

Service YouTube Management Plan

Introduction

YouTube is a video sharing website that hosts user-generated content. Nonregistered users can watch videos, and registered users can upload an unlimited number of videos. It is can be used by individuals and organizations.

1.1 Why We Need a Management Plan?

The Department has signed a terms of service agreement with Google, allowing bureaus to create YouTube channels adapted to the needs of the federal government and built on legally sound agreements. Only accounts specifically designated as falling under this agreement carry its protections and legal grounding. The ease with which new channels can be created outside of the agreement makes it especially important that the Service actively and carefully manage its YouTube presence. Further, due to the ease and low cost of creating new channels, there is a potential for an explosion of channels that are irregularly maintained or lack common elements to “brand” these products for the Service.

The Service YouTube Channel

2.1 Will the Service have a single YouTube channel or several?

The Service will create and maintain a single USFWS YouTube channel. Individuals can work through their respective regional offices to develop playlists or other video groupings to organize products. This will establish a single, cohesive USFWS presence, while still allowing us the flexibility to highlight programs, regions, offices, subject matter, etc.

Service partners or others who wish to distribute public-domain Service video content through their own site, YouTube channel, or other means may do so without restriction. As always, Service personnel should coordinate with their External Affairs office before partnering with any outside organization or developing collaborative video or other communication products.

Management and Administration

3.1 What office will have responsibility for managing the Service YouTube channel?

The management of the Service’s YouTube channel will be coordinated through the Branch of Audiovisual, Web, and Social Media (AWSM) in the Washington Office, External Affairs. AWSM currently manages the Service’s home page at www.fws.gov and the video policy site at <http://www.fws.gov/video>. This office will be responsible for overseeing the YouTube account and facilitating processes for regions and national programs to produce and upload content. In addition, this

office will monitor the site and assist regions to ensure the Service is meeting content and policy requirements in the video products.

The Service's account with YouTube will be accessed through a single user name and password controlled by AWSM. As there are no other safeguards to prevent unauthorized access and the posting of unauthorized content, it is imperative that the Service maintains strict control over that user name and password by limiting the individuals among whom it is shared. Each regional External Affairs office is responsible for protecting the Service's user name and password by strictly limiting its distribution. AWSM will periodically change the account password to prevent unauthorized access and will distribute the password to the designated YouTube lead for each region.

3.2 Who will be allowed to post content to the YouTube channel?

External Affairs will be responsible for uploading on behalf of the Service programs. AWSM will post on behalf of HQ programs. Each regional External Affairs office will designate one primary content manager and one backup content manager to upload videos. Each External Affairs office will be responsible for assessing the technical quality, content suitability, and policy compliance of videos proposed for inclusion in the Service YouTube channel and for making the final determination of which videos to present there.

External Affairs offices throughout the Service are expected to help monitor the Service YouTube channel for signs of unauthorized access and to alert AWSM if there are any problems. AWSM will work with regional contacts and will have authority to remove unauthorized content if necessary.

Managing Content

4.1 Are there common elements that should be a part of every video (e.g. logo, standard message, closing credits, link to Web site, etc.)?

All Service videos posted to the USFWS YouTube channel must include standard elements in keeping with their status as official outreach products. These include the current Service bumper (video intro with Service logo) and lower third (for identifying speakers). If external materials are used, like photos, video, or music from other sources, these must be given appropriate credit in video credits. When programs submit content to be uploaded to YouTube, a package including the video, a brief description including web links, title, and transcript should be included.

4.2 Are there minimum or maximum video length or file size requirements?

YouTube statistics show that people watching our videos watch for an average of less than two minutes. Topics warranting more in-depth treatment should be covered in video segments, each of which can specialize on a specific aspect of the topic, increasing their utility as stand-alone products.

4.3 What will be done to ensure accessibility of the content for people with disabilities?

All Service videos uploaded to YouTube will be closed-captioned to describe all speech and other significant audio content. Closed-captioning helps us meet section 508 requirements.

To assist video producers in the field or regions, AWSM has purchased several licenses of Inqscribe. This software helps in the transcribing process. For information on obtaining a license, or questions about using the program, contact AWSM.

4.4 Can the Service post video that contains copyrighted material? How is copyright attribution handled?

Service video producers should use only public domain content whenever possible. If copyrighted content is required for a product, the authoring office of any such video must have the written consent of the copyright holder to use the copyrighted content specifically within a video product distributed over the Web. This consent must be kept on file by the authoring office for the life of the video or as required by the Service records disposition schedule, whichever is greater. If copyrighted content is included in a Service video, it must be acknowledged as part of the embedded credits for the video. Similarly, content listed as creative commons should be included in the embedded credits.

Additional information about copyright issues can be found the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web Standards Handbook under section 2.1.2.

4.5 Do we provide additional information about posted videos elsewhere other than using the features that YouTube provides?

Absolutely! Videos in the Service's YouTube channel should include information with the video, using the features available when posting content to YouTube, such as a description with background information, copyright information, and transcript/closed-captioning text. All Service videos on YouTube should include a link to a Service Web page in the description so that it is clickable. This will help drive traffic to additional content of interest. Videos may also include the same links embedded in the video. Videos that address specific issues should link to Service Web content that addresses the specific issue in order to provide visitors with more information.

4.6 Should videos posted to the Service's YouTube channel also be housed on the Service's Web site?

Service content distributed via social media channels is generally not presenting new information that meets National Archives definition of federal records. However this may well change as the Service more fully embraces social media for primary communication with the public. YouTube is not adequate for records preservation; offices producing videos for YouTube will need to retain a copy for preservation in accordance with existing Service records disposition schedules. Consult your records manager for more information and before destroying working files.

YouTube provides inexpensive and convenient storage for Service videos. Video producers should strongly consider displaying their videos on the Service website by using YouTube's embedding code.

This embeds a video player that retains closed captions. Embedding these videos on the Service website expands their reach and affords us an opportunity to augment the video with additional information.

4.7 The Future of Service Use of YouTube

Success on YouTube will not come without a price for the Service. It will rightly raise public expectations for quality, accuracy, utility, accessibility, audience appeal, and legal compliance of our videos. In order for the Service to continue to develop its presence at YouTube, we will need to invest more time and energy into planning, producing, and posting videos as well as managing the USFWS YouTube presence. As video becomes a more integral part of Service communications, driven by the popularity of YouTube, the Service will need to invest more in managing its online video resources in general, both for leveraging its video library for maximum reach and return on investment, and for preserving records-worthy video content.