wefevents

COLLECTION SYSTEMS AND STORMWATER CONFERENCE

July 8-11, 2026 | Portland, OR

2026 CALL FOR CONTENT

Accepting submissions from January 26th to March 18th

Submit to: https://ww5.aievolution.com/wef/

The Collection Systems & Stormwater Conference convenes leaders advancing innovative solutions to water challenges that help build resilience and advance the circular water economy. As we launch this year's call for content, we aim to expand the technical program to better engage experts from the Watershed and Small Systems.

To support a more integrated, holistic approach to solving water challenges, we invite practitioners and partners working across the entire water cycle to share real-world lessons, propose innovative ideas, and help shape a more connected, future-ready 2026 program. In addition to submissions focusing specifically on collection systems and stormwater, submissions are also encouraged on the following topics: watershed and water resources management; groundwater and source-water protection; hydrologic and hydraulic modeling; climate adaptation and flood risk management; and decentralized/distributed systems for small systems.

We welcome abstracts and proposals from utility and water professionals, consultants, technology providers, academics, and regulators for interactive, forward-thinking sessions that advance practical solutions and strengthen community resilience.

Water Environment Federation

TOPICS & FOCUS AREAS

Focus Areas: *Submitters will be able to choose a maximum of two focus areas.*

- Collection Systems
- Watershed
- Stormwater
- Small Communities/Systems

Topics: *Submitters will be able to choose a maximum of one topic.*

AI & Intelligent/Smart Systems
Novel ways that AI has enabled utilities to optimize resource allocation, predict infrastructure failures, and address critical challenges like water scarcity and aging infrastructure. Presentations should show innovative solutions that can be applied to other utilities to help educate and expand the use of AI throughout the industry.

Climate Change Resilience and Tidal & Sea Level Rise Impact
Engineering and operational strategies that enhance the resilience of collection systems facing climate-driven challenges. Submissions are encouraged to highlight advanced hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, climate-informed design criteria, flood-hardening measures, and adaptive system configurations that maintain functionality under evolving coastal and watershed conditions. Case studies should present measurable outcomes such as reduced system inflow and infiltration during high-water events, improved performance under tidal or surge loading, increased infrastructure reliability in flood-prone areas, and long-term risk reduction demonstrated through monitoring, modeling, or post-event evaluations.

Community Engagement, Service Equity & Safety
Strategies to connect wastewater and stormwater programs with residents, workers and local partners to shape decisions, priorities and drive success of implementation. Submissions should highlight strategies, case studies and lessons learned related to inclusive outreach, fair distribution of services and investments, protection of the public and field staff and effective communication around system risks, maintenance activities and storm events.

Design, Construction & Asset Management
Innovative design methodologies and construction approaches that improve build quality, system resiliency, and long-term performance of collection system infrastructure. Submissions may explore advances in materials science, construction sequencing, alternative delivery methods, quality assurance technologies, and the integration of digital engineering platforms. Case studies should provide clear, data-supported outcomes such as improved constructability, enhanced system functionality, reduced lifecycle costs, optimized maintenance planning, and long-term asset sustainability within varied operating conditions.

Funding & Financial Planning
Cutting-edge funding initiatives for collection system improvements, including financing options and adaptive methods that evolve with fiscal and regulatory conditions in the current market. Case studies should illustrate scalable implementations, performance metrics, and adaptive approaches that have successfully supported resilient upgrades.

Green Infrastructure, Wetlands Restoration & Nature Based Solutions
Innovative and practical applications of green infrastructure, wetlands and stream restoration and other nature-based solutions that address stormwater quantity management, water quality and ecosystem health. Presentations should highlight case studies, performance data, lessons learned and scalable approaches that demonstrate real-world benefits and transferable outcomes for stormwater and collections system managers and decision-makers.

Integrated Planning, Regulatory & Programmatic Innovations
Innovations in providing integrated planning across water resources including cross system coordination, regulatory alignment, and long-term planning across watersheds. Consideration should be made to affordability concerns and multiple stakeholder integration.

Modeling
Present innovations in the practical application and use of hydraulic models in the water industry for proactive planning or reactive forensics. Applications of automation and other AI enabled tools are encouraged if they are focused specifically on the hydraulic model.

Odors, Air Pollutants & Public Outreach
Emerging odor and air-pollutant mitigation technologies, monitoring methods, and operational strategies that reduce emissions, corrosion risk, and community impacts within collection systems. Submissions should highlight advancements in treatment media, dispersion modeling, real-time sensor applications, and integrated ventilation approaches proven to deliver measurable reductions in odor intensity and complaint frequency. Case studies should also demonstrate effective public outreach initiatives such as communication platforms, educational efforts, proactive engagement driving, improved community relations and measurable stakeholder outcomes.

Operators, Leading Operations, and Community Innovations
Operator-led breakthroughs on O&M and leadership approaches that leverage methods or tools to boost system efficiency, safety, and adaptability. Emphasize community innovations in collaborative platforms, upskilling initiatives, and decentralized solutions for resource management, equity, and/or processes amid environmental shifts. Case studies should detail quantifiable outcomes in performance, sustainability, and stakeholder impact across varied infrastructures.

Small Communities, Decentralized Systems and Management
Small communities in the water and wastewater industry often benefit significantly from decentralized systems, which offer localized treatment and distribution solutions rather than relying on large, centralized infrastructure. Submissions should address effective management of these decentralized systems is crucial for ensuring public health, environmental protection, and long-term sustainability, as it requires tailored approaches to operation, maintenance, and regulatory compliance.

Trenchless Technologies & Gray Systems
Front-running trenchless innovations in methodologies and technologies for collection system rehab and installation, emphasizing breakthroughs that extend lifecycles and minimize disruptions. Submissions must include case studies demonstrating deployments that quantify gains in efficiency, cost savings, and environmental benefits across various settings.

Wet Weather Control, Urban Flooding & Surface Water Management
Strategies and solutions for managing wet weather impacts, including urban flooding, combined sewer overflows, inflow and infiltration and surface water management challenges. Submissions may feature planning, design, modeling, operations and case studies that highlight effective approaches to reducing flooding risk, improving system performance, enhancing resilience and protecting communities during extreme weather events.

SUBMISSION TYPES

Individual Abstract

Due by 9:00AM Eastern on March 18th, 2026

Accepted abstract submissions will be paired with 1-2 other individual abstract submissions to develop one technical session. Accepted speakers will be expected to coordinate with fellow session speakers.

1. Must include an author, co-author, and maximum of two speakers.
2. Abstracts shall be no longer than 9,000 characters. Tables, graphics, and/or images will not count towards this number and are submitted separately from the abstract text within our system.
3. Some accepted abstract speakers will be expected to participate in interactive activities during the technical session to help facilitate adult learning.

Session Proposal

Due by 9:00AM Eastern on March 18th, 2026

Accepted session proposal submissions will become a full 90-minute technical session. Proposal facilitators will be expected to coordinate with WEF staff and conference planning committee members to finalize session agenda.

1. Must include a maximum of three speakers, two facilitators, and complete agenda (90-minute session). Agendas must consist of a cohesive theme or topic with the goal of encouraging knowledge exchange among session participants.
2. Description should not be longer than 9,000 characters (approx. 1,000 words).
3. Proposal speakers and facilitators must have diversity of utilities, organizations, backgrounds, and experiences. Meaning the session should not all represent the same utility, consulting organization, or manufacturer.

HOW TO SUBMIT

All submissions type should be submitted via https://ww5.aievolution.com/wef/.

**Paper or emailed submissions will not be accepted.*

For submission tips and best practices, visit our **Speaker Resources**.

TIMELINE

January	Call for Content Begins Accepting Submissions
March	Call for Content Closes *CSSW conference program committee reviews submissions.*
May	Submitters are notified of acceptance or rejection status.
June	Accepted abstract authors final technical paper due.
July	**CSSW Conference | Oregon Convention Center**

Questions? Email all questions to CSSWConf@wef.org