National Forum on Biological Control Bi-annual Conference Call for Abstracts
March 11th - 14th, 2024
The Graduate Hotel
Annapolis, Maryland

Abstracts for the conference are due January 31st by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time.

The USDA Forest Service is leading the 1st Bi-annual National Forum on Biological Control Conference in partnership with the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) and National Association of State Foresters (NASF). This conference will focus on both weed and arthropod biocontrol and will be a venue for all biocontrol practitioners, researchers, and policy makers to come together to address the shared challenges (e.g., communication, capacity, changing landscapes) and opportunities that exist in this area. The themes for this meeting will focus on biocontrol research, management, and policy and impacts across natural areas.

The goal of this conference is to build relationships and synergy amongst leaders in the biocontrol community to propel this important discipline forward by identifying key strengths, challenges, opportunities, and future directions. There will be no concurrent sessions (all presentations will be held in the same room) which will create an atmosphere for thoughtful discussion, networking, innovation, and collaboration.

Conference sessions will be centered around biocontrol research, management, and impacts in natural areas, with various topics highlighted. Since this is our inaugural year, all oral presentations have been invite-only to help with planning and developing a strong agenda. However, we invite anyone who would like to present a poster to please submit your abstract by the January 9th deadline.

One of the intended outcomes from this conference will be a published white paper from NASF that highlights (from the conference presentations and poster submissions) the identified key strengths, challenges, opportunities, needs, and next steps forward. We will harvest this information from abstracts and presentations. To ensure a common thread exists between throughout the conference, **we'd like abstracts and presentations to include their respective topic's applicable key strengths, challenges, opportunities, needs, and next steps forward.**

Please send in your poster presentation abstracts and biographical sketches to Vanessa Lopez (vanessa.lopez@usda.gov) by January 9th by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time. The guidelines for abstracts and biographical sketches are below.

Please choose the best option that describes your poster presentation from the list of themes here. Use the topic areas under the themes as examples of poster presentation topic areas.

Conference Presentation Themes
The topics listed under each theme below are intended to be ideas and examples and are not comprehensive. Authors are invited to submit posters on topics not listed here if they are relevant to the biological control discipline.

Biocontrol Research
- Horizon scanning
- Innovations in biocontrol
- Microbial and molecular innovations in biocontrol
- Chemical ecology
- Biocontrol delivery and production

Management
- Integration of biocontrol and IPM
- Tools and techniques for management
- Citizen science and outreach

Policy and Impacts
- Agency/organization perspectives
- Access to biocontrol agents
- Economic impacts of biocontrol
- Ecological impacts of biocontrol
- Trends in biocontrol

The program committee will review and approve abstracts. Acceptance will be based on relevance to biological control, poster session space availability, and receipt of the abstract by the deadline.

Guidelines for Abstracts
Abstracts should not exceed 250 words. Authors should carefully edit their abstracts before submission. The conference will not be responsible for editing abstracts. Submit abstracts ready for publication following the guidelines below. Abstracts exceeding the word count will be sent back to the author to edit to 250 words.

Please fill out the abstract submission spreadsheet and send the completed spreadsheet to Vanessa Lopez (vanessa.lopez@usda.gov).

Title: Submit the title exactly as it will appear in the program.

Authors: If there are more than three authors, list remaining authors, including affiliation, in the "Additional Authors" field. If there are multiple authors, please place an asterisk (*) after the name of the presenter. Including full contact information: affiliation, address, phone number, and email address.

Body of Abstract: Body of abstract should be a single paragraph and provide a brief description of the project, methods, results, and conclusions as appropriate to the topic. ***Please include your topic's key strengths, challenges, opportunities, needs, and next steps forward.***

- Names of Organisms: All organisms must be listed first by their common name with scientific names in parentheses. Subsequent references can be by common name.
- *Names and application rates of pesticides:* When referring to pesticides, initial reference should be to their active ingredients (e.g., in Herbicide Handbook, Weed Science Society of America). Trade names can be used subsequently. Rates and units of measurement should be clear.
- Numbers and units: Use either Imperial or metric units, but do not mix them.

Biographical sketch: Please provide a brief biographical sketch (bio) of NO MORE than 150 words that outlines the presenter's expertise relative to the presentation. Bios will be provided to conference attendees. Bios exceeding the word count will be cut to 150.

Poster Presentations Guidelines
Accepted poster presentations do not have a required poster size. Standard size suggestions are 48 in. wide x 27 in. tall or 64 in. wide x 36 in. Set up date and time will be released closer to the event. Pins and display boards will be provided. All poster presenters are encouraged to attend the Poster Reception on March 13th from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. to present their work to the conference attendees. Additional poster sessions may be added to the agenda depending on the number of submissions.