



## Rappahannock River Roundtable

*Blue Ridge to the Bay*

# 2026 Rappahannock River Symposium Call For Session Proposals

Submission Deadline: Monday, June 1, 2026

## Background and Theme

The Rappahannock River Roundtable is dedicated to fostering partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders committed to land and water conservation from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Chesapeake Bay. The Roundtable also prioritizes community outreach, education, and capacity building throughout the Rappahannock River watershed.

Each year, the Roundtable hosts the Rappahannock River Symposium, which brings together up to 200 professionals and advocates to share their expertise in research, funding opportunities, and conservation practices, while providing valuable networking opportunities. Participants represent a diverse range of sectors, including local government staff and elected officials, planning district commissions, soil and water conservation districts, land trusts, state and federal agencies, educators, students, and more.

The theme for the 2026 Symposium is **“One Watershed, One Team: Supporting Each Other with Collaborative Solutions in Challenging Times.”** As practitioners face mounting pressure from land use change, weather extremes, and funding availability, the Symposium will emphasize how collaboration sustains and strengthens our collective impact. Together, we will explore innovative partnerships, creative solutions, and coordinated efforts, while creating space to share strategies for resilience and mutual support.

## Session Proposal Guidelines

We are seeking presentation sessions within the categories listed below; however, other conservation-focused proposals that fall outside these topics are welcome. Interactive workshops, visual presentations, and panel discussions are encouraged. Please consider how your proposed session might engage participants. Presenters should be prepared to give a 20-25 minute presentation with 5-10 minutes after that for questions. Poster sessions are also welcome and encouraged as an alternative format.

*Each proposal must include/answer the following:*

- Title of proposed presentation or poster (10 words or fewer).
- Presentation description. Please briefly describe your proposed presentation submission in 2-3 sentences. (Max # characters 200). \*\*Presentation sessions are 30 minutes long. Please tailor your presentation to a general audience. If you are struggling to tailor your presentation to a general audience, reach out to the planning committee.
- Presenters and collaborators: Please provide your full name as you would like it to appear on the agenda, along with your preferred credentials and abbreviations.
  - Along with the preferred contact method for all presenters.
- Provide **topic area(s)** your presentation or poster falls within:
  - Environmental Education
  - Outreach and Community Engagement (Stewardship, Volunteerism, Engaging All Communities)
  - Restoration and Conservation (Fisheries, Habitat, Agriculture)
  - Science and Research (Methods, Monitoring, Evaluation)
  - Water Quality and Stormwater Management
  - Advocacy
  - Capacity Building (Professional & Organizational Development)
  - Grants and Funding Opportunities
  - Public Access and Recreation
  - Land Protection
  - Other

### **Proposal Evaluation**

All proposals will be evaluated independently by the symposium's planning committee members using [this rubric](#), also attached below. In addition, our planning committee is offering office hours to provide feedback on your session concept. If interested please reach out to [info@rappahannockroundtable.org](mailto:info@rappahannockroundtable.org).

### **Presenter Expectations**

The Rappahannock River Symposium is an in-person event held in Fredericksburg, VA. Presenters are expected to pay for their registration fee (\$30), covering attendance, coffee,

and snacks for breakfast and lunch. Presenters are responsible for their own travel and accommodations – a room block will be available at the Inn at the Old Silk Mill. Please reach out if this would prohibit your participation in the Symposium.

## **Submission Form**

**[Click Here](#)** to submit your proposal.

Learn more about the upcoming and past symposiums **[here](#)**.

For further information or questions about guidelines, contact Shernita Phillips at **[shernita@rappahannockroundtable.org](mailto:shernita@rappahannockroundtable.org)** or **[info@rappahannockroundtable.org](mailto:info@rappahannockroundtable.org)**.



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## RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER SYMPOSIUM PROPOSAL RUBRIC 2026

CRITERIA	POOR (1)	FAIR (2)	GOOD (3)	VERY GOOD (4)	EXCELLENT (5)
1. Relevancy and currency of the topic	The presentation is not current or relevant to the field or to attendees.	The presentation is not current but is a relevant topic to some attendees.	The presentation is current and relevant to some attendees.	The session is current and relevant to attendees and incorporates recent examples or insights.	The session is new, very relevant, and groundbreaking to the field with up-to-date information, data, or approaches.
2. Relevancy to the theme “One Watershed, Many Voices: Supporting Each Other with Collaborative Solutions in Challenging Times”	The topic is not relevant to the symposium theme.	The topic is related only tangentially to the symposium theme.	The topic references collaboration or the theme, but lacks depth or clear examples.	The topic has a clear connection to collaboration or partnerships; includes some consideration of sustaining teams, partnerships, or capacity.	The topic strongly demonstrates collaboration across organizations, sectors, or communities; highlights innovative or replicable partnership models and includes thoughtful strategies that support practitioner resilience, team capacity, or well-being.
3. Practical application and audience	Not appropriate for the intended audience or format; lacks practical value.	Difficult for a general audience to apply; lacks clear takeaways or engagement.	Informative but limited in practical application or audience accessibility.	There are practical applications for a broad range of attendees with more specific lessons.	Highly applicable to a general audience; includes clear takeaways, tools, or strategies that attendees can apply in their work; presentation approach is engaging and appropriate for a 30-minute session.