2009 ASLO STRATEGIC PLAN

I. Introduction to ASLO Strategic Plan

The 2007 ASLO Strategic Plan Committee reviewed the report of “1996 The Future of ASLO Report and Recommendations” and noted that the organization has now implemented most of the listed recommendations. These changes have substantially strengthened ASLO.

The 2009-2013 ASLO Strategic Plan includes an assessment of how well ASLO is accomplishing its Mission Statement as stated below, through an inventory of ongoing activities. ASLO is currently meeting many of its stated goals. However, ASLO is not meeting all of its goals as it could. In order to implement ASLO’s mission statement in a proactive, rather than a reactive manner, a set of Guiding Principles, for Society action, has been adopted (see Section IV). These guiding principles will help ASLO anticipate its membership’s needs, provide philosophical continuity for ASLO Board members, and aid in making the difficult decisions about priorities for allocation of the limited resources of time and money to reach the Mission Statement goals. The 2009-2013 ASLO Strategic Plan discusses what ASLO needs to do to implement its Mission Statement in the future, in light of the Guiding Principles. The last section provides some suggested implementation strategies. The ASLO Strategic Plan will be a living document, evaluated and updated, to incorporate Board decisions, bi-annually by an ad-hoc Strategic Plan committee.

II. Mission Statement

ASLO fosters a diverse, international scientific community that creates, integrates and communicates knowledge across the full spectrum of aquatic sciences, advances public awareness and education about aquatic resources and research, and promotes scientific stewardship of aquatic resources for the public interest. Its products and activities are directed toward these ends. ASLO welcomes and invites anyone interested in the aquatic sciences to join!

III. A brief History of ASLO

Taken from 2007 Board Member Operations Manual (http://aslo.org/board/boardreports/manuals/2007opsmanual.pdf)

Nonprofit organizations generally begin with a perceived need in the community. Concerned individuals form a committee to study the need and conclude that only an organized effort could meet that need. In ASLO's case, the society was first established in 1936 as the Limnological Society of America, after more than a decade of discussion and effort, starting with the activities of the Committee on Aquaculture of the National Research Council's Division of Biology and Agriculture. Participating individuals concluded that a mechanism was needed "to further interest and research in limnological science." In 1948, the society merged with the Oceanographic Society of the Pacific to become the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography (See Appendix 6, article by Dan Conley for details). The ASLO constitution originally stated the purposes of the society as: "The promotion of the interests of limnology and oceanography and related sciences and the furtherance of investigations dealing with these subjects and the publication of the results of such investigations." In 1995, the purposes became "To promote the interests of limnology and oceanography and related sciences, to foster the exchange of information across the range of aquatic science, and to foster investigations dealing with these subjects." The 1996 Future of ASLO Committee recommended and in 1998, the
membership approved expanding the ASLO mission statement to include linking “knowledge and understanding in the aquatic sciences to the identification and solution of problems generated by human interactions with the environment.” ASLO is incorporated as a nonstock (non-profit) corporation in the State of Wisconsin, and is subject to that state's statutes. In 2002, the ASLO Board assumed responsibility for long-range planning, and revised the mission statement to more accurately reflect the range of ASLO activities: “The purpose of ASLO is to foster a diverse, international scientific community that creates, integrates and communicates knowledge across the full spectrum of aquatic sciences, advances public awareness and education about aquatic resources and research, and promotes scientific stewardship of aquatic resources for the public interest. Its products and activities are directed toward these ends.” This revision was approved by the membership in 2003.

IV. Guiding principles for ASLO
These guiding principles do not repeat the mission statement but are to be used to guide the actions of the ASLO Board for the purpose of implementing the mission statement and providing momentum and continuity along a consistent path of action in all Board decisions. Guiding Principles were approved by the ASLO Board on ?date?) ASLO will strive to:

- improve recruitment and retention at the undergraduate, graduate and early career levels to strengthen the demographics of practitioners of the aquatic sciences; the health, vitality, and longevity of our science depend on promoting scientific vocations recruiting the best people.
- learn what services members want, and shall offer these services at a reasonable cost.
- take action to promote forward-thinking science, thereby foreseeing developing challenges, and ensure the continued relevance of our science to knowledge and society.
- seek to improve communication, cooperation, and exchanges with other relevant scientific and policy-based societies, towards promoting forward-thinking consistent with the ASLO mission statement.
- offer equitable services to all members (independently of geographic location, stage of career development, and disciplinary interest within the aquatic sciences).
- provide science products of the highest quality and made as widely and openly available as possible.
- make Society decisions based on the best knowledge available; acquiring the best knowledge may, from time to time, require the hiring of outside professionals.
- be managed so as to ensure financial stability, building resilience against unforeseen negative financial events by holding the equivalent of one year operational budget in reserve.

V. Goals - ongoing and proposed activities
The ASLO Mission Statement has been separated into its 9 current goals, with ongoing and proposed activities described for each; a timeline for proposed activities is also included.

A. GOAL #1 - FOSTER A DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF SCIENTISTS
1. Ongoing Activities:
   □ Disciplinary composition of Invited Speakers (Plenary and session)
Organize new interdisciplinary sessions at meetings –inviting some speakers that would not usually attend

Have several, very strong Multicultural Student and Researcher Programs

Composition of ASLO members is fairly international

These activities sustain and increase diversity and ethnicity in our scientific discipline, encourage different nationalities and genders in our membership and Board composition, publications, speakers, awards, meetings, membership, and committees

2. Proposed activities:

a. Form a new diversity committee

Charge: Set a Society goal to achieve representation on committees and the board that parallels overall membership in terms of demographics (e.g., seniority, gender, ethnicity, etc.), geographic location, and discipline (e.g. molecular ecologists, fluidics, tropical ecology, oceanography, limnology, etc.) within the next five years. This is not intended as a recommendation for attaining a strict numerical result (e.g., not a quota) but rather a recommendation that the representation of members in terms of gender, geographic location, discipline, and seniority be used as a benchmark to evaluate progress in attaining diversity in the governance structure of the society. Diversity should be viewed as a strength of ASLO.

b. Hold meetings in different places in the world, keeping in mind the costs to members and the need for meetings to be accessible to those with limited research/travel budgets.

Charge:

i. Modifying membership fees for members from non-OECD countries; OECD is the Council of Economic Co-Operation and Development

Timeline: Implement decision made in 2009 board meeting

ii. Reduce meeting registration fees for early career members and members from non-OECD countries.

Timeline: Implement decision made in 2009 board meeting

iii. Assist meeting participants with daycare arrangements.

Timeline: Meetings committee will make recommendations to organizing committee for Portland meeting in 2010.

B. GOAL #2 - FOSTER AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF SCIENTISTS

The “A” in ASLO stands for American. ASLO was conceived as a scientific society that represented primarily the US and Canada. As ASLO grew it became an attractive society to many Europeans, and scientists from other parts of the world. ASLO members now come from
67 different countries, with about 30% of the membership from outside of North America. This internationalization has vitalized ASLO, and added new opportunities and obligations as well. The ASLO Board of Directors, over the past few election cycles, has also become increasingly international (http://www.aslo.org/information/board.html). In 2006, ASLO elected its first President-elect from outside of North America. Additionally, in 2000, 2005, and 2009 ASLO had very successful meetings in Denmark, Spain, and France. The Board voted in 2005 to have at least one meeting every 5 years outside of the US and Canada. While the official name of the society remains, ASLO is using the tag line “Advancing the Science of Limnology and Oceanography” to gently de-emphasize national and geographic boundaries.

1. Proposed activities:
   a. Develop alternative distribution mechanism(s) for ASLO Bulletin, such as e-mail with clickable links to articles. To be explored by Bulletin editors and Publications committee
   Timeline: by 2010 meeting, at the latest.

   b. The Diversity Committee is tasked with developing a list of qualified, recommended, and/or interested pool of candidates for appointment to ASLO committees that can be consulted by the nomination committee and the Board to help achieve the diversity goal set above. This can be achieved using information from the membership list, self-identification of interest in serving on committees or as officers, referral from present and past members of committees, and any other approaches they may identify, to develop such a pool of likely candidates. This list should serve as a reference, not a list from which all nominees must be drawn.
   Timeline: for 2010 Board meeting in Portland

   c. The Diversity Committee should provide a progress report in developing a nomination pool for officers and committee members at annual and semi-annual board meetings as they occur, with a review of success of effort after three years.
   Timeline: each Board meeting and in 2012

   d. The nominating committee should report on efforts to achieve the diversity goal for the board and how these issues were approached when compiling nominees.
   Timeline: 2009

C. GOAL #3- FOSTER CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE
1. Ongoing Activities:
   L&O synthetic reviews (P. Jumars, editor)
   L&O Methods
   L&O regular and special issues
   Aquatic Sciences, Ocean Sciences, Summer meetings and special symposia

These activities identify sensitive and critical components and interactions driving aquatic systems; promote aquatic sciences by fostering communication among its scientists. Member benefits include: Strengthen interactions among aquatic science communities; and, identify, prioritize and promote emerging, exciting ideas in aquatic sciences, especially across disciplines, with the endorsement and support of ASLO.
2. Proposed activities:
   See section E below

D. GOAL #4 - INTEGRATE KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE FULL SPECTRUM OF AQUATIC SCIENCE

1. Ongoing Activities:
   - Journals, meetings (Aquatic and Ocean Sciences), special symposia
   - Current partnerships (AGU, TOS, ESF, etc) to leverage effectiveness
   - Current affiliation and/or membership with other scientific societies (AAAS, AIBS, CSSP). Additionally, ASLO is leading the effort to launch a network of aquatic science societies that could serve as a formal mechanism for the societies to coordinate on activities such as small, topical conferences and workshops, as well as outreach activities.

   These activities help achieve coordination, integration and synthesis of results and knowledge from past and ongoing studies. Member benefits are to provide new opportunities for research collaboration and funding and, to discuss and formulate conceptual and/or operational approaches and methods of integration and synthesis.

2. Proposed activities:
   See section E below

E. GOAL #5 - COMMUNICATE THIS KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE FULL SPECTRUM OF AQUATIC SCIENCES.

ASLO communicates knowledge through three primary mechanisms: its journals, meetings, and focused outreach activities.

1. Ongoing Activities:
   - ASLO has three journals, *Limnology and Oceanography*; *Limnology and Oceanography: Methods*; and *Limnology and Oceanography: Bulletin*, which communicate advances in the fields of limnology and oceanography to the international community of scientists, and for the *Bulletin*, to ASLO members. *Limnology and Oceanography* is the highest impact journal in the world of any that cover these two domains and is in the top 2 or 3 for journals, which cover either oceanography or limnology (http://www.aslo.org/bulletin/04_v13_i3.pdf). *Methods* is only 4 years old but already has achieved an impact higher than most journals covering limnology, oceanography or both. The scope of the ASLO journals is broad in discipline, from physics to microbiology with everything in between, and environment, (ocean, lakes, streams and rivers). *Limnology and Oceanography* includes full length articles, shorter notes, and, since 2005, review articles. Special Issues of ASLO journals can take up more specific topics such as Eutrophication (http://aslo.org/lo/toc/vol_51/issue_1_part_2/) or Ocean Optics (http://aslo.org/lo/toc/vol_48/issue_1_part_2/).

   - ASLO meetings cover the full scope of the aquatic sciences. Some meetings, such as the winter Aquatic Science Meetings, pull together the full spectrum of aquatic sciences (both limnology and oceanography). Other meetings emphasize particular disciplines,
such as the Ocean Sciences Meeting (held in winter of even-numbered years) or the Summer Meeting (even years), which usually emphasizes freshwater and coastal systems. Because the primary audience for ASLO’s journals and meetings are scientists, ASLO undertakes special outreach activities to communicate aquatic science to the general public (see #6). Other activities such as special workshops provide venues for communicating science with resource managers. Finally, the ASLO Public Affairs office interacts regularly with policy-makers to communicate relevant science via meetings, poster exhibits and briefings.

Through its journals, meetings and outreach events, ASLO provides its membership with the venues to communicate their knowledge and research to scientists, policy-makers, and the general public.

2. Proposed activities for goals C, D, E:
   a. ASLO should support special sessions for 1-2 days, ahead of, but associated with, regular meetings, to facilitate the discussion among scientists that hold different research views or approaches that may contribute to integration when articulated and to promote the development of new research topics and emerging, cutting edge topics.

   To encourage the dialog among scientists that wish to develop emerging, cutting-edge or controversial issues and/or integrate knowledge and research across communities, applicants to special sessions with these aims will be eligible to apply for dedicated funding to support the extra costs of meeting for two days to develop a review paper to be submitted to an ASLO journal. The application will consist of a form justifying why the session proposed is eligible for this fund and explaining how the meeting group will be selected. A total of up to 10,000 US $ will be allocated by ASLO to each meeting budget to this end. The meeting co-chairs and committee will be responsible for selecting among the proposals received. Eligible costs may include costs of meeting rooms, extra hotel nights, extra travel, and food, as necessary within the budgetary limits mentioned above. The $10,000 US can be split among up to four sessions per meeting. The chairs of the session will submit, within one month from the meeting, a report with a summary of the outcome, in a format that could be reproduced in the Bulletin, and table of contents of the written products stemming from the workshop. At least one of the applicants must be an ASLO member.

   Timeline: To be implemented as of Santa Fe 2010 meeting onwards.

   b. ASLO will continue to encourage programs run by the student representatives, the early-career committee and external programs (e.g. ECO-DAS, etc.) that provide opportunities to network and extend mentoring services to student and early career members.

   Timeline: ongoing

   c. ASLO is already supporting programs to increase networking opportunities through the student and early-career programs. Student members at the Board will explore the potential of new communication tools, including the web page, and make recommendations on how ASLO may use them to strengthen these activities.
Timeline: specific recommendations expected by Portland Board Meeting (early 2010). Program in place by 2011.

d. The Early Career committee and the student Board representative should be jointly charged with the development of a mentoring plan to run consistently at future ASLO Conferences.
Timeline: by Santa Fe Board Meeting (June 2010). Program in place by 2012.

e. ASLO needs to improve the retention of young members. Mentoring programs may help improve retention, and have been included in ASLO meetings, but not in a consistent manner. These have included luncheons with scientists to inform students on how to succeed in developing careers in specific areas, science fairs with undergraduate students and even high school students, and one-to-one mentoring programs within specific domains. Other models, such as “find a mentor” programs that bring together young participants with established scientists at meetings, willing to be listed on a data base of ASLO “mentors”, may be considered and facilitated at social functions arranged at meetings.
Timeline: Program to be running by the end of 2010.

f. Create position of editor for web-based books (to be advertised in Bulletin, with ASLO Chair of Web-books committee as point-of-contact, Paul Kemp webeditor@aslo.org)

Editor should:
- Advise on which of the many options for web-based book publication are most appropriate.
- Deal with current projects
- Forge a vision “what makes a book an ASLO book?”
- Receive and honorarium since this is lots of work
- Develop criteria for rejecting books in addition to positive criteria

The Web-Based Books Committee will:
- draft an ad for an L&O Web-Based Books Editor
- advise the Board on the scale of the project for the next 3-4 years
- advise the Board on reasonable compensation
- serve as the search committee for the new editor.

Timeline: Advertised by Jan 31, 2009

g. ASLO will launch a new journal, L&O Environment and Fluids, to be co-published with Duke University Press. A contract has been already signed with Duke University Press to this end.
Timeline: The new journal will be launched in 2010.

h. ASLO is leading the development of an aquatic sciences network, including CERF and NABS as initial partners. The network will promote aquatic sciences with activities consistent with the mission statements of all member societies.
F. GOAL #6 - ADVANCE EDUCATION ABOUT AQUATIC RESOURCES

ASLO is committed to educating audiences of all ages, with particular emphasis at the undergraduate and graduate levels, about aquatic resources.

1. Ongoing Activities:

- Practicing scientists including faculty, graduate and postdoctoral and some advanced undergraduate students are educated about cutting edge science at ASLO’s meetings, workshops, through our three journals.
- Through several programs, some targeting under represented minorities (MAS, ASLOMP), funding is provided to allow undergraduates to attend ASLO meetings.
- Recent Ph.D.’s are able to attend special workshops such as EcoDAS and DISCCRS (http://www.aslo.org/phd.html), which allow these new scientists to meet and interact with the future leaders in the field.
- ASLO is proud to be one of the only scientific societies to always have two students sit on its Board of Directors as full voting members. The student board members organize a myriad of activities for students in the society (http://www.aslo.org/students.html).
- ASLO has a very active Education Committee (http://aslo.org/information/standing.html), which is focused on education at multiple levels, from grade school through higher education, including teachers (http://www.aslo.org/education.html).
- One of the more popular educational activities is an image gallery on the ASLO web site (http://www.aslo.org/education/library.html).
- ASLO has both a Public Affairs Director (http://www.aslo.org/policy/index.html) and a Policy Committee (http://www.aslo.org/information/standing.html) both of which participate in education and outreach.

Currently, most ASLO educational activities are available to both ASLO members and non-members. An exception is the ASLO Web Lecture Series, which will be available only to ASLO members. The Board has been considering which existing and new educational resources should be for the primary benefit of ASLO members.

2. Proposed activities:

- a. Continue the ASLO Web Lecture Series program as planned
   
   Timeline: ongoing

- b. Provide funding for Eco-Das, or similar programs.
   
   Timeline: ongoing
c. Create peer-to-peer lecture exchange as a member benefit
   Timeline: Early Career committee is asked to provide a plan by the 2010 Board meeting, after legality of posting possibly copyrighted items and storage location issues is checked by ASLO’s attorney.

d. Investigate cost and time of using modern communication tools to advance ASLO’s mission. (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, podcasts, etc.)
   Timeline: Facebook site is already functional. Additional specific recommendations expected from Students Representatives and Early Career committee by Portland Board Meeting (early 2010). Program in place by 2011.

G. GOAL #7 - ADVANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT RESEARCH ON THESE RESOURCES

1. Ongoing Activities:
   - Public Affairs office in US capitol that:
     - Alerts on issues of interest to US-ASLO members
     - Information about careers in the public policy arena
     - Light coverage of policy issues in Canada and EU
     - Joining with other scientific societies in advocating for our field
     - Links to government issue reports and responses – principally in the ocean sciences in the US and EU
     - Facilitation of member participation in policy
   - Membership in scientific coalitions and umbrella organizations
   - Communication workshops to help members understand the interface of science and policy
   - Some public events at recent meetings
   - Press releases surrounding meetings

These activities help the public understand the value, issues, and careers involved in understanding aquatic ecosystems. Member benefits include having a source of ready information on public policy issues; and, a raised profile of aquatic sciences in the public arena and therefore (hopefully) better public support.

2. Proposed activities:
   a. Promote public awareness of the field of limnology by charging Education Committee to suggest two activities to promote limnology
      Timeline: present to board to approval within 3 months. Complete activities by winter 2010 meeting and report to board.
   b. Public policy committee needs to be reenergized (i.e., by replacing members and revision of charge, especially in keeping with newly adopted Guidelines).
      Timeline: Committee reformulated by 2010.

H. GOAL #8 - PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP OF THESE RESOURCES FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

1. Ongoing Activities:
   - Prominent place in our mission statement
Public Affairs office initiatives (see above)
Events of public interest organized at recent meeting

These activities inform and engage the aquatic professional in the protection, conservation, and restoration of aquatic ecosystems.

2. **Proposed activities:**
   - a. Charge Public Affairs Director with generating recommendations for ways to improve the expert list to connect policy-ready scientists with the public and policy makers and to generate policies for:
     - Choosing members listed as experts.
     - Develop webpage for accessing international list of experts.
     - Generate disclaimer that the individual members do not necessarily speak for ASLO.
     - Charge Public Affairs Office with distributing information on the list to relevant programs or individuals (i.e. WHO, US Congress, UN, IHDP, EU, etc.).
     *Timeline: Program ready by the end of 2010*
   - b. Charge Education Committee to generate policy for dealing with requests for presentations to general public or school programs. Establish a mechanism to direct these requests to appropriate ASLO members.
     *Timeline: Program ready by the end of 2010*
   - c. Charge ASLO Bulletin editors to highlight ASLO members that excel at doing resource stewardship (e.g. “Beyond the Ivory Tower” column).
     *Timeline: Proposal to be presented at Ocean Sciences 2010 Board meeting.*
   - d. Charge Public Policy Committee and Bulletin editors to advice on whether we should distribute the ASLO Bulletin electronically to policy makers and aquatic resource managers, editors of environmental magazines or newspapers, perhaps taking advantage of the recently acquired CAPWIZ software. The intent is not to “fix” the Bulletin but adapt it? or extract from its content? or adjust its philosophy? to reach this wider audience. (Explore similarity to ESA’s Frontier?)
     *Timeline: Program ready by the end of 2010*
   - e. Nominate ASLO members for non-ASLO prestigious awards (national, international, regional).
     Charge Awards Committee to devise a strategy for generating a list of non-ASLO prestigious awards. Include reminders of upcoming award nomination deadlines in ASLO Bulletin. Request that members tell Awards Committee when a nomination is made. If no nominations are forthcoming, the Awards committee should devise a strategy to permit ASLO to be proactive about getting nominations or nominate previous ASLO award recipients.
     *Timeline: President to charge ASLO Awards Committee, and request action to be in place by end of 2009*
I. GOAL #9 - CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS WELCOMING TO ANYONE AND ALL INTERESTED IN THE AQUATIC SCIENCES

1. Ongoing Activities:

- ASLO Multicultural Program links aquatic sciences students of diverse cultures together and seeks to increase meeting participation:
  - Centered on meeting participation
  - Roll-model awareness built through published information on minority aquatic scientists
  - Mostly funded externally through initiatives by a few people working through US funding agencies and universities

ECO-DAS & DSCCRS initiatives and/or any new initiatives:
- Helps recent graduates cope with pressures of careers
- Externally funded and run by an ASLO member
- Moved to separate website in 2007

Women in the Aquatic Sciences:
- Small set of Women in Science links submitted by interested members

These activities assure that the Society fosters diversity of education and employment advancement. As member benefits, these provide resources tailored to the needs of underrepresented groups; information on how to thrive in the aquatic sciences, regardless of race, religion, gender, or orientation; and, support structures to foster excellence in the aquatic sciences without impediments imposed by prejudices

2. Proposed activities:

- a. Develop one or more Early Career awards
  
  *Timeline: To be evaluated and confirmed by Early Career Committee. Goal is a description in Bulletin in time for nominations for first awards in 2010.*

- b. Best Paper award- in each ASLO journal each year.
  
  *Timeline: Ask Publication Committee to evaluate this idea for implementation by meeting in San Jose, PR.*

- c. Society should continue to provide substantial financial support for early career activities
  
  The Board shall continue to make efforts to increase, within the budgetary limits, ASLO’s contribution to Early Career Activities. The Early Career Committee is doing excellent work on this. Early career events should be added that are particularly targeted to increase participation by underrepresented groups, particularly those in disciplines or geographic areas that are not well-represented in current membership.

  *Timeline: ASLO President will charge the Early Career Committee with planning these new programs by 2010.*
IV. ASLO Board Implementation Strategies:
A. Strategies already approved by the ASLO Board but not yet implemented; sometimes funding is already in place

1. Survey its membership for needs and interests in 2009. Such surveys should be planned for 2 years prior to the end of the existing SP so that the results are available for the preparation of the following SP (i.e., survey in 2011-12, with results available to write draft in 2013 for the 2014-2018 SP)

2. External review of all ASLO publications (L&O, Methods, LOFE, Bulletin, web, and web-based products). Process to be formulated by the Publications committee and includes external consultants/advice. Process to be in place by 2010 Board meeting and evaluation by 2013.

3. Do a self-assessment of the society, including all committees, by establishing an activities matrix with tractable performance metrics for evaluation of success of SP goals. Input should be requested from all committees for self-assessment. The Board should use the measurements for all decision making.

4. Determine a Financial Plan or investment policy that evolves from the interaction among the ASLO treasurer, the Finance Committee, the Business Office, and is reviewed and approved by the ASLO Board. It should determine the maximum expenditure level by ASLO for every year. Also includes policy on how to allocate funds in the future for committees, projects, etc. within the context of a broader Financial Plan.