

# Request For Proposal: Website Design & Development

## Project: Environmental Storytelling Through Video

Organization: Resource Renewal Institute  
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### I. Organizational Background

Environmentalist Huey D. Johnson founded Resource Renewal Institute following his service as California Secretary of Resources in the Brown Administration (1978 -1982). Mr. Johnson's early career included serving as the Western Regional Director and later president of The Nature Conservancy, and as co-founder of [The Trust for Public Land](#) and [The Grand Canyon Trust](#). Mr. Johnson was also influential in the founding of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai's [Green Belt Movement](#). He received the [United Nations Sasakawa Environment Prize](#) in 2001.

**Resource Renewal Institute**, located in Mill Valley, operates as an environmental think-tank. Among its current activities include programs to restore salmon habitat in California's Delta, establish tax deductions for water rights donations, provide political and strategic advice to community activists whose parks are threatened by development, and the Environmental Elders Storytelling Project, as described below.

### II. Project Summary

In 2012, RRI launched a project that aims to gather stories on video from elders who have had careers or were activists in the "first phase" of the environmental movement (1950s-1970s), both in California and around the world.

The project's mission is to: *"Inspire and inform future generations by capturing interviews with individuals whose role in past environmental battles illustrate the principals, courage, and leadership needed to make a difference."*

RRI is doing this by:

- Identifying pioneering environmental activists, experts and advocates;
- Using oral history and personal storytelling recorded on video;
- Incorporating historical documentation when available; and
- Sharing the stories and lessons broadly in a free and searchable online library.

### IV. Organizational Goals for Project

In deploying the project, RRI hopes to:

1. **Provide effective "case studies"** for individuals wishing to enter the environmental movement professionally or as activists;

2. **Inspire and encourage individuals** to act on behalf of environmental principles;
3. **Capture the history of the environmental movement** from its early stages (generally 1950s- 1970s), recognizing that much of this history would not be recorded but for our project;
4. **Record, edit, and post between 100- 250 interviews** over the next 18 months.

## V. Target User Profiles

1. **Residents in areas described in videos (i.e. potential “citizen activists”):** Many of our interviewee’s stories are place-based, with many occurring in the Bay Area. We hope to convey through some of our interviews that just because land is protected now, doesn’t mean that economic or other shifting interests may not threaten it in the future. By presenting the histories of how many of the country’s landscapes were saved, we hope to connect people to this history in a way that inspires them to act on it or other land’s behalf if the time comes.
2. **Environmental / Conservation Professionals:** Some of our videos will be with retired resource professionals (Park Service, etc), and these stories we hope will serve as instructive case studies.
3. **“The Next Generation”:** Just as political, civic, and natural history is taught in schools, environmental history ought to be a category of instruction as well. Our videos will hopefully be shared with school groups and serve not just as sources of information but as inspiration to take on many of these principles and battles.
4. **Current Citizen Activists:** Throughout California, for example, state parks are continually threatened with privatization, to things like golf courses or office areas, or even closure. Often it is the “Friends of...” park groups comprised of active and concerned citizens who step up to rally people around saving their public lands. We hope to provide stories of the previous generation of activists to inspire, encourage, and instruct the current group.
5. **Individuals interested in place-based history:** Many of our interviews are with well-known personalities, but a large segment are with folks, such as attorneys, retired professors, or other lesser-known folks who made a difference but whose stories are not yet recorded. Our video project will exist as a historical resource for those now or in the future who wish to study many of the people and stories behind the early environmental movement.

## VI. Site Capabilities

### Visitors of the site:

- Should be able to **discover the site** through search engines, social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook page), press releases and content compelling enough to inspire a word of mouth approach. The latter of these will be generated by RRI and may be referenced to on the site landing page;
- Should be able to **see a map with superimposed thumbnail images**

**linking to videos related to** specific locations. This map will be an interface to exploring videos and corresponding content (see 1000voices example below);

- Should be able to **browse & search videos by criteria** (land saving, policy, water, etc) **and name**, with the map interface inherently providing an additional sorting capability described above;
- Should be able to **see additional historical background** on many of the interviewees adjacent to the video content; and
- Should be able to **receive notification** when there are new videos posted via mailing list or RSS feed subscription.

#### **Owners of the site:**

- Should be able to monitor traffic through Google Analytics or similar easy to implement analytics solution; and
- Should be able to upload videos, text and other media on an ongoing basis.

### **VII. Desired Stylistic Presentation**

We are looking for a clean, modern, and focused look and feel that immediately presents the nature of our project (environmental elders storytelling, sharing wisdom and lessons) to visitors. We propose a design that inspires visitors to explore and appreciate historically significant content. We also like brighter colors.

This is a content-intensive site. Therefore intuitive information architecture is critically important, drawing a clear distinction between navigational elements, text content and media.

### **VIII. Similar Websites**

- One example of a video storytelling project with an interface that situates video content geographically is the 1000 Voices Project: [1000voicesarchive.org/](http://1000voicesarchive.org/)
- Another example is a project called “Shaping SF” that features a similar approach to interviews, though they don’t divide the interviews separately by interviewee, nor is there search or sort capability within the parent site: <http://www.shapingsf.org/special/ecology-emerges.html>
- Finally, as examples of a visual look and feel that we find fitting to our desired stylistic presentation (content aside), we like:
  - <http://www.skillshare.com/> for its modern look and bright colors;
  - <http://www.openspacetrust.org/> for its ability to convey a lot of environmentally-themed information without feeling too online magazine-like; and
  - <http://bankmigration.org/> for its clean look and interesting color choice.

### **IX. Potential Project Growth**

We expect our interview collection to grow to between 100- 250 interviews in the next several years. This makes scalability, specifically the ability for users to discover content when an abundance of media exists, effectively a priority.

## **X. Review & Testing**

- The developer of this site will be expected to provide wireframes and work with RRI staff in an iterative way to create the site design.
- Organizational stakeholders will review and provide feedback on creative design and overall look and feel.
- Prior to the site's formal launch, we will have agreed milestones and corresponding periods of testing to ensure site functionality and stability.

## **XI. Release Date and Resource Allocation**

- Desired Site Launch: October 1, 2012
- Available Budget: Approximately \$5k

## **XII. Profile of Preferred Designer/Developer:**

- Strong expertise in designing/developing interactive content-heavy websites
- Attentive to details, service, available budget and deadlines
- An interest in the subject matter (environment) a plus

## **XIII. RFP Submission Details:**

Please submit your response by **5pm on May 31, 2012** to [bogdan.victoria@gmail.com](mailto:bogdan.victoria@gmail.com).

Your submission must include:

- Links to site work done within the last two years
- List of related technologies of which you have familiarity (e.g. CMS)
- Explanation of design and development approach used on past projects
- Cost breakdown/ estimate