



River Management Symposium

BALANCING ECOLOGY, EXPERIENCE AND ACCESS

APRIL 13-15, 2027 | FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

Call for Speakers: Presentations and Posters

The River Management Society (RMS) is proud to announce that our biennial River Management Symposium, **Balancing Ecology, Experience, and Access**, will be held in Fayetteville from April 13–15, 2027.

Hosted by partners across the Ozark and Ouachita region, this event brings together river professionals, watershed leaders, recreation managers, Indigenous partners, and conservation practitioners from across the country for a week of learning, collaboration, and field exploration.

Set against a backdrop of forested hills, clear streams, and vibrant river communities, the region offers an ideal setting to explore the intersection of stewardship, restoration, and equitable access. From the iconic Buffalo National River to Oklahoma’s protected Scenic Rivers, this landscape reflects a deep commitment to conserving riparian ecosystems while supporting recreation and community connection.

As pressures on river systems increase—from climate change to growing recreational demand—how do we balance ecological integrity with meaningful human experience? How can we expand access while protecting the very resources that draw people to rivers? What tools, partnerships, and policies are needed to sustain resilient, inclusive river systems for generations to come?

RMS invites proposals showcasing practical techniques, innovative research, policy solutions, and creative approaches that advance a balanced and holistic vision for river management. Contributions from all river types, regions, and management contexts are welcome.

[Submit Proposals Online](#) by October 1, 2026

Questions? Contact:

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Presentation Formats

You may submit more than one proposal for presentations and/or poster sessions. A separate submission is required for each.

- **Paper or Topic Presentation:** Concurrent sessions can be 30 or 60 minutes long, depending on the type of presentation. This includes time for follow-up questions and group discussions.
 - **Panel or Roundtable Discussion:** Multiple-presenter panel discussions or roundtables can last 30 or 60 minutes. The discussion should demonstrate a practical application and include audience interaction. Proposals in this format should identify a presentation lead or session moderator.
 - **Poster Presentation:** Poster presenters will have an opportunity to display your informational poster during the Welcome Reception on Tuesday evening, April 13, 2027.
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Symposium Themes

1. Balance

Focus: Navigating tradeoffs and decision-making where ecological protection, recreation, and public access intersect.

Representative topics may include:

- Balancing recreation impacts with ecological protection: policy, planning, and implementation
- Visitor use management and carrying capacity frameworks (Access and permitting)
- Recreation flow management at hydropower sites
- State and federal river protections as avenues for protecting myriad river values
- Conflict resolution among user groups and stakeholders
- Balancing conservation with tourism and economic development
- Decision-making tools, data, and adaptive management strategies
- Interagency and cross-sector coordination

2. Ecology

Focus: Implementing restoration and research for long-term ecosystem health.

Representative topics may include:

- River and watershed restoration techniques

- Climate and flood resilience and mitigation
- Habitat protection, aquatic species management and aquatic organism passage
- Invasive species management
- Water quality monitoring and improvement
- Dam removal and floodplain restoration
- Nature-based solutions and green infrastructure
- Integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)
- Monitoring, modeling, and applied river science
- Infrastructure management, including bridges and dams, and mitigation efforts

3. Experience

Focus: Enhancing how people engage with, understand, and value rivers.

Representative topics may include:

- Interpretation, education, and stewardship programs
- Community engagement and participatory planning
- Cultural heritage, storytelling, and place-based learning
- Designing meaningful and safe river experiences ...
- Recreation trends and user experience research
- Engaging the next generation in river stewardship and recreation
- Health and well-being benefits of river recreation
- River and dam safety and risk communication
- Water trails as tools for discovery and engagement
- Viewshed stewardship including visual resource management and scenic river programs

4. Access

Focus: Expanding equitable and physical access to rivers.

Representative topics may include:

- Designing and building river access points and infrastructure
- ADA-accessible and universal design approaches
- Reducing physical, financial, and social barriers to access
- Access in underserved and urban communities
- Access and permitting
- Multilingual and multi-ability signage and wayfinding
- Funding strategies for access development and maintenance
- Recreational enhancements at hydropower sites and alongside other infrastructure
- Partnerships that expand and sustain access