



Writing Press Releases

WRITING THE RIGHT PRESS RELEASE

To publicize the many story angles surrounding hiking, consider distributing a steady stream of press releases. The average newspaper receives more than 200 press releases a day so your goal is to communicate all the necessary information clearly and concisely. Keep your message short and straightforward. Rarely should a release be longer than one page. If you want to include background information, attach a “fact sheet” but key information should remain on the front page.

Type double-spaced, leaving wide margins. Include the date of release and the names and day/night phone numbers for at least two contacts. Write a brief, catchy headline that summarizes your release, center and underline it.

In the first and most important paragraph, cover what is happening, who is doing it and if needed, when and where it is being held. Example:” An informal survey found that five largest local companies could save more than \$200,000 a year if they reduced car parking subsidies and provided better bicycling and mass transit opportunities, according to Ian Peddin of the Hutchinson Highway.

Gosh 200 grand? With more and more companies cutting back and downsizing, any potential big number savings are bound to get some ink and airtime. Reel in reporters in with your second and third paragraphs. The second should be an explanation and expansion of the first (who was surveyed, a breakdown of figures, etc.) The third has a supporting quote by Ian Peddin saying something such as. “While these corporate figures sound high, they are a fraction of the amount that could be saved by individuals currently commuting less than five miles each way by car.”

Show the release is done by typing “end” or 30 at the bottom. If part of the organization, include a one-sentence description of what you stand for so reporters understand how you fit in with the larger organization.

(Thanks to the Millennium Trails Handbook for providing this information.)