

Summary of Proposed SFS Constitution and By-laws Changes and Updates

Prepared 2018-02-16 by Jeffrey D. Muehlbauer (SFS CRC Chair)

Incorporating suggestions from Past-President and VP Emily Bernhardt and Steve Thomas, current President and VP Colden Baxter and Amy Marcarelli, Executive Director Andy Leidolf, plus BoD members Dave Strayer, Todd Royer, Nick Aumen, CRC member Sarah Roley, and standing committee chairs.

Constitution

1. Articles 5 and 6: Phrases “with particular interest in the benthic biological community” and “regardless of residence” deleted. These were necessary when the society’s name was the North American Benthological Society, and are no longer particularly pertinent.
2. Article 7: Added “Board of Directors” to distinguish “the Board” mentioned here from the Board of Trustees.
3. Article 9: Stated that Vice Presidents are officers of the Society.
4. Articles 9 and 10: Removed statements about term lengths, Student Delegate to the Board of Directors being appointed by the SRC, and when officers take office, as this information was redundant with Article 2, Section 10 and Article 3, Section 3 of the By-laws, and was more fitting to remain in the By-laws than the Constitution.
5. Article 12: Added a sentence about ad-hoc publications, which was formerly present in Article 7 of the By-laws. Removed By-laws Article 7 entirely due to its otherwise verbatim redundancy with Constitution Article 12. Removed reference to “Current and Selected Biographies on Benthic Biology,” which is no longer an SFS publication.
6. Article 14: Added text about presenting Constitution and By-laws changes to the Board at least 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Removed By-laws Article 14, which was entirely redundant, verbatim, with text here and in By-laws Article 1 Sections 4 and 5.

By-laws

7. Article 1, Section 1: Clarified and updated “Early career” status as 10 years post-graduation, rather than 3 years.
8. Article 1, Section 3: Removed mention of membership-based dues, allowing for implementation of income-based dues for regular members while maintaining flat dues for students and other special membership classes.
9. Article 1, Sections 4 and 5: Clarified “email voting” to more accurate electronic voting”. Also added “discussion and debate” to the voting process to be in line with correct parliamentary procedure.

10. Article 2: Clarified role of Vice President (see new Sections 3, 5, 7). In brief, the VP-Elect is a non-voting member of the ExComm, the VP is a non-voting member of the ExComm, co-chairs standing committees and leads Board and ExComm meetings, the Past-VP is not on the ExComm, and all three VPs are voting members of the Board. Resulted in similar changes to Article 4, Section 2.
11. Article 2, Section 2: Reorganized and clarified role of President, particularly with respect to appointments.
12. Article 2, Sections 8 and 9: Simplified list of responsibilities for Secretary and Treasurer and referenced Operations Manual to allow greater position flexibility as the needs of these offices change.
13. Article 2, Section 9: Removed outdated text about Treasurer obtaining Surety bond. SFS overall liability policy includes Dishonesty Coverage, making the bond unnecessary. Similar text removed from Article 5, Section 7 (now 9) for Annual Meeting Committee Treasurer.
14. Article 3, Section 3: Consistent with changes to Constitution Article 9, clarified that Vice Presidents have terms of 3 years (VP-Elect, VP, Past-VP), concurrent with the Presidents who appoint them.
15. Article 4: Moved responsibilities of the Executive Committee from Section 3 (Meetings) to Section 1 (Duties) where the text was a better fit. Simplified text in this section to remove redundancy and also leave much specificity for the Operations Manual.
16. Article 5: Revised most sections in this Article by broadly defining all standing committee memberships to have members with 3 years terms and chairs appointed for 1 year terms (both with renewal possible), “unless expressly stated otherwise” for certain committees where this does not make sense. Also made most committee size requirements less rigid in many cases, allowing size to vary according to need at the discretion of the Chair. In consultation with chairs, removed inaccurate our outdated text that no longer represented activities of committees, Also directed many subcommittee operations formerly stated in the By-laws to the Operations Manual, which is more fluid and easier to change as need arises. Renumbered sections to accommodate changes where committees were grouped more topically.
17. Article 5, Section 1: Revised and clarified duty of Vice President to break tie votes within standing committees, and added general statement making committee membership for 3 years and Chair appointments for 1 year (“unless expressly stated otherwise”, with renewal possible in both cases). Additional changes throughout Article 5 to be consistent with these points.
18. Article 5, Section 3: Made Chair of the Board of Trustees the member in the 4th year of appointment, consistent with committee’s actual practice.

19. Article 5, Section 8 (now 10): Deleted defunct Literature Review subcommittee.
20. Article 5, Section 9 (Now 11): Revised Public Information and Publicity Subcommittee text on electronic communication to better incorporate current social media and similar practices.
21. Article 5, Section 11 (now 13): Heavily reduced and standardized SRC text, which was formerly very distinctive relative to other subcommittees. Removed statement about SRC member serving on PIPC and LAC to allow fluidity (text should appear in Operations Manual). Updated text regarding SRC Delegate to the Board in Article 3, Sections 3 and 4 accordingly.
22. New Article 5, Section 14: Added text for the New Early Career Committee as a new section. Updated text regarding SRC Delegate to the Board in Article 3, Sections 3 and 4 accordingly.
23. Article 6: Deleted vague language about “study committees,” which would be included implicitly as special committees anyway and therefore covered by the broad language of this Article.
24. Article 8 (now 7): Broke text up into two sections to make clearer that there are Society Endowment and Journal Endowment funds, which are managed separately.
25. Article 13 (now 12): Removed typo redundant text where “files of the Board” was written twice.
26. New Article 17: Moved Fellows of the Society of Freshwater Science text out of standing committees (Article 5), where it did not fit, to its own, new Article (Article 17). Also made fellows election less rigid by removing the cap of new 4 members per year.

Throughout document

27. Updated “Graduate Resources Committee” to “Student Resources Committee” to reflect actual committee name.
28. Updated “Bulletin of the Society for Freshwater Science” to “Newsletter” to reflect actual publication title.
29. Incorporated revisions voted on at previous meetings (going back generally to 2014, but in some cases as far as 2008) that were voted on and approved, but never added to the document.
30. Clarified usage of “ex officio” and “non-voting” member status on committees to eliminate confusion and conflation of these terms.