

# GUIDE FOR EMERGING LEADERS AT THE 79TH SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE



The 79th SWCS International Annual Conference is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect with a diverse network of conservation professionals, students, and organizations. This event is the perfect place to jump start your career, continue your education, and make lasting memories with fellow program participants.

This year's conference theme, "Rising Together: Collaborative Conservation for All," challenges all conservationists to rise to the significant challenges and opportunities ahead of us, together.

**Dates:** Sunday July 21 - Wednesday July 24, 2024

**Location:** Sheraton Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

**Website:** [www.swcs.org/24AC](http://www.swcs.org/24AC)

The Detailed Agenda and Preliminary Program are available on the website. Members of the 2023-2024 Class of the SWCS Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) receive a complimentary full conference registration, valued at \$500. Registration details are on page 7.

We look forward to welcoming you to the 79th SWCS International Annual Conference, where emerging leaders like you will shape the future of conservation!



79TH SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA | JULY 21-24, 2024

## EVENT DETAILS

### SESSION SUMMARY

- 29 Symposia, 155 Oral Presentations, and 109 Poster Presentations across 11 Thematic Tracks
- 4 Workshops and 3 Conservation Tours
- CEAP and CIG Showcases

### OUR ATTENDEES

We anticipate around 500 attendees from across the United States and internationally, representing the following sectors:

- Students
- Federal, State, and Local Government
- University/Extension
- Industry/Private Sector
- Nonprofit/Foundation
- Conservation Districts
- Ranchers/Farmers
- ...and more!

### ADDITIONAL COSTS TO ATTENDEES

- Travel and lodging are not included in the registration and are the responsibility of the participant or their organization. Hotel details, including information on the reserved event block are available [here](#).
- Meals not included in the Agenda At-A-Glance are not included in the registration and are the responsibility of the participant or their organization.

### AGENDA AT-A-GLANCE

#### Sunday, July 21

New Member and First Timer Orientation  
Emerging Leaders Networking Kickoff  
Half-Day Workshops\*  
Student and Early Career Networking  
Local Forum and Flavor Reception +

#### Monday, July 22

Morning Coffee and Light Breakfast +  
Conference Kickoff  
Pritchard Keynote Lecture  
Concurrent Sessions  
SWCS Members Luncheon +  
Exhibitor and Poster Reception +

#### Tuesday, July 23

Morning Coffee and Light Breakfast +  
SWCS Leadership Breakfast\* +  
Plenary Sessions  
Concurrent Sessions  
Emerging Leaders Symposium Session  
Awards Luncheon +

#### Wednesday, July 24

Morning Coffee and Light Breakfast +  
Concurrent Sessions  
Emerging Leaders Roundtable Session\*  
Conservation Tours\*

*\* Not included in conference registration.  
Additional cost required to attend or invite only*

*+ Food provided in the session*

## BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

The Emerging Leaders Program embodies SWCS's commitment to nurturing the next generation of conservation leaders. Take advantage of attending the conference!

### Networking

The conference provide a platform for you to network with industry peers, potential clients, partners, and thought leaders, which can lead to new business opportunities and collaborations.

### Professional Development

This event offers valuable opportunities to enhance your skills, learn about industry trends, and stay updated on best practices.

### Recognition and Visibility

Showcase your work, achievements, and leadership skills. Gain recognition within the conservation community through events like the poster presentation, awards ceremony, symposium, members luncheon, and more.

### Personal Growth

Take advantage of the conference's diverse range of sessions and activities to enhance your leadership abilities, communication skills, and self-confidence, fostering personal growth and empowerment.

### Inspiration and Motivation

Get inspired by success stories, case studies, and experiences shared by fellow conservation professionals and program participants. Reignite your passion for making a positive impact on the environment and find support from others who share your vision.

### Volunteer

Enhance your conference experience by volunteering for one of the sessions below. If you have not already, these may fulfill your ELP event-planning requirement while contributing to the success of the event.

- Sign up as a moderator
- Participate in the Silent Auction
- Volunteer at the SWCS Booth
- Help Present the ELP Poster
- Present/Organize the ELP Symposium

Contact [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org) by May 23 to learn more about volunteering opportunities.



## EMERGING LEADER RECOMMENDED EVENTS

Participants are welcome to attend any conference sessions. These specially curated events are designed to provide you with unique opportunities for growth, networking, and professional development. Explore the following schedule of ELP-specific sessions and recommended events to maximize your conference experience and accelerate your journey as a conservation leader.

### SUNDAY, JULY 21

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	DETAILS
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Opens	Main Level Pre-Function	Sign into the event and pick up your ELP-specific swag bag and ribbon. The desk will also be open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.	New Member and First Timer Orientation	Main Level Room 106	Kickstart your conference experience with confidence. Get acclimated to the conference environment and learn about the event structure.
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Emerging Leaders Networking Kickoff Meeting	Main Level Room 106	Receive networking tips and an overview of the ELP-specific events at the conference.
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Student and Early Career Professional Networking	Main Level Ballroom C	Meet and network with attendees and other ELP participants. Create connections you can grow throughout the event.

### MONDAY, JULY 22

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	DETAILS
All Exhibitor/Poster Breaks Monday and Tuesday	SWCS Booth	Main Level Exhibit Hall A	Volunteer at the SWCS Booth to inform conference attendees about our offerings and how to connect with our members. (More on pages 5-6)
All Exhibitor/Poster Breaks Monday and Tuesday	Emerging Leaders Poster	Main Level Exhibit Hall A	Present your achievements, share insights, and connect with peers and industry professionals. (More on pages 5-6)
12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	SWCS Members Luncheon	Main Level Ballroom DE	Sit at the reserved VIP tables for Emerging Leaders! Learn about our work in the SWCS State of the Society presentation and be acknowledged as a group for your participation in the ELP program.
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Exhibitor and Poster Reception	Main Level Exhibit Hall A	Network with conference attendees, meet exhibitors, and visit the SWCS booth and ELP poster.

## EMERGING LEADER RECOMMENDED EVENTS

### TUESDAY, JULY 23

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	DETAILS
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	SWCS Leadership Breakfast	Main Level Ballroom A	Network with SWCS chapter leaders, gain valuable insights, and engage in a facilitated dialogue on leadership in conservation.
12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Awards Luncheon	Main Level Ballroom DE	Sit at the reserved VIP tables for Emerging Leaders! Receive your certificate for graduating the program, take a group photo, and take individual photos following the event. Each participant may bring one additional guest to celebrate your graduation!
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Emerging Leaders Symposium Session	Main Level Room 108	Participate in or support other ELP students as they share lightning talks about the program, lessons learned, and their events. (More on page 6)
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Open Networking Time	Meet in Hotel Lobby	Meet up with other ELP participants and spend an informal evening in Myrtle Beach. (More on page 6)

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	DETAILS
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Emerging Leaders Roundtable Session	Main Level Ballroom C	Share your experiences, insights, and challenges in a supportive and collaborative listening session. (More on page 6)

### ADDITIONAL SESSION DETAILS

#### Exhibitor/Poster Breaks (All Exhibitor/Poster Breaks Monday and Tuesday)

Volunteer at the SWCS Booth or help present the SWCS Emerging Leaders Poster “Equipping Tomorrow’s Conservation Workforce: Our Year in the SWCS Emerging Leaders Program” during the following breaks:

Monday, July 22

- 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Morning Coffee and Light Breakfast)
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. (Morning Break)
- 3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Afternoon Break)
- 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (Exhibitor and Poster Reception)

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## EMERGING LEADER RECOMMENDED EVENTS

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Tuesday, July 23

- 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Morning Coffee and Light Breakfast)
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. (Morning Break)
- 3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Afternoon Break)

### Emerging Leaders Symposium Session (Tuesday, July 23, 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.) "Emerging Leaders Lighting Talks: Insights and Impact"

In this 1.5 hour session, Emerging Leaders from the 2023-2024 ELP Class will present 5-10 minute presentations about their experiences in the program, their events, and any additional insights. SWCS staff will moderate the session and there will be a question and answer session following the presentations. Presentations may be oral or include a PowerPoint to display relevant visuals. Increase your professional visibility and practice your public speaking by participating! Contact [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org) to get involved in the session.

### Open Networking Time (Tuesday, July 23, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

This is an informal and optional networking session. Use this time to meet up with other ELP participants and choose an activity of interest to you. Small groups could visit nearby restaurants, go to mini golf or bowling, or select any other activity. Visit the conference webpage to find additional things to do in Myrtle Beach to help you decide. This is for you to be able to hang out in a more relaxed setting.



### Emerging Leaders Roundtable Session (Wednesday, July 24, 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.)

Provide SWCS staff and partners with your perspectives on the Emerging Leaders Program and the conservation career field in general. This is your time to let us know how we can best serve you and your careers moving forward. This session is invite-only, all ELP participants are invited.

## INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

Thank you for contributing to your employee's professional growth through this program! We strongly recommend you continue investing in your workforce by supporting your employees to attend the 79th SWCS International Annual Conference. There are several benefits, not only for them, but for your organization as well.

### Brand Representation

Sending employees to events allows the organization to showcase its expertise, thought leadership, and commitment to industry advancement. Have your employee represent your organization through an exhibit booth, social media posts, and in sessions. **All ELP participant organizations may utilize the nonprofit exhibit booth rate of \$850.** Sign up by May 31. Contact [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org) for more information.

### Skill Transfer and Collaboration

Employees bring back knowledge and insights gained from events to share with their colleagues. This promotes knowledge transfer and collaboration within the organization and with potential external partners.

Events are also the perfect place for market research, learn what others in the field are doing to make better-informed strategic decisions for your organization.

### Recruitment and Retention

Offering opportunities for professional growth and networking can attract top talent to the organization and improve employee retention by boosting morale and motivation. Are you hiring? Utilize this as a recruitment opportunity and have your employee bring flyers to be displayed at their booth and/or the Student and Early Career Networking Session.

### Competitive Advantage

Stay informed about industry developments and trends. Your employees can help your organization maintain a competitive edge and adapt to changes in the conservation field.

### Expanded Perspectives

Attending an international conference exposes employees to different perspectives and global trends, broadening their worldview and enhancing their ability to work in diverse environments.

## REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go to <https://registration.socio.events/e/swcs2024>
2. Input the code emailed to you in the "Enter Access or Discount Code" Section and select apply
3. Select the comp'd Full Conference SWCS Member and proceed with the process

Complete before the early bird deadline of **June 3**.  
Email [events@swcs.org](mailto:events@swcs.org) with any questions.