



American Fisheries Society

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SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER TO SUPPORT INSTREAM FLOW AND WATER LEVEL CONSERVATION

WHEREAS, since 1998 the Instream Flow Council (“Council”) has pursued the conservation of aquatic ecosystems by enhancing state, provincial, and territorial fish and wildlife agency programs and support to other water stakeholders to preserve ecological processes and functions supported by conserving adequate amounts of instream flow and water levels to fish and wildlife productivity and other ecological functions in freshwater and estuarine habitats; and

WHEREAS, such processes and functions include, but are not limited to connectivity, flood mitigation, groundwater recharge, navigation, biological productivity, nutrient transport and recycling, pollution attenuation, energy generation, water supply, and recreational, commercial, and subsistence opportunities such as fishing, hunting, boating, and wildlife-viewing; and

WHEREAS, the Council is governed by, and directly serves, professionals employed by fish and wildlife agencies in fulfillment of public trust responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, between 1974 until 2000 the U.S. Department of Interior’s Cooperative Instream Flow Service Group served as a clearinghouse and provided leadership, training, scientific and technical support to agency professionals and a variety of other interested water use stakeholders involved in instream flow and water level conservation and water management. These training and support services ended in 2000; and

WHEREAS there has been no replacement established to replace these critical support services to train existing and future generations of fish and wildlife agency and other water management and use stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 the Council, in cooperation with the American Fisheries Society (“AFS”) established a Steering Committee (“SC”) of experts who completed a [feasibility assessment](#) that established the need and pathway to provide a new training, research, and development center (“Center”) to provide these critical instream flow and water level conservation state-of-the-art services based on integration of eight interdisciplinary elements and recommended several options to achieve this goal (“Feasibility Assessment”); and

WHEREAS, the Feasibility Assessment outlined a range of concepts and recommendations for organizing managing and establishing such a Center including guidance to the Council’s and AFS’s leadership and water stakeholder community in determining a path forward; and

WHEREAS, the SC determined that a centralized, distributed network with a core staff housed at a central location, and perhaps several trainers operating on a regional basis, would best serve the various needs of fish and wildlife agencies and other water use stakeholder interests to ensure conservation of adequate amounts of instream flows and water levels would be integrated into all water management practices.

WHEREAS: The Council and AFS are presently taking steps to establish a center in this format;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Fisheries Society supports the Council's efforts to establish a center and shall offer subject-matter expertise and technical assistance via its staff and its committees as appropriate and practicable.

Resolution submitted and approved by the AFS Management Committee on August 24, 2024.