

Virginia Master Naturalist Video Crowdsourcing Opportunities

Overview

We are working with MiniMatters Video + Marketing to produce an approximately 3-minute Virginia Master Naturalist program video, as well as some short clips to be used on social media. Our purpose is to have a new video resource that communicates what the VMN program is all about to potential future volunteers and partners. We especially want to communicate the fact that the VMN program is for everyone, no matter their background. The video will consist primarily of material from you, our VMN volunteers, because we know you are so talented!

Your Role

We hope this will be a fun opportunity for you and your chapter colleagues—sort of a scavenger hunt--to find great material! This will also help us to make videos that represent the dynamic VMN volunteer community and spirit across the state. ***If your photos or footage are used, we will give you and your chapter a media credit in the video.:**)

We want to represent volunteers and communities across the state, so we encourage you to submit footage or photos of wildlife, activities, and people from your chapter and region!

There are three ways you can contribute:

1. Submit video footage (preferred) and/or photos of nature, Virginia landscapes, and VMNs in action. These may be new or something that you captured in the past.
2. Conduct video interviews of VMN volunteers and program partners.
3. Be interviewed on camera by a fellow volunteer (see #2!), talking about your experiences with the program.

How to Proceed

For all of these ways of contributing, we have some specific needs and guidelines. Please read on to determine whether you have the skills and equipment to participate. If you do, then start the cameras rolling and follow the directions to submit **by April 7**.

We hope we will have the great problem of receiving more footage than we can actually use in this video! Even if your footage does not make the final cut, please know that we will save it for other uses and communications.

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Details

Technical Guidelines

- We can use footage or photos, but we prefer footage as it's dynamic. So, if you can film a video, please go for it! We're happy to accept your photos as well.
- Phone video cameras are good and give us some environmental sound, too.
- Due to the shape of the frame for the main video, please film horizontally.
- Shoot at 1080p resolution if that's possible for your camera – sometimes you may need to adjust the settings to get the highest option; 4K is also ok.
- *For interviews:* Please mic the subject with a dedicated mic rather than using the camera mic, which will not provide good audio because of the distance away and environmental noise. The audio is as important as the video! If you do not have professional video equipment, including mics, there are low-cost wireless microphone systems that can be used with camera phones such as [this](#) or [this](#). Some of our chapters have microphone systems they have been using for basic training courses, too.
- *For interviews:* Try to have the person filmed be outside in an environment that conveys the local geography. Frame them so that their eyes are about 1/3 of the way down the frame, where they are looking at the camera and big enough to connect with the audience. This sample shows the type of framing we are looking for.



What Footage, Photos, and Clips Do We Need?

General

We have a need for general footage (preferred) and photos (less preferred, but acceptable) showing the following things.

1. Nature
 - a. Tadpoles
 - b. Caterpillars
 - c. Frogs
 - d. Butterflies
 - e. Other flora and fauna specific to your region and which you have good shots of
2. Environments: VMN volunteers in groups participating in conservation activities across the state in different environments and geographies.
 - a. Mountains
 - b. Piedmont
 - c. Coastal
 - d. Forest
 - e. Field/meadow
 - f. Wetland
 - g. Stream/river
 - h. Town/Urban
3. VMNs in Action
 - a. Training
 - i. Training course graduation – volunteers receiving certificates or pins
 - ii. Training course – volunteers learning outdoors
 - iii. Training course – presenters teaching something in a classroom and outdoors
 - b. Volunteer Service
 - i. VMN volunteers engaging in conservation work
 - ii. Educating others (like leading a nature walk or giving a talk)
 - iii. Engaged in science (like water quality monitoring, wildlife count)
 - iv. Engaged in stewardship (like planting trees, doing trail work, doing cleanup)
 - v. Working together in a group
 - c. Partnerships
 - i. Examples of VMN volunteers engaged in a partnership activity with an outside agency or group – visuals of other logos in the shots are especially welcome to show this
 - d. Groups Being Welcoming

- i. Footage (best) or photos of chapters or other volunteer groups in action smiling and waving (Great opportunity for fun and visibility for your chapter!)

Interviews

We're looking to you to provide short "interlude" clips. Each one should be around 10 seconds. If you look at the **script** below, you'll see some "**Interludes**" where we are hoping to include some filmed quotes from volunteers, communities and partners across the state. We've added suggested interview questions you can use to solicit the kinds of clips we're seeking.

Script

At the Virginia Master Naturalist Program, tadpoles and caterpillars aren't the only ones that transform themselves into something wonderful and new. Many thousands of Virginians from all walks of life have trained with us--and over 3,000 are master naturalist volunteers who conserve our natural resources and public lands.

Interlude 1 - Quotes volunteer videographers get from Master Naturalists along the lines of:

"I am amazed at the person I've become. I used to be a math teacher. These days I count diamondback terrapins instead of numbers."

"During the week I'm an accountant, but on the weekends I'm a naturalist. I share my knowledge about bears."

"I'm a mom who has always loved nature. I volunteer with other community members to create pollinator habitats."

***Question to ask: What do you do or did you do in your "regular life," and what do you now do as a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer?**

At the Virginia Master Naturalists Program we transform neighbors into naturalists

who support community conservation--from Chesapeake estuaries to Appalachian mountain forests to the hearts of our cities and towns.

The journey to become a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer starts with a 40-hour basic training course in a chapter near you.

Interlude 2 - Quotes volunteer videographers get from Master Naturalists, where VMNs talk about their training.

***Questions to ask: In a concise answer, what training did you go through to become a volunteer? What training did your local chapter provide for you to become a volunteer?**

Once the new naturalists are ready for their annual service, they work with other volunteers on topics they find most meaningful.

And Master Naturalists get to work with our many partners to benefit Virginia's woods, wildlife and waters.

Interlude 3 - Quotes where partners talk about working with VMNs – for example, Natural Heritage biologist talking about volunteers' contributions to habitat restoration, DWR biologist talking about volunteers' contributions to citizen science projects, State Park ranger talking about VMNs leading interpretive programs and extoling how the volunteers are transforming the environment for the better

***Questions to ask: In a concise answer, what are your organization/agency's goals and how have Virginia Master Naturalists been a help to your organization/agency in achieving those goals? What has it been like to partner with Virginia Master Naturalists? Would you recommend that other agencies and organizations do so and, if so, why?**

Interlude 4 – Quotes where participants describe the ways in which the program has been transformative to them – e.g. How they've grown as a person, how they've evolved, how it's been exciting to be useful in ways they never did before--serving a larger purpose, how they connect to something deep inside them, etc.

***Questions to ask: In a concise answer, how has becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer been transformative for you? How have you or your life changed since becoming a volunteer?**

Contact your local Virginia Master Naturalists Program chapter and set a transformation in motion. [END]

Media Releases

Any people whose faces are shown in the photos and videos must have media releases. Most VMN volunteers have agreed to the standard media release in their Better Impact profile. Any people who do not fall into this category (including members of the public and VMN volunteers who did not agree to the media release in Better Impact) will need to complete the [media release form](#). Please submit any media release forms with your footage and photos.

It is a good practice to, before you film or photograph a group of people, announce what you are doing and give people the opportunity to step out of the shot.

Permission to Use Your Work

By submitting your photos and video footage, you are confirming: 1) that you have permission to include the people or places in them; 2) that you grant MiniMatters and the Master Naturalist Program editorial discretion in the use of photos and footage received in the videos and/or other publications; and 3) that you allow the Virginia Master Naturalist program and its sponsoring agencies to use your work for the purposes of communicating about the Virginia Master Naturalist program.

How To Submit

Drag and drop photos to this Google Drive link by April 7:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QjpIYUINbxSYWZGo17PrWHwXuKQrI9oE?usp=sharing>