



## Hosting a Texas Plains Trail Region Annual Roundup

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806.747.1997 Updated 11/15/2015 **DEADLINE FOR BIDS 12/15/15**

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**The Texas Plains Trail Region holds its annual conference, the Tourism & Preservation Roundup, in late July or early August at a site within the 52 counties of the Region.** Communities vie for the privilege of hosting, since this small but influential interdisciplinary meeting brings a variety of tourism, preservation, economic development, and education professionals and volunteers together to experience the unique flavor of the host city as they prepare for the coming year's work and programming.

**Interested in hosting?** Here are some things you'll want to know.

**Tone, purpose, and programming.** The Roundup is a professional development and networking event rather than a scholarly or educational conference, though elements of history and education are always included. Presenters typically focus on best practices, innovations, and trends in heritage tourism product development, event management, marketing and communications, fund-raising, and logistics. But there's a healthy dose of inspiration and entertainment as well. Past keynoters have included Bob Phillips of Texas Country Reporter, "The Daytripper" Chet Garner, official state photographer Wyman Meinzer, and "National Photographer of Texas" Griff Smith. We keep things fun and light while providing the richest possible mix of ideas attendees can take back and use in their own communities. Dress for sessions and events is business casual.

**Scheduling.** Generally, our conference is takes up one full weekday, with a social/launch event the evening before, to allow attendees and exhibitors to travel most economically and use limited funds most effectively. We've found that our attendees like a Wednesday evening/Thursday, Tuesday evening/Wednesday, or a Thursday evening/Friday combination. Some variation from this custom may be considered as exact dates are agreed upon for a particular site. And at times we've included an optional hands-on workshop on the morning of the travel-home day. It's important to take into consideration other key events within the Region and state (such as the annual meeting of the Texas Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus, which occurs around the same time and attracts much of our same audience), or already scheduled at the site, that may conflict.

**Conference format and promotion.** Take a look at last year's Roundup schedules, sponsors, exhibitors, and promotions at <http://texasplainstrail.com/roundup>; photos of several years' events can be viewed at [www.flickr.com/photos/barbarabrannon/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/barbarabrannon/albums). You'll see that we typically plan for the following lineup and logistics:

- First day (half day) includes time for setup; a separate mid-afternoon board meeting; and the evening welcome reception and/or program—all at the same site or facility if possible.
- Dinner is generally left open for attendees to network on their own in local eateries.
- Second day (full day) includes a series of approximately hour-long sessions (all are plenary, though there are sometimes small breakout groups within the main room).
- Seating should be at tables rather than theater-style, to facilitate hands-on work. Round tables are preferred. Accommodations for 150 allow Roundup to serve the broadest audience possible.
- Adequate space (preferably immediately adjacent) is needed for registration and vendor exhibits.
- Breakfast is generally left open for attendees to network on their own at hotels or in local eateries; snack and beverage breaks are generally provided at the meeting site.
- Luncheon is generally provided at the meeting site; plated, buffet, or box style are all fine, depending on local logistics and the particular programming requirements.

- Second-evening activities and third-morning workshops are optional add-ons, depending on site, host, schedule, and interest.

Feel free to request copies of other materials as you review your site and prepare your bid.

**Conference costs.** We strive to keep costs modest, for the benefit of our organization and our hosts. Here are some typical costs associated with Roundup, which may be covered by host, by Plains Trail Region, or donated:

- Conference venue rental (opening night reception and/or program); A/V, cleanup, security fees
- Entertainment at opening night reception—can showcase local talent
- Food and beverage for opening night reception; décor, tables/chairs, serving ware, servers
- Conference venue rental (main conference day); A/V, cleanup, security fees; tables/chairs
- Food and beverage for luncheon; décor, tables/chairs, serving ware, servers
- Venue, food and beverage, and entertainment for second-evening program, if any
- Conference venue rental (optional third-day workshop); A/V, cleanup, security fees
- Food and beverage for third-day breakfast, if any; décor, tables/chairs, serving ware, servers
- Advance publicity/advertising/promotion
- Conference bags; promotional items
- Printed conference program
- Speaker fees and travel are generally covered in the Plains Trail budget or by grants, but additional financial support is always welcome.

### **Bid preparation**

1. Prospective hosts for a given year must submit a letter of intent to TPTR no later than December 15 of the current year and plan to present their bids (in person or via shared materials) at the December board meeting.
2. The proposal must include the following information:
  - \_\_\_ Description of the proposed conference facility and ancillary venues
  - \_\_\_ Capacity of assembly areas; number and capacity of meeting rooms
  - \_\_\_ Exhibitor space; load-in, load-out, proximity to assembly and meeting areas, tables and chairs
  - \_\_\_ Description and capacity for handling meals and receptions, adhering to local health codes
  - \_\_\_ Internal communications, networking, and audio/visual presentation capabilities; electrical connections
  - \_\_\_ Local lodging: number, proximity, type of hotel/motel rooms and B&Bs; rates and potential discounts
  - \_\_\_ Local alternative lodging: area RV parks, proximity, services, rates, and potential discounts
  - \_\_\_ Local dining opportunities
  - \_\_\_ Local tourism, recreational, and shopping opportunities
3. The board will vote to select the next year's site in December of each year and will notify and announce the winning bidder by December 31.
4. If no prospective hosts present bids for a given year, the board will determine schedule and location at the December board meeting for the upcoming Roundup.

### **Bid presentation (optional)**

1. Prospective host communities are welcome to give a presentation at our December board meeting not to exceed 20 minutes. You are welcome to include a song, skit, handout, or similar activity, but your total presentation may not exceed the twenty-minute time limit, in fairness to all.
2. Prospective host communities are welcome to give advance notice at prior board meetings of their intent to bid for Roundup.
3. Prospective host communities are welcome to staff a display booth at the current year's Roundup to promote their community and bid.

**Give us a call at 806.747.1997, or e-mail us at <mailto:info@TexasPlainsTrail.com>, if you'd like to host us in the coming year. We look forward to visiting!**