



Managing Agricultural Landscapes for Environmental Quality II

Achieving More Effective Conservation
April 28-30, 2010 Denver, Colorado

Call for Oral and Poster Presentations

Deadline for abstracts: January 18, 2010

Conference Summary

As part of a continued effort to improve conservation effectiveness, the Soil and Water Conservation Society is hosting the Managing Agricultural Landscapes for Environmental Quality II: Achieving More Effective Conservation (MAL II) workshop in April 2010. The workshop will build on the success achieved by Managing Agricultural Landscapes for Environmental Quality (MAL I) held in Kansas City in October 2006.

The concept for MAL II is to further explore the scientific, technical, and policy challenges with regards to advancing resource management across agricultural landscapes. The workshop organizers are intent on focusing on assessment and management of vulnerability and risk between and within agricultural landscapes. It is recognized that there is not a large body of literature on resource management at the landscape scale. Consequently a critical component of the workshop will be to explore potential research designs and methods that may be used to address resource management at the landscape scale.

The workshop is being organized around the following four themes which build from the MAL I conference:

1. Assessing Landscape Vulnerabilities and Values
2. Targeting Risky Behaviors on Vulnerable Landscapes
3. Institutional Challenges to Managing Environmental Quality on Agricultural Landscapes
4. Measuring Conservation Effectiveness Across Agricultural Landscapes

Conservation action at the landscape scale implies discovering the appropriate set of practice patterns for specific landscapes that optimize outcomes across economic, social, and salient natural resource dimensions, such as water quantity or quality, soil conservation, wildlife habitat, or even aesthetic values. Thinking about conservation at the landscape scale is based on using a systems perspective where nonlinearities, feedbacks, and surprises are the norm. If conservation is to move beyond the plot, field, and farm or ranch scale, then it is critical that we begin exploring what is known as well as what needs to be discovered about conservation at the landscape scale.

The Soil and Water Conservation Society has organized this conference to explore the scientific support and scientific gaps for each of the above themes of landscape conservation, provide examples that may guide future research or policy discussions, and generate the excitement that will encourage the rigorous debate and discussion of needed activities for achieving conservation at the landscape scale.

Conference Structure:

As with MAL I, papers addressing these four themes will be written collaboratively by a multidisciplinary team of authors for inclusion in a post-conference publication. Each paper will be presented by the lead author and then supplemented by two “perspective papers” on topics that expand on the theme. Each of these four theme areas will also have a block of time dedicated to concurrent sessions and posters on that theme. Individuals can contribute to and participate in the program by offering either an oral or poster presentation in one of the four theme areas above. Abstracts for these oral and poster presentations will be reviewed and published. There will be poster breaks and receptions targeted for interactive discussion on each of the four themes.

There will again be roundtable discussions each evening to discuss the two themes addressed during the day. Workshop participants will interact and discuss the key themes with the lead authors, collaborators, and “perspective” paper authors. This discussion will also be captured and included for the post-conference publication. The closing session for the conference will be a keynote presentation by Dr Sandra Batie, the Elton R. Smith Chair in Food & Agricultural Policy at Michigan State University on Executing Effective Landscape Conservation: A Vision for the Future.

For additional information on this conference, hotel information, or to submit an abstract, visit www.swcs.org/MAL2

Oral Presentations

Individual presentations will be grouped and presented concurrently. Presentations will be 20 minutes with five additional minutes for question and answer. There will be a limited number of oral presentation opportunities available. If authors are not selected for an oral presentation they may be considered for a poster presentation if they wish.

Poster Presentations

Posters will be on display throughout the conference. Presenters are expected to be present at their boards during the break associated with their topic area and the evening receptions to answer questions and discuss their experiences and results with conference attendees. A poster presentation entails affixing printed materials (typed information, photos, graphs, etc.) on a specific topic to a four-foot high by eight-foot wide (4'x8') poster board. Audiovisual equipment and tabletop or freestanding displays are not permitted.

Key Dates:

Abstracts due: January 18, 2010

Notification of acceptance: February 1, 2010

Final abstracts due: February 22, 2010

Registration deadline: March 11, 2010

SWCS Abstract Guidelines

A list of minimum standards that every abstract must meet has been developed for workshops and conferences organized by the Society. Our goal is to enable all submitted abstracts to be included in the final program and we expect that most abstracts will be acceptable without revision. The purpose of these guidelines is to enable the reviewer to easily identify any substandard abstracts. If an abstract does not meet minimal standards the Review Committee will work with the author to bring the abstract up to standard.

Additionally, in the event that we receive more abstract submissions than the meeting facilities can accommodate, we may be required to limit the number of abstract submissions chosen for the final program. We have developed criteria for screening abstracts in the event that abstract submissions must be limited.

Submission Guidelines and Criteria:

- A) Abstract word limit is 350 words.
- B) Type of presentation: Oral or Poster
- C) The abstract should include the following components:
 - Explanation of the importance of the research or activity relative to a conference theme
 - Objectives/goals/hypotheses
 - Methods employed or suggested methods
 - Results/expected results
 - Conclusion/summary relative to conference themes

Abstract reviewers will apply the following criteria relative to the conference theme:

- Importance and relevance of topic
- Innovation and contribution to knowledge base
- Clarity and completeness – made up of the following:
 - overall quality, purposes and objectives, theoretical and/or applied focus, research/activity methods, findings, and potential practical application.