



## NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION®

11100 Wildlife Center Drive  
Reston VA 20190-5362  
www.nwf.org

**National Wildlife Week**  
***EXTRA-Ordinary Wildlife***  
**March 19-25, 2012**

### *Tips for Working with the Media*

Attracting media attention for your projects and events can increase volunteer involvement, funding and recognition and raise awareness about habitat and wildlife issues in your area. Use the following guidelines as you work with the media.

#### ***NEWS RELEASES***

**Every news release has seven basic elements:**

1. **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** These words should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter.
2. **Contact Information:** Skip a line or two after release statement and list the name, title, telephone and fax numbers of the person with the most information. It is important to give their home number since reporters often work on deadlines and may not be available until after hours.
3. **Headline:** Skip two lines after your contact information and use a boldface type.
4. **Dateline:** This should be the city your press release is issued from and the date you are mailing your release.
5. **Lead Paragraph:** The first paragraph needs to grasp the reader's attention and contain the relevant information in your message (who, what, when, where, why).
6. **Text:** The main body of your press release develops your message fully.
7. **Recap:** At the lower left-hand corner of your last page restate your important points such as an event date.

#### ***10 ESSENTIAL TIPS TO ENSURE YOUR PRESS RELEASE MAKES THE NEWS***

1. Make sure the information is newsworthy.
2. Tell the audience that the information is intended for them and why they should continue to read it.

3. Start with a brief description of the news, then tell who announced it—not the other way around.
4. Ask yourself, “How are people going to relate to this and will they be able to connect?”
5. Make sure the first 10 words of your release are effective, as they are the most important.
6. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and fancy language.
7. Deal with the facts.
8. Provide as much contact information as possible: Individual to contact, address, phone, fax, email, Web site address.
9. Make sure you have something with substance before issuing a release.
10. Make it as easy as possible for media representatives to do their jobs.

### ***NEWS ADVISORIES***

News advisories have two purposes:

1. To inform reporters of the time and place of a news event you will conduct such as a news conference or news briefing or a public event such as a workshop.
2. To provide background or in-depth information to editorial writers, urging them to take an editorial stand on an issue, or to provide the same to environmental or outdoor writers, urging them to cover an issue.

### **Keep these points in mind when writing a news advisory about an upcoming event:**

1. Set up on your organization’s letterhead.
2. The title should tell the recipient what the event is about.
3. If teleconferencing will be part of the event, make sure to include all necessary information.
4. Give sufficient background information to make your story interesting, but be careful not to give away too much. You want the media to have to attend the event to get the story.
5. Give the logistical information in “who,” “what,” “when,” “where” format.
6. Be sure to include contact information.

## ***RADIO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS***

Many radio stations broadcast public service announcements (PSAs) that offer information about local organizations and events, health, safety, education and other issues. They do this to benefit their listeners and fulfill FCC public service requirements.

Because stations receive so many requests for public service air time, not all PSAs can be broadcast. But when you're planning a local event, you should consider submitting scripted messages that a live announcer can read.

### **Important tips for preparing and submitting radio PSAs:**

1. List the stations in your area whose listeners you think would be interested in your event or activity.
2. Contact those stations for the name and contact information of the public affairs director or other staff member who handles these requests.
3. Prepare your scripted messages using the sample templates available in the Marketing Toolkit. Remember to include your contact information, start and stop dates, and send the PSAs on your organization's letterhead.
4. Stations air :10, :15, :30 and :60 second versions of PSAs. You should provide as many timed versions as you can. After the script is written, read the messages aloud and time yourself with a stopwatch. If you run over the timeframe, cut copy and rewrite until the message comfortably fits within the limit.
5. Send the PSAs along with a cover letter to the station's public affairs director about two weeks before you want the messages to start airing. The cover letter should describe your event and how it fits into National Wildlife Week plans throughout the country.
6. The usual airtime for PSAs is from two to three weeks.