CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) invites you to join us for the 81st SWCS International Annual Conference, taking place on July 26-29, 2026, in St. Louis, Missouri.

This year's theme, **Gateway to Conservation**, embraces St. Louis's historic and geographic significance. Located just south of the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, the two largest moving bodies of water in North America, St. Louis has long been a meeting place for people, ideas, and opportunity. For thousands of years, vibrant Native American communities thrived across the Upper Mississippi River Valley, where tens of thousands of people called the region home. Later, the city became a hub for westward expansion, symbolized by the iconic Gateway Arch, which today provides an entryway to 128 miles (and counting!) of interconnected greenways.

As we gather at this gateway from East to West, we're invited to think about expansion in a new way: the expansion of conservation itself. How do we widen our reach, deepen our connections, and strengthen our collective impact around the world? How do we show reverence for the past while forging a future? Just as the Mississippi and Missouri rivers converge here to flow forward together, so too can our efforts unite, an inspiring symbol for the future of conservation.

Join SWCS in St. Louis as we bring together our conservation community of researchers, practitioners, industry leaders, farmers, and students from around the world to share inspiration, connections, and wisdom for success.

The conference will feature the latest ideas, technologies, and practices and foster dialogue around their adoption. Through workshops, sessions, symposia, tours, exhibits, and demonstrations, cutting-edge research and practice developments in soil health, water quality, and resource management will be shared. Scientists, practitioners, and farmers will present their work at the field, farm, and watershed scale that span the private and public sectors. Applications of social theories and examples of successful outreach and education will enable attendees to identify ways to scale up localized successes. Participants will also hear about policy and economic developments that build a framework to increase conservation adoption and support future generations.

And when you're done with a day of inspiration, connection, and learning, soak up the beauty of the rivers, cheer on the Cardinals or Cubs, explore historic neighborhoods or the Gateway Arch, and enjoy some iconic St. Louis bites—like toasted ravioli, St. Louis–style pizza, and gooey butter cake!

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL: www.swcs.org/26AC

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 4, 2026

If you have questions, contact events@swcs.org



Gateway to Conservation

81st SWCS International Annual Conference
St. Louis, Missouri | July 26–29, 2026

OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

There are several options to present information and research during the 81st SWCS International Annual Conference. All presenters must be able to present live, in-person.

All **oral presentation, poster presentation, and symposium submissions** must be received through the online CMT submission system.

To propose a **workshop submission**, please utilize the submission form. Do NOT use the online CMT submission system.

All submissions must be submitted by **11:59 PM CT on February 4, 2026**. Please note there will be no extension this year.

Presentations can only be submitted in one area (oral presentation, poster presentation, symposium, or workshop).

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations are opportunities to share the results of conservation research projects and/or lessons learned. Each presenter will be given 20 minutes: 15 minutes to present and 5 minutes for questions. **SUBMISSIONS ARE LIMITED TO ONE PER AUTHOR.**

ORAL PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All oral presenters must be available on their scheduled day, July 26-29, 2026, to present live and in-person.
- All oral presenters must register for the conference.
- View the Information for Oral Presenters at www.swcs.org/26AC for additional details.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Poster presentations report the results of research or lessons learned from professional experiences. **SUBMISSIONS ARE LIMITED TO ONE PER AUTHOR.**

POSTER PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All poster presenters must be available in-person during breaks and receptions on July 26-29, 2026, to answer questions and share their work.
- All poster presenters must register for the conference.
- Optional: Poster presenters will have the opportunity to submit an image of their poster presentation to be included on the event app after the conference. This is separate from the requirement of presenting live and in-person.
- View the Information for Poster Presenters at www.swcs.org/26AC for additional details.

STUDENT POSTER CONTEST DETAILS

SWCS's student poster contest offers three awards (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) with a cash prize. Students can opt in to participating in the poster contest during the online submission process. An image of the student posters may be due in advance.

SYMPOSIA

Symposia are 90-minute sessions that provide comprehensive, in-depth coverage of a specific topic and allow for audience interaction. The sessions are organized by an individual and incorporate multiple presenters, panel discussions, or other formats as determined by the organizer. **SUBMISSIONS ARE LIMITED TO ONE PER AUTHOR.**

SYMPOSIA PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All symposia presenters must be available on their scheduled day, July 26-29, 2026, to present live and in-person.
- All symposia presenters must register for the conference.
- Symposia moderator and presenters are the responsibility of each symposium organizer; information is required within the submission form.
- View the Information for Symposia Organizers and Presenters at www.swcs.org/26AC for additional details.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops are designed to enhance professional skills through engagement, hands-on interactive education, and training in selected topics. The sessions are organized by an individual. **SUBMISSIONS ARE LIMITED TO ONE PER AUTHOR.**

WORKSHOP PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All workshop presenters must be available on Sunday, July 26, 2026, between 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM, to present live and in-person.
- Workshop moderator, presenters, and a detailed agenda are the responsibility of the workshop organizer; information is required within the submission form.
- View the Information for Workshop Organizers and Presenters at www.swcs.org/26AC for additional details.

CONFERENCE TRACKS

Submissions are being accepted for three specialty and nine general topic areas. Abstracts submitted within the general conference track should cater to the conference theme.

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE FOR ALL SCALES AND SYSTEMS

This track explores regenerative agriculture systems that rebuild soil health, restore ecosystem function, and strengthen the resilience of farm and food systems. It explores how farmers and ranchers are defining and applying regenerative principles across all scales of operations to mimic natural systems and expand market opportunity.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Regenerative agriculture across scales (small, medium, and large-scale operations), landscapes (agricultural and urban), and production types (organic, specialty)
- Natural systems agriculture: polycultures, continuous living cover, perennials, pollinator-friendly management, diverse rotations, adaptive grazing, reduced disturbance, and integrated livestock
- Aligning regenerative production with local and regional food systems, supply chains, and market opportunities
- Demonstrating the triple bottom line of regenerative agriculture—environmental, economic, and community benefits (people, planet, profit)

CONSERVATION AT THE CONFLUENCE

Embracing this year's location at the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, the two largest moving bodies of water in North America, this track explores what conservation looks like in and around this iconic region. Conservation is inherently local and place-based, and few places better illustrate the challenges and opportunities of connecting landscapes than this powerful meeting of waters.

This topic area highlights local and regional conservation efforts that offer lessons, partnerships, and innovations with relevance far beyond the basin. Attendees will gain insights into how the region is working across boundaries (geographic, institutional, and cultural) to protect and enhance these vital river systems.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Large-scale watershed initiatives in the Mississippi and Missouri River basins, including Nutrient Reduction Strategy and Hypoxia Zone initiatives
- Regional river system challenges such as navigation, energy, flooding, and sediment management
- Communication and outreach campaigns that elevate the value of river and watershed stewardship
- Urban and rural collaborations that connect agricultural and city landscapes
- Wildlife management and habitat restoration efforts within and adjacent to the river basins
- Collaborative governance models and cross-state partnership advancing basin-wide conservation goals

INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND DATA IN CONSERVATION

Every day, technology changes what is possible and profitable in the agriculture sector, creating new opportunities to expand and improve conservation efforts. This track will showcase cutting edge technologies at the intersection of agriculture and conservation and explore how these innovations can be better integrated to advance sustainability and profitability.

This topic highlights how innovations in the way we collect data, share information, and make on-farm decisions are transforming conservation and expanding the tools available to plan, implement, and monitor practices while creating new sources of revenue that support farm resilience and success.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Adoption of precision agriculture to increase efficiencies in agricultural production and meet environmental goals
- Use of data to analyze and make real-time on-farm decisions and to measure, report, and verify outcomes
- Application of emerging technologies, including drones, robotics, sensors, software, and other tools
- Partnerships and alliances that increase access to and scale up the use of data, technology, and precision agriculture

THE PRODUCER AND THE PLOT

On-farm research and applications conducted with producers can help answer questions about the benefits and risks of adopting new conservation practices and management systems. This topic area highlights the importance of pairing a producer with a conservation professional to conduct trials, demonstrate practices, build networks, and share learnings within their own community.

We are seeking paired talks featuring producers and the commodity groups, researchers, organizations, or companies that work alongside them to implement on-farm trials, demonstration plots, and peer-to-peer learning networks.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- On-farm trials or demonstrations that facilitated a better understanding of changes in management and/or increased conservation adoption
- Networks of on-farm trials and demonstration plots to increase adoption in a geographic area or watershed
- Farmer-to-farmer networks that advance the ability of producers to connect and advance conservation together
- Projects that improve the ability for producers to understand and make decisions for on-farm improvement and off-farm environmental impact

GENERAL TOPIC DESCRIPTIONS

The following nine ongoing areas of emphasis comprise the core work of SWCS to foster the science and art of natural resource conservation. Please choose one of these focus areas when submitting an abstract. Special consideration will be given to new insights, techniques, or approaches in addressing each of these general topic areas.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Adaptive management is an evidence-based approach to improving conservation outcomes through continuous learning and adjustment. This track explores how monitoring, evaluation, and feedback loops inform better decision-making for soil and water conservation, resilience, and biodiversity management.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Economic incentives and regulatory frameworks that drive conservation adoption
- Evaluation of market- and policy-based approaches to resource management
- Environmental markets, credit programs, and trading systems
- Innovative funding models and investment strategies for conservation programs
- Ethical and equity considerations in conservation policy and implementation

CONSERVATION ECONOMICS AND POLICY

This track focuses on the economic and policy factors that shape conservation adoption and long-term sustainability. Sessions will explore how programs, markets, private investment, and policy translate into resource protection or create barriers to broader adoption.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Voluntary or regulatory environmental policy
- The role of innovative funding methods, environmental markets, and trading development in conservation demand and funding
- Evaluation of market- and regulatory-based approaches to natural resource management
- Ethical considerations in conservation policy
- Funding of programs

CONSERVATION MODELS, TOOLS, AND TECHNOLOGIES

This track highlights the tools, models, and technologies that support data-driven conservation planning and evaluation. Presentations will focus on how innovation in modeling, visualization, and analysis enhances resource management and conservation effectiveness.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Development and testing of conservation practices
- Quantification of the environmental and conservation effects of best management practices (BMPs) and systems
- Advances in science and technology for predicting, monitoring, and/or evaluating effects of alternative resource management practices and systems (e.g., soil, water, nutrient, grazing, manure, pest, plant, and landscape management)
- Decision support tools and platforms for conservation planning and implementation
- Geographic information systems and innovative data visualization

CONSERVATION IN ORGANIC, SPECIALTY, SMALL-SCALE, OR URBAN AGRICULTURE

This track explores conservation in organic, specialty, urban, and small-scale production systems. It also includes agricultural management that mimics natural systems and enhances and protects biodiversity.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Conservation and management in small- and medium-scale enterprises
- Natural systems agriculture: polycultures, continuous living cover, perennials, and pollinator-friendly management
- Contaminants and other challenges in urban landscapes
- Integrating conservation practices within local food systems and community-supported agriculture operations
- Implementing conservation approaches in unique and small enterprises that balance environmental, economic, and community sustainability (people, planet, and profit)

CULTIVATING CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, COMMUNITY, AND NETWORKS

This track focuses on the people who make conservation happen—the conservation professionals. Across government, academic, nonprofit, private, and corporate sectors, these individuals connect programs with producers and communities. Research shows that continued interaction with a conservation professional is a strong predictor of conservation adoption. Sessions will highlight professional development, capacity building, and networks that strengthen on-the-ground implementation.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Effective tactics and unique ideas to expand and implement technical assistance capacity
- Compelling training to meet the needs of conservation professionals
- Peer-to-peer and mentorship programs
- Professional and organizational networks advancing conservation
- Intergenerational workforce and preparing the workforce of the future
- Recruitment programs to engage the next generation of conservation professionals
- Collaborative approaches and partnerships that strengthen conservation technical assistance across sectors (e.g., Technical Service Providers, nonprofits, agencies, and industry)

OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This track highlights innovative approaches to education, outreach, and community engagement that strengthen public understanding and participation in conservation. Presentations may showcase programs that build trust, engagement, and shared stewardship.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Applied research and model programs demonstrating effective methods for engaging decision-makers
- Programs fostering cooperative stakeholder-based decision-making
- Innovative outreach strategies that incorporate artists, teachers, and youth
- New technologies and methods to include and collaborate with underrepresented, new, and diverse audiences
- Assessing community and audience learning needs to strengthen conservation outreach and education programs
- Measuring and communicating the outcomes of outreach and education activities to enhance future engagement efforts

SOCIAL SCIENCES INFORMING CONSERVATION

Social science provides critical insight into the human factors shaping conservation decisions. This track explores how disciplines such as sociology, political science, anthropology, and communications help us understand motivations, barriers, and opportunities for conservation adoption.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- A focus on sociology, political science, anthropology, and communications, and how they contribute to conservation adoption and persistence
- The use of social sciences to inform critical conservation challenges facing the nation and world
- Evaluation of stakeholder decision-making, social networks, and information sources
- Case studies demonstrating how social science research has led to measurable conservation change
- Behavioral and cultural factors influencing conservation adoption and long-term stewardship
- Social science approaches to equity, trust-building, and community participation in conservation

SOIL HEALTH RESOURCES, INDICATORS, ASSESSMENT, AND MANAGEMENT

Healthy soils are the foundation to provide the food, fiber, energy, and other ecosystem services needed for a growing world population. This track invites presentations on innovative practices, assessments, and technologies that advance soil conservation and regeneration.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Soil health measurement, assessment, and management
- Soil conservation and management
- Soil survey, assessment, and analysis
- Water and wind erosion prediction and management
- Soil health implications for human health and the microbiome
- The soil's influence on and interaction with global cycles of water, energy, and carbon as indicators of soil health

WATER RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

This track addresses the interconnected social, economic, environmental, and technical dimensions of water resource management. Presentations may share research, case studies, and lessons learned from testing, monitoring, evaluation, and demonstration projects that address water quality, quantity, and resilience at multiple scales.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- International and transboundary water resource management
- Development and implementation of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs)
- Water quality, quantity, supply, source water protection, and conservation
- Stormwater management and design or green infrastructure
- Irrigation and drainage
- Watershed restoration and targeted watershed management interventions
- Flooding and other implications of water resource conservation and management

GENERAL NOTES

Abstracts should include the following:

1. A statement of current relevance or need and who should attend or participate in the session
2. General methods and data analysis information
3. Results or predicted results if the work has not yet been completed
4. Explanation of how the results or outcomes contribute to science and society
5. Your recommendations for next steps to build on work and action

Including tentative or final conclusions will greatly strengthen presentation proposals, as well as identifying and/or including key stakeholders participating directly in the work and clarifying the benefits received.

All presenters and/or organizers (oral, poster, and symposium) who indicate intent to participate in the conference imply agreement to register for the conference at the appropriate fee and present live and in-person. View the 2026 registration fees at www.swcs.org/26AC. SWCS does not reimburse presenters for expenses incurred. This includes authors, symposium organizers, workshop organizers, and panelists invited to present as part of a symposium or workshop.

SHARE YOUR WORK WITH A BROADER AUDIENCE

Consider turning your symposium, presentation, or poster into an article for the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation (JSWC)*.

JSWC has two sections: A Section articles (between 600 and 4,000 words) highlight case studies in conservation practice, new tools and technologies, cutting-edge research in progress, and emerging viewpoints. The Research Section contains peer-reviewed, applied research papers and may include research briefs (short manuscripts reporting on research of high relevance, novelty, or emerging concern), research reviews, and data notes. Submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis.

For more information, browse the submission guidelines and send queries to pubs@swcs.org.