Tips for Capturing Your NPLD Event on Video

On National Public Lands Day, take a moment to capture volunteers in action and learn why they care about public lands—and why they decided to join the celebration. Here are some tips for taking a quality video clip with your cellphone. If you have a regular video camera you can still strengthen the piece with these recommendations.

TIPS FOR FILIMING AN INTERVIEW

• Choose a quiet spot and stand close to your subject so the camera’s microphone will clearly pick up their voice. (Remember, you are closest to the microphone—stay quiet during their answers!)

• Create a steady shot by using a tripod, resting your elbows on a surface, or holding the phone or camera close to your body to stabilize it.

• Stand with the sun behind you and ask your subject to remove their hat if it is casting a shadow on their face.

• Compose a shot—head and shoulders or waist-up are the most useful.

• Make sure you are focused on the subject, not the background.

• Avoid using the iPhone digital zoom. It degrades the resolution. To get a closer shot, move the camera closer to your subject.

• Ask your subject to speak up if they are too quiet. (Asking your questions in a big voice will encourage them to match your volume.)

• Ask your subject to state and spell their name, tell you their affiliation, hometown, and email address—in case you need to get in touch later.

• Explain that your questions won’t be included. Encourage your subject to answer in complete thoughts and sentences.

• Treat the interview like a conversation – don’t be afraid to go off-script and ask follow-up questions.

• Be encouraging! Content and personality are more important than technical perfection. Bumpy answers can always be edited. If you are worried there was a technical problem, tell your subject that their answer was so great you want to do one more—just to make sure you got it.
TIPS FOR FILMING AN ACTIVITY

• Keep the camera steady.

• Avoid zooming.

• Get a variety of shots—wide, medium, and close ups. Think of it as taking snapshots that will tell a story. Hold each shot for at least a count of five.

• Have fun! Once you have some steady coverage in the can, walk around with your camera, follow the action, and try some in-the-moment interviews.

RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS FOR NPLD VOLUNTEER INTERVIEWS

• Tell me your name and whether it’s your first time here or you are a regular visitor?

• What do you like to do when you visit (SITE NAME)?

• What inspired you to join National Public Lands Day, the largest single-day celebration of the nation’s public lands?

• Why are public lands important to you?

Please share your NPLD videos and photos on social media. Be sure to tag them with #NPLD.

Tips provided by The Biscuit Factory, an award-winning production company that creates long and short form programming.

www.biscuitfactory.tv.