



Call for Proposals for Educational and Training Sessions

Opens: January 21, 2026

Deadline: March 27, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET

33rd Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society November 1 - 5, 2026

The Wildlife Society will hold its 33rd Annual Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, between November 1 - 5, 2026. Proposals for education and training programs including symposia, panel discussions and workshops are invited across all aspects of wildlife ecology, management, policy, human dimensions and conservation.

Symposia are comprised of a series of presentations, 6, 12, 18 or 24 talks, that address aspects of a single topic. **Each talk is 15 minutes.** Symposia may include panel discussions as part of their session. Symposia are scheduled to run concurrently with other conference sessions. Symposia with more than 12 talks may be scheduled to occur on one day with a break partway through the session or two days depending on the conference schedule. All symposium speakers are required to register for the conference and symposium organizers are responsible for identifying moderators for their session. Attendance is open to all conference registrants.

Symposium organizers should recruit speakers to submit abstracts for their session as part of the Call for Abstracts. As part of the detailed description of the session organizers will be asked to provide names of intended speakers. These speakers along with other wildlife professionals will need to submit their abstract via the Call for Abstracts in April. It will be up to the session organizers to create a comprehensive and diverse session on the intended topic. Symposium organizers will review abstracts submitted to their session and organize their agenda between May 27 - June 10, 2026. The time allocated for the symposium will be dictated by the number of submissions. If a topic fails to get a minimum of 6 abstracts it may be removed from the program. More information will be provided to session organizers upon selection of their symposium proposal.

Panel Discussions are a forum that allows for dynamic, informal discussion of a topic among a panel of experts and the audience. A panel discussion can be an opening prompt or short introductory comments by experts, followed by audience participation and lively discussion, collaboration and problem solving. The sessions can address complex or specific topics in wildlife management and ecology. The only requirement is they must be interactive. Panel discussions are scheduled for 90 minutes and will run concurrently with other conference sessions. Attendance is open to all conference registrants.

Workshops, Field Trips, & Trainings are courses on specific skills, techniques or processes and may involve one or more instructors. Workshops are intended to emphasize learning through participation, discussion and "hands-on" activities. For this reason, organizers must specify an upper limit on attendance.

Attendance at workshops is by advance registration only. TWS will charge a minimum registration fee of \$30 for professionals and \$15 for students and new professionals, though workshop organizers can request higher registration fees. Fees above the minimum registration will be returned to the organizers or supporting Working Group. To keep overall conference costs as low as possible for attendees, TWS encourages, but does not require, workshop fees to stay below \$100 and preferably less for students. Workshops may be a half day (4 hours) or full day (8 hours) in length.

Offsite workshops, field trips, and trainings that require transportation require a deposit of \$1,000 by August 31, 2026. Workshop organizers are responsible for all transportation costs. Arrangement for transportation must occur through TWS. Further details on payment instructions will be provided when the workshop proposal is accepted.

Workshops are not intended to promote a commercial product, product line or company. These activities belong in the trade show. If the nature of the workshop requires demonstration of specific products, it is preferred that the instructor be a practitioner rather than a company representative.

Responsibilities of Session Organizers

Organizers are responsible for coordinating with the Program Committee, planning their sessions, selecting instructors/presenters, moderating their sessions, and meeting all deadlines. This responsibility includes helping TWS develop an engaging conference inclusive of multiple perspectives and individuals who work to manage, conserve, and protect wildlife and their habitats. As such, all proposals submitted to TWS2025 should be multifaceted with topics and speakers representing the diverse perspectives of our communities (see [TWS Standing Position Statement on Workforce Diversity](#)). You will be asked to provide a short statement as a part of your proposal that describes how your session represents multiple perspectives, individually and/or organizationally.

As part of the proposal symposium submission process, you will provide the names of speakers you are recruiting for your symposium. As described above, you will also be asked to review and, if appropriate, include presentations from outside the list of speakers you provided. We hope that such an approach will assist organizers in finding suitable speakers, build more robust sessions on specific topics, and enhance the overall attendee experience. If organizers feel that a submitted abstract is not appropriate for their session, it will still be considered by TWS for inclusion within the conference's general contributed sessions.

Sessions, including workshops, will be scheduled on all days of the conference.

Abstracts from all recruited presenters must be submitted as part of the Call for Abstracts. Submitters will be able to select the title of accepted symposium proposals upon submission. The Call for Abstracts will open by April 20, 2026, and close May 27, 2026. Symposium organizers will review and organize their session between May 12 –25, 2025. The time allocated for the symposium will be dictated by the number of submissions.

Presenters in symposia must submit their slide deck (e.g. PPT, PDF) via an online submission site 48 hours prior to their talk. To improve the overall accessibility of conference content, **all presenters will also be asked to submit a pre-recorded video of their talk prior to the start of the conference.**

All session organizers and speakers must register for the conference. In general, TWS will not waive registration fees for accepted speakers. However, some speakers based in low- and lower middle-income

countries and locations may have access to fee waivers and discounts consistent with our policy on open access publication, available [here](#). Organizers may seek outside support to cover registration, transportation, lodging, and other conference-related expenses that are necessary to participate in the conference.

All participants including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, TWS staff, service providers and others are expected to abide by the [TWS Guidelines for Professional Behavior](#). The Guidelines for Professional Behavior applies to all TWS meeting-related events including those sponsored by organizations other than TWS but held in conjunction with TWS events, in public or private facilities. In addition, TWS members and authors of TWS publications must also adhere to the [TWS Code of Ethics](#).

Proposal Submission and Requirements –

Please note that some of the guidelines have been updated this year.

All proposals must be submitted through the online submission site. An active link will be available via the Call for Proposals when the submission site opens.

The submission process will prompt you for the following information:

1. Session Type – workshop/field trip, symposium, panel discussion
2. Session Title
3. Short Session Title – under 30 characters including spaces. The short title will be used for marketing materials, including printed materials at the conference. The full session title will appear on the digital schedule, website, and mobile app
4. A brief description of the session – this will be used to advertise your session (50 words)
5. Detailed description of the session – include speakers and topics that you are recruiting to participate in the session. This information will be used to evaluate your proposal (1,000 word limit).
6. Keywords (between 1 and 3)
7. Perspectives Statement (under 300 words) – The statement should describe the perspectives to be included as part of the session. This can include technical, management, cultural, social, policy, sector/industry or other appropriate perspectives representing the breadth of wildlife conservation and management.
8. **Workshops, Field Trips, Trainings Only** – Preferred Session Length –
 - a. Half day (4 hours)
 - b. Full day (8 hours)
9. Organizer(s) – names and complete contact information. If supported by a Working Group, the Chair of the working group should be included as a co-organizer. The submitting organizer will be the contact person. The Working Group Chair is included for administrative purposes, and can be removed prior to posting session information to the website.
10. Supported by (not required)– institutions/groups that are financially or otherwise supporting the proposed session.

Working Group Support: If a TWS Working Group is supporting the proposal, the Working Group name should be listed here and the chair of the working group should be listed as a co-organizer. Working Groups support is typically obtained by contacting the Chair of the working group and support typically comes in two forms: a Working Group decides to support a session that is important to, or will benefit their membership, and/or a Working Group's members are offering a session as a service to the organization (typically in the form of a workshop). In some cases, a Working Group may request the organizers charge workshop registration fees that go toward

supporting the Working Group's activities. The supporting Working Group also needs to provide a letter acknowledging their support of the session (sent to tricia@wildlife.org by March 31, 2026).

Workshop and Field Trip proposals also require the following additional information:

11. Minimum Attendance
12. Maximum Attendance
13. Registration fees – a minimum fee of \$30 for professionals and \$15 for students and new professionals will be charged and this fee will go to TWS. If registration costs exceed these administrative minimums, please include a proposed fee and associated budget with your submission, fees above minimum registration fees will be returned to the Working Group or Organizers after the conference. TWS prefers workshop fees to be \$100 or less for professionals and substantially lower for students.
14. Room set up/Transportation needs
Room Set and AV requests – standard AV packages described below, if you have additional or alternative set-up requests, please note them here.
 - a. Symposium and Panel Discussions – theater seating with a podium, a head table for up to 4 speakers, a laptop, projector, and screen
 - b. Workshops – classroom seating with power for participants laptops, podium, projector, and screen. Organizers will need to bring their own laptops.

Proposal Evaluation and Notice of Decision

Proposals will be evaluated on the timeliness of the subject, importance to the profession and/or contribution to science, breadth of perspectives and the overall quality of the written proposal. Proposals with support from TWS Working Groups are especially encouraged. Proposals that do not meet the requirements outlined in this call will be rejected. TWS further reserves the right to reject proposals for any reason, including but not limited to space and time restrictions, quality of the proposal, timeliness, importance to the profession, breadth of content/perspectives, overlap with other proposals and/or contribution to science.

The submitting Organizer will be notified regarding the status of their proposal by April 17, 2026.

Please direct any questions related to proposal preparation or submission to Tricia Fry, Program Committee Coordinator, at tricia@wildlife.org.