

COOPERATING/INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORTS: NARRATIVE STYLE GUIDE

General

- Abbreviate Fiscal Year as “FYxx.”
Ex: Site visitation was up in FY06.
- Abbreviate organization names after the first use. Put the abbreviation in parentheses after the first mention of the organization.
Ex: Badlands Natural History Association (BNHA) increased membership by 25% in FY06. BNHA also saw a significant increase in sales.
- Use of abbreviations for National Conservation Area (NCA), National Wild and Scenic River (NWSR), National Monument (NM), etc., is acceptable after the first mention of the site designation.
Ex: Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area continued its Stargazing Program throughout the year. Visitors came from across the country to join Red Rock Canyon NCA’s volunteer astronomers in viewing the spectacular night sky.
- Do not use the first person. Instead of “We saw a large increase in visitation,” use “The site saw...” Instead of “Our community partners co-sponsored the event,” use “BNHA’s community partners...”
- Do not capitalize Preserve, Memorial, Monument, etc., when the words are not being used as proper nouns.
Ex: Summer remained the busiest season in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. In 2006, more than two million people visited the monument.
- Capitalize “visitor center” when used as a proper noun, as in Red Rock Visitor Center. Otherwise, it can be left lower-case.
- Use a serial comma (the comma used immediately before a conjunction such as “and” or “or” in a list of three or more items).
Ex: Demonstrations included basket weaving, blacksmithing, and firing pottery.
- *Italicize* titles of publications.
- End quotes go outside commas and periods.
Ex: The project, “Documenting the American Indian Experience of Route 66,” explored the interaction of Native American and Anglo cultures along Route 66.
- Spell check, spell check, spell check!

- Do not use bulleted or numbered lists. Describe items or events in narrative form with complete sentences.
- Avoid generic statements such as “It was a great year” and “Volunteers really helped out at the site.” Use specific events or results to show achievements and success.
- Do not summarize your organization’s history or purpose.
- The ideal length for each narrative is 300-500 words.

Numbers

- Spell out numbers one through nine. Use digits for 10 or higher. A very large number should be expressed with a figure and a word, such as “450 million,” or two words, such as “two million.” A large monetary amount should be expressed with a figure and a word, such as “\$4 million.”
- Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence or reword the sentence to avoid the situation.
Ex: Eighteen people attended the event.
One thousand brochures were distributed to visitors.
In FY06, 19,762 VIP hours were reported.
- Spell out small ordinal numbers, e.g., “first, second, third” instead of “1st, 2nd, 3rd.”
- Spell out simple fractions, e.g., “one-third” instead of “1/3.”
- For percentages, round up to the nearest tenth of a point. Instead of “16.75%,” use “16.8%.”
- Include a comma in numbers of four or more digits such as “\$4,500.”

Dates

- If the exact date of an event is not essential, leave it out. Instead of “The cleanup held on Monday, June 5, 2006, drew volunteers from throughout the county,” use “The cleanup held in early June drew volunteers...”
- Do not use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd) in dates.
Ex: The celebration took place on December 1 and 2.
The Cowboy Centennial events took place July 8-12.

Places

- Abbreviate a state name with its two-letter code when used after a city. Spell out the state name when not referring to a specific location.
Ex: The conference was held in Jackson, MS.
The site is a popular recreation area in Northern Wyoming.

Names

- Use a person's first and last name when mentioning him or her for the first time. Use the first or last name each time after that as you see appropriate.

Ex: VIP Amy Langdon headed the display committee. Amy's group then staffed a booth at the annual volunteer fair in March.

Professor of Biology Mark Chan led the archaeology dig at the site. Dr. Chan presented his findings in a paper titled "Dinosaurs: Best Animals Ever."