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American Fisheries Society to Hold 138th Annual Meeting in Ottawa

More than 1,600 fisheries scientists from around the world are expected at the American Fisheries Society 138th Annual Meeting at the Ottawa Congress Centre and Westin Hotel, August 17-21, 2008. The meeting is the first time AFS has met in Ottawa since 1920, and it will include 36 organized symposia, more than 1,100 oral presentations, and over 220 poster presentations. This year's meeting theme is "Fisheries in Flux: How Do We Ensure Our Sustainable Future?"

"Our return to the Canadian capital is long overdue," said AFS President Mary Fabrizio. "Although AFS has always had a strong presence in Canada, today we are a truly global organization. Each year our Annual Meeting serves as a platform for international exchange on the latest advances in fisheries science and management for experts from over 70 countries."

Some of the highly visible topics that will be addressed include:

Canadian Fisheries Issues. Symposia of particular interest include sessions on Atlantic salmon, Canadian hydropower development, the role of aboriginal communities in fisheries management, urban fishing in Toronto, and the changing composition of freshwater fish species in Canada.

Great Lakes Fisheries. Several of the symposia address issues affecting the Great Lakes, perhaps the most important shared resource between the United States and Canada. Topics include viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) disease in the Great Lakes, lake trout, invasive species, and Great Lakes native species restoration efforts.

New Technologies. An impressive array of new technologies being used in fisheries science will be presented, such as innovations in fish tagging, computer modeling, advances in fisheries genetics, new fishing gear designs to reduce bycatch, and new sampling techniques.

Climate Change. Two sessions will directly address climate change and fisheries: "Sensitivity of Fish and Fisheries to Climate Change—Response and Adaptation," and "Effects of Climate-related Drying and Surface Water Loss on Aquatic Ecosystems in

Extreme Environments.” In addition, several other sessions on fish habitat will discuss climate change issues.

The AFS Annual Meeting also will include several contributed paper and poster sessions, formal and informal educational workshops, socials, and a plenary session. This year’s plenary speakers are William Gilly of Stanford University, discussing his recent retracing of the Steinbeck-Ricketts Sea of Cortez expedition of 1940; Jake Rice of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, talking about the potential of economic incentives to make fisheries policies more scientifically sound, and Sally Guynn of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, speaking about opportunities for fisheries professionals to serve as leaders of change.

More information about the AFS 138th Annual Meeting is available at www.fisheries.org/afs08/, including a full list of symposia and a schedule-at-a-glance. The American Fisheries Society is the world’s oldest and largest fisheries science society, with more than 9,000 members worldwide. Its mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.

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Editor’s Note: Free media registration for the AFS Annual Meeting is available by contacting Beth Beard, AFS headquarters, at bbeard@fisheries.org or 301/879-8616 x220, or by contacting John Cooper, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, at 519/873-4613 or John.N.Cooper@ontario.ca. Searchable CDs including all of the meeting abstracts also will be available to the media after the meeting.