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10.13-16.2020

VIRTUAL  
2020 natural areas conference

*Sierra to Sagebrush: integrating management and stewardship across landscapes*

The valleys and mountains of the Nevada-California borderlands are found at the intersection of two major North American ecoregions: The Great Basin and The Sierra Nevada. Interactions and intersections between these two ecoregions and the climates, biota, and human societies that characterize them constitute the fabric of western Nevada and eastern California. Rivers and Native American trails have long flowed across this land of transition, and now highways have joined them. The convergence of the Truckee River Basin and the I-80 corridor – with Reno and the Carson Valley at their hub – illustrates the region’s vibrant mingling of water, fish, people, and ideas, and conservation challenges ahead.



*Great Basin National Park - Photo by NPS*

The 47th Natural Areas Conference (NAC20), *Sierra to Sagebrush: Integrating Management and Stewardship Across Landscapes*, is focused on the unique ecological and management dynamics that distinguish the Nevada-California borderlands. Things are big here: big mountains, big lakes, big landscapes, big ranches, big growth, and big and complex issues. Like: how to balance one of the fastest growing metro areas in the U.S. with preservation of open habitat? How to support more people with less water, while preserving water quality? How to conserve rare or keystone species in the face of global change and rapid urban growth? How to reduce fire frequencies in sagebrush ecosystems but increase them (safely) in montane forests? Solving these issues will depend at least partly on land and resource managers, scientists, and policy makers coming together to share and discuss creative ideas that cross disciplines, ecosystems, and jurisdictional boundaries. NAC20 *Sierra to Sagebrush: Integrating Management and Stewardship Across Landscapes* is an event designed to facilitate this crucial exchange.



*Sagebrush - Photo by Sue Weis, USDA*

As the Natural Areas Association (NAA), our partners and our professional community adapt to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we look forward to hosting NAC20 as NAA’s first virtual conference. More than 40 recorded individual presentations, 15 posters, and seven live in-depth symposia will be available to attendees, along with live discussions of natural areas topics critical to the Great Basin-Sierra Nevada region and beyond. In addition, you will have opportunities to meet colleagues in groups and one-on-one, visit the virtual exhibit hall, and share your own work with a national audience. The virtual NAC20 will still deliver what you’ve come to expect from a Natural Areas Conference: a convening of professional managers, practitioners, and scientists to exchange the latest science, share innovations, build effective collaborations, and address conservation challenges across state, federal, municipal, and privately-owned natural areas. While we will remain physically distant for the present, the Natural Areas Association hopes to explore the Sierra-Sagebrush ecotone in-person with you, our members, partners, supporters, and colleagues, soon.