

SMM Interconference Members Meeting minutes
 02 February 2022
 1800 GMT
 Held virtually

Time (all times GMT)	Duration (min)	Topic	Presenter
1800 - 1805	12	Welcome and 2021 Year in Review	Charles
1805-1810	5	Budget Update	Katie
1810-1825	15	Conservation Fund Awards Announcement	Jay
	5	Update from the Editor	Daryl
	5	Update from D&I	Eric
	5	2022 Conference Updates	Amy
		Changes to Governing Documents and Dues	
1835-1850	5	Conferences Changes and Impacts	Charles
	3	Other Governing Document Changes	Charles
	5	Changes in dues	Charles/Chris
	10	Announcement of the Norris Award Winner	Charles?
	5	The rest of this year	Charles
	15	8. Open the floor to any other business.	
	40		

1.0 Welcome (Littnan)

- Littnan called to order 1800 GMT
- Because the General Members Meeting is held in conjunction with the conference, but the conference was postponed, it has been greater than 2 years since last members' meeting.
- Thus, this meeting is to update membership and get input from membership
- However, it will not be as comprehensive as a regular GMM – it will focus on highlights

2021 update:

- Littnan highlighted several key accomplishments for 2021
 - Support for science and conservation via funding and awards
 - Diversity and inclusion initiatives via several virtual town halls/meetings
 - Improved society management

- For more detail, see Appendix – Littnan presentation slides
- Monthly editor select series – please consider presenting your research via this opportunity. Student members at large approach authors in MMS. teachers have been using these presentations

2.0 Board Updates

2.1 Budget Update (K. Moore)

- See Appendix – Treasurer update slides
- Highlights:
 - Good standing budget-wise, especially with with new investment manager
 - A lot of expenses; not as much revenue, mostly due to conference delays
 - Association Management Group – Talley
 - The Board agreed to hire Talley Management Group
 - Their offer services in strategic planning, managing conference, and budget/financial management
 - SMM is only using right now for budget/financial management, so Treasurer can focus more on strategic planning
 - They are currently helping get all of books in order; simplify work, so that Treasures can focus less on administrative work
 - Investment Management Firm
 - New; better communications
 - They have a focus on non-profits and strategic growth

2.2 Conservation Fund Awards Announcement (Barlow)

- See slides in Appendix
- 41 proposals received
- The current endowment only had enough to fund 2 proposals, but SMM members provided additional donations to fund the top 6 proposals
- See slides in Appendix for full list of awardees

2.3 Update from SMM Editor (Boness)

- SMM renewed its contract with Wiley with some significant changes – dues go straight to SMM; royalty comes from Wiley; will likely generate more funds for Society
- See slides in Appendix

2.4 D&I update (Littnan for Archer)

- See slides in Appendix
- The D&I committee is re-structuring to sub-committees with the following areas of focus:

- Communications; differently abled; LGBTQIA+; Women and Families; Geographical Equality; Underrepresented Minorities and Indigenous Peoples
- The sub-committees need volunteers to either chair or be members.

2.5 2022 Conference update (Kiszka/Hirons)

- See slides in Appendix
- Hybrid conference with in-person and virtual
- Early bird registration deadline 01 March 2022

3.0 Governing documents

- See slides in Appendix for full review of proposed changes
- There will be a ballot in March

3.1 Conference changes

- Many SMM processes are tied to biennial. But unforeseen circumstances lead to cascading impacts, so some changes made to allow flexibility, regarding election cycle

3.2 Other governing document changes

- Set term limits for committee chairs. Currently, committee chairs serve at pleasure of President. The change would allow for more turn-over.
- Allow editor of MMS to receive stipend.

3.3 Dues changes

- Some questions have been raised as to why our dues are so much, especially compared to some other societies.
 - It is difficult to compare to other societies, because we don't know other revenue streams/endowments. We also do not know their services/programs to members
 - For SMM: we are probably somewhere in the middle in terms of dues. There are some societies that charge less and some that charge more.
 - There were comments from members in the chat highlighting some other societies' dues
 - Reidenberg: American Association for Anatomy charges \$130 per year.
 - Miller: really, these are smaller societies (ASM notwithstanding,). The current membership seems fair.

4.0 Norris Award winner announcement

- Winner: Dr. Randall Wells

5.0 Other updates

- Littnan highlighted what was coming up in 2022.
- See slides in Appendix

6.0 Member discussion

- Will SMM make a stand on resumption of Makah hunt?
 - If science can inform activity, our conservation committee can consider it.
Members can provide a request to Board
 - We currently do not have a position.

- What does SMM mean by equity? What is the difference between equity and equality?
 - Cox answered that equity is dependent on circumstances, whereas equality treats every person equally. In the context of dues, equality would mean every member pays the same amount; equity means there is a dues structure that accounts for individual financial circumstances.

- Mel Consentino – I'd love to see more work on neurodiversity! would love to lead one sub-committee on that, but not sure I fulfil the requirements :)
 - Littnan encouraged to contact Eric Archer

- Any any committee chairs opening soon?
 - Littnan stated that he was not sure; however, elected positions are coming open
 - Elected positions: President-elect, Treasurer, Secretary, Members-at-large, Student members-at-large.
 - If interested in elected position, contact Emer Rogan, chair of Nominations and Elections committee. Can also contact current Board member to ask what the job entails.

- Are aquaria and museum personnel eligible for Board positions?
 - Answer: YES as long as Full SMM member. (Associate members are not eligible to serve on Board)

1945 GMT: Meeting adjourned

Appendix A
Presentation slides



What a year (or two) it has been...



- ▶ **Expansion of our support for science and conservation:**
 - ▶ Committee of Scientific Advisors successfully administered their small grants in aid of research - \$30,000 USD
 - ▶ Awards Committee continues to shepherd our numerous endowed and other awards
 - ▶ Successfully navigated our first Conservation Fund Award

- ▶ **Actions to address diversity and inclusion issues within our Society and field:**
 - ▶ Unpaid Internship Discussion and Actions
 - ▶ Diversity Webinars
 - ▶ Virtual programs

- ▶ **Moves to improve Society operations:**
 - ▶ New investment management
 - ▶ Transitioning to an association management group

What a year (or two) it has been...



- ▶ **Planning and adapting our Biennial Conferences**
 - ▶ Reminder: Perth delayed to November 8-16, 2024
- ▶ **Embracing Education and Career Development**
 - ▶ Revitalized our SMM Career Page
 - ▶ Pilot Project on Marine Mammal Science Profiles
- ▶ **Expanding Science Communication**
 - ▶ Monthly Editor's Select Series
 - ▶ Reconstitution of ad-hoc Social Media committee to become Science communications Committee
 - ▶ SMM Podcast continues to expand



Treasurer's Report- February 2022

2021 SMM Financial Update

Katie Moore

Treasurer's Report- February 2022

2021 SMM Financial Update

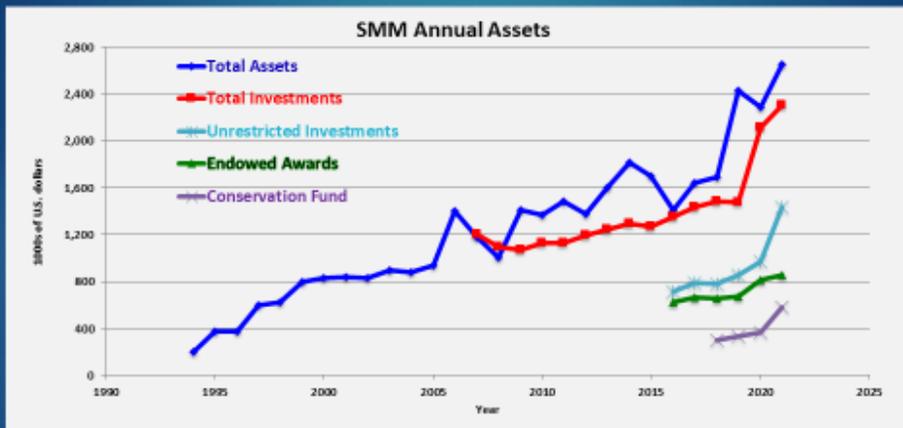
General Operations

- ▶ Accounts are in good standing
 - ▶ Cash: \$351,530
 - ▶ Investments:
 - ▶ Unrestricted: \$864,000
 - ▶ Restricted: \$1.4M
- ▶ General operations (preliminary)
 - ▶ Expenses: \$741,855
 - ▶ Net operating revenue: \$466,748

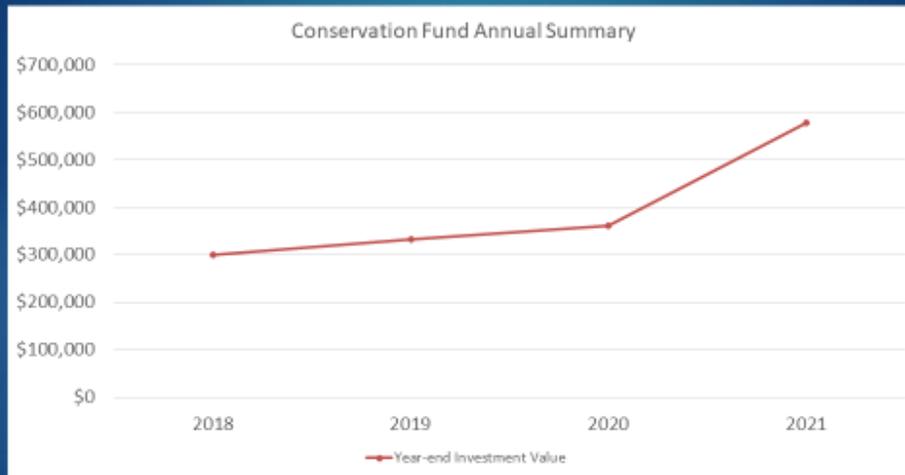
Conference

- ▶ COVID related challenges
 - ▶ Postponement fees
 - ▶ Hybrid costs
 - ▶ Potential losses

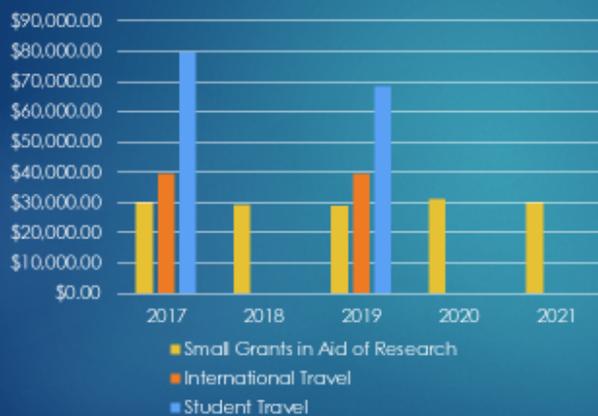
SMM Fiscal Assets Through 2021



Conservation Fund



Annual Direct Investment in Membership



Supporting our members:

- ▶ Conference support
 - ▶ Travel
 - ▶ Awards
- ▶ Endowed awards*
- ▶ Research support
- ▶ Podcasts
- ▶ Publications

Treasurer's Report 2022

- ▶ Accomplishments

- ▶ Association Management Group: Talley
- ▶ New investment management firm
 - ▶ Increase efficiency
 - ▶ Change the nature of the Treasurer role to focus on strategic development

- ▶ Future needs:

- ▶ Complete transition to Talley AMG
- ▶ Diversify revenue
- ▶ Develop business plan to support strategic goals



SMM Conservation Fund Awards

Jay Barlow

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22



... to support research and education projects that will catalyze real action to protect the world's most endangered marine mammals

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22

July 2021: Accepted proposals

August 2021: Finalized guidelines for judging proposal

September-October 2021: Judged and ranked 41 proposals

November-December 2021: Solicited additional funds to support more awards

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22

Judging (3 reviews for each proposal):

- Conservation Committee: Edu Secchi (Chair), Katherina Audley, Ari Friedlander, Simon Goldsworthy, Kit Kovacs, Randy Reeves, Brian Smith, Barbara Taylor, Randy Wells
- Committee of Scientific Advisors: Laura J. May-Collado (Chair), Robert Harcourt, Ladd Irvine, Songhai Li, Colleen Reichmuth, Jorge Urbán R., Valeria Paz, Doug Wartzok

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22

Award Selection:

- Six proposals rose to the top of the rankings
- The Conservation Fund Endowment could only fund 2 proposals
- SMM Members stepped forward with 2021 donations (totaling \$89,985.95) which allowed us to fund all 6 top proposals

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22



Title: Harnessing local ecological knowledge to fill data gaps and support conservation of the Critically Endangered Atlantic humpback dolphin (Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Liberia, Senegal & Gambia)

Principal Investigator: Aristide Kamla Takoukan (& team)

Summary: This project will use interview-based survey campaigns in Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Liberia, The Gambia and Senegal to gain local ecological knowledge about the distribution, conservation status, and threats to Critically Endangered Atlantic humpback dolphins.



**Title: How many Amazon river dolphin species are there?
“Capturing” genomic and morphological evidence to
clarify the *Inia*’s taxonomy to help their conservation
(Colombia, Brazil & Bolivia)**

Principal Investigator: Susana Caballero Gaitan & Larissa Oliveira

Summary: Obtain morphological and genomic (“museomics”) information, using mostly specimens from Museums around the world to understand and clarify the controversial taxonomy of the *Inia* genus



Susana Caballero Gaitan & Larissa Oliveira

Title: Developing a necropsy program to determine the efficacy of reducing Mekong River dolphin mortality with a River Guard enforcement and outreach program (Cambodia)

Principal Investigators: Eam Sam Un, Francis Gulland , and Somay Phay,

Summary: This project aims to determine the causes of Mekong River dolphin mortality, and to assess the efficacy of an established River Guard program to reduce deaths of these animals.



Somay Phay



Eam Sam Un



Frances Gulland

Title: An integrated approach to the conservation of coastal cetaceans in the Gulf of Mottama, Myanmar

Principal Investigator: Wint Hte, Yin Yin Htay, and Tara Whitty

Summary: The project will establish an acoustic monitoring program for *N. phocaenoides*, estimate bycatch rates in small-scale fisheries through Rapid Bycatch Assessments, refine understanding of the current and past distribution of these species in the Gulf of Mottama through Local Ecological Knowledge surveys, and train community youths in research and community engagement skills.



Yin Yin Htay



Wint Hte



Title: Veterinary capacity building to fill vital knowledge gaps for the endangered Indus River dolphins (*Platanista minor*) rescued from irrigation canals (Pakistan)

Principal Investigators: Forrest Gomez, Massod Arshad, Gill Braulik, Uzma Khan, & Cynthia Smith

Summary: Provide veterinary training for Pakistani first responders who rescue dolphins trapped in irrigation canals while collecting essential scientific and health data to fill critical species-specific knowledge gaps.



Forrest Gomez, Cynthia Smith, Massod Arshad, Gill Braulik, Uzma Khan

Title: Counting to protect: population estimation of a highly threatened subpopulation of river dolphin (genus *Inia*) in the Tocantins, the most impacted river by dams and land use changes in Brazil

Principal Investigator: Miriam Marmontel

Summary: Conduct survey to estimate the abundance of Araguaian boto along the Tocantins River, where segmentation by seven hydroelectric dams and rapid changes in land use is heavily impacting this dolphin population.

Conduction surveys for boto



Miriam Marmontel

SMM Conservation Fund Awards 2021/22

The SMM is responding to the growing threats to the species we study with a very active grants program for projects that will make a difference.

We will be accepting biennial proposals again in 2023.

We need your help.

Please consider donating to this fund or motivating others to do so (either now or as a legacy donation). We need to do more.

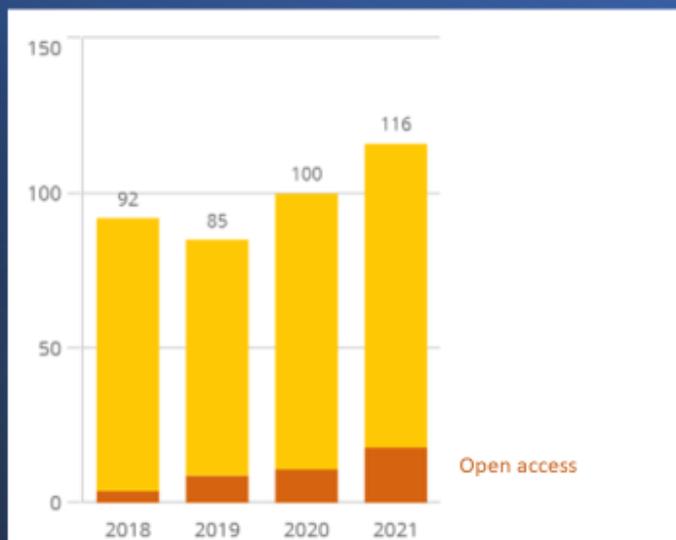




Marine Mammal Science Editor's Update

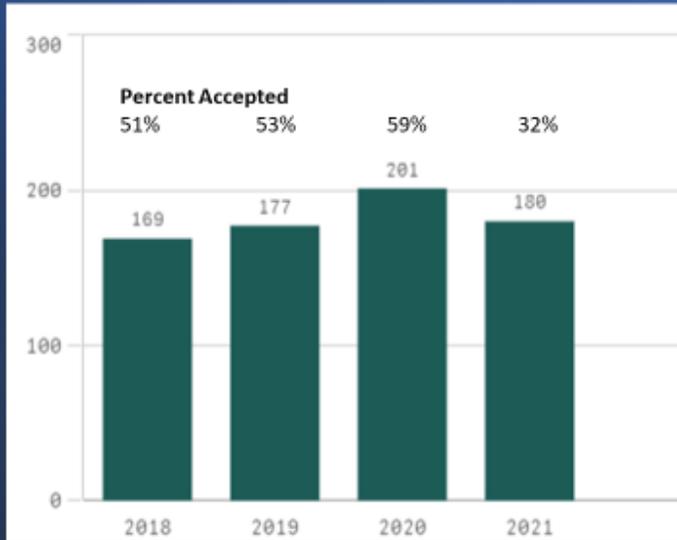
Daryl Boness

Number of Papers Published

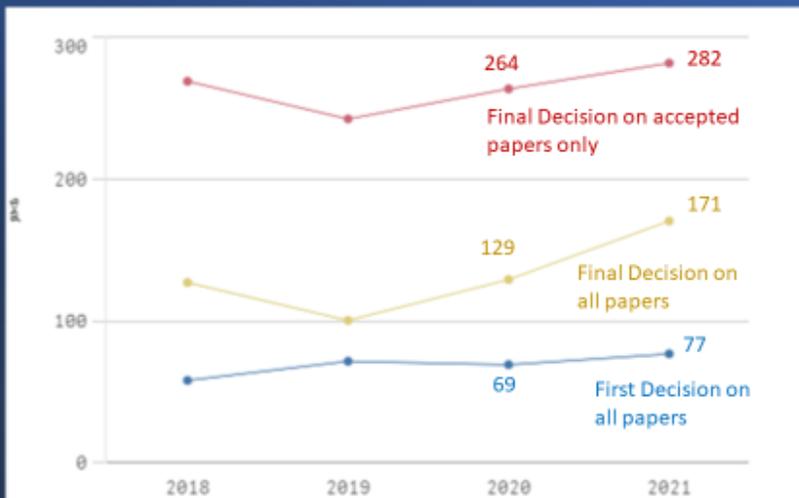


Marine Mammal Science 

Submissions and Acceptance



Median Turnaround Times (Days)



Journal Rating

MMS Impact Factor

2018	2019	2020
2.018	1.651	2.090

MMS Downloads

2018	2019	2020
152,000	159,000	206,000

Journal	Impact Factor	H-index	SJR
Marine Mammal Science	2.090	78	0.723
Aquatic Mammals	1.382	26	0.400
Journal of Cetacean Research and Management	1.037	23	0.355
Endangered Species Research	2.029	57	0.964



Diversity and Inclusion Committee Update

Eric Archer



Diversity and Inclusion Committee Update

Eric Archer

SMM Diversity and Inclusion Committee

- Monitor Society demographics and changes over time
- Expose under-represented groups to the field of marine mammalogy
- Carry out long- and short-term actions for change in the Society
- Advise board on D&I-related issues
- Assist in making Society events more inclusive
- Provide resources to marine mammal community on best practices to enhance safety, diversity, and inclusion

SMM Diversity and Inclusion Committee

- D&I Committee to be composed of community-focused subcommittees
 - D&I chair and sub-committee leads are official D&I committee members
 - Leads must be SMM members in good standing
 - Leads must commit to up to 4 hours of work a month and be responsive to communications
- Subcommittees composed of leads and any number of interested members in the community
 - Subcommittee members do not need to be SMM members
 - Leads and members decide focus and activities

SMM Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Current sub-committees

- Communications
- Differently Abled
- LGBTQIA
- Women and Families
- Geographical Equality
- Underrepresented Minorities and Indigenous Peoples

Please contact Eric Archer

(diversity@marinemammalscience.org) if you are interested in participating in any of these committees or have suggestions for forming others



24th Biennial Conference Update

Amy Hirons, Jeremy Kiszka,
Stephen Trumble, Sascha
Usenko



**24th Biennial Conference on the
Biology of Marine Mammals**
Palm Beach, Florida • August 1-5, 2022

1459 Total Abstracts submitted (166 under review)

1120 completed Registration (to date)

- 634 in-person
- 486 virtual

Early Bird Registration: 1 March 2022

Virtual Platform: interactive and engaging for everyone

30 Workshops (30-31 July)

Poolside Beach Party 🍹

5 Months of Giveaways (Register by 1 March 2022)

- Airline tickets (up to \$500 value)
- Conference Hotel stays
- SMM Membership renewals
- Registration to SMM2024 (Perth)
- Banquet tickets
- Conference swag





Changes to Governing Documents

Charles Litnan

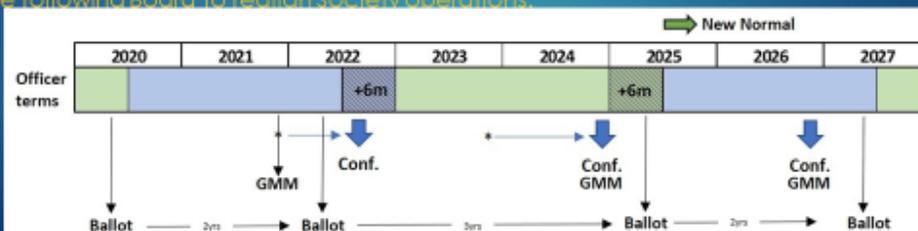
Changes to Governing Docs:

- ▶ Shifting conferences to even years decouples the conference and election cycles.

Action: Modify SMM constitution to have flexibility, with explicit limits, to deal with external events that impact Society operations.

Reason: Currently the language is vague enough to provide the flexibility but we want to more clearly bound ability to extend officers' terms and support the current need.

Action: Extend current elected Board members' terms by 6 months and do the same for the following Board to realign Society operations.



Changes to Governing Docs:

- ▶ Changes to the Committees:

Action: Set 6-year term limits for committee chairs (except Student Affairs and Board of Editors).

Reason: Ensure reasonable turnover and increased opportunity for members to participate in shaping the future of the Society.

Action: Allow Editor of Marine Mammal Science to receive a stipend for services which will be set by a vote of elected officers.

Reason: Duties are required for publication of journal, workload is significant and predictable, particular set of expertise and skill set are required, longevity in position is beneficial.

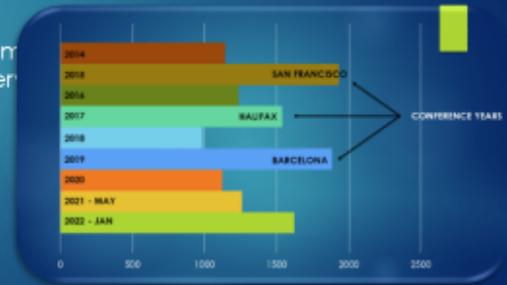
Changes In Due Structure

- ▶ Question received prior to the meeting:

- ▶ *Please explain why, at \$115, a one year membership in the Society for Marine Mammalogy is so much more expensive than a equivalent membership in the American Society of Mammalogists (\$55), the American Society of Naturalists (\$72), the International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine (\$85), the Wildlife Disease Association (\$50 for IAAAM members), the Society for the Study of Evolution (\$50), and the Society of Systematic Biologists (\$48), all of which with the exception of IAAAM include access to excellent scientific journals.*

Changes In Due Structure

- ▶ Why change our membership types and dues structure?
 - ▶ **Equity** – create a due structure that is based on income and eliminates tiers of members
 - ▶ **Simplicity** – limited categories are easier to track and manage
 - ▶ **Predictability** – breaking the boom and bust cycle of registrations allows us to be better able to plan a budget
 - ▶ **Community** – further strengthen a Society community and diversity in marine mammal science and conservation
- ▶ What it is NOT: a cash grab



Changes In Due Structure

Regular Member (based on annual income in USD) – 2 years only

- ☐ \$160 (< \$40,000 gross annual income) – This would be a **decrease of 20%** of current membership cost.
- ☐ \$200 (\$40,001 – \$60,000). 0%
- ☐ \$240 (\$60,001 – \$100,000) – This would be an **increase of 20%**.
- ☐ \$340 (\$100,001 – \$150,000) – **Increase of 70%**
- ☐ \$440 (> \$150,001) – **Increase of 120%**
- ☐ \$500 Supporting Member (members who wish to support the Society's work by paying a higher fee)

Regular Student Member

- ☐ \$90 Student Member (2 years) / ☐ \$55 Student Member (1 year)
- Student membership extends 2 years after graduation.*

Low-income Country

There is no change here and the 1-year option remains.

- ☐ \$50 Regular (2 years) ☐ \$30 Regular (1 years)
- ☐ \$30 Student (2 years) ☐ \$20 Student (1 years)

*Low income country members would get **free online conference access** in the future to maximize inclusion. The SMM would pursue additional funding support from sponsors to maintain this benefit.*

Lifetime Members

- ☐ \$2,400 Life Membership, one-time payment. This would be the equivalent of about ~ 20 yrs of Regular Membership in the \$60-100k salary bracket.



Ken Norris Lifetime Achievement Award

Charles Litnan



Kenneth S. Norris Lifetime Achievement Award



*"...ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EXEMPLARY
LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENCE AND
SOCIETY THROUGH RESEARCH, TEACHING,
AND SERVICE IN MARINE MAMMALOGY."*

January 26, 2022



Kenneth S. Norris Lifetime Achievement Award



2021 RECIPIENT:

DR. RANDALL "RANDY" WELLS



Kenneth S. Norris Lifetime Achievement Award



2021 RECIPIENT:

DR. RANDALL "RANDY" WELLS

What a year it WILL BE!

- ▶ We are going to have an amazing 24th Biennial Conference (live and virtual)
- ▶ 2022 will be a year of introspection and growth
 - ▶ We will continue to work on a host of DEI issues (internships, journal accessibility, and more)
 - ▶ New Ethics Chair will be revisiting what ethics mean to us as a Society and what her committee will be tackling to improve the way we do our work
- ▶ A new update from the Taxonomy Committee
- ▶ Society business
 - ▶ Tackling the archives
 - ▶ Strategic Planning (enhanced comms, new revenue streams, new process for budget and planning, etc.)
- ▶ Continued efforts on education, awards, conservation, international collaboration and more.
- ▶ Finding our next group of Society leaders

What would you like to see from your Society?

Open Discussion from the Floor



- ▶ Please enter a question in the Q&A Box and we will address them as they come in and as time allows.
- ▶ Remaining questions will be shared on our website when we post the recorded meeting.
- ▶ Other Notes:
 - ▶ We will be taking nominations for officers at the SMM Conference, but you can nominate someone or yourself at any time. Email elections@marinemammalscience.org
 - ▶ Don't forget our Editor's Select Webinar Tuesday Feb 17.
 - ▶ EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS MARCH 1, 2022!