Environmental Division

Annual Conference & Expo

Reference Manual for Program Chairs

2025-2026

Environmental Division Reference Manual

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1. Executive Summary

The following is a "living document" that provides insights into the various aspects of the Environmental Program for the SME Annual Conference & Expo. It includes discussions on the primary components of the division's participation in annual conferences:

- Technical Sessions/Abstract Central,
- Environmental Luncheon,
- Outstanding Papers and Presentations,
- Field Trips,
- Short Courses.

The document is "living" in the sense that it should be updated frequently (annually) to reflect the experiences of past and current Environmental Program Chairs and to provide the subsequent Chair with an up-to-date document. This manual should be reviewed and revised soon after the annual conference by the Secretary when experiences are fresh and deadlines are not urgent. In this way, it will serve as a current, valuable resource for Environmental Program Chairs. For each component, the timing/schedule of major activities throughout the year and observations/lessons learned are provided. Please note that the timing/schedule may change from year to year.

2. Executive Committee

The executive committee rotates from year to year, passing responsibilities and roles in an orderly fashion. Table 1 shows the current committee progression and SME Annual Conference & Expo location. Roles shift at the close of the Annual Conference. The year listed is the year that the individual commenced in the role. The committee works on planning activities throughout the year through conference calls and occasional meetings.

Table 1
Executive Committee

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026 (planned)
Chair	Jen Pepe	Annelia Tinklenberg	Omar Smith	Amar Patel
Vice-Chair	Annelia Tinklenberg	Omar Smith	Amar Patel	Heather Halderman
Secretary/ Publications	Omar Smith	Amar Patel	Heather Halderman	Genevieve Sutton
Program Committee Chair	Amar Patel	Heather Halderman	Genevieve Sutton	Nina Astillero
Program Planning Committee Chair	Heather Halderman	Genevieve Sutton	Nina Astillero	Steve Bogart
Past Chair	Lisa Gonzales	Jen Pepe	Annelia Tinklenberg	Omar Smith
SME Annual Conference Location	Denver	Phoenix	Denver	Salt Lake City

2.1 Other Divisions

Table 2 lists the eight divisions active in the SME Annual Conference. Coordinating certain activities with other divisions may be helpful. Check the SME website[1] for the point of contact information.

Table 2
SME Divisions

Division
Coal and Energy (CE)
Environmental (EVD)
Health & Safety (HSD)
Industrial Minerals & Aggregates (IMAD)
Mineral & Metallurgical Processing (MPD)
Mining & Exploration (M&E)
Underground Construction Association (UCA)
Women's Auxiliary to the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers (WAAIME)

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[1] https://www.smenet.org/divisions

3. Technical Sessions and Abstract Central

Technical session coordination is a broad effort and a focal point of annual conference planning. Session planning begins during the previous year's annual conference with observations of how the sessions went, attendance, bringing forward ideas for improvement, and the like. Coordination with SME National and compilation of a team of technical session chairs are critical.

SME National manages Abstract Central, the database used to collect and manage abstracts for the entire SME Annual Conference & Expo for all divisions. Developing the technical sessions is an iterative process starting in the spring after the previous national conference. At a high level, the following steps are the process:

- The incoming Program Committee chair should attend the SME Program Committee meeting on Wednesday Morning of the annual conference to start assembling ideas and chairs for the following year.

- The incoming Program Committee Chair proposes a preliminary list of technical session titles/subjects. This is generally based on feedback from the previous year's annual conference.

- The list will be provided to SME (Tara Davis) in April and is the basis of the preliminary listing of technical sessions for the call for abstracts (typically July 1 to August 1).

- Abstracts are reviewed, categorized, approved or declined, and distributed into sessions. Revise technical session titles and groupings.

Save all abstracts before Abstract Central closes access. These have email and other author information about the author/presentation that will be needed throughout the planning activities for both the Program Chair and the session chairs.

3.1 Timing and Schedule: Technical Sessions and Abstract Central

Table 3 summarizes major activities and milestones for developing a successful technical session program.

Table 3
Technical Sessions and Abstract Central

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
SME Annual Conference, February – March, one year before the SME Annual Conference	• Attend Environmental Division Executive and other planning meetings. • Attend each Author's Coffee. Work with the program committee chair at Author's Coffee to meet chairs. • Gather Outstanding Presentation Award Evaluation forms from each session chair after each session.	Program Planning Committee and Program Committee Chairs

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
	• Program Planning Committee Chair and other Executive Committee roles turn over at the close of the Annual Conference.	
March – April, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Preliminarily identify sessions and seek session chairs. Use previous chairs and those who express interest at the annual conference.	Program Committee Chair
March – April, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Meet or contact upcoming session chairs and submit preliminary session titles or topics, session chairs, and schedule to SME at the Environmental Nominating and Planning Committee meeting. Tara Davis will communicate a deadline.	Program Committee Chair
March – May, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Announce to the Executive Committee and to the upcoming technical session chairs the preliminary session topics and instructions on abstract submittal.	Program Committee Chair
March – August, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Keeping the Program Planning Committee Chair "in the loop," the Program Committee Chair should begin to provide regular e-mails to the session chairs regarding sessions, and when/how to submit abstracts.[2]	Program Committee Chair
June or July, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Abstract Central opens.	SME/Tara Davis
July – August, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Send reminder e-mails to session chairs to get their speakers to submit abstracts	Program Committee Chair
May – November, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Conference calls with SME and program chairs, as needed	Tara Davis; Program Committee Chair
August 1, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Abstract Central closes (note: this may be delayed a couple of weeks to allow stragglers to come in). Preliminary Program based on this mid-August deadline.	SME National
August 1 – 31, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Download abstracts and look for areas with not enough abstracts or too many abstracts to help session chairs move abstracts around and keep the most sessions and abstracts that are high quality.	Program Committee Chair

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[2] Appendix A contains further details on schedule, tasks, template instructions, and other information to communicate to the technical session chairs.

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
August 1 – November, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	SME adjusts and schedules sessions. The Program Committee Chair works with session chairs to decide what papers remain in their sessions and in what order. Some sessions may not have enough submittals, and others may have too many. Work with session chairs on "moving" presentations to get 4 – 8 per session.	Program Committee Chair
September – October, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Email reminders to session chairs to encourage presenters to submit a manuscript by November 1.[2]	Program Committee Chair
November 1, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Manuscripts are due.	Presenters
December – January before next SME Annual Conference	Abstract Central re-opens for chairs and authors to make corrections. Reminder email to chairs, with instructions on notifying authors.[2]	Program Committee Chair
January, the year of the SME Annual Conference	Abstract Central closes for good so that the Final Program can be published.	SME
January – early February, the year of the SME Annual Conference	Form a manuscript review committee; request manuscripts from Tara and Raven.	Program Committee Chair
December – February before next SME Annual Conference	Final communications to technical session chairs for the upcoming conference. Ensure chairs and co-chairs have shared information about Authors Coffee, presentation guidelines, etc.[2] Confirm speaker attendance.	Program Committee Chair

3.2   Observations/Lessons Learned – Technical Sessions

- Tara Davis, davis@smenet.org, and Raven Refuerzo, refuerzo@smenet.org, are the key SME contacts for the program and sessions.

- Having session co-chairs works well because of the shared responsibility for arranging presentations and for stepping in in the event one of the co-chairs cannot attend the annual conference.

- Appendix A contains a package of instructions and communications templates for the session chairs. The Program Chair is responsible for forwarding these instructions to the session chairs.

- The ideal number of presentations for a session is 5 to 7, with a maximum of 8. Sessions with under 4 presentations should be cancelled or combined with other sessions.

- Session chairs need to understand that they are responsible for filling their sessions and should be proactive in this respect – some chairs don't understand this responsibility.

- Some presenters may submit and eventually withdraw their abstracts during the period of abstract submission. The Program Committee Chair should work with the technical session chair and Tara Davis to either obtain a replacement presentation or shift the schedule to avoid gaps.

- Budgets and other circumstances may prevent speakers from attending the annual conference as planned, even at a late date. International speakers are more likely to decline to present.

- Session chairs should check the abstracts for their sessions to make sure they are appropriate. Session chairs will have to decide whether a presentation is appropriate to their sessions. The Program Committee Chair must communicate with the session chairs that presentations should be of a high quality and not a sales pitch. Proposed changes and concerns should be communicated to the Program Committee Chair and the Environmental Division Chair.

- Presentations may be moved between sessions in the Environmental Program or other programs, depending on the need to fill a session or a session having too many presentations. See Table 2 for a list of other divisions.

- Creating an Excel spreadsheet for all the proposed sessions is an excellent way to organize and track the development of program plans and the papers within sessions.

- The schedule of presentations might change from the preliminary program to the final program. A presenter should be notified if the timing, location, or other details of their presentation change from the preliminary program.

- The Program Chair may want to send out an email every couple of weeks to update session chairs and encourage communication with their presenters. The update could include periodic status reports on the number of abstracts submitted to each session.

- After all the abstracts are in and the sessions have been somewhat identified (around the end of August), propose a schedule to Tara Davis of when the sessions will occur, day, morning, or afternoon. All 5 slots, Monday afternoon to Wednesday afternoon, must be utilized for this schedule.

- Tara Davis may ask the Program Chair for a recommendation on a session to offer as a webinar or "stream."

- Last-minute adjustments may be necessary, such as a session chair or presenters not showing up. Have backup individuals ready to step in.

- Session chairs should not be allowed to change the order of presentations during the annual conference, as attendees may want to see specific presentations at scheduled times. Consider an open Q&A discussion during the times when a presenter is absent.

- The Program Chair should attend all the Author's Coffee sessions each morning of the annual conference to check the sessions' final quality and thank all session chairs and speakers for their participation. During this time, paper copies of presentation evaluation sheets and additional instructions are distributed. The presentation evaluation spreadsheet is provided separately and can be emailed to session chairs before the conference.

- The Program Chair should provide all session chairs with judge/evaluation forms at the Author's Coffee. Each session chair is responsible for producing at least one judge/evaluation form for their session. These forms will be collected and used to determine awards such as the best presentation and other SME speaker roles, including Henry Krumb lecturers.

- Just before or during the Annual Conference, the Program Chair should coordinate the review and judging of submitted manuscripts. The winner of the best manuscript will be announced during the Environmental Division luncheon.

- After the annual conference, the Program Chair may choose to send an email or other correspondence to thank the session chairs.

- Following the conference, the Program Chair will work with the Mining Engineering magazine Chair to promote the winners of the best speaker and best manuscripts.

3.3   Observations/Lessons Learned – Abstract Central

- Tara Davis is the key SME contact for Abstract Central.

- When accessible, Abstract Central is set up with tutorials and instructions. Most people submitting abstracts can navigate without assistance. For the session chairs and others who want more instructions, Tara schedules training sessions and on-the-spot assistance when available.

- Tara Davis and her team can provide abstract central training on how to navigate it (aim for this in early July). Tara will also provide support to session chairs and abstract submitters as needed.

- Check Abstract Central often to see the status of sessions and presentations. While Abstract Central is open and just before its closure, download and save abstracts for all accepted and planned presentations. The abstract download (example in Appendix B) includes all presenter information that becomes important to have on hand after Abstract Central closes.

- All presentations should allow for 20 minutes, including introductions and questions. Session chairs should communicate this to presenters in their session.

- Session chairs are encouraged to order the accepted abstracts in Abstract Central, which usually happens in August.

- SME Staff, such as Tara, can only make certain changes to a session using Abstract Central. Maintain contact with her and Raven Refuerzo.

- People can still submit abstracts after the August deadline, but they won't be included in the Preliminary Program (but will be included in the Final Program). Encourage authors to meet the August 1 deadline.

- While Abstract Central opens in mid- to late-June with an August 1 deadline, many abstracts are submitted after the original August 1 deadline.

3.4   Outstanding Papers and Presentations

SME and the Environmental Division recognize outstanding papers and presentations. It is important to recognize and encourage excellence. Outstanding papers may be reprinted in Mining Engineering magazine, and outstanding presentations may be highlighted in an article to recognize responsible individuals. Table 4 provides tasks and time frames for implementing a broad collection of information to evaluate.

Table 4
Outstanding Papers and Presentations

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
December before – January, the year of the SME Annual Conference	Establish Outstanding Papers Committee members for evaluating outstanding papers.	Program Committee Chair and Program Planning Committee Chair
January – February, the year of the SME Annual Conference	Evaluate papers for selection as outstanding.	Outstanding Papers Committee
During the SME Annual Conference Environmental Division Luncheon	Name Outstanding Papers	Program Committee Chair
During the SME Annual Conference	Compile session judge/evaluation forms to identify outstanding presentations.	Program Committee Chair and Outstanding Presentations Committee
March – April after SME Annual Conference	Present recommendations for outstanding presentations to the Environmental Division Executive Committee; the Environmental Division Executive Committee affirms recommendations.	Program Committee Chair and Outstanding Papers Committee

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
April – May after SME Annual Conference	Confirm outstanding presentations; present recommendations to the Environmental Division Executive Committee.	Program Committee Chair and Outstanding Presentations Committee
April – May after the SME Annual Conference	Approve or disapprove proposed outstanding presentations.	Environmental Division Executive Committee
April – May after the SME Annual Conference	Inform authors via email of being selected for an outstanding presentation.	Program Committee Chair
April – May after the SME Annual Conference	Nominate outstanding presentations for the Henry Krumb Lecture Series; make recommendations to SME.	Environmental Division Executive Committee
April 1 after the SME Annual Conference	Submit an article on outstanding presentations and papers for publication in the May issue of *Mining Engineering* magazine.	Environmental Division Secretary
May after the SME Annual Conference	The Environmental Division sends out certificates for outstanding presentations	Program Committee Chair and Environmental Division Liaison

3.4.1 Observations/Lessons Learned – Outstanding Papers and Presentations

Papers/manuscripts are available from SME at the end of January for outstanding manuscripts/papers review. The review of presentations takes place after the Annual Conference. The Program Committee Chair is responsible for assembling a team to review the papers and the presentation evaluation forms to identify outstanding papers and presentations. A template of Evaluation Forms and instructions is included in Appendix A. It is recommended that at least two evaluators judge each session, which can include the session chair. There should be a maximum of two evaluation forms per session.

4. Environmental Division Luncheon

The Environmental Division Luncheon is organized by the Executive Committee as a ticketed event.

Table 5
Environmental Luncheon

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
June – August, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Identify a few candidate speakers (it may be difficult to get one person to commit by September)	Program Committee Chair
Early to mid-September, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Speaker and title of speech need to be provided to SME for incorporation into Preliminary Program	Program Committee Chair
October/November, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Speaker and title of speech need to be provided to SME for incorporation into the Publication of the Program	Program Committee Chair
December before the SME Annual Conference	Script for Environmental Luncheon developed; feedback obtained from Environment Division Executive Committee	SME Environmental Division Liaison
February, the year of the SME Annual Conference (before the conference)	Evaluation of papers for selection as outstanding papers to be presented at the Environmental Luncheon. Typically done right after the Executive Committee meeting on Sunday before the Conference.	Program Committee Chair
February, the year of the SME Annual Conference (before the conference)	Notify outstanding paper authors, invite them to luncheon if papers are received on time, to provide notification. Clarify if authors need to purchase tickets.	Program Committee Chair
SME Annual Conference Environmental Division Luncheon	Present Outstanding Paper Certificates	Program Committee Chair

Observations/Lessons Learned – Environmental Luncheon

- Laura Nelson and Tara Davis are the key SME contacts for the Environmental Luncheon.

- Laura works with SME contacts.

- Announce outstanding papers (authors do not get free Luncheon tickets).

- Luncheon Speaker
  o Attempt to have the speaker's name and speech title included in the Preliminary Program.
  o A short speech of about 20 minutes is ideal; leave enough time for questions and for attendees to move to the afternoon sessions.
  o The Program chair will contact the speaker in January before the conference to confirm plans and ensure they have all the necessary information to arrive.
  o Obtain the slide for the luncheon slide set and send it to Laura in early February.
  o Meet with the luncheon speaker before the event if possible.
  o Get a short bio to introduce the speaker.
  o Review the luncheon speaker's slide presentation prior to the luncheon if possible.

- Depending on Luncheon capacity and SME staff discretion, the Environmental Division may provide complimentary tickets for students, the poster session winners, etc.

- Laura works with the Executive Committee on the overall speech script. The Program Committee Chair has two tasks: announce the manuscript awards and introduce the luncheon speaker. The script is usually drafted in January or February, prior to the conference.

5. Student Poster Session

The Program Committee Planning Chair is the Student Poster Session chair and is responsible for identifying universities, communicating the poster session expectations, and coordinating the session. Poster proposals are evaluated by a panel of at least three judges. The due date for poster abstracts is usually the end of January, before the SME Annual Conference.

Table 6
Student Poster Session

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
March after the previous SME Annual Conference	Work with the outgoing Program Planning Committee Chair to learn what worked well and what didn't.	Program Planning Committee Chair
@October – November, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Compile the email announcement for the poster session contest and the list of universities for the advertisement. Send the email and list to the Environmental Division Liaison.	Program Planning Committee Chair
November before the SME Annual Conference	Prepare an advertisement for the poster session contest in the December issue of Mining Engineering magazine (the year before the SME Annual Conference).	Program Planning Committee Chair and *Mining Engineering* magazine Chair
December before the SME Annual Conference	Identify poster judges for the upcoming SME Annual Conference.	Program Planning Committee Chair
November – December before the SME Annual Conference	With the poster judges, review and accept or reject poster abstracts. Only reject if the poster abstract does not fit the announcement requirements. Poster abstracts will be sent directly to the Program Planning Committee Chair.	Program Planning Committee Chair
February, the year of the SME Annual Conference (before the Conference)	Confirm poster presenters and poster contest judges' attendance.	Program Planning Committee Chair

6. Field Trips

Field trips can be an attractive event for the Annual Conferences. Offering a field trip is not required, but it can greatly enhance members' conference experiences. SME coordinates and arranges the logistics. The divisions can contribute ideas, contacts, and other resources to the field trip effort as desired and appropriate. Table 6 provides the schedule and expected activity.

Table 7
Field Trips

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
March – April, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Identify individuals with local knowledge of the area and potential field trip ideas.	Program Planning Committee Chair
April – May, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Identify, develop Field Trip proposals, and formulate a description to submit to SME by late May.	Program Planning Committee Chair
June – July, the year before the next SME Annual Conference	Coordinate with SME upon field trip approval. Also, other divisions may be submitting field trip ideas.	Program Planning Committee Chair
August before the next SME Annual Conference	Field Trips finalized (field trips with insufficient interest will be cancelled)	Program Planning Committee Chair
SME Annual Conference	Field Trips	Others

Observations/Lessons Learned – Field Trips

- Tara Davis is the key SME contact for field trips.

- The Environmental Division Program Planning Chair needs to provide a Field Trip Information Form[3] and a write-up on field trip(s) to SME in time for Preliminary Program (approximately mid-August).

- Field trip organizers need to consider travel distance, location, and weather (e.g., Denver winter weather may be an obstacle for field trips distant from Denver).

- Field trips need to be intensely marketed to be successful.

- SME will let you know whether a field trip has adequate registration. If registration is lacking in January, a field trip may be canceled.

- It is not uncommon for the actual turnout for the field trip to be lower than the purchased tickets. 'Standby' spots may be available at the discretion of SME and the Program Planning Chair.

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[3] See Appendix B for the Field Trip Information Form

7. Short Courses

Short courses can be an excellent opportunity to highlight certain topics in a manner that far exceeds presentations within the technical sessions. They are highly specialized, and whoever presents one must understand the investment and commitment required to conduct one.

Table 8
Short Courses

Approximate Date	Activity	Responsible Individual(s)
March – May before the next SME Annual Conference	Identify individuals with ideas and/or interest in hosting a Short Course.	Program Planning Committee Chair
June – July before the next SME Annual Conference	Identify and develop Short Course proposals and formulate description to submit to SME.	Program Planning Committee Chair
Early to mid-August before the next SME Annual Conference	Coordinate with SME upon Short Course approval. Other divisions will also be submitting Short Course ideas.	Program Planning Committee Chair
September before the SME Annual Conference	Short Course finalized (courses with insufficient interest cancelled).	Program Planning Committee Chair
SME Annual Conference	Short Courses	Others

Observations/Lessons Learned – Short Courses

- Tara Davis is the key SME contact for the Short Courses.

- Short courses are typically offered on the Saturday preceding the annual conference and are held in parallel to strategic committee meetings.

- Short course forms need to be completed and provided to SME in time for the Preliminary Program (approximately early- to mid-August).

- Short courses need to be intensely marketed to make them successful.

SME will let you know whether a short course has adequate registration to proceed. SME provides periodic updates on short course registrants. If registration is lacking at the end of January, a short course may be canceled.

8. Additional Thoughts

Consistent, clear, and timely communications and follow-ups decrease the likelihood of failure. Some of the more difficult issues to address include no-show presenters or session chairs. By engaging with presenters and authors early and often, they feel more responsible for fulfilling their commitments or notifying you earlier if plans change. This manual is designed to help with planning and organizing with that in mind.

Presenters submitting a paper are highly encouraged, and we need to support and promote that achievement. Preparing a paper generally takes more time than preparing a presentation. Appendix A provides some templates to help support that outcome.

Most authors and presenters are very busy and may travel frequently for work. Communicating with some authors and presenters may require additional patience and follow-up. However, if a commitment seems to be falling through due to lack of communication and response, encourage the session chairs to consult with the Program Planning Committee Chair to try to resolve the issue.

Remember: A goal without a plan is just a wish. (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)

After completing planning and committee work, it's time to be adaptable and enjoy the process. Be flexible!

Appendix A
Communication Package for Technical Session Chairs

9. Email Examples

9.1   Session Topic Solicitation

We're planning the Environmental Division Program for SME's <<Year>> Annual Conference and we need your help!

Hi there, as a valued member of the global mining community, we'd love your help with the Environmental Division's program for the <<Year> SME Annual Conference. The Environmental Division Planning committee is currently soliciting technical session proposals for the conference that will be in <<City>>, <<State>>, <<Month>> <<Date>> through <<Date>, <<Year>>.

We encourage innovative session proposal submissions from people at all stages of their careers. Below are some session topics to get you started.
•   Water Treatment
•   Tailings Management
•   Social Responsibility and Mining
•   Permitting and Policy Amidst Uncertainty
•   Closure covers and climate change
•   Watersheds and Mining; Where (scale), who, when, and CSR

Please share this email with others and send in your suggested session topic, a 2 to 3-sentence abstract describing the session and the contact information for the session's chair and co-chair by emailing me at <<Your Email Address>>. A response by March 31, <<Year>>, is greatly appreciated.

9.2   Edit Session Titles

Greetings,

We have made very good progress on the <<Year>> Environmental Program Session and in identifying Chairs and Co-chairs for next years' conference. Having a short abstract about the session would make it easier to determine the best fit for proposed presentations.

The Ask: Please edit the Session titles listed in the attached document [attach a document with a draft of Session titles], provide a short 2 to 3-sentence abstract, and list the Chair and/or Co-chair name. Then send this information back to me by <<Date>>. We want to make sure that the sessions offered have clear value to SME members and result in sessions that are well attended.

9.3   Request for Chair Contact Information

[Note: This email will be sent to different people during April and May before the SME Annual Conference.]

Greetings <<Chair Name>>,

Thanks for your reply and welcome to the SME <<Year>> Annual Conference and the Environmental Division program. For the conference, I have been requested to provide the following information for each Chair and Co-chair.

- Name
- Company/Academic Institute
- Mailing Address
- Phone
- Email

Please send your contact information to me by <<Date>>.

Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

9.4   Email to people inquiring about SME Session Topics

Greetings:

I am following up after our site visit and the sessions for the <<Year>> SME Annual Conference. SME will send out information requesting session abstracts and I thought some of these might be of interest to you and your colleagues. SME's <<Year>> Annual Conference will be in <<City>>, <<State>> from <<Dates>>, <<Year>>.

The Environmental Division session topics are:

- *ADTI: Advances and New Insights in Environmental Geochemistry*
- *Climate change: Environmental Challenges on Mining*
- *Mine Closure and Reclamation*
- *Mine Wastewater Treatment*
- *Reclaiming the Past: Strategies for Managing Abandoned Mine Lands*
- *Water Resources Modelling in Mining*
- *Sustainable Mine Water Management and Treatment for Effective Reclamation and Closure*
- *The Upside of Failure*
- *Post-Closure: Uncertain, Unsettled, and Underestimated*
- *Innovative Engineering for Sustainable Mine Containment and Restoration*

SME will be announcing the request for abstracts soon. If you have questions in the meantime, please email questions about the session to this year's environmental division planning chair, <<Name>> at <<Email Address>>.

9.5   Abstract Central Notice to Chairs

Greetings <<Chair Name>>,

Thanks to you we have a great program planned for the <<Year>> SME annual conference. Over the next few weeks SME will prepare to start accepting abstracts for papers and/or presentations through the Abstract Central website. Additional information on how to submit abstracts will be posted to the SME community page as well as on the SME website.

During the next weeks please reach out to people who may be interested in presenting during your session titled *Mother Nature to the Rescue: How Natural Methods can Lead to an Inherently Stable Site.* Each session usually has 5 to 6 presentations and your assistance by contacting people in advance is greatly appreciated and helps us have a high-quality program for the SME members.

Sincerely yours,

9.6   SME 2026 Annual Conference; Review Abstracts for Session

Greetings!

I'm contacting you to say that it would be helpful to have you review the <<Number>> abstracts submitted for your session on the Abstract Central site. SME's conference organizer has asked that we review all the abstracts submitted and consider the following questions about the abstracts. I would greatly appreciate it if you could review the abstracts submitted by September <<Date>>.

Abstract Review
- Do I have enough abstracts (minimum 4)?
- Too many abstracts (max of 8)?
- Is the abstract applicable to my session?
- Are they good quality?
- Are any too commercial?
- Is this unique content?
- Is the author committed to attend the conference and present?

The complaints of conference attendees are the following:
- Too much overlapping content.
- Too many sessions that I am interested in, so I can't attend them all.
- Too many presentations that are old news.

There is no space to add more sessions to the <<Year>> annual conference. However, here are some sessions that may also be a good fit for some of the abstracts submitted to your session. Please do not remove or relocate abstracts before letting me know. Sometimes the abstract is more appropriate for a different session. If an abstract(s) needs to be moved to another session, please let me know and I will work with SME to reassign the abstract.
- *Mine Wastewater Treatment*
- *Water Resources Modelling in Mining*

- *Sustainable Mine Water Management and Treatment for Effective Reclamation and Closure*

I do appreciate a suggestion from you on alternative sessions for abstracts. If you think an abstract should just be rejected, please let me know and I will work with the SME conference organizer who can remove it and advise the author if we are cancelling the abstract.

To check your session abstracts:
- Log in to Abstract Central: <<Link>>
  - You will need to remember your password or click on forgot password for a new one.
- After you are logged in, click on the "Session" tab at the top of the screen.
- To view the actual abstract content, right click on your session line.
- Choose "add abstract."
- A pop-up will appear.
- Expand it or scroll down to see the abstracts submitted.
- Double click on the Control ID number that is underlined for all abstract and author details.

Helpful hints:
- Do not use Microsoft Edge if at all possible.
- Remember, when in doubt, scroll down to see what you may be missing.
- Please do not delete abstracts before checking with me.

Thanks for making the <<Year>> SME Annual Conference & Expo Program a success!

Sincerely yours,

9.7   RE: SME 2026 Conference Session Information

Greetings <<Chair Name>>,

First, thank you for chairing a session and contributing to the success of the Annual Conference! This email should provide you the information you need to contact your presenters for a successful Environmental technical session. You will receive a separate email message to address the judging and evaluation instructions for your session which is scheduled to start at <<Time>> on <<Month>> <<date>>, <<Year>> in the <<Room Number/Name>> room.

Regarding the presentations currently included in the session, the information below shows each presentation title, lead author, lead author's email address, presentation date, and location.

    <<Presentation Title>>
    <<Lead Author>>
    <<Lead Author's Email>>
    <<Presentation Date>>
    <<Presentation Location>>

Please contact your presenters by January <<Date>> to confirm they are still presenting. They must register for the conference as well. Accepted authors will have to register on or prior to the early bird deadline or their abstract will be withdrawn from the program and not published or promoted.

Here is some suggested text for an email to the presenters that may be helpful.

Good day all,

Thank you for presenting in the upcoming <<Year>> SME Annual Conference & Expo, to be held at the <<Location>> in <<City>>, <<State>>, <Month>> <<Dates>>, <<Year>>. Your talk is shown on the schedule included with this email in a technical session entitled <<Session Title>>.

Author's Coffee:
You are required to attend the Author's Coffee (look for the room location at the conference) on <<Day>>, <<Date>>. I will be there to receive your presentation slides and provide last-minute instructions. You can also meet and interact with other presenters.

Timing Your Presentation and Staying on Schedule:
We have several speakers, all of whom look forward to having interesting presentations. As co-chairs, <<Name>> and I will do our best to keep us all on schedule during the session. Staying on schedule is a courtesy to your fellow speakers and to the conference attendees who plan their talk attendance by the schedule provided in the program. Each speaker is allowed 20 minutes, which includes time for introductions, your set up at the podium, your presentation, and questions/answers. Please time your talk to accommodate all of these. A 16 to 18-minute presentation is a good rule of thumb.

Other Recommendations:
- *Please be present at your session at least 10 minutes before it starts to check the audio visuals and confirm your slides are correctly loaded.*
- *Your presentation should have a technical and/or educational focus, not a marketing focus.*
- *Follow good presentation practices. Outlining your presentation topics and ending with conclusions or lessons learned and benefits is helpful to the audience.*
- *SME evaluates all presentations and puts forward excellent ones to be considered on our "Outstanding Presentations" listing.*
- *Please keep my contact information handy for any last-minute communications.*

Registration:
Information, including the full technical session schedule, can be found at https://www.smeannualconference.org. Please note that all attendees, including presenters, must register and pay for attendance at the conference.

Thank you for your time and attention to this, we look forward to working with all of you.

I hope all is well,

9.8   Early January: Environmental Division Tech Session Chairs and upcoming information

<u>Program Chair to Tech session chairs</u>:

Happy New Year all!

We are two short months away from our big event. To provide you with an update and a glimpse of final planning, here is what to expect:

SME has posted detailed information on the website including conference schedule and technical session programs. Registration is required for all speakers and early bird discounts go through <<Date>>. The conference agenda is being finalized, and publications are being prepared. In the event an author cannot attend as planned, please let me know as soon as possible. Note that the booklets and documentation will not reflect any changes, however we may be able to modify the information on the conference app.

Please contact your presenters with the following message (edit as you see fit):

Happy New Year! We are just weeks away from our technical session planned for the <<Year> SME Conference in <<City>>. Here are a few things to remember:

- *Please register for the conference and explore the detailed information provided here: <<Conference Website Link>>. You must register on or prior to the early bird deadline or your abstract will be withdrawn from the program and not published or promoted.*

- *Our session has approximately 7 to 8 presenters. Our session will be held on: <<Fill in your session date and time here>>.*

- *Our session presenters and chairs will meet at the Author's Coffee held the morning of our session at 7:30 am. At that time, we can collect the slide decks for your presentations (flash drives work well for this) and check out the room.*

- *Presentations should be approximately 15 to 17 minutes. We need to adhere to our schedule so that SME attendees can attend the presentations as shown in the program.*

- *Room numbers at the facility are shown in the program, however, they have a way of changing at the last minute so please confirm at the conference.*

We'll be sending out additional emails with more information for a successful conference. As always, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you again for being part of this!

Appendix B
Field Trip Information Form

SME Society for
Mining, Metallurgy
& Exploration ®

Field Trip Information Form

12999 E ADAM AIRCRAFT CIR
Englewood CO 80112
davis@smenet.org, 303.948.4215

NAME OF FIELD TRIP

DAY, DATE AND TIME OF TRIP

PRIMARY SITE CONTACT NAME:

JOB TITLE:

Cell Phone #:   **Email Address:**

SITE ADDRESS & General Directions: *(Exact for Bus Directions)*

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL THE SITE ACCOMMODATE:

DESCRIPTION OF FIELD TRIP *(What will people see etc. 100 words to be used in advertising. Please attach site photos)*

DURATION/TIME OF TOUR FROM START TO FINISH:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS ON APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT:

ATTENDEES SHOULD BRING THEIR OWN PPE TO INCLUDE:

THE SITE CAN PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING PPE:

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTENDEES:

IS PHOTOGRAPHY ALLOWED?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM SITE:

WHAT HAPPENS NOW
1. **Send the completed field trip proposal form to: Tara Davis, SME Program Manager, davis@smenet.org**

2. **Upon receipt, the UCA of SME staff will do the following:**
    a. **Contact the site coordinator if any questions or incomplete information**
    b. **Prepare a budget and establish ticket prices**
    c. SME staff will make all logistical arrangements outside of the site (bus, advertising, refreshments, etc.)
    d. Confirmation to the site will be handled by SME staff