

Marissa Ortega-Welch

Award-winning radio and print journalist specializing in longform, nuanced stories about environmental science, public lands, and outdoor recreation. Prior to journalism, spent a decade working in the environmental science and education fields as a teacher, naturalist, and field biologist.

JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE

Independent Journalist. Various Outlets. 2015-present

- Radio stories have aired on NPR, *Reveal*, *Latino USA*, WHYY's *The Pulse*, *The California Report*, KQED San Francisco, and KALW San Francisco.
- Print stories have been published in *High Country News*, *Audubon*, and *Bay Nature Magazine*.
- Developing a grant-funded podcast about wilderness, with an expected launch date of fall 2023.

Editor. KALW Public Media, San Francisco, CA. 2022-present

- Edit feature stories for *Crosscurrents*, an award-winning Bay Area news radio magazine.
- Mentor and train early-career reporters.
- Serve on the editorial team for the news department—guiding individual story pitches, the overall show's tone, strategic long-term planning for our newsroom, and the station's equity and inclusion efforts.

Science Reporter and Training Manager. KALW Public Media, San Francisco, CA. 2017- 2021

- Managed KALW's nationally-recognized training programs including our summer high school and adult internships, our nine-month "Audio Academy" professional audio journalism training program, and our programs inside state prisons. Recruited applicants, wrote curriculum, coordinated teachers and guest speakers, taught lessons, and oversaw implementation of the programs.
- Reported award-winning feature stories about science and the environment.

FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

Fund for Environmental Journalism Story Grant 2022

- Support for an [upcoming story](#) about "shared stewardship" models for public land management, as a way to engage stakeholders in wilderness management decision making.

Scripps Fellow. Center for Environmental Journalism, University of Colorado 2021-2022

- Conducted research for an [upcoming podcast series](#) about the concept of wilderness in the U.S.
- Audited university classes on environmental history, environmental policy, and public land law.
- Provided service to the university by guest-speaking in journalism and science classes.

- California Humanities Documentary Project Grant** 2021- 2022
- Awarded a grant to [research and develop](#) an audio series about wilderness management.
- UC Berkeley-11th Hour Food and Farming Journalism Fellow** 2017
- Produced a [three-part audio documentary series](#) on the history of agricultural pest control. One of these stories was recognized as part of an “Emerging Journalist” award.
- USC Annenberg California Health Journalism Fellow** 2017
- Produced an in-depth series on the [health impacts of Bay Area oil refineries](#).
- San Francisco Writers’ Grotto Fellow** 2016
- Received membership in and mentorship from a professional writers’ community.
- Latino USA California Endowment Health Reporting Fellow** 2015-2016
- Produced [California health stories](#) for a national audience.

AWARDS

- Excellence in Science, Environment, and Health Reporting (Radio)** 2020
Northern California Society for Professional Journalists
- For a selection of stories I produced in 2019-2020, including 3 stories I produced about public lands while reporting remotely in the Eastern Sierra Nevada.
- Emerging Journalist Award (All Media)** 2019
Northern California Society for Professional Journalists
- For a selection of stories I produced in 2018-2019, including a story supported by the UC Berkeley-11th Hour Food and Farming Journalism Fellowship.
- Public Service Award (All Media) and Excellence in Longform Storytelling (Radio)** 2018
Northern California Society for Professional Journalists
- For the four-part series “[Persistent Poison](#)” I co-reported with Angela Johnston, on the health impacts of childhood lead poisoning.

EDUCATION

- University of California, Berkeley** 2006
Bachelor of Science, Conservation and Resource Studies. Dean’s Honors.

SKILLS

Wilderness First Responder trained, certified 2007-2019.
Mastery level ability to identify West Coast birds by sight and sound, for avian field surveys.
Volunteer hawk counter and bander, Golden Gate Raptor Observatory.
Conversational level of Spanish.