



Checklist and Step by Step Timeline for Organizing an Event for National Wildlife Week

6 to 12 Months Ahead	Yes	No
Decide event purpose (raise funds, visibility, celebration, etc.)		
Choose a theme		
Visit potential sites		
Research/appoint an event coordinator/manager		
Research/select committees/chairpersons		
Chairperson forms subcommittees		
Get cost estimates (site rental, food, drinks, sound/lights etc.)		
Get recommendations for entertainment; hold auditions		
Get bids for entertainment		
Get bids for decorations		
Get bids for design/printing		
Get bids for other major items		
Finance committee drafts initial budget		
Decide on admission cost		
Create sponsorship amounts/levels		
List items to be underwritten and possible sources		
Research/approach honorees		
Compile mailing list (individuals/businesses)		
Check proposed date for potential conflicts, finalize date in writing		
Get written contracts for site, catering, entertainment, etc.		
Develop alternative site (if event is outdoors)		
Consider pre-party event for publicity or underwriting		
Invite/confirm VIPs		
Select graphic artist, begin invitation design		
Working with artist, create logo for event		
Order hold-the-date cards or other event announcements		
Set marketing/public relations schedule		
Develop news release and calendar listings		
Select photographer; arrange for photos of VIPs, chairmen, honorees		
Get biographical information on VIPs, celebrities, honorees, chairmen		
Investigate need for special permits, licenses, insurance, etc.		

3 to 6 Months Ahead	Yes	No
Begin monthly committee meetings		
Write/send requests for funding or underwriting to major donors, corporations, sponsors		
Requests logo from corporate sponsors for printing		
Review with graphic artist invitations, programs, posters, etc.		
Prepare final copy for invitations, return card, posters		
Prepare final copy for tickets		
Complete mailing lists for invitations		
Order invitations, posters, tickets, etc.		
Sign contract with entertainment company		
Make list of locations for posters		
Finalize mailing lists; begin soliciting corporations and major donors		
Obtain lists from honorees, VIPs		
Obtain radio/TV sponsors, public service announcements, promos		
Set menu with caterer for food and beverages		
Secure permits and insurance		
Get written confirmation of celebrity participation/special needs		
Finalize audio/visual contract		
Select/order trophies/awards		
2 Months Ahead	Yes	No
Hold underwriting or preview party to coincide with mailing of invitations; invite media		
Assemble/address invitations (with personal notes when possible)		
Mail invitations		
Distribute posters		
Finalize transportation/hotel accommodations for staff, VIPs, honorees		
Obtain contracts for decorations and rental items		
Confirm TV/radio participation		
Release news announcements about celebrities, VIPs, honorees		
Follow up to confirm sponsorships and underwriting		
Obtain logos from corporate sponsors for program printing		
Review needs for signs at registration, directional, etc.		
All major chairpersons to finalize plans		
Hold walk-through of event with responsible committees, chairpersons and responsible site staff members at event site		
Review/finalize budget, task sheets and tentative timeline		
Start phone follow-up for table sponsors (corporate, VIP, committee)		
1 Month Ahead	Yes	No
Phone follow-up of mailing list (ticket sales)		
Place newspaper ads, follow up with news media, on-air announcements		
Confirm staff for registration, hosting, other		

1 Month Ahead (continued)	Yes	No
Write to VIPs, celebrities, program participants, confirm participation		
Complete list of contents for VIP welcome packets		
Get enlarged site plan/room diagram, assign seats/tables		
Give estimate of guests expected to caterer/food service		
Meet with all outside vendors, consultants to coordinate event		
Review script/timeline		
Continue phone follow-ups for ticket/table sales		
Continue assigning seats; set head table, speaker's platform		
Confirm transportation schedules: airlines, trains, buses, cars, limos		
Confirm hotel accommodations		
Prepare transportation and accommodations (include arrival time, flight number, airline, person assigned to meet flight)		
Confirm special security needed for VIPs, event		
Prepare welcome packet for VIPs, chairmen, key staff		
Schedule deliveries of special equipment, rentals		
Confirm setup and tear-down times with event site		
Finalize plans with party decorator		
Give caterer revised numbers		
Meet with chairpersons, key staff to finalize any of the above		
1 Week Before Event	Yes	No
Meet with all committees for last-minute details		
Finish phone follow-ups		
Confirm number attending		
Finish seating/table arrangements		
Hold training session with volunteers; finalize assignments		
Secure two or three volunteers to assist with emergencies		
Finalize registration staff		
Distribute seating chart, assignments to hosts/hostesses		
Schedule pickup or delivery of any rented or loaned equipment		
Double-check arrival time and delivery times with vendors		
Reconfirm event site, hotel, transportation		
Deliver final scripts/timelines to all program participants		
Finalize catering guarantee, refreshments		
Confirm number of volunteers		
Make follow-up calls to news media for advance and event coverage		
Distribute additional flyers		
Final walk-through with all personnel		
Schedule rehearsals		
Schedule volunteer assignments for day of event		
Establish amount of petty cash needed for tips and emergencies		
Write checks for payments to be made for the day of the event		

<i>Day Before Event</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Lay out all clothes you will need the day of the event		
Recheck all equipment and supplies to be brought to the event		
Have petty cash and vendor checks prepared		
<i>Event Day</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Arrive early (with your change of clothes)		
Unpack equipment, supplies and make sure nothing is missing		
Be sure all VIPs are in place and have scripts		
Reconfirm refreshments/meal schedule for volunteers		
Review all the final details with caterer and setup staff		
Check with volunteers to make sure all tasks are covered		
Set up registration area		
Check sound/light equipment and staging before rehearsal		
Hold final rehearsal		
<i>1 to 3 Days After</i>		
Meet with committee chairpersons to critique event		
Write thank-you notes to special guests, celebrities, others who contributed significantly to the success of the event		
Write thank-you notes to media representatives who provided special event coverage		