

PARADISE ON FIRE

2019 ASLE CONFERENCE

June 26-30, 2019
University of California, Davis

Conference Website: <https://www.asle.org/conference/biennial-conference/>

Submission Site: <https://asle.submittable.com/submit>

Open Panels: <https://www.asle.org/conference/biennial-conference/panel-calls-for-papers/>

The name of the conference was not drawn from any specific event, but from the long literary imagining of California as another world, as we hope the call for panels and papers have made clear. The title was intended to be metaphorical, and took on an unintended new meaning in light of the tragic November 2018 Camp Fire, which destroyed the town of Paradise CA. ASLE mourns for the loss of life, home and habitat in that fire, and will continue to take steps to assist the fire's victims. We will reach out to affected communities as part of our conference effort as well. ASLE is a community dedicated to grappling with difficult, long-term and often irresolvable issues. Despite its unintended resonance we have retained the conference's title to remember what happened in California and to memorialize the tragic loss of life and home. To back away from a conference title that has proven to be disturbingly prescient, even though it is now a difficult, even problematic title, would be to sidestep the trouble rather than dealing intellectually, artistically, and pragmatically with reality. We request that our members think respectfully about the fire and its victims as they think through their presentations. ASLE will continue to seek out ways that our organization and conference attendees can aid the victims of this tragedy and assist their recovery. (To donate, see the end of this CFP for a list of organizations.)

CALL FOR PAPERS

This year the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) is experimenting with a two-part submission process intended to make the conference more participant-driven and democratic. The second step is this Call for PAPERS. **Proposals must be submitted by December 15, 2018 at 11:59 pm EST.**

A diverse array of panels has been chosen by the conference committee; this call for papers now invites anyone who wishes to submit a paper proposal for consideration for inclusion within a specific panel, or to the open call, between October 15 and December 15, 2018. Panel organizers themselves will choose presenters from the submissions that they receive; the panel organizer will evaluate your proposal carefully and notify you of its final status by January 10, 2019. All paper proposals that do not find a home in the panel to which they were submitted will be considered for placement into one of the conference's open panels. If you submit to the open papers call, or you were not accepted to

the original panel you applied to, conference organizers will evaluate your abstract and you will be notified by February 4, 2019 of its final status.

There are nearly 130 panels seeking participants on a variety of topics. Submitting to an accepted panel GREATLY increases your chances of being accepted to the conference, as there is very limited space on the schedule for panels formed via the open call for submissions. **Please Note: Only one paper submission per person is allowed.**

Conference Theme: Paradise on Fire

The Biennial ASLE Conference will be held in Davis, California, in June 2019. Following a longstanding tradition, this conference gathers scholars and artists working in a diverse array of environmental humanities projects.

"Paradise" is the Greek word for a walled garden. What is it like to find yourself on the wrong side of that structure? Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy imagines a walled city with a climate-controlled dome called Paradise where genetic engineers create new forms of life, a bubble breached by human violence and climate catastrophe. In the sixteenth century Garcí Rodríguez de Montalvo imagined a place called "California," an island ruled by a dark skinned Amazonian queen with an Arabic name, Califia (*Las Sergas de Esplandián*). *California* was affixed to our maps by conquistadors, eager readers of Montalvo who believed the Earthly Paradise to be nearby. The price of its establishment was the genocide of the land's indigenous populations. The Greek word for Eden is "Paradise," a walled garden that bars entrance to most. Yet as Octavia Butler's dystopian vision of California on fire has shown, walls seldom lead to lasting safety and cannot exclude a turbulent world for long (*The Parable of the Sower*). If as Rebecca Solnit contends, "paradise arises in hell," when democratic communities are built from the ground up during times of disaster that leave us "free to live and act another way," what might life in catastrophic times entail for the environmental humanities? How should we write, teach, protest, live, and act during this era when "paradise" is on fire, figuratively and literally?

The Biennial ASLE Conference "Paradise on Fire" explores the connections among storytelling, real and imagined landscapes, future-making, activism, envired spaces, differential exclusions, long histories, and the disaster-prone terrains of the Anthropocene. Plenary addresses will be given by [Nnedi Okorafor](#), [Cherríe Moraga](#), [Melissa K. Nelson](#), and [Ursula Heise](#).

Topics may include but are certainly not limited to:

- reckoning with "paradise" in the face of colonial histories, environmental injustice, and ecological catastrophe
- the intimacy of myth to possibility, alternative realities, and catastrophe
- the reduction of diversity after the arrival of settler colonialists, especially but not only in California
- cross-cultural currents and global vectors, human and nonhuman
- the relation of imagination to discovery, settlement and transformation
- extinction, ecological imperialism, monstrosity, megafauna, and scale
- gender, race and ecology in dystopian times

- the proliferation of material and ideological walls around enclaves, states, and nations
- attending better to the people, animals, plants, and natural forces that find themselves on the wrong side of the gate, forced into communities not of their choosing, or forced to migrate without safe destinations
- radical welcome: creating more just, capacious, and humane modes of living together across species
- how the past matters to the imagination of a more capacious future
- climate fiction (CliFi), climate fact, and the future of ecological science studies
- archives of recovery and enclosure
- Afro-futurisms, Indigenous futurisms, Latinx futurisms, Asian futurisms, queer futurisms
- California and beyond: exceptionalism, secession, natural and unnatural disasters, green gentrification (the L.A. River), evacuation zones, Sanctuary Cities and States, gated communities, immigration and Dreamers, Trump's border wall, housing and being humane
- The Trans-Pacific: imaginaries, cultures, materialities, flows
- Fire as emblematic of the strange agencies and hybrid onto-epistemologies of the Anthropocene, and fire as emblematic of the passion, energy, and incendiary creativity of activism

Paper Submission Process

All conference sessions will be 90-minutes long. ASLE strongly encourages presenters to find a [panel seeking panelists](#) among the nearly 130 options available. Both scholarly and creative submissions are welcome. We expect to receive more proposals than we can accommodate; therefore, not all proposals will be accepted. Proposals submitted to a specific panel will have a much greater chance of acceptance than individual paper proposals.

ASLE is a diverse professional community that is enriched by the multiple experiences, cultures, and backgrounds of its members, and we strive for access, equity, and inclusion in the conference.

Key information:

- **Only one paper proposal submission is allowed per person**; participants can present only once during the conference (pre-conference workshops and chairing a panel are not counted as presenting).
- All paper proposals must be submitted via the [Submittable](#) website. **Please DO NOT submit a paper directly to the panel organizer**; however, prospective panelists are welcome to correspond with the organizer(s) about the panel and their abstract.
- If you do not yet have a Submittable login account, you will need to create one to submit.
- All panel descriptions and submission forms are posted in [Submittable](#). Links to each of the panels seeking panelists are also listed on the [Panel Calls for Papers page](#), along with a PDF of all panel descriptions and links.
- There are separate forms in [Submittable](#) for each panel seeking participants, listed in alphabetical order, as well as an open individual paper submission form.
- In cases in which the online submission requirement poses a significant difficulty, please contact us at ASLEconference2019@gmail.com.
- Proposals for a Traditional Panel (4 presenters) should be papers of approximately 15 minutes-max each, with an approximately 300 word abstract, unless a different length is

requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.

- Proposals for a Roundtable (5-6 presenters) should be papers of approximately 10 minute-max each, with an approximately 300 word abstract, unless a different length is requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.
- Proposals for a Jam Session (7-8 presenters), should be papers of eight minute-maximum presentations plus discussion), with an approximately 200 word abstract, unless a different length is requested in the specific panel call, in the form of an uploadable .pdf, .docx, or .doc file. Please include your name and contact information in this file.
- Individual open call submissions are for 15-minute presentations; potential presenters will be asked to indicate whether they would also be willing to participate in a jam session with a shorter presentation (which will increase chances of acceptance); 300 word abstracts should describe both form and content and will be posted within the Submittable form.
- To encourage institutional diversity and exchange, all panels will include participants from more than one institution and from more than one academic level/sector.
- ASLE policy is currently to discourage virtual participation at our biennial conferences except in extraordinary circumstances.

Deadlines:

- All proposals must be submitted via [Submittable](#) by December 15, 2018 at 11:59pm EST.
- Panel organizers will evaluate your proposal carefully and notify you of its final status by January 10, 2019.
- If you submitted to the open papers call, or you were not accepted to the original panel you applied to, conference organizers will evaluate your abstract and you will be notified by February 4, 2019 of its final status.
- If you can no longer attend the conference, please inform the organizer of your panel *and* ASLE of withdrawal by January 30, 2019.

Thank you for your patience as we attempt this two-step method of organizing our biennial gathering. Our desire is to maximize the ability of our membership to participate in the shaping of the conference, an event at the very heart of our ASLE community. As interest in the environmental humanities has greatly expanded, we hope this structure will not only be more transparent but will take better advantage of the wide-ranging interests, expertise, and diversity within ASLE.

For questions about submitting, please contact us at ASLEconference2019@gmail.com.

Note: you must be or become a member of ASLE by the time of conference registration (Spring 2019) to present at the conference. Click these links to [JOIN](#) or [CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS](#), or contact Amy McIntyre at info@asle.org for assistance.

Pre/Post-Conference Workshops: Pre-registration Required

ASLE will hold pre-conference workshops (Wednesday, June 26, 10am-2pm) and post-conference workshops (Sunday, June 30, 9am-1pm) to bookend the 2019 conference. Topics and leaders are listed below and on the conference [Schedule and Events](#) web page, click on the title of the workshop to view a description.

The cost of workshops is \$20, payable during online registration. Because each will be limited to 15 participants, there is only one slot per person allowed and **YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER TO RESERVE A SPOT!** To pre-register or be added to a waitlist, please contact ASLE at ASLEconference2019@gmail.com and provide the following information: in your email's subject line, the title of the seminar or workshop you are interested in; in body of email, your name, affiliation, and email address.

Pre-registration will open October 15, and will close April 15 (or when full, whichever is earlier). Some preparation in advance of the conference may be required, as noted in the descriptions. Because workshop participants will be listed in the conference program, we encourage (but do not require) you to consider attending in lieu of presenting on a regular conference panel. If you have questions about the content of a workshop not included in the description, you may contact the leaders; all other questions about pre-registration and registration should be directed to ASLEconference2019@gmail.com. Leaders CANNOT accept any pre-registrations directly.

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 10AM-2PM

- [Affective Ecocriticism](#), organizers Jenn Ladino, University of Idaho, and Kyle Bladow, Northland College
- [Graduate Student Creative and Critical Workshops](#), organizer April Anson, University of Oregon
- [The Public Environmental Humanities: An Incubator](#), organizer Allison Carruth, UCLA
- [UnEarthing/Re-Earthing: Fire and Land](#), organizers Bibi Calderaro and Margaretha Haughwout, the Coastal Reading Group
- [Using Maps in Scholarship and Creative Projects: Integrating ArcGIS Online, Story Map Apps and Story Map Journals](#), organizers David Taylor and Maria Brown, Stony Brook University
- [Vegan Studies](#), organizer Laura Wright, Western Carolina University

POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS: SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 9AM-1PM

- [California's Racial Ecologies](#), organizers Sarah Wald, University of Oregon, and Hsuan Hsu, UC Davis
- [Fire in the Belly \(of the Beast\): Doing Ecocriticism in Petrocultures](#), organizers Heidi C. M. Scott, University of Maryland, and Bart Welling, University of North Florida
- [Tendings and Eco-poetic Disability Culture: Bodymindspirits of the Future](#), organizers Petra Kupperts, University of Michigan and Stephanie Heit, artist

Donations for the 2018 Camp Fire

North Valley Community Foundation:

One fund is to support the needs of the evacuation centers who opened their doors to house fire victims who lost their homes or had to evacuate. <https://www.nvcf.org/fund/camp-fire-evacuation-relief-fund/>.

A second fund will provide financial resources to organizations and agencies responding to those affected by the Camp Fire in Northern California.

https://nvcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create?funit_id=2012

North Valley Animal Disaster Group: Works jointly with public and private agencies and organizations in the area to help ensure the safety and well-being of all domestic animals and farm animals, including wildlife, affected by a disaster. This includes assistance with emergency temporary shelter, evacuation, and medical care. <https://www.nvadg.org/donate>.

Caring Choices Chico: 100% of donations will be used to directly offer aid to those in need. Donors can indicate if they are making a contribution or a donation to a specific person, area or need.

<http://www.caring-choices.org/wild-fire-donations.html>

California Community Foundation's Wildfire Relief Fund: Supports victims by helping to rebuild homes and providing financial assistance to those who need medical and mental treatment.

<https://connect.calfund.org/give/wildfirerelief>.

Another option is a donation to the **2019 ASLE Community Grant**, which we plan to award to a project based in California, near the 2019 conference site that has been affected by the fires. The purpose of this grant is to integrate the environmental humanities into efforts to bring much-needed support to vulnerable communities. Your gift now will help us meet our goal of awarding a \$5,000 Community Grant in 2019. <https://www.asle.org/join-our-community/donate/>

We are grateful, as always, for the generosity of our ASLE community.