



## California Trails & Greenways Conference

### CALL FOR SESSION PROPOSALS

*Proposals must be received by January 9, 2015*

#### ***“Building Connections: Enhancing the Links Between Communities and Trails”***

[www.parks.ca.gov/trails/conference](http://www.parks.ca.gov/trails/conference)

*April 22-24, 2015/ Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite*

Planning for the 30<sup>th</sup> California Trails & Greenways Conference is well underway. We are now seeking session proposals on the full range of trail and greenway topics. *(Please note that the conference theme will be decided after the October Local Host Committee Meeting).* Your contribution of knowledge and information will ensure that dedicated trail advocates and professionals like you continue to receive the high-quality, up-to-date trail management guidance they have come to expect from the Trails & Greenways Conference. It is also an opportunity to highlight your own leadership, dedication and expertise to California’s trails community.

Conference sessions are from 1 to 1¼ hours in length, and will take place either Thursday (April 23<sup>rd</sup>) or Friday morning (April 24<sup>th</sup>). Both expert and novice trail leaders attend the conference to learn basic skills, as well as practical, cutting-edge techniques. We are requesting proposals on timely and relevant subjects about which you have proven expertise. It is essential that the session you propose focus on the "teachable skills" you will provide. Page 4 of this document lists some suggested topics that came from last year's conference survey, and theme topics that were suggested by the 2015 Local Host Committee will be added soon. Guidelines for planning a conference session can be found on pages 2 and 3. Sessions presented during past conferences can be reviewed at [www.parks.ca.gov/trails/conference](http://www.parks.ca.gov/trails/conference).

To keep the conference as affordable as possible, we have been very fortunate that presenters have been willing to donate their time and expertise in the preparation and presentation of high-quality sessions. As a token of our sincere appreciation, all presenters will receive a \$25 credit that may be applied to any of the online conference registration options available after February 10, 2015.

To submit a session proposal, simply complete the Session Proposal Form found on page 5 and return by mail, email or fax as directed at the bottom of the form. **Session proposals must be received by January 9, 2015. Submission of proposals does NOT constitute acceptance.** The Conference's Selection Committee will make the determination and notify the designated Session Chair in early February.

Carefully review the attached materials to assist you in preparing a successful proposal:

- Conference Session Guidelines (page 2)
- Tips for Successful Conference Sessions (page 4)
- Topics to Consider (including those requested by 2014 Conference attendees) (page 5-6)
- Session Proposal Form (page 7-8)

The 2015 conference will take place at Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite, April 22-24 (Wednesday through Friday). If you have any questions regarding your proposal, please contact Conference Co-chair Alex Stehl at 916.324.0322 or [trails@parks.ca.gov](mailto:trails@parks.ca.gov).



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### Conference Session Guidelines

**2015 Conference Theme.** Session proposals providing tools and techniques in support of the conference theme are strongly encouraged. Following is a description of the theme.

#### ***“Building Connections: Enhancing the Links between Communities and Trails”***

- Preserving wilderness trails while introducing people to the magic of the outdoors
- Ensuring healthy ecosystems within open space through sustainable trail design
- Creating access and enhancing opportunities for trail use
- Building stronger communities while promoting active and healthy lifestyles by connecting people and places through trails
- Ensuring advocacy and protection of trails among the next generation of stewards
- Reconnecting children to nature through trails
- Improving the environmental and social health of communities through alternative transportation options
- Boosting local economies through local desirability and the promotion of trails as a tourist attraction
- Emphasizing regional thinking through community partnerships

Following is general information about conference sessions. Additional questions regarding sessions can be directed to Alex Stehl at 916.324.0322 or [trails@parks.ca.gov](mailto:trails@parks.ca.gov).

- **Audio, visual and other technical arrangements.** The following equipment is provided in each session room: projector, screen, remote control/pointer and laptop with a **Windows XP** operating system and Microsoft **PowerPoint 2003**. Additional equipment **may** be provided **ONLY by prior arrangement**. Any software updates will be communicated as they become available.

Each session chair will be contacted to discuss audio/visual needs. It is essential to the success of any presentation utilizing audio/visual equipment that the **presenter needs and expectations are made clear to us at least one month prior to the conference.**

Prior to arriving at the conference, YOU ARE STRONGLY URGED to schedule time at the conference to download and test your presentation. Colors and text sometimes look quite different when projected on a large screen compared to a small computer screen. Audio/visual staff will be available Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and two hours before the first

concurrent session Thursday and Friday (April 23 - 24) to download and test presentations. Failure to do so will only add to the stress of your presentation.

We ask that electronic files be provided to us on compact disk or DVD, as opposed to a flash drive. Please note on the disk or DVD your name, a cell number we can reach you, and the name, date and time of your presentation. Compact disks or DVDs are preferred, as flash drives are hard to label and may not be returned.

- **Audience size:** Presenters should be prepared for a maximum of 65 people for concurrent sessions. If you are preparing handouts, please bring enough for your session. Any remaining copies will be made available to other conference attendees. For a greener conference, please consider recycled paper, double-sided copying and web citations instead of extensive text.
  
- **Handouts and electronic presentations:** We ask that your presentation and handouts be sent to us electronically prior to or immediately following the conference so they may be posted on our website. Please include your contact information in the document.



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### Tips for Successful Sessions

- **Set clear learning objectives for your presentation.** What is the specific value of the information you will present? Describe what efficiencies, performances or other improvements will result from your presentation. Then make sure your audience walks away with tangible elements that are practical. *Proposals that highlight projects without providing clear teachable skills will be rejected.*
- **Consider your audience.** What are the teachable skills you'll be providing and who are the people that will benefit the most by receiving these skills? Also consider interactive discussions or activities to engage the group in problem solving.
- **Define terminology and acronyms.** The audience is there to benefit and learn from your experience, and it should be assumed that much of your terminology will be new to at least some, so, limit phrases and acronyms, and speak plainly. Articulate your objectives without jargon.
- PowerPoint tips:
  - Prior to the conference, **schedule an appointment the day before (April 21<sup>st</sup>) or at least 3 hours before your presentation to download and test your electronic files.** See details in *Conference Sessions Guidelines* above.
  - **Time your PowerPoint.** An audience's average attention span to any single PowerPoint slide is about 2 minutes or 15 slides for a 1/2-hour presentation. So limit the number of slides and projected text. **DO NOT** read your PowerPoint. *A successful PowerPoint presentation augments your session, it does not dictate it.*
  - **Test your PowerPoint presentation with a projector** to ensure image clarity when slides are enlarged and projected in a fully or dimly lit room.
- **Limit panel size to 3** to enable reasonable time for each panelist to present their segment of the session. *We strongly urge not more than three panel members for any of the 1 to 1½ hour sessions.*
- **Clarify panelists' roles in advance and make sure they are fully informed about the time they have,** the order of their presentation and the particular expertise they are expected to bring to the discussion.
- **Stay on topic**, provide relevant information about trails; and do NOT focus the presentation on yourself, your organization or your project. *Emphasize teachable skills that will directly benefit your audience.*
- **Allow a minimum of 10 minutes at the end of the session for questions and discussion.**



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### *Theme Coming Soon...*

### Topic Suggestions

Topic suggestions come primarily from conference attendees. If you have expertise in any of the areas listed below, or expertise on a topic not included on this list but you believe will be of value to the conference, please know we would welcome your session proposal.

#### ➤ Interpretation

- Basic interpretation skills and tools
- Innovative interpretive programs
- Promoting trail programs
- Keeping trails relevant & interesting -- enhancing the connection with nature, culture & history
- "Telling the story" – how to inform users about unique habitats, histories & cultures
- Integrating trail use and ecology – appreciating the value and nuance of the natural environment
- Promoting trails for community economic development
- Attracting diverse populations to rural and urban trails
- Promoting trail tourism
- Building public support & fostering collaborations among trail users, politicians, businesses, constituents and management
- Signage for branding, way-finding & interpretation
- Signage plans and best practices
- How to research and interpret historic trails
- Computer technology for graphics & photography
- Making trails relevant to non-trail users
- Way-finding trends and techniques

#### ➤ Community, Volunteers & Use

- Expanding the role of nonprofits & volunteers
- Securing public approval for trail endeavors
- Getting beyond conflict, uniting the trail community in partnerships & other endeavors
- Urban to rural trail links
- Understanding cultural norms and overcoming inhibitions to trails & open space
- Trail events
- Volunteers – recruiting, managing, training and keeping them engaged
- Partner opportunities with conservation corps
- Volunteer "trail watch" programs
- Innovative uses of social media
- How to engage trail enthusiasts as advocates

- Negotiation basics (access, partnerships, etc.)
- Engaging families, youth, young adults & other cultures
- Public and trail safety
- Best practices for enforcing use and other rules
- Successful resolutions to multi-use conflicts
- Creating collaborations among agencies, nonprofits and volunteers

#### ➤ Finance

- Socio-economic benefits of trails
- Public financing campaigns
- Raising local funds
- Trails as "economic development"
- Trail sponsorship programs
- Making tough budget decisions
- Federal, state and local funding opportunities
- How to do more with less
- Connecting with private philanthropy
- "Sharing the load" -- multi-agency/nonprofit partnership agreements
- Negotiating & securing trail easements
- Grant writing skills
- How to work with elected officials

#### ➤ Sustainability and Management

- Trail conduct for first generation trail users
- Fire management and recovery
- Sustainable multi-use trails -- designing, building or improving existing trails
- Management plans for trail systems
- Understanding and avoiding liability
- Enhancing trails' compatibility with nature
- Enforcement & Compliance (rules, regulations; tools, personnel, volunteers; single use & multi-use)

**Continued on next page**

#### ➤ Planning, Construction & Maintenance (con't)

- Species protection & recreation

- Managing and mitigating trail impacts & overuse
- Habitat restoration
- Design techniques for managing run-off & sediment
- GIS/GPS as management tools
- Tools for gaining trail access on private property
- Enforcement & trail behavior changes
- Options for dealing with encroachment by neighboring land owners
- Laws relating on the public's access to trails

➤ **Planning, Construction & Maintenance**

- Online mapping innovations
- New and basic skills, equipment, tools and materials for trail building & maintenance
- Basic, modern construction techniques
- Good existing trails and why they've withstood the test of time
- Solutions for difficult trail maintenance issues with real case studies
- Emerging geospatial technologies
- Technologies for improved trail planning & outreach
- Creating greenways that integrate with conservation plans
- Crossing roads, highways and other barriers
- Overcoming the complexities of planning trails to the satisfaction of diverse stakeholders
- What's new in accessibility & mobility requirements, remedies and devices
- Managing water -- erosion, stream crossings, sediment, run-off, etc.
- Meaningful approaches to trail planning, lay-out and design (aesthetics, sustainability, safety)
- How to reduce trail maintenance costs
- Wilderness trail techniques
- Understanding NEPA, CEQA, EIR & EIS, permits and other regulatory requirements & processes
- Water trails



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**SESSION PROPOSAL FORM**

Proposals must be received by January 9, 2015

**Session Title**

*[Limit title to 8 words.]*

**Session Description**

*[Limit session description to 200 words. Concisely describe the following: the topic, one sentence on what will be learned (to be more fully described below), and presentation format.]*

**Educational Objectives**

*[What will attendees learn from your presentation? List 2-3 specific points that will assist registrants in their trails work. Proposals that focus on projects without providing concrete, teachable skills, will be rejected. ]*

**Audience Level**

*[Will your session be geared toward individuals with specific skills or levels of expertise?]*

**Session Structure**

*[How will the session be presented? Panel discussion, demonstration, audience interaction, etc. Describe.]*

Continued on next page

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**SESSION PROPOSAL FORM**

**Session Chair**

*[For the individual responsible for coordinating the session, provide name, title, affiliation, address, phone, email, a short 3-4 sentence biography establishing credentials. Please note that the name of the session chair and their email address will be provided as part of the session list on the conference website.]*

**Additional Session Presenters**

*[Strongly urge no more than 3 presenters. For each additional presenter provide name, title, affiliation, address, phone, email, and a short 3-4 sentence biography establishing credibility.]*

**Proposed Length of Session**

*[The longer sessions have fewer available times.]*

1 Hours       1 ¼ Hours

***Information may be provided on additional pages, if needed.***

**Please submit proposals by January 9, 2015 to:**

Alex Stehl, Conference Co-Chair  
California Trails and Greenways Conference  
704 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: 916.324.0322  
trails@parks.ca.gov