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78<sup>th</sup> SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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## CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) is seeking oral presentations, posters, symposia, professional development sessions, and workshops for the 78th SWCS International Annual Conference, taking place in Des Moines, Iowa, August 6-9, 2023.

This year's conference theme, "Healthy Land, Clean Water: Cultivating a Legacy of Conservation," challenges us to envision the world we want to leave for those who follow us. At this year's event, we will share successes and embrace lessons learned so that we can move toward our natural resource goals with greater speed, efficiency, effectiveness, and inclusivity. We will examine the traditions that have both built and challenged our ability to advance the conservation movement while exploring the new and necessary capacity, innovation, and partnerships needed to regenerate our land, water and other natural resources.

The conference will assemble a diverse, multigenerational conservation community of researchers, practitioners, industry leaders, farmers, and students from around the world in Des Moines, Iowa, where the Soil and Water Conservation Society was founded 78 years ago and is still headquartered today. The agenda will feature the latest ideas, technologies, and practices, and foster a 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 and practitioners will present their work at the field, farm, and watershed scale across an array of private and public arenas. 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.

**SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL:** [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC)

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** February 15, 2023

If you have questions, contact [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org)



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### OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

There are several options to present information and research during the 78th 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 found at [this link](#).

To propose a **professional development submission**, please utilize the submission form found at [this link](#). Do NOT use the online CMT submission system.

To propose a **workshop submission**, please utilize the submission form found at [this link](#). Do NOT use the online CMT submission system.

All submissions must be submitted by **11:59 PM CT on February 15, 2023**. Please note there will be **no extension** this year.

### 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 make their presentation and 5 minutes for questions. **Submissions under this category are limited to no more than two per author.**

### ORAL PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All oral presenters must be available on scheduled day between August 6-9, 2022, to present live, in-person.
- All oral presenters must register for the event.
- Optional: Oral presenters will have the

opportunity to submit a video recording of their presentation to be included on the virtual resources platform after the event. This is separate from the requirement of presenting live and in person. View the Information for Oral Presenters at [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC) for additional details.

### POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Poster presentations report the results of research or lessons learned from professional experience. **Submissions under this category are limited to one per author.**

### STUDENT POSTER CONTEST DETAILS

SWCS will be sponsoring a student poster contest by offering four awards (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and People's Choice) with a cash prize. Students can opt into participating in the poster contest during the online submission process. A JPEG image of the student posters will be due in advance.

### POSTER PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All poster presenters must be available live, in-person during select breaks and receptions on August 7-8, 2023, to answer questions and share their work with attendees.
- All poster presenters must register for the event.
- Optional: Poster presenters will have the opportunity to submit an image of their poster presentation to be included on the virtual resources platform after the event. This is separate from the requirement of presenting live and in person. View the Information for Poster Presenters at [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC) for additional details.



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### SYMPOSIA

Symposia are 90-minute sessions that provide comprehensive, in-depth coverage of a specific topic and that also 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 under this category are limited to one per author.**

### SYMPOSIA PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All symposia presenters must be available on scheduled day between August 6-9, 2022, to present live in person.
- All symposia presenters must register for the event.
- Symposia moderator and presenters are the responsibility of each symposium organizer; information is required within the submission form.
- Optional: Symposia presenters will have the opportunity to submit a video recording of their presentation to be included on the virtual resources platform after the event. This is separate from the requirement of presenting live and in person. View the Information for Symposia Organizers and Presenters at [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC) for additional details.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

Professional development sessions are hosted with the intent to further enrich the skill set of conservation professionals across a diverse range of fields. These sessions focus on professional growth

and communicating best practices for those working in natural resource conservation. Examples of past sessions include “Hiring Diversity: Equitable Hiring Practices,” “Effective Networking and Leadership,” and “Creating Meaningful Community Engagement.” Organizers will choose the length of their professional development session in the submission form; 40 minutes, 90 minutes, or either if they have no preference. **Submissions under this category are limited to one per author.**

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All professional development presenters must be available on scheduled day between August 6-9, 2023, to present live in person.
- All professional development presenters must register for the event.
- Professional development moderator and presenter(s) are the responsibility of each session organizer; information is required within the submission form.
- Optional: Professional development presenters will have the opportunity to submit a video recording of their presentation to be included on the virtual resources platform after the event. This is separate from the requirement of presenting live and in person. View the Information for Professional Development Organizers and Presenters [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC) for additional details.



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### WORKSHOPS

Workshops are designed to enhance professional skills through engagement, hands-on interactive education, and training in selected topics. Workshops may be proposed for a time frame of two to three hours on Sunday, August 6, 2023, between 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. **Submissions under this category are limited to one per author.**

### WORKSHOP PRESENTER REQUIREMENTS

- All workshop presenters must be available on Sunday, August 6, 2022, between 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, to present live in person.
- Workshop moderator, presenters, and a detailed agenda are the responsibility of the workshop organizer; information is required within the submission form.

### 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

Inclusion of tentative or final conclusions will greatly strengthen presentation proposals. Additional points for identifying and/or including key stakeholders participating directly in the work and clarity of benefits received. For example, as conservation professionals provide technical assistance, sponsored by private and or government agencies, to farmers to implement conservation on farms in watersheds, downstream

cities and communities receive source water protection and flood damage disaster mitigation. Including the various stakeholders in the presentation to illustrate how this fits together may be beneficial.

Presentations can only be submitted in one area (oral presentation, poster presentation, symposium, professional development session, or workshop) unless it is explained in the abstract how they will differ.

All presenters and/or organizers (oral, poster, symposium, and professional development session) who indicate intent to participate in the conference imply agreement to register for the conference at the appropriate fee and present live in person. View the 2023 registration fees at [www.swcs.org/23AC](http://www.swcs.org/23AC).

SWCS does not reimburse presenters for expenses incurred. This includes authors, symposium organizers, professional development session organizers, workshop organizers, and panelists invited to present as part of a symposium, professional development session, or workshop.



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### JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

SWCS invites presentations about justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and traditional and Indigenous knowledge in conservation within each specialty and general topic area. Our goals for the world's soil, water, and other natural resources cannot be realized without justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. SWCS's core values recognize this imperative and include respect for people and cultures, and the valuation of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas. To support both the earth's landscapes and the societies that reside within them, we must seek diverse voices, engage in dialogue, think critically, and take meaningful action toward creating institutions and systems that serve and value people equitably.

Learn more at [www.swcs.org/about-us/our-organization/](http://www.swcs.org/about-us/our-organization/).

### CONFERENCE TRACKS

Submissions are being accepted for three special and eight general topic areas. Abstracts submitted within the general conference track should cater toward the conference theme. SWCS reserves the right to adjust presentation submission tracks.

### CULTIVATING CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, COMMUNITY, AND NETWORKS

This track embraces the Soil and Water Conservation Society's mission and the conference theme by providing a space to share the development of the single most important aspect of conservation implementation: the conservation professional. Employees in the government, academic, nonprofit, private, and corporate sectors are the link between technical assistance, conservation planning, and program implementation and farmers and communities. Research has found that interaction with a conservation professional over time is a consistent predictor of farmer adoption of conservation practices.

Topics include but are not limited to:

- Effective tactics and unique ideas to expand and implement technical assistance capacity
- Compelling training meeting the needs of conservation professionals
- Peer-to-peer and mentorship programs
- Professional and organizational networks advancing conservation
- Intergenerational workforce and the workforce of the future
- Youth conservation efforts
- Recruitment programs to engage the next generation of conservation professionals
- Projects creating more opportunities for underrepresented populations to enter, flourish within, and lead the conservation community



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### CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

As the negative impacts of climate change are increasingly felt, climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are top-tier priorities for policymakers, researchers, and land managers. Climate-smart agriculture simultaneously adapts and increases resilience to climate change, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improves productivity to ensure food security. Abstracts in this track should address adaptation methods and how to better manage our resources in light of climate change threats. Topics may include but are not limited to:

- The current and anticipated impacts of climate change on agriculture and our natural resources
- Methods and practices for making our landscapes and communities resilient to weather extremes
- Sustainable energy sources, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and carbon sequestration
- Technologies and innovations in agronomic inputs for increased resilience and productivity
- Climate data services and decision-making tools for selecting and monitoring adaptation responses
- Policy initiatives and programs to encourage adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices

### EDGE-OF-FIELD PRACTICES AND MONITORING

Edge-of-field practices, including wetlands, bioreactors, saturated buffers, drainage water management, and others, have been identified as integral components of nutrient reduction strategies in the Mississippi River Basin. Edge-of-field technologies are being actively developed, and the science around their adoption and benefits is evolving. Topics in this area could include:

- Use of edge-of-field monitoring to engage stakeholders, measure and target practices, and improve water quality
- Research on the water quality and other environmental impacts of edge-of-field practices
- Implementation of edge-of-field practices and monitoring at various scales
- Unique partnerships to scale up the implementation and monitoring of edge-of-field practices



Photo courtesy of Lynn Betts and the [SWCS Conservation Media Library](#).



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### GENERAL TOPIC DESCRIPTIONS

The following eight 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, engagement of stakeholders, or approaches in addressing each of these general topic areas.

#### ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Adaptive management is an interactive, structured process of management with the goal of enhancing learning and reducing uncertainty. Adaptive management for soil and water conservation, climate resiliency, and biodiversity management is appropriate when uncertainty is high but management is possible. Abstracts in this track may include but are not limited to:

- Aspects of water and soil management
- Maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services
- Plant and animal responses to management
- Monitoring to inform decision-making
- Scientific and technical advances in targeting conservation and in precision conservation
- Effective use of human capital to increase conservation success
- Climate resilience strategies
- Community, regional, and integrated planning

- Utilizing conservation to improve and protect source water

#### CONSERVATION ECONOMICS AND POLICY

This subject area focuses on economic, policy, and related drivers of conservation adoption, demand, and maintenance. It addresses how programs, markets, private investment, and policy translate into resource conservation and environmental benefits, or hinder greater conservation adoption. Abstracts in this track may include but are not limited to:

- Voluntary or regulatory environmental policy
- Decision support tools for program design and implementation
- Monitoring and assessment of conservation needs
- 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

In the implementation, planning, management, and development of conservation practices, we rely on models and tools that provide decision support through analysis, visualization, and evaluation. Development of new tools and technologies, results of evaluation, and application experiences all provide valuable information.



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Abstracts in this track may 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 (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 subject area focuses on organic, specialty, urban, and small-scale agricultural and forest systems. It also includes agricultural management that mimics natural systems and enhances and protects biodiversity.

Abstracts submitted in this area could include:

- Conservation and management in small- and medium-scale enterprises
- Local foods, community supported agriculture, and market and supply chain development and analysis
- Opportunities for unique enterprises to implement conservation supporting a triple

bottom-line of sustainability (people, planet, and profit)

- Natural systems agriculture: polycultures, continuous living cover, perennials, and pollinator-friendly management

### OUTREACH, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach, education, and engagement help integrate quantitative data with qualitative knowledge and social concerns, thereby strengthening the decision-making process and achieving equitable solutions.

Abstracts may address:

- 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
- Educational needs assessment
- New technologies and methods to include and collaborate with underrepresented, new, and diverse audiences
- Evaluation of the impacts of outreach activities, including technical assistance

### SOCIAL SCIENCES INFORMING CONSERVATION

Understanding what motivates landowners, land managers, and other stakeholders to pursue (or not pursue) conservation practices is essential.



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The human dimensions of soil and water conservation are a critical component to sustainable conservation adoption. Abstracts in this track may include:

- A focus on sociology, political science, economics, 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

### SOIL HEALTH RESOURCES, INDICATORS, ASSESSMENT, AND MANAGEMENT

The use of soil resources is required to provide the food, fiber, energy, and other ecosystem services needed for a growing world population. Soil and environmental degradation have made the development of technologies and practices for sustainable and regenerative soil management a high priority. We are seeking presentations that consider:

- Soil health measurement, assessment, and management
- Soil conservation and management
- Soil survey, assessment, and analysis
- Water and wind erosion prediction and management
- Carbon sequestration and implications of climate change for soil health, conservation, and management

- The soil's role in global cycles (water, energy, carbon)
- Soil health implications for human health and the microbiome

### WATER RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

This area addresses the social, economic, environmental, and technical dimensions of water resource management. Abstracts in this area should disseminate results, information, lessons learned, and/or shared experiences of research, testing, monitoring, and/or evaluation/demonstration projects on water resource issues. Abstracts may include:

- International and transboundary water resource management
- Watershed-scale research and planning methods and tools
- 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 climate change for water resource conservation and management