AFWA Professional Standards

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) has prepared the following list of widely recognized professional standards that are regularly on display by, and are expected from, attendees at the AFWA Annual Meeting and related events and gatherings. By documenting these professional standards, we are affirming for current participants and establishing for new and future participants the standard behaviors that they can anticipate at AFWA events which also reflect the values of our organization, and supports the mission, vision, and values of the AFWA Strategic Plan.

All participants share responsibility for fostering a professional, respectful, collaborative, and inclusive environment that supports learning, networking, and the advancement of fish and wildlife conservation. We contribute our time, expertise, and efforts to help others and advance our shared conservation mission.

As a professional organization, we seek to strike a balance between encouraging open networking and maintaining professional boundaries. The focus is to encourage active participation, inclusivity, and productive collaboration.

- **Core Values and Foundations**
  - **Integrity – We value truth, honesty, and ethical conduct.**
  - **Respect – We treat all colleagues and participants with dignity and reject harassment and discrimination.**
  - **Empathy – We demonstrate awareness of others' perspectives, circumstances, and experiences.**
  - **Civility – We maintain and foster courteous and respectful interactions in a safe space, particularly during disagreement.**
- **Engagement and Communication**
  - **Active Listening – We listen to understand and engage with the speaker's perspective.**
  - **Welcoming Engagement – We foster an environment where all participants feel welcomed, respected, and comfortable contributing, and encourage broad participation from individuals with varied backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints.**
  - **Constructive Dialogue – We debate or challenge ideas respectfully and with open minds while valuing the people behind them.**
  - **Collaboration – We actively share knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned.**

❖ **Professional Conduct and Responsibility**

- **Professionalism – We demonstrate reliability, preparedness, accountability, and appropriate conduct.**
- **Accountability – We take ownership of our actions, decisions, commitments, and the impact of our work on others and our organization.**
- **Dependability – We follow through on commitments and support organizational goals.**
- **Stewardship – We responsibly care for our community, resources and the trust placed in us.**

❖ **Growth and Advancement**

- **Curiosity – We approach new ideas and challenges with openness and a desire to learn and grow**
- **Continuous Learning – We pursue professional growth and stay informed about emerging science and best management practices.**
- **Adaptability – We embrace change and encourage exploration of innovative concepts.**