What is FAR-WEST?
Folk Alliance Region-West (FAR-West) (www.far-west.org) is the western regional chapter of Folk Alliance International. FAR-West fosters and promotes traditional, contemporary and multicultural folk and acoustic music, dance, storytelling, spoken word and related performing arts in the western parts of North America.

The conference is a 4-day event that combines many activities.
Here are just a few examples:

- Juried Showcases on the large stage – A chance to perform for venues and other talent bookers.
- “Guerrilla” Showcases – An entire hotel floor is transformed into 20 to 30 small clubs. You may find yourself playing for a talent agent who is sitting 5 feet from you or learning as you listen to other amazing performers. Every year, a number of very special moments emerge from this event alone.
- Panels & Workshops – Listen and learn. Large variety of topics related to the performance world. Performing, marketing, songwriting, musicology, self-care, social media, PR, and much more.
- Networking Center where you can promote yourself, learn about your fellow musicians, healthcare benefits for performers, musical instrument insurance, or examine instruments and accessories.
- “Best of the West Awards” presented annually – Previous honorees have included Chris Hillman, John McEuen, Joe Craven, Laurie Lewis, McCabe's Guitar Shop, Wendy Waldman, The Guacamole Fund, Kate MacLeod, Art Poddell and many others.
- Socialize with presenters, DJs, fellow musicians, agents. Get to know each other in a relaxed setting.
- Jams. All night jams (and daytime, too).

Hang out. Take a chance. Make new friends and get inspired by their stories. Connect with artists who can welcome you to their hometowns when you travel to perform.
Most of all, find your community gathered together to entertain and inspire each other, then go back home and bring that magic back with you to your own neighborhood and spread the joy.

What happens at the Annual FAR-WEST Music Conference?
A FAR-West conference is a full weekend packed with opportunities to fire up your passion for music and other folk arts and to remember why, or develop it as a big part of your life. Attendees are performers, presenters, venues, agents, DJs, managers, music fans, etc. They come simply for the love of the music and stories. It's a special opportunity to hear a year's worth of performances in one magical weekend and really get to know the people who devote their lives to creating the art.

This is your chance to see old friends, meet and jam or write with new friends, learn something, teach something, play for venues. Take a guitar or voice class. Listen to a panel of experts. View a range of amazingly varied showcases. That's why so many people come back year after year.

Photos by Penelope Salinger, Matthew Moran, Duff Ferguson, Sharon Hannah & Jeanette Lundgren from previous FAR-West Conferences