

## Program Committee

**Committee Members:** L. Alexander, K.C. Bell, B.R. Blood, P.K. Connors, E.J. Finck, D. Eline, D.L. Greene, J.D. Hanson, A. Hope, S.A. Jansa, K. Jones (2021 Co-Host), E.A. Lacey (2021 Co-Host), E.P. Lessa (2021 Co-Host), J.E. Light, V.L. Mathis, C. McCain (2020 & 2022 Host), M. McGowen, R.N. Platt, J.L. Rachlow, A. Ricketts, J.M. Ryan, S.R. Sheffield, R. Sikes (2021 Co-Host), W.P. Smith, K.A. Speer, C.W. Thompson (Chair), K. Stanchak, and N. Woodman.

### **Mission:**

The Program Committee is responsible for the solicitation and acceptance of proposals for symposia and workshops, for advertising the meeting to other scientific societies, for soliciting bids to host meetings, and assisting meeting hosts in preparing for annual meetings. In 2011, the Committee was charged with venue selection, organizing the Annual Meeting, the solicitation and acceptance of proposals for symposia and workshops, and advertising the meeting to other scientific societies.

### **Information Items:**

#### **(1) *Sponsors & Exhibitors***

2020—James Ryan, Lois Alexander, Patrice Connors, Drew Eline, Jessica Light, and Katie Stanchak organized sponsor and exhibitor solicitations. Vendor solicitation continues to be difficult. Seventy-two businesses, government agencies, museums, and universities were contacted. At the time of this report, these efforts have resulted in seven sponsorships (cash and in-kind). This resulted in a 10.0% success rate. The University of Colorado (CU) Museum of Natural History also waived rental fees for meeting space and the student social, and the CU Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology “hosted” the meeting to allow for internal rental and catering fees. All sponsorship fees were returned to vendors following the cancellation announcement of the 2020 meeting.

Given the low return rate, it is the recommendation of this committee to consider establishing long-term relationships with companies that have histories with the Society (e.g., H.B. Sherman, Tomahawk, etc.), as well as large companies that deem us too small and specialized to sponsor the meeting (e.g., Fisher Scientific, Garmin, Sigma-Aldrich, etc.). Annual corporate sponsorship could provide financial support in exchange for advertising options on the website, in the journal, and at the meeting (vendor show and auction). Additional opportunities exist if Society membership and meeting attendee lists were made available to potential sponsors. Leadership from the Development Committee would help in this regard.

2021—Solicitation efforts will continue for the Anchorage meeting with hopes to retain sponsors. The 2021 brochure will be distributed to sponsors and exhibitors this summer with an invitation letter signed by the Society President. With the help of the local hosts, efforts also will focus on identifying agency sponsors and local businesses with interest in providing vending options.

#### **(2) *Website***

2020—The Society continued to use the *mammalmeetings.org* domain name to maintain continuity and increase reach for the meeting. This will serve as the meeting URL going forward. However, all website management was shifted to the Program Committee, and WordPress was used to host and manage the meeting website.

The meeting website was live by the first week in January, and updates have been provided as needed since that date. The meeting website also includes a Twitter feed of @mammalmeetings. Both outlets were used to announce the cancellation of the 2020 meeting.

2021—Because of the joint meeting with the IFM, it was decided that a new domain was necessary. Therefore, the Society purchased the *imc13.com* domain name, and it was live with minimal information by November 2019. The website is still managed by the Program Committee via WordPress.

### **(3) Registration**

2020—The ASM Business Office continued to operate the meeting registration site. This has greatly simplified the registration and abstract submission process. However, the registration software continues to be limited in its utility for revising already submitted registrations. This necessitates meeting attendees to contact the ASM Business Office to process changes. Sponsors and vendors utilized a similar form for their registration, which also was organized by the ASM Business Office.

Registration rates were similar to previous years. Non-member rates were maintained at roughly twice the cost of annual membership to encourage new membership. The Developing Country registration rate has continued to garner interest. Presenters also were required to register and pay in full prior to submitting an abstract, which has virtually eliminated cancelled abstracts.

The travel award process also was decoupled from the abstract submission process, which has helped alleviate financial concerns expressed by students. However, there has been some confusion by student applicants about the process, so better communication and coordination between the Honoraria and Travel Awards Committee is necessary.

All registrations and fees were refunded to meeting attendees following the cancellation of the 2020 meeting.

2021—The ASM Business Office will continue to manage the registration process for the Anchorage meeting with support from Next Great Event.

### **(4) Travel and Lodging**

2020—Hotel room blocks at The Millennium and Best Western provided. The CU campus also provided dormitory space and meal plans. Because of contractual attrition clauses, it is important that meeting attendees book inside the room block to avoid fees for the Society. Given the cancellation of the 2020 meeting because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all hotel and dorm contracts were voided because of Force Majeure. All reservations for the Best Western and dorms were cancelled. Cancellation of The Millennium guest reservations were still pending at the time of this report.

2021—Several hotel room blocks have been secured for the Anchorage meeting. In addition, dormitory room blocks will be available at the University of Alaska-Anchorage, and downtown Anchorage access will be provided to meeting attendees via a bus shuttle system.

#### **(5) Abstract Submissions**

2020—Steve Sheffield, Brad Blood, Daniel Greene, Sharon Jansa, Winston Smith, and Neal Woodman managed the abstract submission and revision process. For the third year, submissions were completed through the Oxford Abstracts software. Presenters were asked to use the form to submit their abstracts through the Oxford Abstracts site following the guidelines of the *Journal of Mammalogy*. The abstract submission process was suspended and subsequently cancelled because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Sixty-four abstracts had been submitted by March 10th.

2021—Interest in the printed Abstract Booklet continues to decline (~13% of 2019 meeting attendees) and removing abstract submissions altogether is being evaluated (e.g., see Evolution meetings). Abstracts could be received but without review and made electronically available only. Presentation titles, authorlines, and author affiliations could be used to develop the program, reducing the workload and timeline required for abstract review and scheduling. Either way, the committee hopes to offer abstracts only in electronic format in 2021.

#### **(6) Program**

2020—The program was to include two plenary sessions (eight student award speakers and three senior award speakers), four symposia, four workshops, and seven field trips. One symposium was being offered through a collaboration with Society for the Study of Mammalian Evolution. Additionally, the North American Pika Consortium was to provide two days worth of sessions to the program.

2021—Symposium and workshop solicitations for the Joint ASM-IFM meeting are currently underway. The deadline for proposals is May 1st. At the time of this report, there were five symposium and three workshop proposals. Reviews for these proposals will be completed by a joint committee consisting of IFM appointed individuals, as well as current members of the Program Committee's Professional Development Subcommittee. The members of the Professional Development Subcommittee are Kayce Bell, Andrew Hope, Michael McGowen, Neal Platt, and Drew Ricketts. In addition to symposium and workshop solicitations, thematic sessions will be developed from abstract submissions and vetted by the Program Committee to add additional content to the meeting.

The continued development of the mobile meeting app will occur to allow the program to be distributed entirely in an electronic format. With only 22% of meeting attendees purchasing a meeting program in 2019, the Program Committee's plants to only provide a print program to those selecting such as an a la carte purchase during registration.

#### **(7) Receptions & Socials**

2020—Efforts to control the cost of the picnic and closing and awards ceremony (formerly, the banquet) continued. Prices were \$50 and \$25 per ticket, respectively.

2021—Many social events are planned for the Joint ASM-IFM meeting. Most social activities will occur in the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center (i.e., opening social, poster socials, auction, and closing banquet/dance). However, two specific events will occur offsite. The first is the Student Social, which will occur at the Anchorage Museum. The second event is a Diversity Social, which will be hosted by the Human Diversity Committee. The Diversity Social will take place at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, and will include cultural demonstrations by Native Alaskans.

#### **(8) *Special Meeting Events***

2020—In 2018, the Special Events Subcommittee was developed to help support meeting special events of other Society committees, such as the Run-for-Research, Student Social, and Auction. This subcommittee consists of Kelly Speer, Lois Alexander, Brad Blood, Elmer Finck, and Verity Mathis. The Special Events Subcommittee developed a form for resource requests, which was shared with the other chairs during the solicitation of committee meetings. The goal is to transition to a protocol similar to the process used for Symposia and Workshop solicitations.

2021—The Special Events Subcommittee will work with other committees and the 2021 local hosts to organize special meeting events at next year's Joint ASM-IFM meeting.

#### **(9) *Media, Social Networking, and Public Relations***

2020—With help from the Informatics Committee, the Society's website and social media resources (Facebook and Twitter) were used to promote the meeting. Meeting announcements also were sent directly to the membership through the ASM Business Office and Mammal-L. The meeting-specific Twitter handle (@mammalmeetings) was continued to provide greater oversight to online communication. The #ASMBoulder hashtag was used to generate social media interest. Communications regarding the cancellation of the 2020 meeting were coordinated with the Informatics Committee and the ASM Business Office.

2021—The Program Committee will continue to research streaming presentations as a possible way to incorporate a broader community into the annual meetings. Adobe Connect, BlueJeans, Zoom, or other resources could allow for a "Virtual Meeting", which may increase meeting participation and provide for new revenue. This may be especially important given the uncertainty surrounding global travel and the potential economic limitations because of COVID-19.

#### **(10) *2020, 2021, and 2022 Meeting Venues***

2021—Given the cancellation of the annual meeting at the University of Colorado-Boulder, the Joint ASM-IFM meeting will be the 100th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists. The Joint ASM-IFM meeting will be held 9-15 July in Anchorage, Alaska. Kim Jones, Doug Kelt, Eileen Lacey, Enrique Lessa, and Bob Sikes will serve as local hosts.

2022—The 101st Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists will now be held in Boulder, Colorado. Christy McCain has agreed to again serve as the local host. At the time of this report, the meeting dates have not been finalized.

2023—Bids are being solicited for the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists. The target location for the meeting is the Southeastern Region. The Program Committee fully supports efforts to increase diversity at Society meetings and will work with the

Human Diversity Committee to identify meeting locations within states without codified discrimination laws.

**Action Items:**

(1) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to cover expenses associated with the annual meeting. Specifically, this request is for *all meeting revenue* generated from attendee registrations, a la carte fees, and sponsorships. This line item will function as a pass-through in the Society budget and is subject to change based on meeting attendance.

**REQUEST:                 \$619,125**

(2) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support meeting costs and other expenses for plenary and capstone speakers at the 2021 Annual Meeting. This includes expenses for both the 2019 and 2020 plenary speakers.

**REQUEST:                 \$50,177**

(3) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support expenses associated with site visits for the selection of future meeting venues.

**REQUEST:                 \$8,000**

(4) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to support dorm housing expenses for ASM officers at the 2021 Annual Meeting.

**REQUEST:                 \$5,000**

(5) The Program Committee requests approval of a budget line item to serve as a contingency fund for the 2021 Annual Meeting. Specifically, a 10% contingency fund is being requested to support unanticipated meeting expenses. In particular, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, these funds are requested to cover potential social distancing measures and health screening expenses that may be required in Anchorage. The contingency funds will only be used in consultation with the Society President and the Planning and Finance Committee.

**REQUEST:                 \$71,861**

(6) The Program Committee requests approval of budget line item to support an honorarium for the Program Director.

**REQUEST:                 \$2,000**

**TOTAL REQUEST:                 \$756,163**

**Respectfully submitted,**

Cody Thompson, Program Director & Committee Chair

[\(mammal.meetings@gmail.com\)](mailto:mammal.meetings@gmail.com)