



MEMORANDUM

TO: Coastal AFS Chapters
FROM: Donna Turgeon
SUBJ: New Estuaries Section
DATE: August 11, 1993

At the last meeting of the Potomac Chapter, members voted unanimously to initiate the establishment of a new AFS Estuaries Section. The Potomac Chapter is pleased to invite you to join us in establishing the new AFS Estuaries Section. As with any new Section, a petition of 200 members in good standing and a pledge of 50 prospective Section members are needed for presentation to the AFS Executive Committee. A copy of each form for your member signatures and a copy of draft bylaws are enclosed for circulation to your members. Thank you for helping. We eagerly await your response.

At its business meeting, the Potomac Chapter discussed the fact that there are already several AFS Sections and Chapters with vested interests and a number of activities underway on specific estuarine issues in specific estuaries, but AFS lacks a comprehensive, integrated focus for all U.S. and Canadian estuaries. Because of the current heavy use of estuarine resources and the fact that resource use is expected to increase with burgeoning coastal populations, issues for our new section would surely include fresh-water inflow diversions, habitat alteration, eutrophication, chemical contaminant problems, biodiversity inventories, ecosystem interactions, risk assessments, and fishing. One of the first issues for this new section could be funding and infrastructure for Title V, the National Coastal Monitoring Act, authorizing NOAA and the EPA to establish a national program for consistent monitoring of the nation's coastal ecosystems. Each of these agencies must carry out specific activities leading to developing integrated coastal management and also prepare biennially a comprehensive report to Congress assessing the condition of the nation's coastal ecosystems--all without funding appropriations to fulfill these responsibilities. Other State and Federal Programs would benefit from the public forum and networking potential of an Estuaries Section. This new Section should also plan for a strong liaison role among the various scientists/managers involved with estuarine monitoring programs and research as well as with the Estuarine Research Federation and its constituent regional organizations.