



Quiet Water Society
P.O. Box 27412
Lansing, MI 48909-7412

QWS Event Management Request for Proposals

The Quiet Water Symposium, while being entirely a production of the Quiet Water Society, has since its inception been a part of Agriculture and Natural Resources Week. ANR Week is presented by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources on the campus of Michigan State University. MSU supports the Symposium by partially underwriting expenses by providing the event facility at a greatly reduced cost. Over its 22 year history, the Quiet Water Symposium has evolved from a fairly simple rendezvous of a few Great Lakes area paddlers, meeting to share stories amongst themselves and the public, to the largest single day event of its type in North America. The 2017 event had over 150 exhibits, 33 presentations and half a dozen ongoing demonstrations. Planning for and execution of the event took nearly 12 months, 75 volunteers, and uncounted volunteer hours.

The Symposium originally was designed to be a self-funding entity, and the sole source of funding for the Quiet Water Society. Due to its popularity, the event is on solid financial ground with the resources to plan future events. In addition, the Symposium has generated enough funding to allow for four additional tools:

1. The production of an expanded version of the show program booklet (now nearly self-funding through advertising) which has “take home” value as an educational piece.
2. Grants to non-profit and government entities for projects that advance the Society’s mission.
3. The newly launched Quiet Water Society web site has become more than a bulletin board for Society members. It now serves as a means for furthering the mission through content presented in various formats (text, video and photos).
4. The Society’s use of Facebook has attracted a much broader audience and support base, building a sense of community and advancing the mission through its content.

Now that our dreams for the Symposium have come true, we find that the event has become a victim of its own success. This is due to its growth and the inherent complications associated with our achievements. The members of the Quiet Water Society have found that we can no longer sustain the Symposium with the all-volunteer production model that we have historically used. We are currently seeking new models to sustain and grow this important community event. Specifically, we are seeking a person or organization that can assume the day to day planning, volunteer coordination, and execution of the next Quiet Water Symposium.

To help potential event managers determine if they would be interested in learning more about becoming involved in the production of the Quiet Water Symposium, additional background on

the Society and the Symposium may be useful. The specific objectives and purposes of the Quiet Water Society are:

1. To educate the public and encourage participation in non-motorized outdoor recreation,
2. To promote public concern and support environmental stewardship and conservation of natural resources of the Great Lakes region, and
3. To plan and execute annual and special events for any or all of the purposes listed above.

The Society has traditionally used a hand-picked mix of speakers and an open exhibition featuring a blend of independent exhibitors to help achieve its objectives. Areas of responsibility that an event manager might be asked to undertake may include but not be limited to:

1. Financial – track costs, work within a budget, and develop revenue to support the grant program.
2. Scheduling – set times, places and agendas for regular planning meetings with volunteers, chair planning meetings, maintain and publish an updated calendar to track tasks.
3. Facility management - coordinate with MSU staff and volunteers to ensure layout, security, bathroom cleanliness, concessions and assistance with set up and take down.
4. Parking/shuttle – work with the University and/or outside supplier to obtain shuttle and parking space for attendees, exhibitors, and volunteers.
5. Volunteer management – communicate with the Society and the person serving as the current Volunteer Coordinator to cover event needs.
6. Exhibition management – act as a point of contact with exhibitors to assist in recruiting, registration, and assigning booth space.
7. Event promotion – coordinate work with the Society and Symposium volunteers to raise event awareness in target audiences. Co-administer social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and website.
8. Communications management – respond promptly to internal and external requests for information and provide regular written reports.
9. Program booklet – supervise creation, assist in advertising sales, edit content, and work with printer to meet deadlines.

Skills needed to manage the Quiet Water Symposium included the ability to create and manage documents with Microsoft Office products such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher. Website management skills are also required to add and delete site content such as documents, photographs, and videos.

In the past, the level of success associated with a given event has been measured in a variety of ways, including:

1. Count of Symposium participants, to include admissions, exhibitor staff, and volunteers
2. Net revenue, to include admissions, exhibitor fees, sponsorships, sale of ads and expenses
3. Attendance at presentations
4. Visitor feedback
5. Exhibitor feedback

In this case, the Quiet Water Society is not seeking to hire an employee. The current need is for a private contractor who can perform duties associated with the areas of responsibility listed above. Those with interest in more information about the Quiet Water Society and the Quiet Water Symposium are encouraged to review the [Society's website](#) and [Facebook page](#). Please contact the Society through our email address, info@quietwatersociety.org, which is also found on our website under Contact. We look forward to hearing proposals on your capabilities to manage future events for the Quiet Water Society.

Gary De Kock
President

June 13, 2017