

## Media Tips

**Here are some hints to help you get press coverage of your local Seagrass Awareness Month:**

Hold a kick-off event for Seagrass Awareness Month and invite local media. Distribute press kits that include your Seagrass Awareness Month press release, fact sheets and photographs. Pick photos that will reproduce well in black and white or color. Print out labels with captions and credits and attach to the backs.

Reporters are always looking for a good story. Introduce yourself to local reporters who cover the environmental beat. Suggest seagrass-related stories. Are seagrass biologists in your area conducting research? Arrange for an interview or suggest the reporter accompany the scientists on fieldwork.

Take reporters out on the water for a firsthand look at the value of seagrass and the threats to its health. Lead a snorkeling trip to the grass beds to see some of the creatures that depend on them. Set up a boat trip to an area with heavy propeller scars so they can see the scope of the problem for themselves.

Send a press release! Smaller newspapers that are short on staff will run a well-written release with minimal or no editing. Even if the reporter uses your release as a starting point, many of your words and ideas will make it into the final story. Make it as easy as possible for papers to run your releases by them in the text of an e-mail message, as a text file, or Rich Text Format attachment.

Submit a guest column. Newspapers will often provide space on the editorial pages. Call first and ask for guidelines, such as word count and deadline.

Meet with the editorial board of your local paper. Educate them on seagrass issues and ask for an editorial in honor of Seagrass Awareness Month.

Have a good photo op? Editors are more likely to run a photo than a press release when space is tight. Using digital cameras makes photo releases a snap. Download your picture or scan a slide or print, write a brief caption and send via e-mail. Check with your local papers to see what resolution they prefer for pictures.

When talking to the media, speak plainly. Explain why readers should care about seagrass. If you must use scientific terms, explain them.