22 January 2022

To all NSS Cavers,

Recently there have been many questions coming from the NSS Membership about the status of convention. It is my pleasure to write you today to assure you that, all indications, and all plans are to hold the NSS 2022 Convention **in-person in Rapid City, SD June 13-17th this year!**

The NSS Convention is one of the most important events to US Caving and the NSS. It builds and maintains bonds of friendship between cavers who are spread across our nation and across the globe. We get to share in each other’s triumphs of exploration, lessons of conservation, and are reminded of fun stories… both long forgotten and newly made as we run into folks we haven’t seen for a while. It has been too long since we have met in person, this year we hope to see every member who is able at the convention.

Covid-19 and its variants of course remain a concern. There is no indication that the need for consideration of the threats posed by this virus is going away any time soon. For the foreseeable future it is likely that cases and variants will wax and wane, and we must each take the precautions that are best for us as individuals. We have seen the availability of vaccines against this virus increase over the last year, allowing for nearly anyone who chooses, to get vaccinated. The 2022 convention staff moved the convention location to its current venue, the Central States Fairgrounds, in Rapid City. This move gives us a convention location that is oversized for our needs, and will allow for social distancing to be easy to do both at the sessions as well as the campground and associated parties. It also has the rodeo arena needed for a very special type of Speleolympics, not seen since 1988! All in all, the City of Rapid City is excited to have you come and the convention staff are excited to make this event happen! In South Dakota, we are as ready as we are ever going to be to return to live events.

As for the event itself, there will be everything you know and love about conventions: Vertical contests, US and international exploration sessions, the evening parties, cave trips, JSS, Conservation Tuesday, vendors, geology field trips, the Salons, Awards, and all of the other great things we’ve missed. As well as some special additional features this year with an all-day cave paleontology session, paleontology field trips, cave beers, additional live music, some hands-on workshops, two of the longest caves in the world, and of course the Black Hills themselves which bring millions of non-cave visitors to the region each year to witness their dynamic landscapes and beauty.

Finally, because I consider all cavers extended family, I want to urge you to register for 2022 soon. The NSS deadline for the convention early registration discount is not for some time, but the travel industry has its own timetable. As I mentioned, the Black Hills are a tourist destination. There is so much to do and see. But, the longer you wait to make your travel plans, the more expensive these plans will inevitably become. So, make plans, pack your helmet, submit your abstracts for talks, and above all get excited! www.nss2022.caves.org

Sincerely,

Adam Weaver
NSS, Administrative Vice President
adam@caves.org