National Wilderness Conference
Albuquerque, New Mexico
October 15–19, 2014

The American Legacy of Wilderness
Honoring 50 Years of Preservation, Use, and Enjoyment

www.wilderness50th.org
For a Half-Century
and Forever...

Gila Wilderness, New Mexico

Above: John F. Kramer, Forest Service
Below, left: Photo by William Stone, williamstonephotography.com

National Wilderness Conference
The 50th Anniversary National Wilderness Conference will be the culmination of year-long events and activities that highlight America’s Wilderness heritage and focus on future stewardship of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The event will inspire all who attend with the vision, hopes, and concerns for the future that motivated the authors and advocates of the Wilderness Act of 1964. Presentations will feature the core values Wilderness advocates share, and will promote understanding of varying perspectives among a national audience including individuals new to wilderness, nature and recreation enthusiasts, youth and families, diverse communities, private land owners, wilderness stewardship groups, environmental organizations, government agencies, and scientists.

This conference will be a four-day event that will include presentations, panel discussions, exhibits, field trips, skill development workshops, and opportunities to network and share ideas, celebrate recent successes, and discuss emerging challenges in Wilderness stewardship.

**Conference Goals**

- To make the concept of Wilderness and its ecological, recreational, aesthetic, spiritual, and symbolic values better known to a wider range of the American public
- To provide a forum for discussing growing challenges to Wilderness values while deepening and enabling participants’ engagement in Wilderness stewardship in a time of unprecedented environmental and social change
- To celebrate the achievement of a half-century of permanent protection for America’s wild places
What is Wilderness?

On September 3, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into law. This established the National Wilderness Preservation System and set aside an initial 9.1 million acres of Wilderness for the use and benefit of the American people. Over the past 50 years, and as a result of America’s support for Wilderness, Congress has added over 100 million acres to this system. The Wilderness Act defines Wilderness as areas where “the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man,” with untrammeled meaning left wild and free from human control or restraint.

Wilderness designation provides the greatest level of permanent protection for Wilderness values such as adventure, solitude, clean air and water, scenery, wildlife, and scientific understanding of how the natural world works when left alone. Wilderness areas are found in National Parks, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and National Conservation Lands.
Conference Location

The National Wilderness Conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on October 15–19, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency hotel downtown. Albuquerque, a distinctive locale surrounded by beautiful Wilderness, is a place that offers a unique multi-cultural perspective of the wild experience and is located on the historic Route 66.

Participants

Approximately 1,000–1,500 participants are expected to attend this momentous event, from all states in the country, from individual Wilderness enthusiasts to federal agency and academic professionals, staffers and volunteers with Wilderness advocacy organizations and stewardship groups, scientists, youth and representatives from diverse communities.

Conference Tracks and Sessions

All presentations and panels will follow six primary tracks: History, Stewardship, Education, Experience, Civic Engagement, and Science.

Many sessions will focus on the future stewardship of Wilderness and emerging issues that could not have been foreseen when the Wilderness Act became law. On topics from climate change to shifting demographics and lifestyles, these sessions will stimulate discussion and inform action. Programs will explore opportunities to enhance the relevance of Wilderness to young people and future generations of an increasingly diverse America.
In this track, scholars will relate the inspiring history that led to the formulation of the Wilderness concept. Sessions will describe the social and physical landscape that shaped the Wilderness movement. Discussions will explore diverse interpretations of our Wilderness frontier cultural heritage and its continued role in shaping our national character and identity.
When the Wilderness Act passed, managing Wilderness often meant just leaving it alone. Today, new threats require more proactive approaches, the field of Wilderness stewardship has grown and become more professionalized, and Wilderness faces unprecedented challenges in our evolving physical and social environments. This track offers stewardship insights from leading agency practitioners, researchers, academic scholars, and partners.
Education

To succeed, Wilderness management must prevent impacts, prepare future stewards, and raise public awareness and support of Wilderness. This conference track offers field-tested information for Wilderness education program development, implementation, evaluation, and fundraising strategies in difficult economic times. Real-life education success stories will be offered to build new or enhance existing Wilderness education programs.
Experience

This track will provide a forum for those who participate in, study, or manage recreation in Wilderness to explore a full range of motivations, perspectives, and behaviors that need to be understood to maximize Wilderness experiences and protect Wilderness resources. Discussions will also address the symbolic values of Wilderness experienced by millions of people who will never set foot in Wilderness.
Civic Engagement

America’s Wilderness decision-making process involves public participation at its very heart, from establishing Wilderness law to managing areas. Experts will discuss present-day Wilderness civic engagement, as well as the changing demographics of the Wilderness constituency in the social media age. This track will feature traditions and innovations of activism through individual volunteerism, organizational involvement, and electoral participation.
Science

This track includes sessions from both the ecological and social sciences. Presentations will describe ecological benefits derived from Wilderness, its value as a natural laboratory, research findings of new threats to Wilderness, and the management of visitor perceptions and values. Sessions will discuss how the natural world functions when left wild, and how it responds to large-scale, human-caused influences, including global climate change.
Registration Fees

Registration for the National Wilderness Conference includes participation in all sessions, receptions, exhibitor hall displays, and events including the closing day Wilderness50 'Get Wild' Festival, which is open to the public as well as participants. Scholarships opportunities will be available, and participants will also have access to shared facilities or low-cost housing alternatives.

Venue

Hyatt Regency Albuquerque
330 Tijeras NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505.842.1234

DoubleTree by Hilton Albuquerque
201 Marquette Ave NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505.247.7000

Hotel Andaluz
125 Second St. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505.923.9098

Host Hotels

The following hotels are enthusiastic sponsors of the National Wilderness Conference and will provide meeting space for related activities. A list of alternative accommodations will also be made available to participants.

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Sponsorship, Exhibiting, and Advertising Opportunities

We invite you to be a part of the National Wilderness Conference as a sponsor or exhibitor. Wilderness50 is happy to customize a sponsorship package that meets your specific objectives. To start a discussion or for further information about participating as a sponsor and/or exhibitor, please contact:

Vicky Hoover, Wilderness50 Co-Chair
415.977.5527
Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org or

Greg Hansen, Wilderness50 Co-Chair
602.237.2021
redroadone@aol.com

Suggested sponsorship opportunities are:
Zahniser ($50,000); Leopold ($25,000);
Carhart ($15,000); Marshall ($10,000);
Murie ($5,000); Muir ($2,500);
Pinchot ($1,000); Putnam ($500).