# GUIDELINES FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS
First National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration

December 6-10, 2004 ● Wyndham Palace Resort ● Lake Buena Vista (Orlando), Florida

Attention to detail is vital when preparing for any presentation. For posters, a general concept is the information should stimulate discussion, not give a long presentation. Because space is limited, keep text to a minimum, emphasize graphics, and make sure every item in the poster is necessary.

**Preparation and Layout**
- Draw a rough sketch of the poster on graph paper to develop a clear idea of which components will go where.
- Remember that the size of the poster board will be 4-feet high x 6-feet wide (1.22 M high x 1.83 M wide). Boards are approximately 30 inches (76.2cm) off the floor. See diagram on first page.
- Include the title and authors of the poster as listed in your abstract.
- Information on the poster should read like a book – flowing from left to right and from top to bottom.
- It may be helpful to use arrows or identifiers (sequential letters or numbers) to guide the reader through the poster.
- You can also arrange it in two or three vertical columns, but not horizontal strips.
- The introduction or rationale should be placed at the upper left and the outcome/impact or concluding comments should appear at the lower right. Objectives, and other information will fill the remaining space.
- Keep it simple – too much information leads to messy or "busy" posters.
- Avoid overwhelming your audience with too many numbers, words, and/or complicated graphs.
- Stick to two or three main points. Too many can confuse the viewer. Get feedback from others before finalizing it.

**Text**
- Double-space all text, using left justification.
- Use short sentences, simple words, and bullets to illustrate discrete points.
- Written material should be concise. Avoid using jargon, acronyms, or unusual abbreviations.
- The printed outcomes/impacts should permit observers to focus on a concise statement of your central findings that lends itself to discussion.

**Fonts**
- All information should be large enough to read easily from at least 4 feet away.
- Suggested text size is no smaller than 24 point; Author(s) and affiliation(s) should be at least 42 point; Subheadings should be at least 60 point.
- The title should be printed across the top of the poster in characters of 80-150 point. (Again, allow for the 4"x4" poster number in the top left-hand corner.)
- San serif fonts. (The small finishing strokes that stem from the upper and lower ends of a character) are easiest to read. Suggested options include: Arial, Century Gothic, Franklin Gothic Medium, Lucida Sans.
- Choose one font and then use it throughout the poster.
- Add emphasis by using **boldface**, <u>underlining</u>, or color. (*Italics* are sometimes difficult to distinguish from regular.)
- Do not use all caps unless it is for one or two word headings. ALL CAPS TEXT IS NOT THE EASIEST TO READ.

**Illustrations (graph, charts, photos, etc.)**
- The success of a poster directly relates to the clarity of the illustrations and tables.
- Self-explanatory graphics should dominate the poster (at least 50% of your poster space).
- Keep captions brief.
- A minimal amount of text should supplement the graphic materials.
- Graphic materials should be visible from a distance of four (4) feet.
- Only include essential information in graphs and tables
- Label data lines in graphs directly, using large fonts and color. The use of legends and keys will take the viewer more time to interpret your message.
- Lines in graphs should be thicker than normally provided in printed letter-sized paper reports or manuscripts.
- Use colors to distinguish different data groups in graphs. Avoid using patterns or open bars in histograms.

**Use of Color**
- Overuse of color can be distracting – restrained use of 2 to 3 colors for emphasis is valuable.
- Two to three related background colors *will* unify the poster.
- Use a light background with darker photos; a dark background with lighter photos.
- Use a neutral background (gray) to emphasize color in photos, a white background to reduce the impact of colored photos.