



## **FORMAT AND STYLE GUIDELINES FOR IDFG FISHERIES REPORTS**



**Rev. June 2010**

07/02/2010

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## GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines for preparation, internal review, and publication of fisheries research, management, and hatchery reports have been prepared for authors and administrative support staff. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) expects authors to prepare reports that conform to rules of English grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. as well as the specific style convention of the journals published by the American Fisheries Society (AFS) before submission to administrative personnel for formatting and proofreading. This document provides basic information for all authors. However, it is not a comprehensive list of every rule; it is designed to address common questions from IDFG authors.

Some authors prefer to format most of their report themselves, while others prefer to format only the basic layout while leaving much of the formatting details (e.g., building the Table of Contents, etc.) to administrative personnel once the document is first submitted. Either method is acceptable, and this document will help in either endeavor.

These guidelines presume that the author is formatting the report for IDFG and the relevant contractor only, or for eventual submission to an AFS publication. If that is the case, refer to the AFS Full Style Guide at [http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub\\_stylefl.pdf](http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub_stylefl.pdf). The AFS guide provides information on abbreviations and acronyms (including lists of both), capitalization, italics, math and statistics, numbers and measurements, punctuation, quotations, references, species names, spelling, symbols, tables and figures, vendors and commercial products, word usage, and a list of geographic and geological terms. See also the AFS Guides for Authors at <http://www.fisheries.org/afs/publications.html>.

Adherence to these guidelines has led to consistent formatting amongst our reports and helps maintain their high quality. However, it should be recognized that there is room for flexibility in our report formats. For example, some authors may eventually submit portions of their report to a journal other than those published by AFS, and they may have different guidelines. These IDFG guidelines should be viewed as being sufficiently flexible that most of this alternate type of formatting can be used for your report, such as for the Literature Cited, literature citations in the text, etc. There is no reason to make extra work for our report authors over minor alterations. However, please keep the alternate formatting to a minimum. Alert the reviewers and administrative staff when you submit the report so they will know why the report is formatted slightly differently than AFS and IDFG guidelines. Whatever guidelines you are using, make sure you are consistent throughout the report or chapter.

### **Basic Setup**

- ◆ Standard paper size is 8.5" x 11" with 1" margins on all sides.
- ◆ Add only one space after periods.
- ◆ Use Arial 11 pt font.
- ◆ Table font size can be as small as Arial 8 if needed to make table fit on page.
- ◆ Double justify paragraphs.
- ◆ Indent the first line in each paragraph ½".
- ◆ Leave a blank line between paragraphs.
- ◆ Because single-spaced text is difficult to edit on a hard copy, double-space your draft. Administrative staff will single-space the final version before submitting it for signatures and printing.

## **File Size**

- ◆ Keep the report file size as small as possible, preferably not over 2 MB. Creating the report in Microsoft® Office 2007, or converting the report to Microsoft® Office 2007, does reduce the file size, but it will not reduce a 300 MB file to less than 2 MB! In addition, the report is converted to a PDF file before uploading it to the Technical Reports website for public access. Converting the report to PDF also reduces the size of the file, but not enough to reduce a huge file to a reasonable size for readers to download.
- ◆ Photos need to be compressed to 96 dpi. To do so in Microsoft® Word 2007, right click on the photo. Select Format Picture, click on the Picture tab, click on Compress, choose Selected Pictures, Web/Screen (96 dpi), Compress Pictures, and Delete Cropped Area of Pictures. Click Save twice.

## **Page Breaks vs. Section Breaks**

Insert page breaks, not section breaks, to start a new page, and use page breaks sparingly. The various paragraph styles are designed to keep headings and the subsequent paragraph together, which eliminates the need for most page breaks. Section breaks present several problems. Microsoft® Word treats each section separately for page setup, margins, footnotes, etc. Reports are significantly easier to format with the fewest possible sections. Insert section breaks only when the new section needs to be formatted differently than the current one, most commonly for page orientation to accommodate wide tables or figures.

## **Page Numbers**

The cover page and title page are not numbered. Make sure that the cover page and title page are Section 1, the Table of Contents is Section 2, and that the Abstract begins Section 3. With your cursor in the Table of Contents section, click on the Insert tab on the Toolbar, then choose the Page Number command in the Header & Footer group. Click on Bottom of Page and Plain Number 1.

At this point, Microsoft® Word automatically switches to the Design tab on the Toolbar. Click the Page Number dropdown on the Header & Footer toolbar and use the Format Page Number dropdown to choose small Roman numerals. Make sure the numbering is not continued from the previous section.

Then click in the next section, which should be section 3, and insert a page number again. Format this one with Arabic numerals, also not continued from the previous section. This will insert page numbers at the bottom of the page online. The page number will be on the right side of landscaped pages when reading a hard copy.

## **Headings and Subheadings**

Up to four levels of headings, plus two specialized headings, may be used in the text. Each is formatted for *Widow/Orphan Control* and *Keep With Next*.

- Heading 1 is for the main sections of the report, such as Results, Methods, Literature Cited, etc. It is formatted with all capitals, centered, bold, not underlined, with two blank lines before and 12 pt space after. Type the heading in all caps; otherwise, it will not be all caps in the Table of Contents.

- Heading 2 is initial capitals, centered, bold, underlined, with 12 pt space before and after.
- Heading 3 is initial capitals, flush left, bold, not underlined, 12 pt space before and 12 pt after.
- Heading 4 is part of the paragraph and is created with the Mark Table of Contents Entry dialogue box. Press ALT+SHIFT+O to open the Mark Table of Contents Entry dialog box.
- Table, figure, and appendices headings have their own formatting due to unique indentation requirements; see below.

To copy the standard report styles onto your computer, go to Reports & Documents on the Nampa Research website. From there go to NR Forms & Documents and find *Report Styles—Importing and Exporting* under *Group:Instruction*.

### Report Divisions

Combine all sections of the document, including tables, figures, and appendices, into one file before submitting to the administrative staff for formatting and editing. All pages, figures, tables, and appendices are numbered consecutively throughout the document.

Reports should be assembled in the following order.

- ◆ Cover page (the template is on the Nampa Research website. Type “NR2” in your browser without quote marks and without www, click on *Reports & Documents*, then on *NR Forms & Documents*, then on *Group:Forms*; the templates are listed under *Reports*. If you are using the template or a cover page from a previous year’s report, be sure to update dates, contract numbers, and names as needed.)
- ◆ Title page if needed; this template is also on the NR website. This page includes contact information for IDFG, name of cooperating agency, and contract and project numbers.
- ◆ TABLE OF CONTENTS (begins on new page; starts section 2)
- ◆ LIST OF TABLES
- ◆ LIST OF FIGURES
- ◆ LIST OF APPENDICES
- ◆ ABSTRACT (begins on new page; starts section 3)
- ◆ INTRODUCTION (begins on new page but not a new section; it is still section 3)
- ◆ STUDY SITE
- ◆ OBJECTIVES
- ◆ METHODS
- ◆ RESULTS
- ◆ DISCUSSION
- ◆ RECOMMENDATIONS
- ◆ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (begins on new page)
- ◆ LITERATURE CITED (begins on new page)
- ◆ TABLES
- ◆ FIGURES
- ◆ APPENDICES
- ◆ Signature page

Note: List of Tables, List of Figures, and List of Appendices are no longer needed in the document and in fact you are encouraged to omit them. However, those authors that wish to add these sections may do so.

### **Literature Cited**

For reports with multiple chapters, authors can choose between listing all of the Literature Cited at the end of the report (after the acknowledgements and before the tables) or at the end of each chapter.

As long as you are consistent throughout the Literature Cited, you can choose whether to leave a space in between author's initials.

For specific AFS formats, see Chapter 8 of the AFS Full Style Guide at [http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub\\_stylefl.pdf](http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub_stylefl.pdf). A few basic examples:

Gorman, O. T., and J. R. Karr. 1978. Habitat structure and stream fish communities. *Ecology* 59:507–515.

Mills, D. H. 1989. Ecology and management of Atlantic salmon. Chapman and Hall, London.

In publishers' names, nonessential terms such as "Company," "Inc.," and "Ltd" should be omitted.

When the city of publication is well known, the name of the state or country in which it is located should be omitted.

### **Tables & Figures**

You are encouraged to place all the tables and figures at the end of the document, just before the Literature Cited. However, if desired they can be interspersed throughout the document. To place the tables and figures at the end of the document, follow these guidelines:

- ◆ For tables, insert a section break, center the word "TABLES" both horizontally and vertically on the new page and mark as Heading 1, then insert another section break before inserting the tables. Place the caption above each table.
- ◆ For figures, insert a section break after tables, center the word "FIGURES" both horizontally and vertically on the new page and mark as Heading 1, then insert another section break before inserting the figures. Place the caption below each figure.
- ◆ For appendices, insert a section break, center the word "APPENDICES" both horizontally and vertically on the new page and mark as Heading 1, then insert another section break before inserting the appendices. Place the caption above each appendix.
- ◆ Tables, figures, and appendices themselves begin on new pages with new sections, and follow on successive pages.

Do not combine a table and a figure on the same page. A page can have multiple tables or multiple figures, though, if they all fit on that page. Tables and figures are numbered in order of their citation throughout the entire text.

#### **Tables**

When you have finished creating the table in Microsoft® Excel, select all of the cells and click "Copy." Go to the place in your Word document where you want to insert the table and

click "Paste." Doing so will paste your table in a format that can be edited. It will not be linked to the table in Excel; however, pasting a linked table makes the document file size much larger.

Alternately, you can format your table in Microsoft® Excel, copy it, and use Paste Special in Word, selecting Picture Enhanced Metafile for the format. (Make sure that you use the same font you used in the report itself.) This has the advantage of maintaining the formatting from Excel, but has the disadvantage that the author must make edits in Microsoft® Excel and then repaste the table.

If you are pasting tables within the document, do not start a table on a page that contains text unless there is room for the entire table on that page.

Do not manually split a table that spills over onto the next page. If the table is too large to fit on one page, insert blank rows and type "Table #. Continued." at the top of each subsequent page. Copy the column headings at the top of the table on each subsequent page. Lengthy tables should be avoided in the text in favor of the Appendix.

Ideally, tables should appear vertically on the page unless the quantity of data requires that the table be placed horizontally.

Consult AFS journal articles, as well as author guidelines, for specific details in table formatting. Capitalize only the first word, proper nouns, and appropriate symbols for column and row headings.

Use single spacing throughout the table.

Insert a line all the way across the top and bottom of the table. Also, insert a line all the way across underneath the column headings. Do not insert any other interior grid lines.

If the word "Total" is used in the table, consider inserting a blank line between the previous row and the "Total" row.

Use standard abbreviations in the column headings only when space does not allow headings to be spelled out. Any abbreviations or symbols that are not standard units of measure, or are not readily recognizable, must be explained in the footnotes.

For table footnotes use lowercase superscript letters (not numbers), alphabetically, immediately below the table, indented three spaces from the left margin (or use the style "a Number a" in the list of styles). Text size is Arial 10 unless the font in the table itself is less than Arial 11, in which case the footnote text size is the same as the table text. Footnote references are labeled left to right, top to bottom, in the table. Use asterisks for probability levels.

## **Figures**

All illustrations, graphs, line drawings, photographs, charts, maps, and diagrams are considered figures and should be labeled as such. They need to fit on 8½" by 11" paper with the proper 1" margin.

Although the online report is in color, hard copies are printed in black and white, so make sure that the graph or figure is easily distinguishable in black and white.

Figures need to be in line with text, not floating, and they need to be grouped. Objects that are not grouped sometimes “float away” and disappear from the document. Select and copy the figure from the software used to create it and paste it into your document.

As with tables, using Paste Special and selecting Picture Enhanced Metafile maintains the formatting from Excel or other graphical software, which avoids unwanted changes to the formatting. However, it also makes the figure uneditable in Word.

Graphs and line drawings are best created in Microsoft® Excel. The title information should be in a legend. Axis labels, data points, etc., should be formatted in Microsoft® Excel. Consult AFS journals or author guidelines for additional specific information.

### **Grammar, Word Usage, Style**

Turn on the spelling and grammar in Microsoft® Word. If words are flagged as misspelled, verify that they are actually spelled correctly and then add them to your dictionary. Microsoft® Word will no longer consider them misspelled.

Both AFS and IDFG use *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, as updated by the latest edition of *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 11<sup>th</sup> edition*, for word definition and spelling. Additional resources include:

Chicago Manual of Style 15<sup>th</sup> edition

Scientific Style and Format 6th edition (Council of Biology Editors, Cambridge, UK)

Fisheries Techniques, 2nd edition (American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, Maryland)

Common and Scientific Names of Fishes from the United States, Canada, and Mexico

World Fishes Important to North Americans

Common and Scientific Names of Aquatic Invertebrates from the United States and Canada

Computation and Interpretation of Biological Statistics of Fish Populations

Merck Index

Enzyme Nomenclature

The Elements of Style

Gregg Reference Manual

### **Dates**

Either the American or the European convention may be used for dates provided that the usage is consistent throughout the report, i.e. March 29, 2002 or 29 March 2002.

### **Locations**

Use GPS coordinates for locations.

### **Words often misspelled in IDFG reports**

Correct spellings are from AFS spelling list in Appendix A of the AFS full style guidelines, [http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub\\_stylefl.pdf](http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/pub_stylefl.pdf). Sources include Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition; Webster's Third New International Dictionary; Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition; Scientific Style and Format, 6th edition (Council of Biology Editors, Cambridge, UK); and Fisheries Techniques, 2nd edition (American Fisheries Society, Bethesda, Maryland).

## **Age-class**

### **Block net and variations**

block net (n)  
block-net (adj)  
blocknet (v)  
block-netter (n)  
block netting (n)  
block-netting (adj)

### **Broodfish, broodstock, brood year**

broodfish (n)  
broodstock (n)  
brood year (n; adj)

### **Coded wire tag and variations**

coded wire tag (n; adj)  
coded-wire-tagged (adj; v)  
coded-wire-tagging (adj)

### **Coldwater, coolwater, warmwater, saltwater, and variations**

cold water (n)  
coldwater (adj)  
cool water (n)  
coolwater (adj)  
warm water (n)  
warmwater (adj)  
salt water (n)  
saltwater (adj)

### **Echo sounder and variations**

echo sounder (n; adj)  
echo sounding (n)  
echo-sounding (adj)

### **Electro...**

Electrofisher  
Electrofishing  
Electroshocker

### **Eyed egg and variations**

eyed egg (n)  
eyed egg stage (adj)  
eye-up (n; adj)

## **Fish Ages**

For AFS reports, hyphenate fish ages, i.e. use age-1. Follow the guidelines of the appropriate journal and be consistent.

### **Gill net and variations**

gill net (n)  
gill-net (adj)  
gillnet (v)  
gillnetter (n; adj)  
gill netting (n)  
gillnetting (v)

### **In stream, downstream, and variations**

in stream (n)  
instream (adj)  
downstream (adj, adv)

### **Life cycle**

life cycle (n; adj)

### **Life history and life stage**

life history (n; adj)  
life stage (n; adj)

### **Main stem**

main stem (n)  
main-stem (adj)

### **“Mid”**

It can be treated as an adjective, but AFS prefers to treat it as a prefix (e.g., midseason, midyear).

It is hyphenated when it modifies a proper noun, date, or number (e.g., mid-August, mid-1988).

If it is separated from its stem by other words, it can stand alone (e.g., mid to late March, but early to mid-March).

### **Out-migrant**

Out-migrant (n; v)  
out-migrate (v)  
out-migration (n, adj\*)

**PIT tagged and variations**

PIT-tagged (adj)

PIT tagged (verb)

PIT is always capitalized

**Prefixes**

The prefixes “non” or “pre” are no longer hyphenated.

**Sport fish and variations**

sport fish (n; adj)

sport fishery (n; adj)

sportfishing (n)

sportfishing (adj)

**Trap net and variations**

trap net (n)

trap-net (adj)

trap-netted (v)

trap-netting (n; v)

**Year-class**

year-class (n)

year-class (adj)

## REVIEWER GUIDELINES FOR IDFG ANNUAL AND COMPLETION REPORTS

The purpose of these guidelines is to help develop a consistent and professional review process for annual and completion reports. Such reports are a form of grey literature with the purpose of transferring, archiving, and communicating research and management results and their unpublished interpretation. Grey literature is unlike a publication that has gone through an extremely critical and comprehensive review process. For example, you are all familiar with the fisheries publications and journals: *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society*, *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, the *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, and others. Although annual and completion reports, as grey literature, do not require the same level of scrutiny, they do demand to be technically correct and in proper and understandable English.

Remember these reviews take the same consideration of a timely review process. If you cannot review the report in three weeks or less then recommend a replacement reviewer or advise the author. Unnecessary delay in this process is unprofessional and unacceptable.

As a first guide to the recommended review process, each annual and completion report must first and foremost follow the IDFG *Format and Style Guidelines* as presented herein. Although ultimate responsibility for correct formatting lies with the authors, reviewers are expected to point out formatting issues throughout the document to the author.

While reviewing a report, you may range widely in your comments, but your comments are to be kept constructive, even for unfavorable assessments. You may edit a report lightly, but you do not need to rewrite text or be overly concerned with writing style. Each author has his/her own style for writing, and if he or she has a writing skill issue it is up to their manager to address it. Critical to the review process are comments and suggestions regarding 1) overall flow; 2) arrangement of the content, 3) redundancy; 4) omissions of important justification, methods, results, or discussion; 5) the link between the findings of the work and the recommendations at the end; and 6) inaccuracies in citations or missing citations in the text or in the bibliography.

If you are reviewing a hard copy of the report, the best strategy might be to lay everything out on a table with the tables, figures, and text separate. As you read the text, you can then examine the tables and figures for accuracy and comparability to the text.

Some of the following questions have been modified from the American Fisheries Society reviewer guidelines to fit our needs. They are offered as a guide for judging the merits of an annual report or a completion report and help the reviewer and author in the reporting and revision process. As you progress through the checklist, check the box to the left to allow the author to see that you have assessed each category.

## REVIEWER CHECKLIST

Check here

- (1) Is the report understandable, scientifically sound, and technically reliable?
- (2) Does the title clearly reflect the contents of the report? Is the abstract informative and concise? Are the objectives clearly stated? Is the methodology sound and supported by the literature? Often if the methods are well known or commonly used, they can be shortened with the use of citations. But if the methods are new and not very well known or implemented it is recommended that they be described.
- (3) Are the results clearly presented? Are the tables sufficiently complete and the figures adequate?
- (4) Are the results in the same logical order as the methods? The results should not be a mix of the discussion.
- (5) Are the statistical tests, if any, appropriate for the data, cited in the literature, and correctly applied? Has the decision probability been stated and properly applied?
- (6) If a few sentences with the same data can eliminate the need for a table or figure, then that is advised. On the other hand, the narrative should not rehash an entire table or figure but only describe the main content. In addition, large tables can be replaced by an appendix table.
- (7) Do the discussion paragraphs begin with a clear topic sentence, followed with support of data from the report, and further followed by supporting results from the literature? Are the findings well integrated with existing knowledge? Are the conclusions adequately supported by the data?
- (8) Are the recommendations adequately covered and supported in the discussion?
- (9) Are all of the citations in the report found in the Literature Cited section?
- (10) If this is a completion report, does it cover its chronological subject adequately?
- (11) Remember science is to be open-minded, objective, and unbiased. Can you say that about the discussion narratives?