

# Volunteer Monitoring at the National Monitoring Conference & Tips for Getting YOUR Conference Abstract Accepted



Barb Horn, Mary Skopec, and Peggy Compton  
National Water Quality Monitoring Council  
Webinar Series

# Agenda:

- Introductions
- National Monitoring Conference
  - VM opportunities
  - Features and presentation types
- Writing a successful abstract
- Q & A



**National Water Quality Monitoring Council**

Working together for clean water



# Introductions



**Barb Horn**

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# NWQMC & VM Opportunities at the NMC



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# NWQMC

<https://acwi.gov/monitoring/>

1997 formed to bring together the diverse expertise needed to develop collaborative, comparable and cost-effective approaches for monitoring and assessing our Nation's water quality

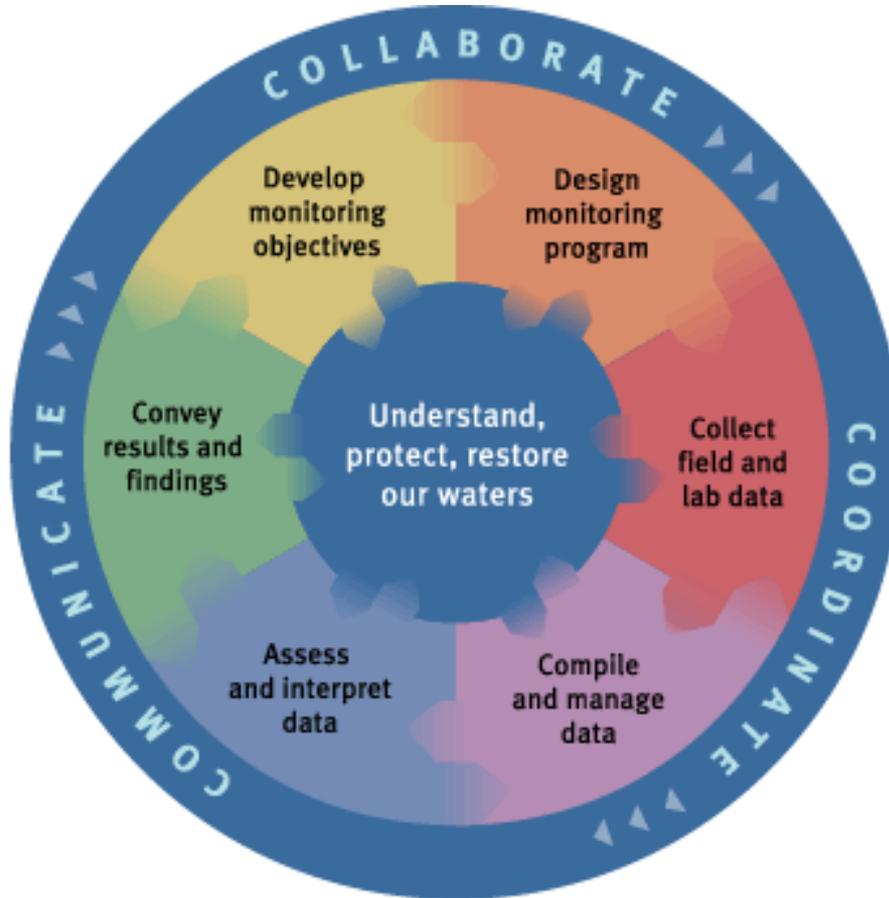


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# NWQMC – Monitoring Framework





# NWQMC - Resources

- Water Quality Portal
- National Environmental Methods Index (NEMI) & Sensors Guide
- National Monitoring Network & National Network of Reference Watersheds
- Bi-annual conference, newsletter & webinars
- Volunteer Monitoring Map, resources, success stories
- Focused workgroups – including Volunteer Monitoring

# National Monitoring Conference - VM

- Booth
- Meeting
- Networking



# 11<sup>th</sup> National Water Monitoring Conference



**Mary Skopec**

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# NWQMC

The Council provides a ***national forum*** for coordination of comparable and scientifically defensible methods and strategies to improve water quality monitoring, assessment and reporting, and promotes partnerships to foster collaboration, advance the science, and improve management within all elements of the water quality monitoring community.



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# 11<sup>th</sup> National Water Monitoring Conference

March 25-29, 2019  
Denver, Colorado

Goals of the conference:

1. Exchange information
2. Build community/network
3. Be inspired!!

<https://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2019/index.html>



# Conference Themes

- Water Quality Prediction: State of the Art and Future Directions
- Emerging Risks in Water Quality
- Monitoring Water Across a Changing Hydrologic Cycle
- Tools to Mine, Share, and Visualize Water Quality Data
- Innovative Designs and Technology for Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment
- Holistic Water Quality Monitoring: Exploring Chemical, Physical and Biological Integrity
- Effective Monitoring Collaborations and Partnerships
- Measuring Effectiveness of Management Actions, Improvement, and Restoration Activities
- Monitoring and Assessment to Protect Human and Ecosystem Health

# Conference Themes

- Water Quality Prediction: State of the Art and Future Directions
- Emerging Risks in Water Quality
- Monitoring and Assessment to Protect Human and Ecosystem Health
- The Role of Data in Water Quality Management
- Integrating and Assessing the Effectiveness of Management Actions, Improvement, and Restoration Activities
- The goal is to have practitioners of all types integrated in sessions
- Measuring Effectiveness of Management Actions, Improvement, and Restoration Activities
- Monitoring and Assessment to Protect Human and Ecosystem Health

# Presentation Formats

- Presentations
  - Oral 15-minute
  - Poster
- Extended Session (90 minutes)
  - Panel Discussion
  - Workshops
  - Facilitated Roundtables
- Opportunities
  - Networking
  - Field Trips





# **Deadline for Abstract Submission August 15, 2018**

For more information on conference abstract submission, including instructions, visit:

<https://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2019/index.html>



# *Abstract Review Process*

1. Author selects “theme(s)” when submitting the abstract.
2. Abstracts are given to “theme” review teams
3. Automated tool lumps abstracts within a theme based on **key words**
4. Abstracts that don’t fit within the identified theme may be moved to a different theme
5. Theme teams read and review abstracts
  - Reject any abstracts that are selling a product (these need to be exhibitors)
  - Review championed sessions
  - Prioritize abstracts based on quality (more on that later....)
  - Develop sessions with abstracts that are cohesive and compliment each other
  - Every effort is made to find a place in the conference for high quality abstracts; but abstracts without a place in the oral presentation slots may be asked to give a poster instead.
  - Notify presenters of acceptance and Voila an awesome conference ensues...



**Notified by January 15, 2019\* regarding  
acceptance into the conference**

\* Some abstracts may be selected as alternates. Alternates may be asked to fill a space in the conference

# Writing Effective Abstracts



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# Writing a Quality Abstract: Getting Started

- Know the audience



The image shows a screenshot of the website for the 11th National Monitoring Conference. The header includes the text "11th NATIONAL MONITORING CONFERENCE" and "Working Together for Clean Water" with the dates "March 25-29, 2019" and location "Denver, Colorado". The NWQMC logo is also present. Below the header, the text "Call for Abstracts" is displayed. A paragraph of text invites participants to join the conference, highlighting opportunities for water stakeholders. On the right side, a navigation menu lists "Call for Abstracts", "Abstract Submission", "Extended Sessions Call for Abstracts", and "Extended Session Abstract Submission". A red arrow points to the "Extended Sessions Call for Abstracts" link.

11th NATIONAL MONITORING CONFERENCE  
Working Together for Clean Water  
March 25-29, 2019 Denver, Colorado  
NWQMC

Call for Abstracts

Please join us on March 25-29, 2019 in Denver, Colorado for the National Water Quality Monitoring Council's (NWQMC) 11th National Monitoring Conference. This conference provides opportunities for water stakeholders – federal, state, tribal and local water professionals, nonprofits, academia, and volunteer citizen scientists – to network, develop new skills and partnerships, and exchange information.

Call for Abstracts  
Abstract Submission  
Extended Sessions Call for Abstracts  
Extended Session Abstract Submission

- Know the conference themes/topics
- Consider the best format for your work

<https://www.nalms.org/2019nmc/call-for-abstracts/>

# Writing a Quality Abstract: Getting Started

- Determining what to submit
  - Completed work
  - Innovative, new ideas
  - Has a take-home message



# Writing a Quality Abstract: Crafting Your Abstract

- The purpose of the abstract
  - Conference presentation accepted!
  - Conference program/schedule
  - It's short. Make it impactful!



# Writing a Quality Abstract: Crafting Your Abstract

- The abstract title
  - 50 word limit!?!? Whoa, that's A LOT!
  - Specific style guidelines "Title Case"
  - Descriptive and interesting with audience in mind

Example: Role of Evaluation in Decision Making and Program Improvement: Case Study of a Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program

# Writing a Quality Abstract: Crafting Your Abstract

- Communicate content and intent
- State audience engagement/learner outcomes
- Describe the body of work – tell your story
  - What was done?
  - What did you learn?
  - What does this mean to your audience? What will they learn? What will they “take away” from your presentation?



# Writing a Quality Abstract: Example Abstract

## Integrating Volunteer Monitoring into Extension Programs

As Extension is entering a new era, changing in size and scope, it is more important than ever to understand the strengths that exist within UW-Extension and how our programs can be synergistic with one another. For 20 years, the Water Action Volunteers (WAV) Stream Monitoring Program has been training and empowering citizens...

Many volunteers also share their data and knowledge in local communities, helping to improve management of water resources.

This session will include:

- A brief overview of the WAV program and the local partnering organizations that make it so successful.

- A review of a recent 5-state North Central Region Water Network funded effort to integrate volunteer monitoring into Extension Programs.

- A discussion of the potential future of volunteer monitoring and how WAV could be an integral part of programming in counties and regions.

# Writing a Quality Abstract: Submitting Your Abstract

- Review the abstract instructions:

11th NATIONAL MONITORING CONFERENCE  
Working Together for Clean Water  
March 25-29, 2019 | Denver, Colorado



*Abstracts must be received no later than August 15, 2018*

## ABSTRACT SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

*Please read the following BEFORE submitting your abstract online as this information will be requested by the abstract submission system (link provided below).*

**Title:** Enter the full title of your abstract (50 word limit) in the title case format (format example, "Assessing Effects of Climate Change on Water Availability and Quality"). This title will be used in the final program. Please make your title as informative and interesting as possible.

**Body of Abstract:** There is a 350 word limit. The abstract submittal system will NOT accept abstracts that exceed the limit. Any font type or font size may be used.

**Affiliation:** List the institutions or organizations with which the authors are affiliated.

**Authors:** You MUST enter the names of ALL authors including yourself in the order in which you wish them to appear in the program.

**Selection of Theme:** Select the theme from the "Call for Abstracts" that best describes your abstract.

**Other:** If you select "Other" from the list of Themes (above) please suggest a session topic that you think would be a good fit for your presentation; otherwise this may be left blank. If your abstract is part of a championed session, please include the proposed title of that session here.

**Championed Sessions:** If your abstract is part of a championed session, be sure to check the championed session box and identify the championed session organizer.

**Keywords:** Provide one or two keywords that best characterize your submission. Please be sure to place a comma between each entry. If your abstract is part of a championed session, be sure to use key words specified by your session champion.

**Preferred Type of Presentation:** Select from three choices: **Oral** (15 minute presentation with 5 minutes for questions and answers), **Poster**, or **Either** (either oral or poster – whatever best fits the overall program).

**Author Information:** Including the address, email address, and phone number of all authors.

**Volunteer Monitoring Affiliation:** Indicate whether or not your abstract includes volunteer monitoring products, data, results, examples, etc. and if you are a volunteer monitoring coordinator, staff member, advisor, volunteer, or "other" type of affiliate.

**When you are ready to submit an abstract go to:**

<https://www.nalms.org/2019nmc/abstract-submission/>

**NOTE:** You will receive a confirmation email from [nmc2019@nalms.org](mailto:nmc2019@nalms.org) after your abstract is submitted. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR 'JUNK' OR 'SPAM' FOLDER IF YOU DO NOT SEE IT IN YOUR INBOX.** Once you are registered with the submission system, you can go back to this site to update or correct information up to the August 15, 2018 deadline. If you have a problem or wish to withdraw your abstract, contact: [events@nalms.org](mailto:events@nalms.org).

<https://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2019/abstracts/2019.InstructionsForAbstractSubmittal.pdf>

# Writing a Quality Abstract: The Online Process

<https://www.nalms.org/2019nmc/abstract-submission/>

**Corresponding Author First and Last Name**

**Corresponding Author Email Address**

**Abstract Title:** Enter the full title of your submission in Title Case. This will be used for printing in the final program.

**Key Words:** Provide one or two word 'keywords'

**Abstract Subject:** (Choose from 9 themes)

**Volunteer Monitoring Affiliation\*:** Does your submission include product, data, results, examples, etc. *from a volunteer monitoring effort?* Yes/No

**Championed Sessions\*:** Are you submitting as part of championed session? Yes/No

**Championed Session Organizer:** Who is the championed session organizer?

**Please choose your preferred means of presentation.\*** Oral/Poster/Either Oral or Poster

**Presenting Author's First and Last Name\***

**Presenting Author's Affiliation\*, City, State/Province and Country**

**Abstract Authors\*** Please list ALL authors in the order you wish them to appear in your abstract. List authors in the following format with one (1) author per line: Author First and Last Name, Affiliation, City, State/Province, Country.

**Please enter the filename of your abstract file.\*** Submit your abstract in Word format. The next screen will include a link for you to upload your abstract. Abstracts must not exceed 350 words. Abstracts in excess of 350 words may be truncated.

# Writing a Quality Abstract: Ingredients for Success

- Write your story with a beginning, middle and end
- Tailor to audience and themes
- Adhere to guidelines
- Consider the review process or scoring criteria – if available
- Don't doubt the importance of a good title
- Keep language simple and understandable
- Be concise
- Proofread, proofread, proofread – and then have someone else proof it!





# Writing a Quality Abstract: Things to Avoid

- Product marketing and program advertising
- A project not yet developed or incomplete
- Recycling an abstract with disregard to this conference's audience and guidelines
- Poor grammar, typos, incomplete sentences



# Writing a Quality Abstract: Helpful Resources

- Purdue Online Writing Lab  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)
- The Writing Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
<https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Style.html>

# General VM Resources

- **National Water Quality Monitoring Council**
  - <https://acwi.gov/monitoring/vm/resources.html>
- **USA Volunteer Water Monitoring Network**
  - <http://volunteermonitoring.org/>
- **Listserves:**
  - The EPA volunteer monitoring listserv: To subscribe, send a blank email message to [volmonitor-subscribe@lists.epa.gov](mailto:volmonitor-subscribe@lists.epa.gov)
  - The extension listserv: <https://list.uvm.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=EXTVOLMONNETWORK&A=1>
  - Citizen Science Association: <http://citizenscience.org/elist/>



# Questions?

