

American Fisheries Society
Southern Division Resolution
Adopted February 9, 2007

RESOLUTION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTREAM FLOW
PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the mission of state fish and wildlife agencies is to conserve, protect, restore, enhance and manage fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for current and future, use, benefit and enjoyment by state residents and visitors, and;

WHEREAS, the mission of state environmental protection agencies is to conserve, manage and provide for wise utilization of the natural resources of the state, and;

WHEREAS, these mission statements are consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine which requires that navigable waters, tide lands, and fish and wildlife resources be managed for the benefit of the state's citizens to ensure long-term sustainability so as to prevent or minimize harm to these resources, whenever possible, and;

WHEREAS, in some cases the state fish and wildlife agency does not have the regulatory authority to issue water use permits and coordination with the state environmental agency regarding water use is necessary to ensure that sufficient instream flow remains for fish and wildlife resources and outdoor recreational pursuits, and;

WHEREAS, the natural flow regime of streams and rivers is inherently variable and this variability is critical to natural ecosystem function and native biodiversity in streams and their associated riparian areas and floodplains, and;

WHEREAS, since some state resource agencies currently recommend instream flows that are a single flow value (e.g. 7Q₁₀) for determining instream habitat needs for aquatic life which is scientifically unjustifiable and should be abandoned, and which is considerably less than the average natural flow of the stream, fails to reflect flow variability and cannot meet the habitat needs for all species nor maintain healthy fisheries, therefore be it

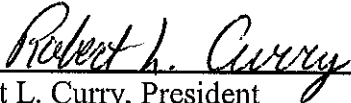
RESOLVED, the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, assembled at its annual meeting on this 9th day of February in the year 2007 at Memphis, Tennessee urges the state fish and wildlife and state environmental protection agencies in the Southern Division to commit the necessary staff and financial resources to the development of instream flow protection programs that contain all the elements listed below:

- Use an interdisciplinary approach to conduct instream flow studies that evaluate and prescribe instream flow needs in terms of hydrology, biology, geomorphology, water quality and connectivity. The spatial scope of instream flow studies should encompass the river channel, the riparian corridor and floodplain systems including connected groundwater.
- Use a coordinated, interagency, interdisciplinary team with adequate staff, training and funding to address all instream flow issues that exist under each agency's responsibilities.

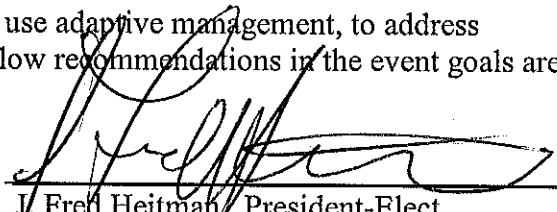
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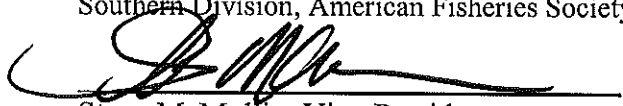
- The state fish and wildlife agency should have the primary authority for determining the appropriate instream flow necessary to restore, manage, protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources.
- Commit appropriate fiscal and human resources to maintain or restore flows that reflect the natural seasonal pattern of a riverine hydrographs in terms of intra-annual factors (magnitude, duration, timing, and rate of change) and inter-annual variability (frequency) to maintain or restore the natural ecological function of riverine resources. Instream flow programs and actions should focus on preserving or restoring intact functioning ecosystems rather than on single species.
- Incorporate public input into the decision-making process through direct efforts to inform the public regarding a) how instream flows are administered and the benefits they provide by furnishing information that can be understood by citizens with a limited understanding of biological concepts and terminology and b) the opportunities and limitations afforded by state and federal laws and policies for each state.
- Monitor riverine responses to instream flow recommendations to learn from the experience and where appropriate use adaptive management, to address uncertainty and modify instream flow recommendations in the event goals are not achieved.



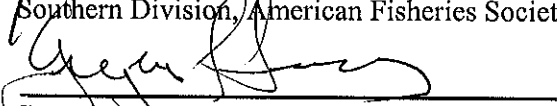
Robert L. Curry, President
Southern Division, American Fisheries Society



J. Fred Heitman, President-Elect
Southern Division, American Fisheries Society



Steve McMullin, Vice-President
Southern Division, American Fisheries Society



Gregory L. Summers, Secretary-Treasurer
Southern Division, American Fisheries Society