

2025 Video Contest: Information and Guidelines

Directions to guide students

What do I make my video about?

This year's theme, "**Water Careers Unleashed: Navigating the Blue Path!**", encourages you to explore various roles within the water sector, interview professionals, and visit workplaces. By combining storytelling and research, your goal is to inspire viewers to consider water-related professions that play a crucial role in safeguarding our planet's most vital resource.

- Your video can be about one or multiple careers in water, but keep in mind your video is only **55 seconds!**
- We recommend starting with one interview (and site visit, if possible), assessing how much content you collected, and planning from there.
- **Focus:** Research water-related careers, especially those impacting the **Russian River watershed**.

To assist you with this research, a [water professionals contact list](#) has been organized. The list includes professionals in the water industry willing to connect with you. **Submit the form to receive this list.**

Information to Include in Your Video

The information in your video should come from a combination of research and interviews. Your video can include topics like:

1. **What led the person to this career?**
 - Personal interests, education, and experience.
 - Inspiration or obstacles encountered.
 - Degrees or certifications required.
2. **Details about their current job.**
 - Daily responsibilities and work schedule.
 - Typical salary.
 - Impact of their work on the organization and/or the greater water system.
 - Favorite and surprising aspects of the job.
 - Skills and abilities important in their work (e.g., people skills, technical skills).
3. **What the future of this career looks like.**
 - Room for growth and demand in the career.
 - Tips for learning more about the career.
 - Schools with strong programs in this field.
 - Tips for getting hired in this industry or organization.
 - Insights for high school students about this career or the water industry.

Who can I interview?

- **Contact Local Water Professionals:**
We reached out to local water professionals who are ready to discuss their careers. [Complete the form](#) to receive the contact list.
- **Find Careers That Interest You:**
Review the job descriptions in the list to find one that interests you.

2025 Video Contest: Information and Guidelines

- **Start Early:**
Begin requesting interviews early to allow time for scheduling and conducting multiple interviews if needed.

How do I prepare for the interview?

1. Research

- Look through the links in the section below to read and watch videos about water careers. Then, choose one career that interests you and learn more about it to figure out if this is a career you want to include in your video.
- Check the water professionals contact list to see if anyone works in the career that interests you.
- Reach out to the person with a few possible interview dates and times based on your schedule and any preferences they listed. See the sample email below.
 - Explain that you received their contact information from the Russian River Watershed Association Video Contest and that you are making a video about their career.
 - You can ask to interview them over the phone, on a video call, or at their workplace.
 - If you set a meeting at their workplace, ask if there is a special dress code, like if you need to wear closed-toe shoes. Plan to dress professionally.
 - Reply to emails within 24 hours to show respect for their time.

2. Write your interview questions.

- First, write what genuinely interests you or what you're curious about. If you're asking questions you care about, you will get more out of the interview.
- Then, look at the section above "**What do I make my video about?**" for more ideas on what questions to ask.
- Think about what answers you could only get from a real person working in the career (like, "what inspired you to work in this career?", "what challenges did you face on your career path?" or "what is your favorite part of the job?") versus information you could find online (like, "what certifications are required for this position?" or "what is the average salary for this position?"). This will help you make the most of your interview time.
- A good final question can be, "Is there anything else you want to add that I haven't asked yet?" Or "What do you want high school students to know about this job or a career in the water industry in general?"
- For more ideas, check out these informational interview resources from [Santa Rosa Junior College](#), [UC Berkeley](#), or search the Internet for "informational interview questions."

3. A few days before the interview

- Email your interviewee to confirm place, time, and the best way to contact them. If possible, share your cell phone number so you have a quick way to get in touch if a problem comes up.
- If it's a video interview, make sure you both have the correct link.
- Review your interview questions. Bring the questions with you to the interview (print or on your phone) and something to take notes on.
- Charge any audio or video equipment you will use, and pack backup batteries/chargers if possible.
- Get your outfit ready.

2025 Video Contest: Information and Guidelines

4. During the interview.

- Confirm how much time the person has for the interview.
- Ask the interviewee if it is ok to record the interview. If you are at their workplace, ask if it is ok to take photos/video.
- Take notes, don't just depend on the recording. This will help you focus on the parts that most interest you. For example, you can note the runtime when something interesting comes up, like "minute 10:30, story about hundreds of fish returning to restored habitat."

5. After the interview.

- Take a few minutes to write down the parts of the interview that stood out to you and any new questions that came up. Doing this while the experience is fresh in your mind will help you later!
- Within 24 hours, send a thank you email to the person you interviewed, and ask if it's ok to contact them with follow up questions. Include at least one specific thing you appreciated about their story or one thing you learned from the experience. You could also ask them if they can recommend another person to interview for your video.

Where can I find information about careers in the water industry?

- California Water Jobs
 - Career Videos <https://www.cawaterjobs.org/career-videos/>
 - Career paths <https://www.cawaterjobs.org/career-paths/>
- Baywork Career Paths in Water & Wastewater
 - <https://www.baywork.org/careers/>
 - Each topic under "Explore Career Paths" includes a video about that career or interest group
- Work for Water <https://www.workforwater.org/careers-in-water/>
- Santa Rosa Junior College Water Resources Technology <https://appliedtechnology.santarosa.edu/water-resources-technology>
- Sonoma Water Job Specifications <https://www.sonomawater.org/job-specifications>

Careers at Sonoma Water

Need some quick inspiration? Click below to read 1-page interviews with people who work at Sonoma Water.

- [Interview thumbnails](#)- each image matches a career profile PDF
- [Career profile PDFs](#)

2025 Video Contest: Information and Guidelines

Sample Email

Subject Suggestions

- a. Request for Informational Interview on Water Careers
- b. Seeking Insights on Your Career for Video Contest
- c. Interview Request: Learning About Your Role in Water Careers
- d. Student Inquiry: Informational Interview Opportunity
- e. Interested in Your Career Journey: Interview Request

Hello [Mr./Ms.Last name],

My name is [First name,Last name] and I am a [grade level] student at [High School] in [City]. I am making a video for the 2025 Russian River Watershed Association Video Contest about water careers, which is how I received your contact information.

I am excited to learn more about your work as a [job title]. [Write one sentence about what interests you about the job].

Are you available for a 20-30 minute informational interview [within the next few weeks, next month]? I'm happy to speak over the phone or video conference. [Optional: If possible, it would also be amazing to meet in person at your workplace.]

Please let me know what works for you. These days/times work best for me: [write 3-5 days and times]

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[First name, Last name]

[Email or phone number]