SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT
INTRODUCTION

As human beings, we connect to nature with a force as strong as the pull of gravity. We depend on nature. Zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, national parks, the conservation movement—indeed, the Wildlife Conservation Society—were all created with a desire to maintain and strengthen that connection.

Our human footprint keeps growing. Since the Renaissance, the global human population has grown from a half billion to over seven billion. By 2050, that number could reach 10 billion. More than half of the people on the planet live in cities, where zoos and aquariums provide a window into nature. Our demands for food and water have a global reach; our choices have an impact on the planet.

Saving wildlife and wild places is our history and our future. WCS recognizes that the health and welfare of people and communities across the globe are inextricably connected to our mission of protecting wildlife and wild places and we will work globally and locally to achieve these goals. Having supporters like you that are willing to carry our messages to their networks forward our mission and helps us achieve our goals.

Over the past century, WCS has established long-term conservation presence in the last wild places across the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, built strong and trusting partnerships, and acquired a depth of knowledge that ensures effective conservation action. We protect these last wild places because they are intact, biodiverse, most resilient to climate change, and bastions for large, iconic wildlife species.

The WCS Wildlife Advocate Program Social Media Kit was created to help amplify the message of urgency to conserve the world’s largest wild places in 14 priority regions. Now more than ever, we must use every tool at our disposal to ensure we can protect wildlife in the last wild places on earth. We encourage you to join us in sharing these important messages on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS, HOW TO’S, TIPS AND TRICKS

Social media plays an integral role in the way we share and consume information every day. Through social media, we can not only educate our networks about key topics, but also proactively define the voice and image of WCS and what we stand for.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are all great opportunities to connect with legislators and others in your network. All three platforms are used by different demographics, but the good news is that our cause appeals to all ages and demographics.

This guide includes tips and tools that you can use to manage your social media profiles, communicate your priorities to the public and engage your communities.

Contents of the Toolkit

- Taking it Back to the Basics: Terms You Need to Know
- The Do's & Don'ts
- Posting on Social Media Platforms
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
  - Twitter
- Important Dates for Wildlife Advocacy
**Comments**
Comments are a form of engagement where you can reply to another user’s posts or have a user respond to your posts. Similar to tweets and posts, comments can include text, hashtags, pictures, and emojis.

**Engagement**
Engagement is any form of interaction with your profile on social media. Likes, comments, and shares are all forms of engagement.

**Feed**
A feed is a collection of new content posted by all the accounts you follow.

**Follower**
A follower is a user that has subscribed to see another user’s posts in their feed. A follower is used to describe users on Twitter and Instagram. Facebook Pages have followers, whereas individuals who see each other’s posts in their feeds are referred to as “friends.”

**Geotag**
Geotagging is the process of including a location in your post. This feature is available on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Handle**
A handle, usually used on Twitter and Instagram refers to the username that appears after the @ sign in your profile URL and must be unique to your account.

**Hashtags**
A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#). Hashtags let you describe the topic of your content or mark it as part of a larger conversation. Similar to keywords, posts with hashtags are all compiled in your feed (ex: search the hashtag #StandforWildlife to find all posts related to that topic).

**Highlight**
Instagram Highlights are groups of stories that users can create as folder sections on your Instagram profiles. This means that once you post a story you can save it in a Highlight (like a folder) that will display on your Instagram profile, or you can also choose the option to archive the stories and in future create highlights from the saved stories in your archive.

**Likes**
This is the number of individual users that have liked your photo or video. Likes are used on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

**Live Stream (Facebook & Instagram)**
A live stream is a real-time video that is displayed on a social media platform. Platforms offer users the ability to interact with their followers during the stream by answering questions and reading submitted comments.

**Mentions**
A mention (using the symbol ‘@’) is the act of tagging another user in your tweet or post. Mentions trigger a notification for the user tagged and allows your audience to click through to their profile.

**Posts**
This is a general term that refers to updates on all three social networks. Unlike tweets, Facebook and Instagram provides users with more flexibility on the character limits. Typically, these posts have more information and include high-quality pictures and videos.

- **Tip:** If your post is going to be more than a paragraph long, it is recommended to include a link for more information, so your post isn’t overlooked due to the heavy content.

**Repost/Regram/Retweet**
Reposting (Facebook), regramming (Instagram) and retweeting (Twitter) are all ways to share another user’s post on your page to your followers/friends.

**Stories**
Facebook and Instagram allow users to post information and content (“stories”) to their profiles that disappear after 24 hours. Once you have 10,000 followers, you can include links in Stories that automatically open if the user swipes up.

**Tweets**
Tweets are Twitter posts. Limited to 280 characters, these status updates can include photos, videos and/or URL links. You can also tag other handles in the copy, or tag handles in a photo.

**Twitter Thread**
Threads are a group of tweets on one subject. They show up on the Twitter feed grouped together so other users can read the entire thread chronologically.
The Do's

- Do post fresh content regularly—at least twice a week
- Do encourage conversations with your followers via photos, videos, polls, etc.
- Do include hashtags in every post (#StandforWildlife, #EarthStrong, #PracticeHumanity)
- Do tag relevant accounts (see page 9 for relevant accounts to follow)
- Do interact with other organizations and advocates by reposting, liking and retweeting their posts, stories and videos.
- Do follow the accounts of your local lawmakers and members of the media and encourage engagement by interacting with them via tweets and posts.
- Do provide inspiring and valuable content about the cause (personal stories, etc.). Heartfelt posts can go a long way!

The Don'ts

- Don’t bury the message. Lead your posts with the key points and expand after.
- Don’t post the exact same content across all platforms. You want to maintain a consistent identity but adjust the content for each platform. (see below)
- Don’t forget to include links to news and event updates in your posts.
POSTING ON VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Overall, content should be brief, straightforward and visually engaging while also ensuring the right message gets across.

This kit provides tailored posts that you can use to share and to promote on your social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter.

We encourage you to join the conversation using the hashtag, #StandforWildlife and tag @TheWCS on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook

Helpful Tips

- Conversational
- Relevant articles
- Use your profile and/or cover image to reflect your support.
- Brief videos, most attention-grabbing information in the first three seconds
- Post attention-grabbing visuals. A picture is worth a thousand words!

Create Post

Jane Doe

I had the opportunity to connect with [tag lawmaker name] to urge him/her to support [insert campaign/bill/initiative] #StandforWildlife

Add to Your Post

Post

Create Post

Jane Doe

Did you know [insert infographic, fact about wildlife]? Visit [insert website/link] to learn more! #StandforWildlife #EarthStrong

Add to Your Post

Post
- Strong images
- Short videos (~:30)
- Share your experience at events by going Live or adding videos to your IGTV channel
- Tag lawmakers and locations on your pictures and posts to capture the attention of a broader audience.
- If a post says "Link in Bio", click on the user’s handle name on the post to be directed to their profile page.
  - The referenced link will be under the profile picture.
- Captions should lead with your most important points, so readers that are scrolling can get your message.
  - If you want to expand after that, Instagram’s character post limit is 2,200, 30 hashtags.
Thank you @[insert social media handle] for your support on [insert campaign/bill/initiative] #StandForWildlife

Thank you @[insert social media handle] and the growing bipartisan group of legislators working to save our wildlife #StandForWildlife @theWCS

There is a 280 character limit on tweets.
Use hashtags to join the conversation
Post brief summaries about wildlife issues
Use visuals (pictures, videos, and memes) to stand out.
This is a good platform to share links (news articles, advocacy links, etc.)
Engage in conversation - tweet directly at legislators and decision-makers.
Twitter Accounts to Follow

**Wildlife Conservation Society**
@theWCS
@WCSHealth
@WCSNewsroom

**WCS Ocean**
@WCSOcean

**New York Aquarium**
@nyaquarium

**Bronx Zoo**
@BronxZoo

**U.S. Senate**

**Senate Committee on Appropriations**
@SenateApprops

**Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources**
@EnergyGOP
@EnergyDems

**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**
@SenateForeign

**Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works**
@EPWGOP
@EPWDems

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**House Committee on Appropriations**
@AppropsDems
@HouseAppropsGOP

**House Committee on Natural Resources**
@NatResources
@NRDems

**House Committee on Foreign Affairs**
@HouseForeign
@HouseForeignGOP

**U.S. Federal Agencies**

**United States Agency for International Development**
@USAID

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**
@USFWS
Social Media Hashtags to Follow

- #StandForWildlife
- #SeeingIsBelieving
- #5GreatForests
- #Forests4Life
- #VibrantOceans
- #WCS125
- #EndTheTrade
- #ProtectWildlifeProtectUs
- #EarthStrong
- #insidethezoo
In order to spread the word, there are many important national dates that are used to celebrate the world’s wildlife. Joining the conversation around these dates may be a way to elevate the advocacy that you are doing for WCS. Additionally, having a list of these dates might help in creating a consistent flow of posts for the duration of the year in addition to providing you with some ideas of content to post.

- **World Wildlife Day -- March 3**
  - #WorldWildlifeDay

- **Earth Day -- April 22**
  - #EarthDay

- **World Migratory Bird Day -- Second Saturday of May**
  - #WorldMigratoryBirdDay
  - #MigratoryBirds

- **World Turtle Day -- May 23**
  - #WorldTurtleDay

- **World Ocean Day -- June 8**
  - #WorldOceanDay

- **International Tiger Day -- July 29**
  - #WorldTigerDay
  - #InternationalTigerDay

- **World Elephant Day -- August 12**
  - #WorldElephantDay

- **National Bison Day -- First Saturday of November**
  - #NationalBisonDay
Please don’t hesitate to reach out to anyone on the WCS team for any questions or additional guidance to posting on social media. We appreciate your efforts to help raise awareness and spark action to save wildlife and wild places.