

USA-NPN Communications Standards

Here are some notes to help us present the USA-NPN consistently.

- USA-NPN (not NPN alone) is the abbreviation
- Use “The Pulse of Our Planet” or “Taking the Pulse of Our Planet” (not ‘the planet’, which belongs to a radio station).
- Definition of Phenology
 - We define phenology to our general audiences as the ‘study of the seasonal plant and animal life cycle events’. It’s good to give examples like “flowering of plants, ripening of fruit, emergence of insects, and migration of birds.”
 - We often also want to talk about how phenology is affected by climate and environment, but generally do not include that piece in the definition (at least for people who need to first get a grip on what phenology is). There is still debate in the field at large as to whether physical events like ice break up are part of phenology. At this point we leave it out of our general definition.
- In general, we credit the US Geological Survey (abbreviate it like this: USGS) for the USA-NPN, while particular projects and programs have other agency and institutional supporters (check with NCO staff if you are not sure whom to credit).

Messages to our Audiences:

General Audience:

- By observing and reporting plant and animal life cycle events, you can help scientists and managers understand and adapt to our changing climate and environment.

For Policy-makers:

- Phenological information is key to understanding and managing natural resources in the face of climate and environmental change.
- The USA-NPN increases scientific literacy and engages the public in understanding first-hand the impacts of climate change.

For Scientists:

- By sharing your phenological observations through the USA-NPN, you can advance your own research and contribute to the growing understanding of ecosystem response to climate variation and change.
- The USA-NPN is developing a unique resource that integrates phenological and related environmental data for basic and applied science.

For Natural Resource Managers:

- Current and historic phenological information is key for management of natural resources in the face of climate variation and change.
- The USA-NPN will provide standard monitoring methods, an information management system for storing and accessing data, data quality assurance, and decision support tools targeted at current management issues.

For Educators:

- Studying phenology is a great way to understand the effects of climate change and connect students to the natural world
- By observing plant and animal phenology – your class contributes to real (basic and applied) science.

For Partner Organizations:

By connecting with the USA-NPN your organization will benefit from:

- national recognition
- standardization of methods for phenology monitoring
- a resource for data entry, storage and quality control
- 'networking' - connections to other organizations/individuals
- education and training resources
- access to future data analysis tools
- access to future research and management tools