



Writing and Submitting OpEds

Op-Ed means “opposite editorial.” In other words, it appears on the page facing the editorial page. Syndicated columns and guest opinion pieces appear on this page. Op-Eds are a great way to educate the public about Alaska public lands and waters. Congressional staffers often read the Opinion section of their local newspapers first thing in the morning.

Newspapers’ policies on Op-Ed submissions vary greatly. Check the paper’s website or call the editorial department for guidelines on word count, exclusivity and submission instructions before preparing your Op-Ed. Never send the same Op-Ed, at the same time, to papers that compete for the same circulation area. Additionally, many national newspapers like the New York Times, Boston Globe, etc. also request exclusive content for Op-Eds. For local papers, Op-Eds provide a chance for local residents to submit an article on a topic that is important to them without the word limits of a letter to the editor. Additionally, you can always check if your local paper welcomes guest columnists.

Writing an Op-Ed

- The Op-Ed is casual and conversational. Start with a personal experience. Be descriptive.
- Remember, the key to getting your Op-Ed published is to make it relevant to the paper’s readership and timely.
- Find an appropriate way to mention your organization.
- Put a call to action towards the end.
- After you have piqued the reader’s interest and given background information, lay out the problem you are addressing.
- After stating and explaining the problem, give the solution and address the challenges to reaching this solution.
- Sentences should be simple and concise, one thought per sentence.
- Use a snappy close that mobilizes readers.
- Restate the author’s name, along with the organization, author’s job title and the organization’s website and any other qualifications that would give the author more credibility with the audience.

If you are interested in writing and submitting an Op-Ed, Alaska Wilderness League’s communication staff can help you.