

2026 U.S. Masters Swimming Annual Meeting — Virtual

Committee Name: USMS South Central Zone

Session #: 2026 Annual Meeting

Committee Chair: Jacky Merianos

Vice Chair: N/A

Minutes recorded by: Jacky Merianos

Date/time of meeting: Thursday, August 27, 2026

(with review by Nicole Christensen and Kris Wingenroth)

Number of committee members present: 10

Number of other delegates present: 3

Delegates present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Jacky Merianos – Chair (NT), Nicole Christensen (GU), Neil Gregerson (GU), Lindsay Price (GU), Kris Wingenroth (GU), Cindy Myer (NT), Brad Portway (OK), Ira Panzer (ST), Allison Kiewer (ST), Ed Coats (ST – USMS President)

Other Members present: Stacey Eicks (GU), Ginny Holmes (NT), Susan Ingraham (ST)

Actions Requiring Approval by the House of Delegates:

1. Formal proposal submitted and HOD vote to be taken on September 19, 2026: Southern LMSC's request to join the South Central Zone.

Motions Passed:

1. 2027 South Central Zone Summer Championships: The motion to accept WMST's bid was made by Kris Wingenroth and was seconded by Nicole Christensen. The bid for WMST to host the 2027 LCM Zone Championships on June 26-27, 2027 was approved by a unanimous vote.

Minutes

Zone Chair, Jacky Merianos, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Jacky welcomed all attendees and thanked them all for their involvement in their LMSCs, the South-Central Zone, and USMS.

2025 South Central Zone Jesse Coon Award presentation

Jacky presented the 2025 South Central Zone Jesse Coon Award to Cindy Myer of Lone Star Masters (LSM). Cindy was formally recognized at the Pegasus Masters Long Course Meet in July, and during our Zoom call, Jacky reshared the presentation honoring her contributions. Congratulations to Cindy on this well-deserved recognition.

2025-2026 Zone Chair report

Jacky presented the Zone Chair report which highlighted the following items.

- Zone membership remains strong at 96.6% of last year — even with the 2025 Nationals boost — demonstrating sustained interest across the Zone. To date, we have 3,615 members registered across our five LMSCs for the 2026 year, with two months still remaining in the registration cycle. We’ve also seen steady growth in club participation, increasing from 77 clubs in 2024 to 81 in 2025, and now reaching 89 in 2026. At the same time, the number of unattached swimmers has decreased from 714 in 2025 to 609 in 2026, indicating that more members are finding a home with local club teams.
- The total number of Zone-sanctioned events increased from 25 in 2025 to 28 in 2026 reflecting growth in this area. To date in 2026, we have sanctioned 13 SCY meets, 6 LCM meets, 2 SCM meets, 2 Zone Championship meets, and 5 open water events.
- Effective March 2026, the South Central Zone centralized both the Sanctions Chair and Top Ten Recorder roles. These two positions now oversee all event sanctioning and meet-result processing for the five LMSCs in our Zone: Arkansas, Gulf, North Texas, Oklahoma, and South Texas.
- All South-Central Zone meet results—including split requests—have been uploaded to the USMS database. Both our South Central Zone Championship Records and All-Time Records have been updated and are posted on our Zone website.

2026 and 2027 Open Water Grand Prix Series

Nicole Christensen reported on our 5th Annual South Central Zone Open Water Grand Prix. In 2026, the Grand Prix featured four open water events, including two long-standing swims that have been part of the series since its inception (Lake Long Horn and the OWS Challenge) and two brand-new swims in South Texas (Rockport Swim Challenge and Banana Slug Splash). These races typically draw around 50 masters swimmers each. Three of the four events have already taken place, with the final race scheduled in Marble Falls, TX this October. With 20 swimmers already registered, we anticipate a strong finish to the series.

Nicole is in the beginning stages of planning out the 2027 Grand Prix. If you have a race you’d like considered for inclusion, please reach out to her no later than January 31, 2027.

Centralization of the Sanctions and Top Ten Recorder Role

Effective March 2026, the Sanctions Chair and Top Ten Recorder roles were centralized at the Zone level. Kevin Lunsford has been serving as our Zone Sanctions Chair, and Linda Visser has been serving as our Zone Top Ten Recorder. Jacky asked for feedback on the transition. Both the Gulf and North Texas reported that the process has been smooth and that Kevin and Linda are doing an excellent job. Neither LMSC has encountered any issues. Those present on the call from South Texas and Oklahoma noted that they are not directly involved in sanctioning or meet-result processing and therefore did not have feedback to offer. We did not have any Arkansas delegates or leaders present on the call.

2026 Zone Expenses

Jacky presented the Zone expenses for 2026:

- \$37.98: Website Domain
- \$332.34: Website and Email Marketing Tools
- \$112.58: Jesse Coon Award
- \$300.00: Grand Prix Series Finisher awards (*estimated cost – to be purchased in September*)
- \$100.00: Grand Prix Series High Point awards (*estimated cost – to be purchased in September*)

Distribution of 2026 and 2027 Zone expenses

Jacky reminded delegates and leaders that at our 2025 Zone Meeting, South Central Zone delegates voted to split all 2026 and 2027 Zone expenses proportionally based on each LMSC's share of Zone membership – no additional vote was required this year. We will continue using this method and revisit it at our 2027 Annual Meeting when voting on the expense structure for 2028–2029.

2027 Zone Championship Meet bids

We received two meet bids for 2027. A Spring Zone Championship bid was submitted by Red River Masters (Shreveport, LA), and a Summer Zone Championship bid was submitted by The Woodlands Masters Swim Team. Delegates discussed the proposed Spring Championship dates (February 27–March 1) and expressed concern that the meet was scheduled too early. The Zone agreed that Jacky would provide this feedback to the meet director and explore whether the meet could be moved to April. No additional questions or concerns were raised about the bid. Delegates will await a response from Red River Masters and vote on the bid at a later time.

The Summer Zone Championship bid was accepted unanimously. The meet will be held June 26–27, 2026, at Conroe ISD in The Woodlands, TX. **The motion to accept WMST's bid was made by Kris Wingenroth and seconded by Nicole Christensen, and the bid to host the 2027 Spring SCY Zone Championships was approved by unanimous vote.**

Southern LMSC to Join South Central Zone

Our proposal for Southern to join the USMS South Central Zone was submitted earlier this year to the Legislation Committee and will be voted on by the House of Delegates at the upcoming Annual Meeting. Jacky asked for any final feedback or comments, and none were offered. Delegates and leaders remain excited and fully supportive of this change.

Important Zone Dates and Events for 2026-2027

- October 18-19: Banana Slug Splash, Marble Falls, TX – Final Race of the 2026 Open Water Grand Prix
- November 14-15: South Central Zone Inaugural Fall SCM Championship Meet
Conroe ISD Natatorium, Shenandoah, TX
- TBD: 2027 South Central Zone Spring Championships
- June 26-27: South Central Zone Summer LCM Championship Meet
Conroe ISD Natatorium, Shenandoah, TX

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m. Central Time

Tasks for the Upcoming Year

1. Follow-up with Red River Masters on 2027 Spring Zone Bid
2. Continue to scout out facilities and/or meet hosts for Zone Championship meets
3. 2027 South Central Zone Open Water Grand Prix



2026 South Central Zone Chair Report

Jacky Merianos, 2026 – 2027 Zone Chair
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

South Central Zone Membership Report

LMSC	2026 membership (as of 8/26/26)	2025 membership (Jan 1 st – Dec 31 st)	2026 membership #s (to date) compared to 2024 membership #s
Arkansas	178	181	98.3%
Gulf	852	881	96.7%
North Texas	1,068	1,185	90.1%
Oklahoma	185	186	99.5%
South Texas	1332	1,308	101%
South Central Zone	3,615	3,741	96.63%

LMSC	2026 Club Teams	2025 Club Teams	2026 Unattached Swimmers	2025 Unattached Swimmers
Arkansas	9 Clubs	8 Clubs	43	56
Gulf	30 clubs	28 clubs	134	128
North Texas	17 clubs	18 clubs	194	228
Oklahoma	4 clubs	6 clubs	45	53
South Texas	29 clubs	21 clubs	193	249
South Central Zone	89 Clubs	81 Clubs	609 unattached swimmers	714 unattached swimmers

2026 South Central Zone Sanctioned Events: 28

(sanctioned events as of 8/26/2026)

- 13 SCY meets
- 6 LCM meets
- 2 SCM meets
- 2 Zone Championships (SCY and SCM)
- 5 Open Water swims

Sanctioned events breakdown by LMSC

(sanctioned events as of 8/26/2026)

LMSC	Total events	SCY meet	LCM met	SCM meet	Zone Championship	Open Water
Arkansas	4 events	0	2	1	0	1
Gulf	7 events	4	0	0	2	1
North Texas	7 events	3	2	1	0	1
Oklahoma	4 events	2	2	0	0	0
South Texas	6 events	4	0	0	0	2

South Central Zone projects and events since last Annual Meeting

- 2026 Spring Zones Championships (172 participants)
- Planning & sanctioning of our inaugural Zone SCM Championships *to take place November 14-15, 2026*
- 2026 SC Zone Open Water Grand Prix Challenge (4 OW Swims)
- Our Zone transition of the Sanctions Chair and Top Ten Recorder roles to the Zone level in March 2026
- In June 2026, a formal proposal has been submitted to the Legislation Committee requesting that the Southern LMSC (Louisiana & Mississippi) be moved into the South-Central Zone. The House of Delegates will be voting on our proposal at the 2026 USMS Annual Meeting in September

2026 South Central Zone Sanction Report

Kevin Lunsford, 2026 Zone Sanction Chair
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

Effective March 2026, the South-Central Zone transitioned to a centralized Sanctions Chair role. This position now oversees, manages, and approves all sanctions for every LMSC within our Zone: Arkansas, Gulf, North Texas, Oklahoma and South Texas.

Zone Sanctions that have been approved since this transition occurred:

Arkansas LMSC

<i>Description</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Sanction Date</i>	<i>Event Date</i>
Creekmore Classic Dual Sanctioned	LCM	June 1, 2026	June 19-20, 2026
First Chance Long Course Invitational	LCM	Aug 13, 2026	Jan 15, 2027

Gulf LMSC

<i>Description</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Sanction Date</i>	<i>Event Date</i>
First Time for Everything	SCY	July 31, 2026	Sep 19, 2026
Sabine Weiser SCM Championship	SCM	Aug 14, 2026	Nov 14-15, 2026

North Texas LMSC

<i>Description</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Sanction Date</i>	<i>Event Date</i>
Pegasus Long Course Meters Meet	LCM	April 22, 2026	July 11-12, 2026
TFAM Last Chance Long Course	LCM	Aug 11, 2026	Sep 12-13, 2026
ROCC Masters Invitational	SCY	Aug 14, 2026	Oct 3, 2026
Rodeo Relay Festival	SCM	Aug 14, 2026	Oct 11, 2026

Oklahoma LMSC

<i>Description</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Sanction Date</i>	<i>Event Date</i>
2026 JTSC TMSC Spring Intrasquad	LCM	March 27, 2026	April 11, 2026
Oklahoma Memorial Championships	LCM	May 27, 2026	Aug 15, 2026
Oklahoma Senior Games	SCY	Aug 10, 2026	Sept 13, 2026

South Texas LMSC

<i>Description</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Sanction Date</i>	<i>Event Date</i>
Hill Country Aquatics	SCY	April 9, 2026	May 16, 2026
Banana Slug Splash	OW	June 14, 2026	Oct 17-18, 2026
HCAM Harvest Moon	SCY	July 29, 2026	Sept 27, 2026

- South Texas LMSC as a courtesy requested that the meet announcement state whether awards would be given to swimmers.
- Also, in my communications I am reminding meet directors to submit the results to Linda Visser at linda.visser58@gmail.com Reminding event hosts to not allow one-event participants at SCM and LCM for AQUA recognitions.

2026 South Central Zone Top Ten Recorder Report

Linda Visser, 2026 Zone Top Ten Recorder
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

Effective March 2026, the South-Central Zone transitioned to a centralized Top Ten Recorder role. This position now oversees, reviews, and submits all meet results to the National Office for events held within the LMSCs of our Zone: Arkansas, Gulf, North Texas, Oklahoma and South Texas.

All South-Central Zone meet results—including split requests—have been uploaded to the USMS database. The 2026 SCY Top Ten individual and relay reports have been submitted, and National rankings were released in late August.

2026 South Central Zone Championship Meet Records Report

Susan Ingraham: 2026 Zone Championship Meet Records
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

SCY and LCM Zone Championship Records are all up to date and have been posted to our Zone Website:

SCY Champ Meet Records

[Women Records](#)

[Men Records](#)

[Relay Records – Women](#)

[Relay Records – Men](#)

[Relay Records - Mixed](#)

LCM Champ Meet Records

[Women Records](#)

[Men Records](#)

[Relay Records – Women](#)

[Relay Records – Men](#)

[Relay Records - Mixed](#)

Longest standing record is Ben Allen Age Group 80-84 in 100 Breast with a time of 1:57.53 from 1994.

Note to Zone hosts: Please be sure to upload SC Zone Record Files (Ind & Rel) into MM prior to hosting a Zone Championship so that results will reflect when a record is broken.

2026 South Central Zone Open Water Report

Nicole Christensen: 2026 Zone Open Water Chair
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

2026 South Central Zone Open Water Grand Prix

The 2026 Zone Grand Prix Open Water Challenge Series started in April and will have its final race on the weekend of October 17 – 18. Our series this year has four races, and I am excited to report that two of them are brand new. I worked with groups in South Texas so that we were able to add on races in Rockport, TX and Marble Falls, TX giving us races in three of our five LMSCs.

- **Apr 12**: Lake Longhorn Open Water Round Up [*Gulf LMSC*]
46 swimmers
- **May 3**: Rockport Beach Open Water Challenge [*South Texas LMSC*]
NEW RACE – 50 Swimmers
- **Jul 12**: Open Water Swim Challenge [*North Texas LMSC*]
33 swimmers
- **Oct 17 – 18**: Marble Falls Banana Slug Splash [*South Texas LMSC*]
NEW RACE - registration is open until October 15th. Currently it has 20 swimmers.

The races are set up with three distance categories at each race and swimmers are given points in 1st through 10th place in each distance category at each race. The points are then added together as swimmers swim in additional races. A leaderboard is kept showing the cumulative points achieved by each swimmer in the category they swum in. If a swimmer swims in different distance categories, then their points will be split to show them in both.

At the end of the series, the 1st – 3rd place male and female swimmer in each distance category are given the Grand Prix champion awards based on cumulative point totals. Swimmers who swim in all races in the series also receive a prize no matter how they score. For 2026, we currently have nine swimmers who have attended all three races that have been swum so far.

Swimmers must swim in at least two races to be eligible for the Grand Prix champion awards. Swimmers must also be USMS registered in order to receive points. OEVT swimmers do not get Grand Prix points, although they may get points and awards from the individual race hosts for their specific race. All races in the series are USMS sanctioned open water events.

2026 South Central Zone Website & Email Communications Report

Nicole Christensen : 2026 Zone Communications Chair
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

Zone Website

An update to the Zone website was done to refresh the images and backgrounds on the home page, refresh the South Central Zone Calendars section on the Calendars page and then also to change the South Central Zone Events calendar page to have buttons that directly link to the USMS events that are for each specific LMSC. In this way, human error is taken out and whenever a calendar listing (save the date), pool meet, open water race, clinic or anything else any of our LMSCs are going through the process of getting something on the USMS Calendar of Events will automatically show.

Our Open Water page has been constantly updated with new information coming in about our Grand Prix Open Water Challenge series. The challenge being for swimmers to do the whole series and travel around the zone.

The Records page has been updated with items sent to me by the All Time Zone Record keeper, Kirsten Hoffman, and the Zone Champs Meet Records keeper, Susan Ingraham.

The Zone Champs Meet Results page is updated to include all results that I have found for our Zone meets from 2013 to the present. If anyone knows of a links to results for missing years, please email me.

The Awards Winners page has been updated to include the information about our 2025 Jesse Coon award winner, Cindy Myer. We also have other awards on this page [Award Winners](#) and if anyone sees something that is missing, once again, please email me.

For groups/clubs wanting to host a Zone Championship swim meet, please go to our [Documents](#) page to down templates, samples and other information.

Email Communications

Since the last Zone Annual Meeting, thirteen emails have been sent out to the members of the zone. Emails are sent from the swim@usmssouthcentralzone.org email. If zone members have not been seeing the emails, they should check their spam or bulk folder and designate it as not junk/safe sender. Questions should be sent to Nicole at ncr@creativewaters.net. Since some devices automatically open emails and click on the links, it is difficult to ascertain the true open rates and url click rates.

2026 South Central Zone Championship Meet Committee Report

Nicole Christensen, Jacky Merianos, Susan Ignraham, Lynn Morrison & Alana Wilson
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

It has been a quiet year for our Championship Committee. With no LCM Championship meet held in 2026, the committee has not convened since Winter 2026.

Even without formal meetings, committee members have continued to make progress on the following projects:

- Identified and collaborated with Zone bid candidates for 2027
- Maintained and updated all Zone Championship meet records
- Continued collecting post-meet reports and documentation for our Championship archives (Google Drive)
- Provided as-need support for Zone Meet directors

We are excited to share that a Long Course bid has been received for 2027! In addition, we are looking forward to our inaugural SCM Zone meet this fall and – —assuming it is successful—have a potential bid for a 2027 SCM fall meet as well.



2026 South Central Zone Expense Report

Jacky Merianos, 2026 – 2027 Zone Chair
2026 USMS Annual Meeting

2026 expenses to date

Website domain renewal: \$37.98
Website & marketing tools (1-year): \$332.34
Jesse Coon Award: \$112.58

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$482.90

Fall 2026: Anticipated expenses

Grand Prix, finisher awards: \$300 (estimate)
Grand Prix, high point awards: \$100 (estimate)

Splitting of 2026 expenses

At our 2025 South Central Zone Meeting, delegates voted to split all 2026 Zone expenses proportionally based on each LMSC's share of Zone membership. For example, if an LMSC represents 25% of the Zone's members, it will be responsible for 25% of the total Zone expenses. No LMSC will be asked to pay more than \$0.25 per registered swimmer.

LMSC	% of Zone membership	Requested contribution to 2026 Zone costs
Arkansas	5%	TBD
Gulf	24%	TBD
North Texas	30%	TBD
Oklahoma	5%	TBD
South Texas	36%	TBD

As we are still operating within the 2026 year, our final Zone expenses have not yet been tallied. In early 2027, Jacky will reach out to all LMSC Chairs and Treasurers with each LMSC's requested contribution based on the finalized expenses. All 2026 Zone expenses to date have been covered by the North Texas LMSC (thank you, Mike Doyle!). When it comes time for LMSCs to submit their contributions, payments will be sent directly to North Texas.

Zone Expenses: 2027-2028

At the 2027 Zone Annual meeting, our Zone will take a vote on how they would like to divide up and take care of expenses for 2027 and 2028.