Workshop Guidelines Dry Stone Canada

This is a guideline for a potential host so they can best prepare to host a workshop. It is not, however, prescriptive, as each workshop location, and each host, is unique. Dry Stone Canada (DSC) works with the host to make the workshop a success for all parties involved.

Workshop Selection Criteria

Workshops are typically hosted at Heritage sites, parks, and public land.

If a workshop is to be held on private land, it needs to meet certain criteria eg.(high public visibility, heritage conservation, networking opportunity for DSC or a unique teaching opportunity/subject matter.

Workshops are not intended to be used as an inexpensive way of obtaining a wall i.e. instead of hiring a landscape company to do the work.

Other selection criteria include:

Strategic Importance

a) The workshop expands the DSC footprint into new geographic locations
b) The workshop creates exposure to a large audience hence promoting the craft of drystone walling

Bandwidth

a) DSC has enough instructors to take on a new workshop.
b) DSC has support in the area in order to site visits and site preparation

Workshop Fatigue

a) DSC hasn't saturated a geographical area to the point where getting enough students is difficult therefore making the workshop not financially feasible

Teachable Moment

a) The wall offers a unique teachable moment. eg. curved wall, arch etc.

Attendance

A minimum of 6 to a maximum of 20 participants is usually preferred.
A ratio of 1 instructor for every 8-10 participants ensures adequate oversight.
We try to have 2 instructors to ensure adequate oversight.

Site Preparation

Whenever possible a DSC representative (usually the instructor) will meet on site of the proposed workshop with the hosting organization to check out the site and confirm all arrangements and answer any questions. If a physical assessment is not possible, then photos of the site will be required, and a conference call will be arranged to discuss workshop details. The instructor may be required to arrive a day prior to the workshop depending on the distance travelled and/or the readiness of the site.

Materials

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It is the responsibility of the hosting organization to provide the stone for the event. DSC is happy to assist to ensure the right material is obtained. An option the hosting organization could consider is to have stone donated for the workshop (usually arranged with a local quarry to be provided as a sponsor). If the donation can be arranged through a charitable organization, the quarry will receive a tax credit for their donation.

Transportation of stone – the cost to transport the stone is usually covered by the organization that will receive the benefit of the completed structure.

Fees

Participant Fees

DSC charges $300 per person for a two-day workshop. This is intended to cover the instructor fees and operational overhead. In the rare instances that fees do not cover the cost (low registration, extra day for instructor, travel costs) an agreement would need to be made with the host to cover extra costs. We are open to keeping costs to minimum (for example, if the instructor requires accommodations – perhaps the host could billet).

Instructor Fee

The current rate is $500/day x 2 days + travel ($0.55/km), food, and accommodation costs. Any additional day is also subject to the above rates.
The payment that goes to the instructor is kept by the instructor; DSC gets no part of that.

Site Visits

One or more site visits by the instructor may be required prior to hosting a workshop. The host is responsible for covering all travel costs ($0.55/km).

Registration

DSC will post the event on its website. The event post will provide links to registration forms and waivers. Fees are collected via the website. Advertising of the event in the local community by the host is encouraged.

Insurance

Dry Stone Canada carries event insurance. It can be arranged for the hosting site to be added to the Certificate of Insurance for the event. However, DSC is not responsible for the state of the property. It is expected the work area is accessible and in adequate condition to provide safe working conditions.

The Workshop

Normally a workshop runs from 9am to 4pm on Saturday and Sunday.

A typical first day would be as follows.

8:30	Arrive/sign in
9:00	Introductions / Safety Review / Discussion on Basics of building a dry stone wall
10:00	Start of field work
12:00	Lunch
13:00	Review of work so far and continue

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16:00 End

Food

It is generally expected that the host provides morning & afternoon snacks and lunch. Hot drinks in the cold or cooler months or cold drinks (water) in the warmer months are required to be available for participants and instructors. It is an expectation that the quality of the food is high, and that there is plenty of it – both make the workshop experience positive.

Safety

Minimum safety equipment for the participants is safety glasses, gloves, and safety footwear.
Depending on the location of the workshop barriers/signage/pylons may be required to protect onlookers/visitors.
Recommended tools (depending on site and conditions) include the following: garden rake(s), leaf rake(s), spades/shovels, hatchet, wheelbarrow. The instructor will have the tools required for building the wall.

Other Considerations

We do not normally cancel events due to weather conditions. Therefore, protection against the elements (hot sun or rain usually) is sometimes required. DSC have tents that are used to provide shade or cover for the work area. These tents are available if the instructor is driving to the location. If we can't bring these, then the organization hosting the workshop will need to ensure adequate weather protection is available.

Toilets are required on site or within easy walk of the site. Normally one is enough, with hand washing facilities.
If food is to be served outdoors, a washing station (tub of water, soap, towels) is recommended.

Benefit

Our workshops are designed for beginners. They are to learn all aspects of building (including proper teardown if it is a pre-existing wall) from foundation preparation to laying of copes. The instructors take their time to instruct on best practices. This takes time. There is no guarantee on how much will be completed on any given workshop. There are too many variables (from number of participants to worksite challenges (like on a slope)). And, because it is built by beginners, the finished product, while being structurally sound, will not necessarily be of a professional standard.

Also, it may take several workshops to complete the project. We generally only schedule a workshop once per year at a given location as DSC runs multiple workshops during the year and demand is high.

The benefit for the host is that a section of wall is built for a fraction of the cost if it were built by professionals.