



# Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors

Affiliated with the National Society of Professional Surveyors



To: Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors (WSLS) Members, Guests and Institute Attendees  
Re: 2021 Annual Institute

For well over 70 years, the Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors has hosted an annual in-person Institute providing quality education, networking, and socializing opportunities for our members, attendees, and guests. However, due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, WSLS and many other State Societies, had to seriously consider a possible change to their annual conferences.

The WSLS Institute Planning Committee and the Board of Directors reviewed the pros and cons of options to host the 2021 Institute. The Society considered a hybrid of in-person and virtual event, but that also created uncertainty. If we were ordered to cancel the in-person event, there would be cancellations of travel, lodging meals etc. for all involved. In addition, our conference with 1000 participants has the potential of being a 'super spreader' event. And finally, our Institute survey indicated many participants were unsure if they would, or could, attend an in-person event. After much consideration, WSLS has decided to host the 2021 Surveyors' Institute virtually.

This was a very difficult decision, but given all the variables with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Society had to make a responsible decision, with '**what we know as of now**', in order to plan for a quality virtual event. Our partner, UW Stevens Point (UWSP) has experience with facilitating virtual events and feels confident our participants will be very satisfied with this experience.

The Institute will have a similar format with four concurrent sessions for participants and will include a wide range of subjects. **The dates will remain Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021.** If you do not have access to high speed Internet service, we are asking Chapters to provide options where you might be able to gather safely to connect and view the virtual event.

We will definitely miss the in-person event and the networking that is extremely valuable for our participants, exhibitors, and the profession; therefore, we plan to resume the in-person Institute in 2022. This may even be an opportunity where we can learn from this virtual experience, possibly incorporating some virtual options in future Institutes.

We certainly hope you understand the situation the Society faced and will still be able to participate in this historic Institute. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Kevin Boyer, WSLS President  
Frank Thousand, WSLS Executive Director  
Bob Beilfuss, Chair WSLS Institute Planning Committee