**Field Photography Tip Sheet**

**Best practices for taking photos in the field**

Step 1: Adjust your settings

* Set your image quality to the highest, largest size possible so that the photos are at least 7 MB
* Shoot in color

Step 2: Be brave — capture the brilliantly bold, dramatically beautiful and authentically human

* Get close to your subject
* Take photos from interesting perspectives, above or below your subject
* Portray uniqueness with behind-the-scenes images the viewer wouldn’t otherwise see
* Attributes that make images memorable include:
  + Prominently featuring a person or people in a unique moment
  + A strong sense of color and light
  + A sense of place

Step 3: Consider your subject

* People
  + Candid photos are better than staged photos
  + Take a combination of close-ups, including hands and faces
  + Take photos that convey action or movement
  + Avoid photos of backs and backsides
* Scenery and landscapes
  + Show depth and size by photographing the horizon and beyond
  + Capture space; simple, open and expansive
  + Try angles that capture contrasting colors and textures
  + Zoom in to look at the intricate detail of plants and geologic features you might encounter

Step 4: Click (a lot)

* It’s better to have too many photos than not enough photos
* Photograph a mix of people, the landscape and organisms or research subjects
* Take photos from a variety of angles and perspectives
  + Close up and zoomed out
  + Vertical and Horizontal
  + Straight on and looking up at or down on the subject
* Take several shots of each image you want to capture
* Turn off the flash

**Special considerations for field trips, labs and other academic settings**

Step 1: Identify a photographer

* Share best practices above

Step 2: Notify participants

* Let students and others involved in the field trip know that photos will be taken and how they could ultimately be used (newsletter, website, social media, etc.)
* Allow anyone who does not wish to have their photo taken to opt out of being photographed and make sure the photographer(s) are aware of any opt-outs

**Using Photos**

* Make sure that each photographer grants permission for you to use the photos they take (best to get this in writing in advance)
* Include [photo release forms](https://environment.uw.edu/intranet/marketing-communications/photo-release/) as part of the preparation for a field trip
* All participants who may be photographed should complete this release form: <https://environment.uw.edu/intranet/marketing-communications/photo-release/>
* Release forms should remain on file with your unit
* Immediately delete any photographs taken of people who didn’t get permission to be photographed
* Name the photo files with the photographer’s name, course or event name and date so photos can be easily archived and located later

**Sharing Photos with the College of the Environment**

Minimum technical specifications

* Resolution of 300 dpi (2700 x 3600 pixels)
* Acceptable formats: high resolution JPEG (.jpg), TIFF (.tiff), PNG (.png) or a RAW image file (.dng)
* Send original, uncropped photos
* If you’re not sure whether your images meet these requirements, send them through anyway. Smaller images are not preferred, but can often be used on social media.
* Thanks in advance for remembering to share your images with the College of the Environment!

We can’t use photos when

* Safety procedures are not being followed
* Proper photo permissions have not been acquired; when we receive a photo from you, we are depending on you to obtain appropriate permissions *before* sharing it with us