



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: EVENT COORDINATION

Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) seeks an experienced event coordinator to assist with the planning and execution of our Annual Meeting and Partner Retreat.

## BACKGROUND

Virginia Conservation Network is the partnership of over 170 environmental organizations working together to protect Virginia's natural resources.

VCN has hosted our Annual Meeting at Pocahontas State Park for the last 4 years for an outdoor retreat. Staff of Partner organizations are invited to join to make new connections, strengthen existing relationships, and develop our skills and knowledge to enhance our conservation movement.

## SCOPE OF WORK

The 2025 Annual Meeting & Partner Retreat will be held at Pocahontas State Park on Tuesday, October 7th–Wednesday, October 8th. An estimated 150 attendees are invited to stay overnight at a lodge, rustic cabin, or campsite or commute in for one or both days. The Retreat will feature a variety of sessions, speeches, and activities that support the goals of the Retreat:

1. Partner Engagement and Celebration
2. Deep Dives into Environmental Issues
3. Utilize the Outdoors
4. Strengthen VIP Relationships
5. Professional Development and Training
6. Diversity and Inclusivity

See Appendix A for a draft schedule of the Retreat.

VCN has a full time staff and Planning Committee who are bottom-line responsible for programming and recruitment. VCN is seeking an event coordinator to assist with pre-event logistical coordination, set up, and on-site coordination of the Annual Meeting and Partner Retreat.

See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of proposed tasks.

The event coordinator will be provided on-site lodging and is expected to stay overnight on Monday, October 6th and Tuesday, October 7th to assist with the event.

## BUDGET

We aim to compensate the event coordinator with a flat fee in the range of \$5,000–\$7,500, commensurate with experience and scope of services provided. This fee should include all planning, coordination, and on-site execution outlined in this proposal, with the exception of direct event expenses (lodging, meals, travel mileage), which will be covered separately by VCN.

Applicants are encouraged to include a proposed fee and/or hourly rate in their submission, along with a breakdown of anticipated hours and services.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Deadline: May 16, 2025

Format of Proposal:

- A detailed breakdown of your approach to event coordination
- Estimated timeline for event preparation
- Estimated cost breakdown
- If possible, please include client testimonials, references, or a portfolio related to similar events.

## CONTACT

Ask questions and send submissions via email to Nicole Vaughan, Director of Communications and Outreach, at [nicole@vcnva.org](mailto:nicole@vcnva.org).

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on based on:

- Previous experience with similar nonprofit events
- Familiarity with the conservation community
- Familiarity with online softwares including Google Suite and Customer Relationship Management Systems
- Pricing

Decisions will be made by May 29th.

## Contract Timeline

Start week of June 23rd with registration launched July

Must be available Oct 6-8

Contract concludes Oct 10th

# APPENDIX A

## Monday, Oct 6th, 2025

2:00-4:00 PM: Team sets up at Pocahontas State Park

4:00-7:00 PM: Registration opens for early arrivals

## Tuesday, October 7th, 2025

7:00 AM-9:00 AM: Morning setup

9:00-10:00 AM: Registration and Breakfast

10:00-11:45 AM: Annual Meeting and Keynote Speaker

12:00-1:130 PM: Lunch

1:45-3:15 PM: Field Trips / Workshops

3:30-5:00 PM: Field Trips / Workshops

5:00-6:00 PM: Happy Hour

6:00-8:00 PM: Conservation Awards Dinner + Keynote Speaker

8:00-9:00 PM: Activity TBD

9:00-10:00 PM: Campfire

## Wednesday, October 8th

8:00-10:00 AM: Registration, Breakfast, Morning Activities

10:00-11:45 AM: Workshops

12:00-1:130 PM: Lunch

1:45-3:15 PM: Field Trips / Workshops

3:30-5:00 PM: Field Trips / Workshops

5:00-6:00 PM: Closing Dinner

6:00-7:00 PM: Breakdown and Pack Up

# APPENDIX B

## 1. PRE-EVENT LOGISTICS AND PREPARATION

### A. Reporting and Communication

- Regular Meetings: Participate in regular conference calls with Outreach team staff
- Communication: Provide VCN staff updates on conference developments
- Cost Tracking and Approvals: Ensure the coordinator monitors expenses and stays within budget, seeking approval from you for any major changes.

### B. Vendor Management

- Retreat site: Serve as the primary liaison with Pocahontas site for set up of all retreat meeting space including main banquet hall, breakout rooms, registration area, and exhibitors' space

- Catering: Manage catering services for the event. This could involve menu selection, set up, service times, dietary restrictions, and service style (buffet, plated, cocktail).
- Audiovisual (AV): This includes the sound system, lighting, microphones, projectors, and any multimedia needs. The coordinator will work with an AV company to ensure everything runs smoothly.
- Transportation and Logistics: If the event involves multiple locations or transportation (e.g., shuttle service to/from venues), the coordinator will arrange these details.
- Supplies: Purchase supplies from list shared by VCN staff ahead of the event.

#### C. Guest Management

- VCN agrees to set up and serve as primary manager of the online registration process.
- Ticket Sales and Registration Management: Manage ticketing and ensure smooth check-in for attendees.
- Updates: Draft and schedule pre-determined updates to registered guests under VCN staff guidance
- Lodging: Monitor overnight guest registrations, create and communicate room assignments ahead of Retreat
- Registration Packets: Work with staff to create all attendee packets and add-on orders to be given during registration on-site

#### E. Speaker Logistics:

- Logistics: Provide VCN staff with electronic copies of briefing materials for all conference speakers (general schedule of events, instructions for their participation, and logistics information) to be shared by VCN staff
- Speaker materials: Obtain speakers' materials in advance and ensure these materials are placed at the right location ahead of the session

#### F. Volunteers:

- Volunteer Work Plan: Monitor scholarship form for volunteers; create a comprehensive list of volunteer needs and fill positions
- Volunteer Communication: Provide all volunteers with a detailed schedule of their participation and position description

#### G. Field Trips:

- Logistics: Work with staff and co-hosts to secure the arrangements for the conference field trips and serve as the primary logistics coordinator once basic trip plans have been determined
- Transportation: Make transportation arrangements for field trip participants
- Communication: Share all logistics with the session lead ahead of Retreat

## 2. EVENT EXECUTION

### A. On-Site Coordination

- Setup: The coordinator will assist VCN staff to setup the venue, ensuring that all décor, signage, registration desks, AV equipment, etc., are in place and properly arranged.
- Vendor Coordination: On the event day, the coordinator will be responsible for managing the vendors to ensure everything runs smoothly, including checking that all services are delivered as expected.
- Schedule Management: The coordinator will keep track of the event timeline and ensure that everything happens on time, including coordinating transitions between different segments of the event (e.g., speakers, meals, entertainment).
- Problem-Solving: The event coordinator is the go-to person for handling any last-minute issues or emergencies that may arise during the event.
- Volunteers: Manage the work of all volunteers throughout the conference

### B. Guest Experience

- Registration/Check-in: The coordinator will manage the event check-in process, ensuring that attendees receive their tickets, name tags, or other necessary materials.
- Guest Services: Ensure there are services available for guests, such as coat check, information desks, or special accommodations for VIPs or people with disabilities.
- Crowd Control: Manage the flow of guests between sessions, during meals, and at registration
- Real-time Communication: Communicate real-time updates to key participants including staff, co-hosts, volunteers, and guests through group messaging platforms.

## 3. POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES

### A. Breakdown and Cleanup

- Dismantling: Ensure the venue is cleared, all rented items are returned, and the space is left clean and undamaged after the event.