



WHY WRITE AN OP-ED?

An Opinion Editorial, also known as an “Op-ed”, is a timely persuasive article that provides readers with a clearly expressed opinion on a current issue. An Op-ed usually contains a call for action, especially if there is a decision pending. For the Trust, Op-ed’s bring awareness to relevant conservation issues such as banning uranium mining in the Grand Canyon, or calling for a sustainable grazing plan in Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument. Op-ed’s have the potential to reach large numbers of people and perhaps even influence public policy.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN OP-ED

Op-Ed’s are important because, if written effectively, they can persuade a reader to agree on their position of an issue and hopefully even feel inclined to take on an action themselves. An Op-Ed is a useful tool for trying to get others on board with a cause or initiative that you are passionate about. They are also an effective tool for advocacy because Op-Ed’s are meant to be written in a way that almost anybody can understand. To reiterate, Op-Ed’s are important because:

- You can have your voice heard by a large audience
- It is a way to voice a persuadable opinion to the masses
- Can give a fresh or unique outlook to a certain issue
- Can persuade others to want to get involved or take an action

HOW TO WRITE AN OP-ED

The good news about writing an Op-ed is that anybody that is knowledgeable and passionate about a particular issue can write one! This does not guarantee that your Op-ed will always get published, but if it is clearly written in an engaging, knowledgeable, voice, it is more likely to be published in a news source.

Make it **timely and local**. Follow the news and respond to a relevant issue that has a local or regional scope. This will also determine which papers you should submit your Op-ed to.

Get the reader’s attention. Start with a fact or story that will grab hold of your reader and illustrate the single point you want to make in your editorial. **Make it personal** by bringing in your own experience and writing in a personal and conversational voice.

Get to the point right away and provide a brief, clear argument.



Keep it concise and limit the article to 750 words. While an Op-ed is supposed to be persuasive, it is not meant to be long and drawn out. Op-ed's are quick and to the point and written in conversational style. Tell readers why they should care and **offer recommendations**.

End strong. Summarize your argument by reiterating the point you made in the opening paragraph and potentially incorporate a call to action. For example, if you are in support of banning all uranium mining in the Grand Canyon, that would be stated at the beginning and end of your Op-Ed. There would need to be facts incorporated into the piece as to how you came to that decision. At the end, a call to action could be writing to an elected official, signing a petition, attending a community forum on the issue, or another related action.

SUBMITTING AN OP-ED

Below are some tips we suggest when submitting an Op-ed article:

- Check newspaper and commentary sites on their guidelines for submitting Op-ed's
- Choosing a regional newspaper is oftentimes better than a national newspaper like the New York Times
- Accompany your article with a graphic
- Include your contact information
- Follow-up with the commentary site
- Share your article with the Trust on our blog site!