

Tips for using and taking photography

NFWF and Southern Company's Stewardship Partners Meeting



UPPING YOUR IMAGE GAME: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

- One of the basic stories photographs tell is about the organization using them. Do the images seem professional or amateurish? Are they compelling? The use of photos says a lot about the sophistication and organizational capacities of a given organization.
- Photography is a powerful storytelling tool and can help your organization reach its communication goals
- Photography is one of the most important storytelling and marketing tools in the world of digital and social media



UPPING YOUR IMAGE GAME: KNOWING YOUR OPTIONS

Visual storytelling is not one-size-fits-all. Sometimes you'll need high-end nature photography, sometimes you need simple photos of work being done, sometimes you need iPhone shots of volunteers. You need to gain good understanding of:

- What's available through image stock services
- Negotiating and hiring freelance photographers
- Taking advantage of free and open sources of imagery (government sites, etc)
- Copyright issues, and the difference between royalty-free and managed rights
- Privacy issues (public v. private land, are children in photos, etc.)
- Commercial use of images and use of model release forms
- Photo editing and toning
- Management of imagery metadata and libraries
- Appropriate file size and resolution for various uses
- How to use various cameras, from those on mobile devices to digital SLRs
- How to plan and execute a photo shoot.
- Proper use of various cameras, from those on mobile devices to digital SLRs



UPPING YOUR IMAGE GAME: MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

There is a barrier to image quality that most of us can't cross. To get the really great wildlife shots, you need tens of thousands of dollars in equipment and a ton of time in the field.

Managing expectations is important – especially so you can concentrate on filling the gaps in your storytelling instead of chasing impossible-to-get wildlife close-ups.

TAKING PHOTOS: HAVE A PLAN

Think about which shots you'll need to tell the story -- people, habitats, species, plants, conservation actions, equipment, etc. **Make a shot list and refer to it in the field.**

You should work these points into your plan:

- Devote the time to taking photographs. Shoot a ton.
- Remove yourself from the group. Play photographer. Have fun
- Take notes as you shoot.
- Get all names and contact info.
- Bring model release forms if required.
- Watch for rule breaking in the field -- make sure you're taking pictures of people behaving in safe and responsible ways.



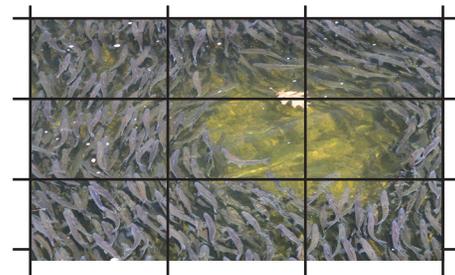
TAKING PHOTOS: TELLING THE STORY

- **Set the scene** – These are the “zoomed out” photos that help orient your audience. Landscapes. Habitats. Work sites. Problem areas.
- **Document details and perspectives** – Zoom in, look for weird angles. Spend a little time looking for interesting compositions. Get low, get high. Eye-level and 5 feet away is boring after a while. This is also your opportunity to show conservation tools and techniques. Highlight textures, details, context.
- **Capture moments** – This is one of the most important things you could think about. Try to catch people and animals doing what they do, naturally. Go for candid shots. Nothing wrong with some posed shots – they have their place – but the candid shots are the best.

TAKING PHOTOS: COMPOSITION

- Look for interesting ways to frame your subject matter.

- Apply the Rule of Thirds: If you split the frame into thirds vertically and horizontally, the focal areas should be at the intersection.



- Think about leaving negative space, which you could use later in publications for headlines and reversed type