

Preface

The new 2020 edition of the American Fisheries Society, Fish Health Section Blue Book is now available online and contains updates of a number of chapters like the Virus hemorrhagic Septicemia virus (VHSV), Bacterial kidney disease, streptococcosis, and *Perkinsus* spp. infection. In 2020, the first real-time PCR assays have been added to the Blue Book. One real-time PCR assay is for the detection of VHSV (Jonstrup et al. 2013), while the second is for detecting *Renibacterium salmoninarum* (Chase et al. 2006). In 2016, a new chapter on Viral Encephalopathy and Retinopathy, caused by Nervous Necrosis Virus (NNV), introductory chapter in the section on Diseases of Crustaceans, Erythrocytic Inclusion Body Syndrome (EIBS), Viral Erythrocytic Necrosis (VEN), and Testing for Mycoplasma in Cell Cultures were added. Also note that in 2014 several new updates were incorporated, including three new chapters in the Diagnostic Section: Weisellois, Hematodiniasis and Electron Microscopy for Diagnostic Virology. Also included were updates to the chapters on Motile Aeromonas Septicemia and the Bacterial Flow Chart. In the Inspection Section, the *Myxobolus cerebralis* chapter was amended to add a final extension cycle step to the PCR protocol listed on page 12.

A major feature of the AFS-FHS Blue Book is the Standard Procedures for Aquatic Animal Health Inspections. This Section is a collaborative effort between the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Fish Health Section that describes specific procedures recommended for the detection of certain pathogens of regulatory concern. An identical document also appears in the USFWS Handbook. Although information on some pathogens may be included in both the Inspection and Diagnostic Sections, the number of pathogens and level of detail is different. The Inspection Section provides more technical information regarding testing for specific pathogens pertinent to inspections conducted for aquatic health surveillance and/or transport purposes; whereas, the information presented in the Diagnostic Section is more broad-based: describing diagnostic, epizootiological, and other biological information important to diagnosticians. The Blue Book is now only available in an online and open access format. This format allows for better graphic detail with incorporation of more images (including videos) and improves ease of download. Our hope is the open access format will attract a new audience for the Blue Book and enhance the Fish Health Section's reputation as a leading source for high quality and relevant information on the detection and diagnosis of aquatic animal diseases. Production of the blue book required hundreds of volunteer hours contributed by the members of the Inspection Section Committee, by the FHS Technical Standards Committee, and by authors of Diagnostic and Inspection Chapters. We hope readers and users of this document find it useful and will participate in the process of improving it in the years to come.