

# Planning Information for the NPSNM Annual Conference

This list is meant to offer assistance for chapters while planning the annual conference. We welcome suggestions regarding how to make it more useful or topics and information to add. The accompanying document is a checklist in editable form. That file can be saved and edited and used to make multiple checklists for planners to use.

## Hosting Chapter rotation

2023 El Paso  
2024 Taos  
2025 Las Cruces  
2026 Gila  
2027 Santa Fe  
2028 Otero (2020 was cancelled due to COVID)  
2029 Albuquerque

Possibly 1 year (or 2 years) before your hosting turn, put together a conference planning team. Hope that the team will be able to take the large task of planning and carrying off a conference more doable by dividing up the tasks. Feel free to use the editable checklist provided with this document to set up tasks and people assigned to them.

## Venue and Equipment

1. Conference venue – find and reserve a facility where your conference can take place.
2. Reserve a room for the NPSNM Board meeting that usually takes place the day before the conference, from 1 – 3 in the afternoon.
3. Audio/visual equipment. You may be able to find a conference venue that supplies all space and audio/visual equipment for the conference, but many chapters are in smaller towns where this will not be an option. In this case, the conference planners may need to arrange for audio/visual equipment separately. Also, decide whether sessions will be recorded or available by Zoom.
4. Student posters – find a location for student posters, and if possible, work time into the conference schedule for attendees to visit the posters. Designate a chapter person who will communicate with those wishing to present posters at the poster session, and facilitate set up and take down of posters.

5. Lodging discount(s) – attendees expect a discount at at least one hotel.

## Insurance

1. Contact the NPSNM treasurer to inquire about what parts of the conference will require insurance and how to go about getting the necessary insurance certificates.

## Program

1. Decide upon a conference theme if there is to be one. Perhaps involve an artistic chapter member to develop a logo for the conference.
2. Line up speakers and field trip leaders for the conference. Once speakers are confirmed get speaker bios and photos and presentation descriptions. Get field trip descriptions from the field trip leaders.

## Publicity (provided by Kathleen Hall, Albuquerque chapter)

Publicity is taking opportunities to tell people about your work, your wildflowers, your landscape, your hometown; to welcome them to your event; to help them anticipate the wonderful spread you prepare for them; and to remind them, finally, of how good it was to be together.

A publicity person or sub-committee is useful to:

1. Contact Margaret Menache (NPSNM Newsletter Editor at [newsletter@npsnm.org](mailto:newsletter@npsnm.org)) for details on newsletter deadlines for the year of your conference, article submission requirements, and photo requirements.
2. Organize an article for each issue: Collect info, rough out something Margaret can work with, get a few quotes from chapter members and planned speakers; interviews with or articles about speakers are interesting; make a big noise about your conference theme, why you chose, how it relates to your landscape, history, speaker topics, field trips, etc.; welcome members to the big event of the year; a wrap-up for the issue following the conference is a lovely touch.
3. Collect your program and registration form details to submit to the newsletter issue that will be published at least (six?) weeks before your conference.
4. Find a photographer to work with you. Take or collect photos to illustrate your theme or region or chapter, including credits, to submit with your articles. Include some line drawings, design a logo for your theme, and/or choose a quote to set in an illuminating typeface.
5. Consider other ways to use your logo and/or quote for your conference -- tee shirts, bags, mugs, reusable water bottles, bandanas, notebooks, etc. A local screen-printing business can show you some options. Merchandise can be included in your registration packets or sold during your conference, and mementos are nice gifts for speakers and workshop presenters.

6. Plumb the depths of your chapter's membership and their friends for creative additions to the publicity effort. Who's an artist, a poet, an essayist, a whittler, bookbinder, or herbalist? Is there a way you can incorporate some original work or unique item into your publicity effort? If it's printable put it in the newsletter. If it's herbal tea, bag it up and hand it out.
7. What else would you like to do to remind people of Native Plant Society, your conference and your chapter?

## Meals and Celebrations

1. Decide on whether or not there will be a conference banquet, which night, where, choose menu and confirm by paying what is needed.
2. Decide on whether or not there will be a conference reception, which night, where, and set details.
3. Decide on whether or not the conference will provide lunch, choose menu, confirm.
4. Note any limits in the number of participants due to facilities and/or any planned meals.

## Registration and Registration Materials

1. Create conference program and registration form. Also create confirmation email or letter.
2. Send conference registration information and registration information to [web@npsnm.org](mailto:web@npsnm.org) (Madeleine Woodward) for posting on the npsnm.org website. Also, you probably still need to prepare for those registering by snail mail. Set up spreadsheet to keep track of registrations and payments. Arrange for confirmation emails (and snail mails) to be sent.
3. Print conference programs.
4. Assemble any other materials you intend to give when people sign-in at the conference. Some chapters assemble swag bags with free gifts provided by conference sponsors or purchased by the chapter (carry- bags, notebooks, etc).
5. Assemble a group of volunteers who will handle registration as people enter, conference food and technical assistance, and clean-up.

## Sponsors, Chapter Fundraising, and Other

1. Begin to recruit sponsorships for the conference and gather any materials to be distributed in attendee packets, any adds or mentions to be included in the conference programs.
2. The conference offers opportunities for the hosting chapter to do fund-raising during the conference. Things that have been done in the past include:

- a) A silent auction
  - b) Selling conference T-shirts, bandanas, or any other easily obtainable items with the conference theme (see item 5), logo (see item 5), or the chapter name on them.
  - c) Other fund raising if appropriate.
3. The hosting chapter may choose either or both a 'Conservation Champion' or a teacher to present with an award (usually a \$500.00 check) during the conference. The NPSNM Board wants to be involved in the decision to award a teacher, but will allow the local chapter to choose their own Conservation Champion if they have someone they deem worthy. This award has traditionally been kept secret and only announced at the meeting (often the banquet). The NPSNM Board pays the award from the Carter Fund.
  6. Book sales – will your conference have a place for book sales? Many chapters and some authors will frequently set up book sales at the annual conference. If speakers at the conference are authors and would like to sell their books at the conference, work with them to make that possible.
  7. Community outreach is an option. You may be able to find a way to use the conference as a recruitment tool for new members, or simply as a way to further your mission within the local community. Things that have been done in the past include offering a discount for attending a part of the event that does not have an attendance cap or is not full; maybe a field trip or other activity that is designed for kids or families and open to the community.