

Tips for Engaging Local Media for Your NAAB Ash Tree Tagging Event

- Check the Web and the phone book for listings of all newspapers, radio, and television media in your area. Make a contact sheet, including specific names of reporters who handle local events.
- It is helpful to write a press release to send to media. That way the things that are important to your group are right there and not missed.
- Always return reporters' phone calls, even if late, and even if you think you know what they want. If you don't show interest in them, they will stop showing an interest in you.
- Be sure to give media plenty of notice about the event. Two to three weeks is great – one week is the lower limit for a first announcement. Be sure to send a reminder 3 days before the event.
- Do your homework: List local media outlets and appropriate contacts and record your interactions with them using the attached form. Most of this information can be found on Web sites but do not hesitate to call the organization's general number and ask for help.
- Make follow-up phone calls and send follow-up e-mails after your initial contact. Be sure to log your calls so anyone can follow the thread.
- Don't rely entirely on email; ask people in person when possible or call them up.
- It is handy to have a "cheat sheet" in front of you when talking to media that includes information about your group, NAAB, and your event (including goals and objectives).
- Invite the media to your event so they can see your work first-hand.
- Everyone in your group who will talk to media should be able to rattle off the "5Ws" and all your materials should clearly have this info:
 - **Who?** Who's the event for, who's organizing it?
 - **What?** What type of event is it?
 - **When?** Give the date and day of the week as well as time.
 - **Where?** Provide a link to a map or directions and information on transportation and parking if necessary. Getting a reporter or a crew to an event can be won or lost in how well you direct them there.
 - **Why?** What's the purpose of the event?

