

## **SWS South Central Chapter Regional Meeting Guidelines**

Meeting Program (in the fall of the year, typically October or November)

Workshops: 1-2 workshops to take place over 1 to 2 days prior to meeting.

Meeting: Friday and Saturday

Friday (8 AM to 5 PM)

Saturday (8 AM to 12 NOON)

Historically, the purpose of the Annual Fall Meeting of the South Central Chapter (SCC) of the SWS was to encourage networking among Chapter members, to highlight research or wetland program activity in the South Central region, to conduct Chapter business, to recruit new members to SWS, and to provide a friendly, yet professional setting for students to obtain experience presenting research. Meetings have been on Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings to limit conflicts with busy work schedules.

The Fall Meeting will consist of a business meeting, invited and contributed sessions, and student presentations. Order and arrangement of scheduled events will be at the discretion of the meeting planners with the following requirements: one hour will be allotted for the SCC business meeting, and priority will be given to student presentations over invited or contributed session speakers since it is the intention of the SCC to maximize student participation in the meeting. When student participation is minimal the planners may fill the remaining time slots with invited and contributed talks with the approval of the Chapter President. If student participation is high the planners may choose to schedule only student presentations. In any case, the Chapter President must approve the program. Invited speakers are not to be compensated for their involvement, however assistance with lodging costs and/or registration fee waivers may be approved by the SCC Board on occasion for a speaker whose sole purpose is to present a topic at the meeting and would not otherwise be involved. Travel to and from the meeting for any speaker is generally not covered unless approved by the SCC Board. Whenever possible, it is best to invite speakers locally to talk on pertinent local topics. Typically three to four invited speakers are selected for each meeting to provide interest for attending professionals.

The Chapter business meeting will be run by the Chapter President following the agenda format set forth by the Bylaws of the South Central Chapter of the SWS. If the President cannot be present, the President-elect or another officer designated by the Bylaws will preside over the meeting. The meeting host will need to coordinate the business meeting with the Chapter President and President-elect.

The meeting schedule must allow time for the Chapter Officers and Board Members to meet prior to the business meeting to discuss agenda items. This meeting can be scheduled in the evening prior to the Chapter meeting (Thursday) or during a lunch break.

## Meeting Location

The meeting Host should attempt to secure free meeting space. Local government agencies or universities may have conference space that can be reserved free of charge. If no such space is available, the Host should select a hotel that is convenient and affordable. Generally, the hotel should be within government per diem rate. The Host must secure a reasonable guarantee by the hotel that adequate rooms will be available. Any formal arrangement (i.e., contract) that is required by the hotel that obligates the SCC with potential penalties (e.g. room blocking, meeting arrangements such as meeting rooms and coffee, etc.) must receive prior approval by the SCC Board and the SWS President. As of June of 2007, any contracts must be reviewed by the SWS Business Office. Documents that obligate SCC may be signed by the Chapter President or by the meeting Host if authorized to do so by the SWS President.

## Meeting Costs

**Student non-member** - Whatever the cost of student membership to the SWS is at that time.

**Student member** - Free, always, and forever.

**Member** - This was increased from a long-standing fee of \$10, to \$35 in the year 2000, and to \$45 in the year 2008.

**Non-member** - Meeting fee plus SWS membership fee.

**NOTE:** Regular meeting costs cover food and beverage for breaks and possibly help supplement the social and/or field trip.

## Workshop Costs

Anyone registering for a Workshop in association with the Fall Chapter Meeting must also register for the Fall Chapter Meeting at the appropriate fee level. This means that workshops will cost the following:

**Student non-member** - SWS membership fee plus cost to cover workshop fee

**Student member** - Cost to cover workshop fee.

**Member** - Cost to cover workshop fee

**Non-member** - SWS membership fee plus cost to cover workshop fee.

**NOTE: SWS Membership fees CANNOT be considered in the budget. These fees are forwarded to International Society bank account. Current SWS members may not renew their memberships for the upcoming year at the Chapter Meeting, but should do so through the on-line renewal process provided by the Business Office at [www.sws.org](http://www.sws.org).**

## Deadlines

The registration deadline is set at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Meeting withdrawals for a refund will be granted for up to 7 days prior to the first day of the meeting. Registration fees are forfeited thereafter.

The “Call for Student Abstracts” should be announced at least 3 months prior to the meeting. Abstracts will be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to meeting. Form, format, number of papers should be determined by the host committee, however, we have found historically that it is difficult to accommodate more than 10 student papers. Students will be informed of the acceptance/rejection of their abstract no later than one month prior to the meeting. Please be sure to acknowledge receipt of each student abstract via return e-mail, and note on the “Call for Student Abstracts” form that students not hearing back from the committee with 3 days after submitting their abstract should send a follow-up e-mail to the committee (or preferably call).

Meeting and workshop announcements to be posted in the Society of Wetland Scientists Bulletin need to be submitted to the Chapter President by April 15<sup>th</sup> of the year to meet the June Bulletin press deadline. Requests for Chapter meeting announcements to be included with international Society e-mail postings should be sent by the Chapter President via e-mail to the SWS Business Office. A separate announcement and registration form shall be sent via e-mail 3 months prior to the meeting. The meeting and workshops should also be publicized at the International SWS Annual Meeting. Follow up Chapter-wide emailing (2-3) are important to remind or encourage members to participate. ONLY the SCC President has access to this mailing list and the right to send Chapter-wide e-mails.

The meeting Host will work closely with the President-elect, who is chair of the program committee, and will be responsible for drafting the meeting and workshop announcements and distributing them to all interested parties. These may include Chapter members and relevant universities and departments, government agencies, private businesses, and any other outlet that the chapter or Host feels may be interested in attending the meeting. The Chapter at the request of the Host shall pay all costs incurred by the meeting planners. The Host is responsible for working with the Chapter President-elect, Secretary, and Treasurer to insure that all mail outs are properly formatted and costs are within allocated budget.

Meeting dates and locations should be set 9 months prior to meeting. This will include the acquisition of meeting facilities, which may include university facilities, hotel facilities, or government agency facilities. In any case, the arrangements must be promptly secured for the dates approved by the SCC President.

### Registration

The Host, or a person designated by the Host, is responsible for preparing a registration form that describes the meeting and workshops; this form will be posted on-line at least 3 months prior to the meeting. On-line postings and registration portal can be established by the SWS Business Office at the request of the SCC President. The registration form

will instruct participants to submit the completed form with payment at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Fees for late registration will be required for people registering after the stated deadline. Copies of past registration forms are available from the SCC Past-President, Secretary, or Treasurer to illustrate the format required. Lodging options and any room block arrangements should be included on the form. Personal information requested on the registration form will consist of all information needed for Society membership: complete name and title, mailing address including zip code, business telephone number, fax telephone number, and email address. The registration form should include information suggesting lodging locations. The Host shall have hard copies of registration and society membership forms available at the registration desk for on-site registration.

The Host (in consultation with the Secretary) is responsible for maintaining a record of participation in the workshops and attendance at the meeting. The record will consist of a spreadsheet file (Excel preferred) listing all personal information, participation, and associated fees. The spreadsheet should have a separate column for each field to facilitate transformation to mailing labels. The file must include columns indicating whether the participant is a new SWS member, which functions the participant is attending (e.g., workshop, meeting, social, field trip), the fees due, and fees actually paid. The method of payment, whether check, cash, money order or credit card (only possible through the registration portal created by the SWS business office unless registering on-site), must be recorded in order to facilitate reconciliation by the Chapter Treasurer. This information is needed to plan meeting expenses, to prepare the list of new members, and to calculate payment due to the International organization. A template for a meeting expense/attendance form (in MS Excel) is available from the Chapter Treasurer.

### Meeting Finances

The Host is authorized to commit to paying any routine expenses associated with the workshops and meeting. Routine expenses include: workshop handouts, workshop lunches, break snacks, and refreshments. Any other expenses, including books, rental of meeting space, rental of vehicles for field trips, and reimbursement of instructor or speaker travel expenses, must be approved by the SCC Board prior to making any commitments. Any single expenditure between \$500 and \$2,000 must receive prior approval by the SWS Treasurer, through the SCC Treasurer. Any single expenditure over \$2,000 must be approved by the SWS President. In addition, if a workshop or meeting is attended or co-sponsored by an outside group (i.e., non-Chapter members, other SWS Chapters), any deals to split proceeds or costs must be approved by the SCC Board prior to making a commitment.

The Host is responsible for retaining all original receipts of expenses incurred for the meeting and workshops. Expenses may include deposits to hold meeting space, break refreshments, workshop lunches, social supplies, workshop materials, van rental, and mailing and copying fees. The host may request an advance for meeting expenses from the Chapter Board. At the conclusion of the meeting, all original receipts must be provided with an itemized summary of expenses to the Chapter Treasurer. The Treasurer

will make all payments due and will reimburse any expenses covered by the Host/designee.

The Host/designee is responsible for safely maintaining all registration payments received for the workshops and meeting. These payments will be provided to the Chapter Treasurer along with the spreadsheet file (see above) at the meeting's conclusion.

### Workshops

The workshops are designed to be both affordable to students and in depth enough to be useful to professionals. However, we never intended for the workshops to compete with professional workshop facilitators. If at any time the membership wishes to hire someone specifically for a higher caliber workshop, this will be treated on a case by case basis according to need and desire. Rates should be set not less than \$100 but generally not greater than \$150 per participant (not including SWS membership fees for nonmembers). Instructors for courses may be compensated for travel expenses, but the Chapter generally does not agree to be obligated to pay for instructor services. Meeting hosts are encouraged to seek volunteer workshop instructors to keep costs down. Our Chapter's members are a diverse group with many areas of expertise and therefore a great source of workshop leaders. Any compensation required by instructors must receive prior approval by the Chapter President. Proceeds from workshops will be used to pay for all workshop expenses, including instructional materials, lunches, break foods and drinks, and in some cases the travel expenses of the instructor. Remaining proceeds will remain in the general fund of the Chapter for discretionary use by the Chapter. As a Chapter, we have a fair amount of yearly expenses, so a small amount of proceeds is desirable to help attend to our annual business.

### Field Trip(s)

Traditionally, there have been field trips associated with the Annual Fall Meetings. These typically take place on Thursday, when some of the membership is still traveling to the meeting. Field trips may alternately be scheduled for Friday afternoon or Saturday afternoon, after the close of the business meeting. Field trips of the past have been planned to highlight unique or interesting wetland habitats, centers of research and/or wetland management, or similar places of interest to wetland scientists. Transportation to the field site may be by personal vehicles, but the host is encouraged to secure large vehicles to avoid the confusion, danger and misdirection of participants that often occurs when a large number of vehicles attempt to navigate to field sites. Government agencies or universities will often provide vans free of charge. It may also be possible to lease vans from commercial vendors if the meeting budget allows.

Liability - If rental vans are used, then drivers should purchase the company's insurance and NOT use their own. This is for collision, liability and what ever else. This also applies to any rental vehicles, such as boats, canoes, ATV's, etc. In the past, agency vehicles and university vehicles have been used; however, it was determined prior to use

that drivers and passengers were all covered under the appropriate insurance. Each participant must fill out a waiver form provided by the SWS Business Office.

### Social

The social traditionally takes place on Friday evening following the first day of the meeting. The Host is responsible for making arrangements for the social and may be done in anyway that the host sees fit. The Host is encouraged to have the social in a style and place that showcases local cuisine and culture. The Host shall secure prior approval for all expenses incurred and anticipated for the social event and is responsible to ensuring that the total costs of the event do not exceed the allocated budget. Often, these events are not funded by the host committee, but are “pay as you come” events. Occasionally, meeting budgets allow for supplementation of the social or for providing for some or all of food and beverage. The Host is encouraged to find donations for food and beverages from meeting sponsors and to seek volunteers to provide services.

### Student Papers and Awards

A priority of the SCC annual meeting is to provide the opportunity for students to present papers and compete for a monetary award to be used only for travel and representation of SCC at the following annual SWS national meeting. Therefore the Host is encouraged to provide a meeting program that is convenient, affordable, and conducive to students. Since active SWS members will judge the papers, the meeting host should make arrangements to provide three volunteer judges for each student presentation. Each judge should be responsible for three to four presentations. SCC will provide the forms to be used by the judges.

### Meeting Sponsorships

The purpose of sponsorship is to broaden support and recognition for SWS and keep meeting costs low and affordable for students. The host is encouraged to pursue sponsors for the meeting such as local universities, businesses, or government agencies in whatever capacity is appropriate. For example, local businesses are encouraged to contribute monetary sponsorship in exchange for recognition by the Chapter and local universities and government agencies are encouraged to contribute facility and transportation support.

### Meeting Milestones

<b>City Selection -</b>	10 months prior to meeting
<b>Meeting Date &amp; Facility -</b>	9 months prior
<b>Call for Student Papers -</b>	3 months prior
<b>Meeting Announ./Registration Form Mailing -</b>	3 month prior
<b>Lodging Arrangements (Room Blocks) -</b>	3 months prior
<b>Student Abstract Submission deadline -</b>	6 weeks prior
<b>Student Notification -</b>	1 month prior

<b>Registration Deadline -</b>	2 weeks prior
<b>Registration &amp; Sponsorship Fees -</b>	Last meeting day, to Treasurer
<b>Finalized List of Expenses &amp; Receipts -</b>	3 weeks post, to Treasurer
<b>Finalized Registration File -</b>	3 weeks post, to Secretary and
Treasurer	
<b>Finalized List of New Members -</b>	3 weeks post, to Secretary

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