

Montana Chapter 58th Annual Meeting 2026  
**American Fisheries Society**

February 10 to 13, Fairmont Hot Springs

Through the Looking Glass



## February 10: Continuing Education

Time	Presenters	Moderator
<b>De-escalation Training: Meadowlark/Cutthroat/Grizzly Rooms</b>		
09:00 – 11:30	Cory Clarke; Police and Resource Officer, Kalispell Police Department and Flathead Valley Community College.	Kenny Breidenger
	Mandee Johnson; Psychiatry Professor, Flathead Valley Community College.	
12:00	Lunch: Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms	
<b>MEPA/NEPA: Meadowlark/Cutthroat/Grizzly Rooms</b>		
13:00 – 17:00	Demi Blythe; Fisheries Biologist, Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Kenny Breidenger
	Leanne Roulson; Environmental Policy Specialist and Past AFS President	
08:00 – 19:00	Registration: Foyer	
08:00 – 19:00	Setup: Posters, Sponsors, Art Show in Foyer (contact: Michelle McGree)	
<b>17:30 – 18:30</b>	<b>Welcome Social: Foyer and Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms    BUY RAFFLE TICKETS</b>	
<b>18:30</b>	<b>Dinner: Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms</b>	

## February 11: Welcome, Plenary Session and Contributed Papers

Time	Presenter Name	Talk Title	Moderator
07:30	Breakfast: Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms		
08:30	Ryce/McGree	Welcome and Introduction	
	Plenary Session: Through the Looking Glass		Ryce
09:00	Gary Whelan, AFS President	Keynote Address Fisheries lessons learned the hard way, history lost, and the occasional lost trail: Deep thoughts, observations, and musings from afar on our collective work.	
09:45	Barry Hansen, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes	A history of fisheries management in Flathead Lake: Contrasting values and visions.	
10:45	Refreshment Break		
11:00	Leo Rosenthal, FWP	Lake Trout Removal in Swan Lake, Montana.	
11:45	Mathew P. Corsi, IDFG	Why the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: A case for population-level management.	
12:30	Lunch (Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms) and Poster and Art Show (Foyer)		
13:45	Panel Discussion: Whelan, Hansen, Rosenthal and Corsi		
	Large River Symposium		Peter Brown
14:15	Luke Holmquist, FWP	Bomb-radiocarbon validated age structure reveals evidence of recruitment bottlenecks for Blue Sucker in the Upper Missouri River.	
14:35	Mat Rugg, FWP	Evaluating fish passage at intake bypass channel and implications for Pallid Sturgeon recruitment.	
14:55	Caleb Bollman, FWP	The upstream dispersal of a Paddlefish fishery after completion of Intake Fish Passage.	
15:15	Panel Discussion: Holmquist, Rugg, Bollman		
15:30	Refreshment Break		
	Contributed Papers Session 1		Niall Clancy
15:50	Nathan Jaksha, FWP	Population dynamics of a “Booming” Kokanee population: Insights on managing a World Class Fishery.	
16:10	Peter Skidmore, Dipper Consulting, LLC	Improving stakeholder engagement and restoration outcomes with alternatives.	

**Through the Looking Glass**

16:25	Robert Al-Chokhachy, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center	Do Brown Trout limit the resilience of Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout to drought?	
16:45	Closing Remarks and Adjourn		Ryce
17:30	Biologists Union Location: Board Room		
17:30	<b>Student Social: Bitterroot//Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms</b>		<b>BUY RAFFLE TICKETS</b>
18:30	<b>Dinner and Fish Trivia. Hosted by University of Montana Student Subsection</b>		

# February 12: Committee Meetings, Business Meeting, Contributed Papers

Time	Presenter Name	Talk Title	Moderator
07:30	Breakfast: Bitterroot/Sapphire/Ponderosa Rooms		
08:30	Ryce	Welcome	
08:45	Committee Meetings: locations will be announced		
	Contributed Papers Session 2		Caleb Bollman
10:00	Niall Clancy, Salish Kootenai College	Small fish, lots of 'em: trends and drivers of fish community change on the northern Great Plains.	
10:20	Jeff Dunn, WGM Group	Watershed scale restoration planning to maximize riverscape extent, improve instream habitat, and enhance late-season baseflows.	
10:40	Refreshment Break		
11:00	Benjamin Weber, Montana State University	Evaluating success in an experimental Bull Trout translocation.	STUDENT
11:20	Stacy Schmidt, FWP	Temperature and disease history shape physiological stress in Montana crayfish <i>Faxonius virilis</i> .	STUDENT
11:40	Kristen Cook, FWP	A strategy for the conservation of a Montana icon: the Cutthroat Trout.	
12:00	Lunch: Business Meeting, Bitterroot/Sapphire/Ponderosa Rooms		McGree
	Contributed Papers Session 3		Nathan Jaksha
13:30	Jason Blakney, FWP	Translocation as a tool for Westslope Cutthroat Trout conservation in the Lower Clark Fork River drainage.	
13:50	Donovan Bell, FWP	Long-term genetic outcomes of the mixed-source introduction of Westslope Cutthroat trout in Cherry Creek.	
14:10	Craig Wells, University of Montana	The influence of genome structure on hybridization between native and introduced trout species in the Kootenai River basin.	STUDENT
14:30	Anika Snyder, University of Montana	Investigating the population structure of Bull Trout across montana.	STUDENT
14:50	Refreshment Break		

	Contributed Papers Session 4		Jason Blakney
15:10	Bonnie W. Dana, Montana Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit	Anglers show behavioral variation among lotic and lentic systems in the Madison River drainage.	STUDENT
15:30	Michael Lant, Montana Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit	Estimating abundances and movements of recreationists using license plates.	STUDENT
15:50	Ryan Kovach, FWP	Cooperative, large-landscape conservation provides resiliency for Arctic Grayling amidst climate change and drought.	
16:10	Nick Hudson, MSU	Investigating drivers of juvenile production and recruitment in Southwest Montana trout populations.	STUDENT
16:30	Lukas Draugelis, MSU	Where did you come from? Where did you go?: Tracking invasive species production and spread with improved otolith-genetic assignment tools.	STUDENT
16:50	Closing Remarks and Adjourn		Ryce
<b>17:30</b>	<b>Social Hour: Bitterroot/Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms BUY RAFFLE TICKETS</b>		
<b>18:30</b>	<b>Awards Banquet and Raffle: Bitterroot/Saphire/Ponderosa Rooms</b>		

## February 13: Contributed Papers

Time	Presenter Name	Talk Title	Moderator
07:30	Breakfast (Meadowlark, Cutthroat, Grizzly Rooms)		
08:30	Ryce	Welcome	
	Contributed Papers Session 5		Colton Pipinitch
08:45	David M. Stagliano, Montana Biological Survey	Aquatic resources of the Black Butte Copper Project Area in Meagher County, MT: Holistic ecosystem trends and observations from 10+ years of monitoring.	
09:05	Brian Beckley, VodalQ	Independent testing of PIT tags: advancing biotelemetry standards for fisheries and wildlife management.	
09:25	Sam Bourret, FWP	Bull Trout video monitoring in Northwest Montana: 2021-2025 update.	
09:45	Andrew Lahr, USGS- NOROCK	Understanding the influence of the timing and magnitude of streamflow on trout production using weighted hydrographs.	
10:05	Refreshment Break		
	Contributed Papers Session 6		Demi Blythe
10:25	Timothy Cline, Montana State University	Unlocking lifetime histories from otolith microchemistry.	
10:45	Clint Muhlfeld, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center	FishCast: An integrated drought early warning system for cold-water fisheries management.	
11:05			
11:25	Closing Remarks and Adjourn		Ryce
Posters			
	Kerrie Berger	Isolation and characterization of bacteriophages infecting <i>Flavobacterium psychrophilum</i> strains isolated from Westslope Cutthroat Trout- <i>Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi</i> .	

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## NOTES

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