HOW TO CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL MEDIA

#1 Establish credibility:
- meet with the person face to face, so they’ll remember who you are
- don’t exaggerate; media person needs to know they can get a “straight answer” from you
- be accessible; have someone from your organization that’s generally available
- don’t assume they know the basics of your issue
- conversely, don’t treat ‘em like idiots

#2 Be considerate when providing information:
- use acceptable format of a press release
- be aware of their deadlines
- give additional background material to reinforce/back up your info (scientists, other references, maps & charts, etc.)

#3 Get it right:
- who’s the appropriate person
- spell their name right
- get their title correct
- keep the media contacts up-to-date

#4 Go the extra step:
- gratis ticket to your conferences, annual meetings
- tour them around (take them out on the river, to the pollution site, etc.)
- take time to sit down with them face to face to explain a complex issue & your viewpoint
- give them contact info of other “experts” who share your perspective as well as contacts for the “opposition”
- provide them with periodic “heads up”

Who to contact?
At a newspaper, work several persons, say, in a daily paper – the environmental reporter, the outdoor writer, the editorial board.
If you’re working with a small weekly, then how can you expand coverage? Get, say, a larger city paper to do a feature article on your issue….
For a TV station, the general manager or news director
For a radio station, use the community relations person or the news manager

Forms of your contact:
- email press releases
- phone calls
- face to face meetings
- printed press release
- meeting with editorial board
- press conference
- press outing/ river trip

Provided by: River Network www.rivernetwork.org