

Educational Video

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: Educating through Entertainment

Background

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the only body of federal lands dedicated specifically to the preservation and restoration of wildlife, including many of the earth's most threatened species. The Refuge System is composed of more than 540 refuges throughout the United States and its territories and covers over 100 million acres. More than 400 of these refuges have visitor centers that welcome people and educate the public about that particular refuge's role in wildlife preservation, recreational opportunities at that refuge and education about the entire refuge system. This video will be shown to all visitors at every visitor center throughout the United States and will be distributed to partner organizations and educators and the general public upon request.

JDG's Solution

With a primary goal of educating the public, JDG Communications began this production by creating a linear story that was intended to have an emotional impact on viewers thereby imparting a story that would stay with them for a long time.

JDG's first challenge was to accurately represent the enormosity and importance of the wild places the system preserves. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service maintains an amazing still image library with tens of thousands of images dating back to the 1900s and a vast video library that contains literally thousands of hours of footage, including many reels with historical significance. This footage enabled JDG Communications to outline and develop a script with specific images and footage in mind.

A scriptwriter who is very familiar with the refuge system developed the script, capturing the essence of the system, its overall magnificence and importance as well as specific historical events and success stories, all of which were used to weave a story that tugs at viewers' heartstrings as it educates them. For the narration, an emphasis on specific points and an emotionally evocative diction style add to the impact. Original music scores were composed and recorded to accompany the video, enhancing the narration and footage effectively.

This video, which consists of nearly 500 individual shots over 12 minutes, is the result of 18 months of effort by the JDG team in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The video will be seen by many of the 30 million people who visit National Wildlife Refuges each year. Over the next ten years, it is estimated that 200 million people will view it.

