



North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society nasps-sturgeon.org

Annual Business Meeting
Prestige Lakeside Resort, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada
September 23, 2025 2:10pm

GB Attendees: Schooley, Webb, Crossman, Schreier, Moser, Andres, Higgs, & Kamara
GB Not present: Haxton, Kahn, Scribner, & Fox
Members present: *Roll call was not taken. No voting items were on the agenda, therefore a quorum was not needed. Nearly all 69 meeting attendees were present for the business meeting.*

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

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| 1 | <p>Welcomed attendees to the annual meeting and thanked local organizing committee (primarily James Crossman and Molly Webb).
Introduced current NASPS governing board and acknowledged those not in attendance.</p> <p>Encouraged members to consider running for board seats in the next elections October 2026.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Described the purpose of this business meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What has NASPS been up to in 2025? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High level of federal uncertainty in 2025: funding, staffing, etc. ○ Held workshop on mass mortality events for sturgeon and paddlefish ○ Sturgeon taxonomy revision ● What does NASPS hope to accomplish in 2026? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [This list was generated based on what we discussed at the meeting, not prescribed] ○ The board would like to focus less on meeting planning and more on our mission. ○ Improve monthly communication. ○ Grow the society... a little bit. ○ Make sure we stay engaged on sturgeon and paddlefish issues, support students |
| 3 | <p>Reviewed the NASPS “mission” as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To foster the conservation of sturgeon species and restoration of |

sturgeon stocks in North America in collaboration with indigenous, government, and industry partners

- To support the information exchange among all persons interested in sturgeons
- To foster and support interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research on all aspects of sturgeons (e.g., biology, management and utilization of sturgeons)
- To collaborate closely with the WSCS to help meet their goals and objectives, including organization and participation in international symposia

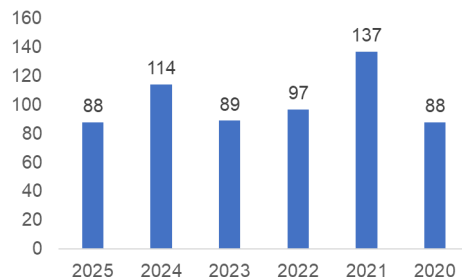
Note- This is not the official mission statement from our website, but a consolidation of our objectives.

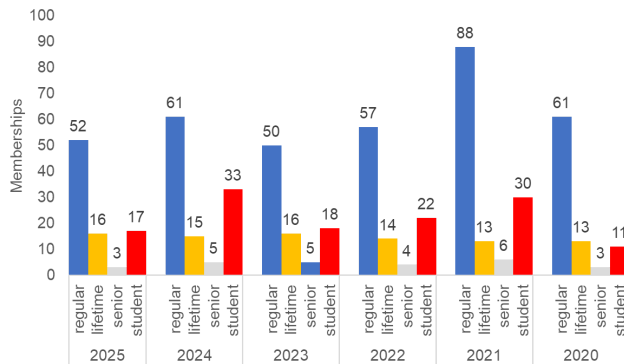
Discussion: Concern over why our mission doesn't include paddlefish. Our actual Constitution and Bylaws (2015) include sturgeons and paddlefish throughout. We also described to the membership that we have been in a state of revision on the constitution and bylaws for several years and this project is unfinished, but we would ensure that paddlefish are adequately represented throughout. Discussed that we should prioritize finishing this revision in 2026.

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Membership update

- 2025 membership to date- 16 lifetime members, 17 student members, 3 senior members, and 52 regular members = 88 total.
- 2014-2024 membership ranged 70-135
- Discussion on a general desire to maintain ourselves as a manageable size (perhaps ~100 or less), but could stand to grow a little bit. Annual meeting format and location play a large role in fluctuating membership and participation.





Reviewed membership benefits

- Supporting students
- Reduced meeting registration
- Reduced WSCS membership fee
- Access to WSCS Gen Assembly

Memberships on calendar year

- Please considering renewal starting Jan 1

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Student Awards

Travel Grants (\$500) awarded to:

- Collin Atwood (MSc Trent University)
- Samantha Embersits (MSc University of Wisconsin Stevens Point COOP)
- Shasta Kamara (PhD University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)
- Dan Millea (PhD University of Delaware)
- Jenna Scott (MSc Trent University)
- Levi Umland (PhD University of Missouri)

Best student presentation awards (announced later at banquet)

- Samantha Embersits (MSc, oral presentation)
- Avery Dextrase (PhD, oral presentation)
- Shasta Kamara (PhD, poster presentation)

Research Awards (\$2,500)

- Student-Mentor Collaboration Award: not awarded for 2025. *Pending discussion on revision.*
- In Memoriam Research Award 2024: Wyatt Wolfenkoehler, MS student at Oklahoma State University validating techniques for abundance estimation of Paddlefish (submitted video presentation for NASPS 2025 program)

Order of Acipenser

	● Acknowledged previous recipients, including Mike Parsley, who was present. ● Multiple nominations received for 2025 ● OoA awards were presented at the banquet Wednesday September 24, 2025. ○ 2024 recipient Gary Anderson ○ 2025 recipient Larry Hildebrand ○ 2025 recipient Pat Braaten
6	Annual meetings- where we have been and where we are headed ● Presented history of NASPS meetings and locations ● Briefly discussed society's general commitment to have a combination of standalone and virtual meetings mixed with symposia (e.g., at American Fisheries Society meetings) while also considering spatial representation across the USA and Canada. ● NASPS has an opportunity to hold a joint meeting with WSCS in 2027. This may likely be held in Eastern Canada (perhaps Ottawa). ● No proposals for the 2026 meeting have been received, but this was encouraged of membership. ● Meeting via a NASPS symposium at the 2026 AFS meeting in Columbus, OH, is an option.
7	World Sturgeon Conservation Society updates ● James Crossman, Molly Webb, and Thomas Friedrich provided a summary as follows: ● Guidelines for Ex Situ Conservation Hatcheries; Population Monitoring and Habitat Monitoring; links to be sent out in the newsletter ● ISS10 will be held at Three Gorges University, Yichang, China in October 20-25, 2025 https://iss10.whu.edu.cn ● First student exchange grant was in spring 2025; opportunity for 2026 will be announced in the near future ● Student exchange in 2025 on population assessment and monitoring of spawning activity: Austria <-> Canada ● WSCS Affiliates: NASPS, GRE (Germany), and SSCS (Sweden)
8	Treasurer's Report / Taxes ● Molly Webb provided summaries as follows (noting that after the dust from the annual meeting fully settles, we will have a more accurate picture):

Treasurer's Report
1 January-August 2025



Income	
Memberships	\$2,947.00
Donations	\$14,140.76
Meeting Registration	\$18,125.00
Total	\$35,212.76

Expenses	
WSCS Membership Dues	\$808.07
Website Hosting Fee	\$270.23
Zoom/Dropbox/eMailDodo	\$394.15
Student Awards	\$3,000.00
Shipping	\$41.10
PayPal Fees	\$529.84
Tax Prep Fee	\$250.00
2025 Meeting Costs	\$18,547.74
Total	\$23,841.13
Income-Expenses	\$11,371.63

NASPS Balance = \$53,871.81

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Student / Young Professional Subunit updates

- Officially re-org'd as "Student and Early Professional Subunit"
- Successfully operating an Instagram account for sturgeon science communication with the public @nasps2012
- Created fundraising materials like the conservation calendar to help fund student research and travel awards
- Solicit donations for the raffle and silent auction also to fund/support students!
- Quarterly newsletters to highlight student work and the latest sturgeon/paddlefish news
- Student elections are coming up soon! If you are interested in joining, please contact: naspsstudents@gmail.com

JOIN US!

NASPS STUDENT AND EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONAL SUBUNIT

Who are we?

We are a group of students and early career professionals that:

- Promote sturgeon and paddlefish education, collaboration, and communication
- Facilitate activities that allow students to hone professional skills and network
- Support the NASPS parent society through contributions to the website, newsletter and annual meeting

SciComm and Fundraising Opportunities

To support sturgeon outreach, education and communication we:

- Contribute to newsletters
- Maintain an Instagram @nasps2012 through:
 - Publication highlights
 - Species information

We have also supported student research through our 2026 conservation calendar!



Benefits to Joining!

We want to hear from you!



- Opportunities to develop your CV
- Professional forum to present and view research
- Option to participate in student & early career professional-mentor social event
- Unparalleled networking opportunities
- Eligibility for NASPS In-Memoriam Student Research Award and NASPS Student-Mentor Collaboration Award
- Reduced membership fee for NASPS

Student Spotlights!

Join the subunit and get highlighted in our newsletters and on our Instagram!



MCKENSIE VASKE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

Mckensie is a 4th year student at North Carolina State University. She is currently working on her Master's thesis on the effects of climate change on the life history of sturgeon. She is also a member of the NASPS Student and Early Career Professional Subunit.



Be featured on our student of the month spotlight on the NASPS informational email and on our Instagram page!

Follow Us on Instagram!

The subunit maintains an active instagram presence! If you have a paper, project, person or sturgeon to highlight please let us know so that we can highlight your project!



@nasps2012

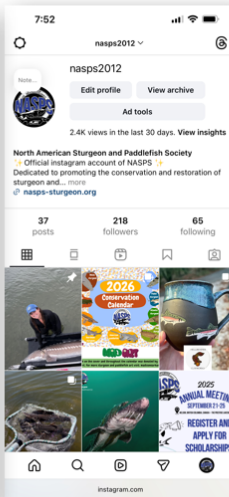
NASPS Student Spotlight

OLIVIA ST. GERMAIN
NASPS STUDENT AND EARLY CAREER SUBUNIT MEMBER



I am an undergraduate student at the University of Southern Mississippi. My research focuses on the spawning and post-spawning movements of Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) in the Bouie River. Specifically, I focus on the environmental influences of large anthropogenic mining formations in the spawning reaches on sturgeon departure from the river. I also aim to characterize the extent of stratification the river undergoes during sturgeon occupancy.

To address these questions, I combine passive acoustic telemetry data with temperature, precipitation, and water discharge monitoring to determine influences of departure and residency in the Bouie River during summer. Results from this research will help determine the need for restoration of the lower Bouie River. By monitoring sturgeon response to habitat modification in this spawning ground, we can augment conservation efforts for this vulnerable population of sturgeon.



Volunteer and make connections!



Networking Opportunities



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Other new or unfinished business?

- Listserv communication
 - Noted the challenges or frustrations with monthly listserve messages (lots of text, inconsistent formatting, less than ideal effectiveness).
 - Pledged that the Governing Board is examining improvements in monthly communication.
 - Encouraged that anyone not on the listserve reach out to get placed on it. Listserve is not just for members, but to serve the larger sturgeon/paddlefish conservation community of professionals and students and to serve as a society recruiting tool.
- Sturgeon taxonomy
 - Multiple members of NASPS and WSCS are preparing a “rebuttal” paper to Brownstein and Near (2025).
 - Comments on Recently Proposed Taxonomic Changes of Sturgeons (Actinopterygii: Acipenseriformes: Acipenseridae), with Recommendations for their Classification in Support of Conservation

April 2025

Toward a Phylogenetic Taxonomy of Sturgeons
(Acipenseriformes: Acipenseridae)
 Chase D. Brownstein^{1,2} and Thomas J. Near^{1,3}

- To be submitted to Oryx-The International Journal of Conservation
- Open discussion on how NASPS can better provide research awards for students. Noted that supporting students is a core focus of the society.
 - Student-Mentor Collaboration award, timeline relative to annual meeting, requirements

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Solicited ideas from the membership about how to better facilitate this award. Discussed how the timing may not be adequate for students that could use the help (esp. MSc students, due to the short timeframe to graduation). Perhaps the application period follows the annual meeting, to utilize potential student/mentor connections made at the meeting. Other ideas discussed. Possible larger role for governing board (or individual facilitator) to help connect students and mentors.○ Governing Board committed to reconsidering/revising the award timing, qualifications, and criteria to better serve its purpose.● Reminder- National Sturgeon Day October 27● Open discussion / feedback |
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