specific changes to 3§3.

Clarification on PubComm roles and budget process

Descriptions for the Publications Committee (PubComm) are heavily revised and clarified. The new Journal Editor-in-Chief (EIC) and PubComm Chair agreed that there were confusing and out-of-date descriptions of their roles and responsibilities. The PubComm Chair also noted some of the duties of the Chair could be streamlined and clarified, especially around the budget process and web page. New clarification of budget discussions and budget being submitted by Pub Comm and EIC to Finance Committee (FinComm) also resulted in the removal of the PubComm Chair from their obligations to serving as a non-voting member of FinComm. The Website subcommittee is now in the Communications Committee. See specific changes to 5§9.

Clarification of Communications Committee roles

Clarifying roles for web support and content in light of re-starting the Communication Committee and having a Communications Specialist working with SFS. These responsibilities were previously under Pub Comm and PIPC. Website subcommittee is now in the Communications Committee and its composition is revised. See specific changes to 5§10.

Specific Changes:

3§3: Changed re-election eligibility for the office of President, who were previously ineligible for re-election: “Former Presidents are eligible to run for reelection once their Past-President service commitments are completed.”

5§2: PubComm Chair is removed from membership of FinComm. Previously member with non-voting status.

5§9, throughout: “Editor” is clarified as the Editor-in-Chief (EIC)

5§9, Paragraph 1: Add “annual” planning and oversight of publications to existing language of long-range planning and oversight of all Society publications.

5§9, Paragraph 1: Now specifies the Society’s publications as including “the Society’s Journal *Freshwater Science*, web pages for the Journal and for the society, newsletters, social media, podcasts, and other media”

5§9, Paragraph 2: Co-Chairs now allowed on PubComm.

5§9, Paragraph 2: Language added to clarify PubComms membership contains three members “at large.”

5§9, Paragraph 2: Language added to specify “No more than one member of PubComm will also be an active Associate Editor for the Society’s Journal.”

5§9, Paragraph 2: Language added to further clarify membership in PubComm and remove PubComm Chair’s obligation to serving as non-voting member of the Finance Committee: “Additional Committee members can be added upon agreement of the PubComm Chair and SFS President. The terms of service for these additional members will be identified at the time of appointment, but will not extend beyond 3 years. The PubComm Chair shall serve on the Board.”

5§9, Paragraph 3: Vague language removed to better clarify the SFS Board appoints the Journal’s EIC (and not “other publication editors”)

5§9, Paragraph 3: Clarifies PubComm reviews and provides recommendations “to the SFS Executive Committee” on all publication-related contracts, which was previously ambiguous.

5§9, Paragraph 3: Significant language added to clarify budget process for PubComm: “Annual budget requests for any and all PubComm expenses (including SFS subsidies for *Freshwater Science*, planned honoraria for EIC and Associate Editors, and estimates of contracted expenses for technical and copy editing) will be compiled and discussed by PubComm before budgets for the next fiscal year are submitted to FinComm in September. Budgets will be reviewed and aggregated by FinComm, who then provides recommendations for the Society’s annual budget.” Note that this new process justifies the change in the previous paragraph now removing the PubComm Chair from obligations to attend FinComm meetings.

5§9, *Editorial Subcommittee section*: Clarifies the EIC’s “guidelines” for managing and editing the Journal should be “developed in discussion [between the EIC and PubComm],” rather than dictated by the Board.

5§9, *Editorial Subcommittee section*: New language clarifies that this subcommittee differs from that of PubComm and comprises the Journal’s EIC and a subset of its Associate Editors appointed by the EIC, further specifying the subcommittee’s roles can include “modification” and new sections” in addition to existing role of long-range planning for the journal.

5§9, *Editorial Subcommittee section*: Language simplified that the EIC “coordinates submission” of an annual report of the activities and budget of the Journal to PubComm and the Board, with the timing as “prior to the annual meeting of SFS.”

5§9b: Website Subcommittee removed from PubComm (now subcommittee of Communications Committee, see next changes to 5§10)

5§10: Communications Committee may now have Co-Chairs.

5§10: Communications Committee responsibility for implementing electronic communications/the website is now independent of PubComm. Electronic communications now specifically includes “social media outlets.”

5§10: Society for Freshwater Science Website Subcommittee added as a subcommittee of the Communications Committee. The composition of this subcommittee is changed to remove prescription of Chair of the Communications Committee as subcommittee member, specifying the Communications Specialist as Subcommittee Chair, and including “the SFS Executive director, representatives from the Communications Committee, PubComm, and other members as needed.”