

Digital Imaging Guide

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Delaware Water Gap
National Recreation Area



Introduction

This document gives guidelines for submission of digital image files for use by the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA) for print production. This guide assumes that files are being supplied to DWGNRA for use in our projects.

Digital Photography

The file type produced by a digital camera is determined by the capability of the camera and the settings chosen by the photographer. The type of file significantly influences the quality possible in media production. All high-end cameras can make camera raw and JPEG file formats. Many also have TIFF file capability.

Acceptable File Types

DWGNRA uses the Adobe Creative Suite® for image processing and print design. If photos cannot be processed by Adobe Photoshop® they are not acceptable. We prefer images that have not had any user color corrections, adjustments, or sharpening. Because data compression is inherent in JPEG files and it always results in the unrecoverable loss of information, *JPEG files are not acceptable for quality reproduction.*

Digital Negative (DNG)

A universal camera raw format that is gaining widespread acceptance. A DNG file is our first choice in file types for digital photography. Files converted from a proprietary camera raw format to DNG files are still camera raw files and preserve all the raw attributes. Hasselblad, Leica (M8), and Pentax cameras and backs use DNG as their native raw format.

Camera Raw - NEF, CRW, CR2, ORF, etc.

The actual name and file extension varies between camera manufacturers. Adobe DNG files (preferred) or proprietary camera raw formats automatically provide the highest resolution and bit depth for the camera, with the most flexibility, and ultimately the highest possible quality for reproduction. If your camera does not make camera raw files it is not up to the task of making files for reproduction. The quality of the media is dramatically influenced by the nature of the files. Digital Negative or Camera Raw Format is highly recommended.

Tagged Image File Format (TIFF or .tif)

This is the catch-all file format and is acceptable. PSD files are also acceptable.

File Sizes

To ensure the most flexibility in design and layout, you should set your camera's photo setting to its highest quality. A 10 megapixel (MP) camera on high resolution can produce an 8x10 photograph that can be printed at high quality on printing presses. For this reason a 10MP image (3888 pixels x 2592 pixels) is the required minimum. Waysides require larger images so a camera with 18 MP (5184 pixels x 3456 pixels) is considered minimum. Larger is always better because photos can always be downsized and retain their quality. You cannot upsize a photo without losing quality.

File Submission

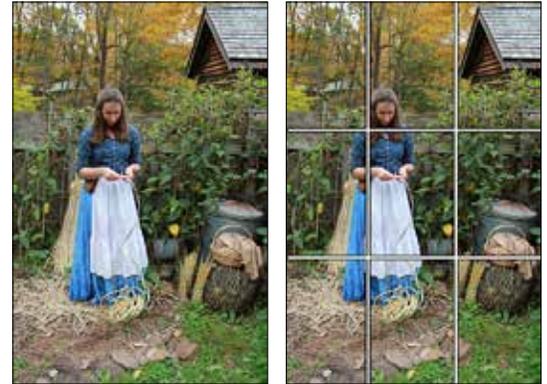
All photographs need to be clearly identified as to the location and or feature. They should be organized in some fashion; by name, by type of feature, etc. All photos should be in a master folder clearly marked with your name. All photos should be submitted via CD or DVD. These CD/DVDS will not be returned. Email submissions will not be accepted. Photographers may also call park headquarters in advance and arrange to have photos copied from USB drives/CD/DVD if one does not want to mail disks. Donaters must fill out a release form as photographs will become property of the NPS and become part of the public domain. For more information visit:
<http://www.nps.gov/dewa/getinvolved/supportyourpark/opportunities-for-artists.htm>

Some General Tips for Photo Composition (All Photos by NPS)

When taking photographs for DWGNRA there are certain framing conventions to take into account that provide us with the most flexibility in our design process across the different media products that we produce. These are different ways to approach the framing of the photo and all do not need to be used at the same time.

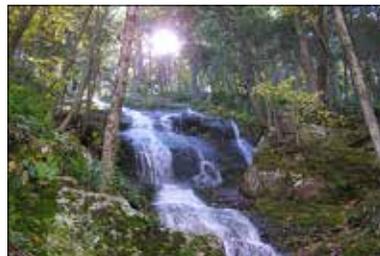
Rule of Thirds

The Rule of Thirds divides a photograph into ninths. It is the intersection of these lines that are beneficial for composition. Placing the subject on or near these intersections opens up the opportunity for more creative photos. There are many websites that can provide additional information on using this technique. In this photo you can see how the Rule of Thirds works. Place the interesting focal points of your photo at or near intersections of the white lines. It makes photographs more dynamic than just centering your subject.



Horizontals and Verticals

Some scenes naturally fit a vertical or horizontal format. We often have a design layout where a certain photo, subject-wise, would be absolutely perfect for the article. The problem is that the layout requires a horizontal format to work and the photo is in a vertical format and cannot be cropped properly for use. If possible take photos of your subject in horizontal AND vertical formats to provide the most flexibility.



Open Space

Waysides often use photographs and art work in order to help convey their message. Taking photographs with open space provides natural areas for placement of text and other art elements. Use the Rule of Thirds or place subjects in corners.

