

## What is a symposium?

**Symposia** consist of 5 invited speakers whose talks are strongly integrated. Talks are 25 minutes with 5 minutes for questions. After the 5 talks, there will be 30 minutes available for facilitated discussion in a flexible format; session organizers are requested to use the time to advance and expand the conversation on the topic, with a view towards inspiring continued debate. We ask that organizers consider symposia an opportunity to start conversations at a deeper level than simple presentation Q&A.

## Who should consider submitting a proposal for a symposium?

Symposia are ideal for an organizer who has several speakers in mind with different perspectives on a common topic, or is looking for an opportunity to showcase a range of information on that topic with an eye toward advancing knowledge and debate in a particular area. Organizers **must be willing to coordinate these speakers** and submit all info regarding their symposium, including all participants and their presentation titles, at the time of the proposal. Organizers must register for the conference, and also need to inform their symposium participants that **each presenter will be required to register for the conference and cover their registration cost and associated expenses.**

## Instructions and Judgment Criteria

*On this page, you'll find detailed instructions for how to put together a 2019 Natural Areas Conference Symposium Proposal.*

*When you have read through the instructions and are ready to submit your proposal, click back to the main Call for Proposals Page and press Submit Proposal.*

## Proposals are due by April 15, 2019

Thank you for considering the development of a symposium for the Natural Areas Conference! We appreciate your efforts to bring the very best of your knowledge and insight to a wider audience at the conference, and to help us make this event as engaging, collaborative and cutting-edge for your colleagues as possible. We are pleased to provide a venue for you to advance a broader discussion of natural areas topics to this audience.

Please check for this year's conference theme and topics. **We ask that all proposals connect to the theme and fall under the heading of one or more of our announced topics.** We also ask that you consider our audience, which is primarily people involved in on-the-ground management and adaptation work, when submitting your proposal.

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### **Symposium Submissions**

Our proposal submission form will ask for the following information, so please have everything assembled before beginning your electronic submission. Also, you will need BOTH the specific portions requested below, AS WELL AS complete abstracts **for each speaker** in the symposium you are proposing. [Click here for an example of a proposal](#). All accepted abstracts are included in a document that is made available online to all those considering attendance at the conference.

- Event title. See example below:  
*Symposium: Pollinator Habitat Restoration and Implementation of Pollinator Friendly Best Management Practices*
- Name, email, and phone of event lead person
- Identify who will moderate the event
- One-sentence summary of the symposium. If your proposal is accepted, this description will appear in the printed program and be read by attendees deciding which sessions to attend. See below for example: *This session will discuss pollinator habitat management, restoration and the implementation of pollinator best management practices.*
- List of speakers (name and affiliation), and each speaker's presentation title
- An associated abstract for each speaker's presentation (not to exceed 400 words). Indicate whether any are students. See example below:  
*Best Management Practices for pollinators: Creating Practices that are meaningful and implementable for rangelands across the west. Rangelands account for a substantial portion of the Western US. These lands are essential for the conservation of pollinators of all types. The Xerces Society is working with the U.S. Forest Service to develop meaningful and implementable Best Management Practices (BMPs) for pollinators on western rangelands with a major focus on habitat protection, management, enhancement and restoration.*

*These guidelines will address the needs of native bees and butterflies, including the monarch butterfly. The Xerces Society is using a process that we developed working with the Federal Highway Administration on publications that provide guidance on the science and practice of roadside management for pollinators. The steps include 1) a thorough literature review of all peer-reviewed literature and technical materials on the topic of rangeland management and restoration to enhance pollinator habitat value, 2) interviews with practitioners and others that understand the science, practice, and economic issues related to pollinator conservation and habitat management in rangeland systems. All of the information is summarized into clear, concise guidance that can be used by agency staff for “real world” field application. We are specifically looking at how this body of information can be applied in western North American rangeland settings while considering feasibility relative to existing practices, guidelines, and budgetary limits. These BMPs provide a roadmap for how we can better manage rangeland pollinators and a process for successful BMP creation.*

## **Symposia Proposal Review Criteria**

All proposals will be reviewed and scored by the conference program committee according to the criteria below. The program committee will also consider how the proposed session relates to other proposed sessions and fits into the overall program. The committee may accept, decline, or offer an opportunity to present the proposed work in a revised format.

- Strength of content
- Proposed session seeks to synthesize information or provide a broad overview of a compelling and germane topic to the conference theme
- Summarizes important advances or concepts related to the conference theme
- Content is focused on applied concerns, and topic is of clear interest and importance to managers/practitioners
- Demonstrates structure and organization
- Proposed session forms a coherent whole through contributions from individual talks
- Offers a range of objective perspectives and avoids the appearance of bias
- Outlines if and how the symposium will lead to further action (working group, white paper, publication, agency guidance, etc.)
- Offers a diverse mix of speakers, each of whom brings an important contribution to the symposium. We will look favorably on proposals that include student speakers

**NOTE: Each presenter and symposium organizer will be required to register for the conference and cover their registration cost and associated expenses. Please make this clear to all speakers included in your symposium at the time you invite them to participate.**