

# COASTAL COMMUNICATORS

A newsletter for the nation's coastal management and research reserve programs.

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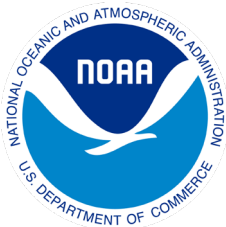
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LET THE READER FIND THAT HE CANNOT AFFORD TO OMIT ANY LINE OF YOUR WRITING BECAUSE YOU HAVE OMITTED EVERY WORD THAT HE CAN SPARE.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson



April 2022, Issue 41

## COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS

### ANSWERS TO YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We started this newsletter as a way to provide communication tips, and we've often asked which topics you want us to cover. Over the years there have been a range of questions, but we've heard a few that keep coming up—so here's our version of an FAQ.

#### *How do we brand our programs?*

This is probably the most frequent question we hear. Do you brand under the umbrella of your state affiliate, NOAA, or your own label? What about the individual programs within your organization? The answer is a little gray and can be complicated, but we have several options to consider.

- First, you should follow your state agency requirements and guidelines. If your state agency requires you to use its logo, please do.
- Others have said they prefer to have the NOAA logo, since it might be more recognizable. You can use the NOAA logo if you wish, but that is not required by us. Reach out to us if you need a high-resolution logo.
- Some coastal programs and research reserves have several partners and affiliates. Using too many logos can be a little confusing or overwhelming for the user. I personally don't look at logos if there are more than two. If we are working with more than one logo or partner organization, we often list the partners in the footer, as opposed to having a cluster of logos that detract from the main content or clash with each other and the design of the outreach product.
- Branding the individual programs or sectors within your organization can be confusing for the consumer and can detract from the overall brand, so stick with one brand and forget the sub-branding. Here's an example: don't say, "This program was provided by the Coastal Training Program of XY Research Reserve." Instead, go with, "This program was brought to you by XY Research Reserve."

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### ***How do I develop an outreach plan?***

Outreach plans are gold in our office. I work with project teams to develop outreach plans for each product and training they want to advertise. We have a template we follow that guides the process.

- Who is your audience for this product or activity? This is important for guiding everything else in your outreach plan.
- Develop your product message and make sure it resonates with your audience. Avoid jargon and keep it simple. People want information that is quick and to the point. If your audience is the public, run the message by a parent, spouse, or neighbor to make sure they understand.
- How are you going to reach that audience? This is the fun part. List all the ways you are going to reach your audience. You know which work best for them, but you can also think outside the box to reach new sub-audiences. Ask other similar programs if they have suggestions. We always tell people to prioritize their lists. If time is an issue, choose the top three options. If you have time, you can always tackle more activities later, or ask others to help.
- Reread this [previous newsletter](#) for additional information.

### ***How do we make sure our team is sharing the same message?***

A few years ago, we developed an employee reference guide to help show new employees the ropes and to make sure everyone is sharing the same messages for our products. If you have been struggling with your team, we suggest you develop an employee reference guide, too.

- Our organization can often be tough to understand, especially for new employees. It helps to provide an overview of the umbrella organization, along with one for each program or branch of the organization, and the purpose of each.
- Since many folks who have to “sell” our products aren’t necessarily on the project teams, the overview section provides talking points for each product, which helps to ensure that staff are sharing the same messages and can present them intelligently. Also, we provide points of contact for each so that staff can reach out if they need more information. A companion piece to this section is a set of pre-made slides that staff can use for presentations.

This is just a sample of some of the most common questions, but please keep them coming! We will continue to answer them. And if you need additional information, or would like to talk through any of these thoughts, feel free to reach out to me.

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# COMMUNICATION PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

**Featured product:** Coastal County Snapshots

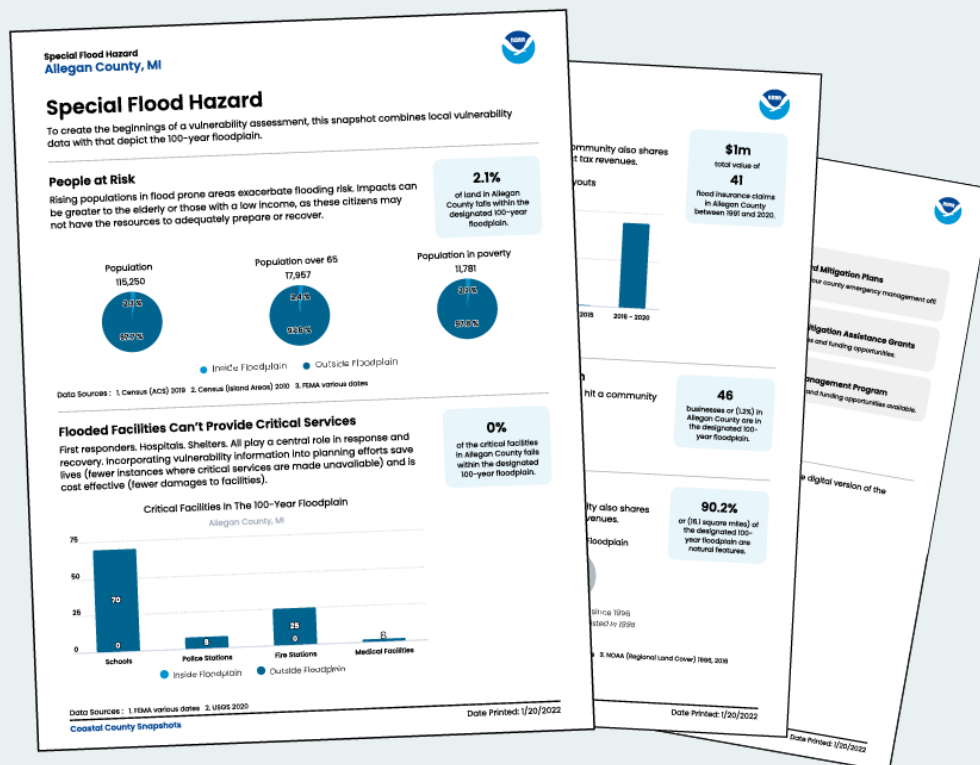
**Source:** The Office for Coastal Management, [coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/snapshots.html](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/snapshots.html)

**Submitted by:** Pamela Jacobs, Lynker in support of NOAA's Office for Coastal Management

**What it is:** An online tool that automatically combines coastal data to create easy-to-understand charts and graphics, allowing users to view and share otherwise complex information. Users choose their county and topic of interest—flood exposure, marine economy, total economy, or sea level rise—and the tool does the rest.

**Why we chose it:** Coastal County Snapshots is a good example of a tool that helps communicators in the coastal management world do their jobs. And while the tool has been a favorite among Digital Coast users for years, the recent upgrades to both the functionality and data mean it's now even more of a coastal communicator's best friend.

The charts, maps, and graphics do many of the things communicators look for when sharing information—particularly when that information is complex or scientific. First of all, they demystify the data, making it easier for both the presenter and the audience to understand. Second, they present it visually, which means data can be shared easily in a variety of ways—printed or electronic handouts, social media posts, infographics, or however else users like to get information to their audiences. Finally, the fact that this one tool allows users to dig into the details of four different topics means that it's not just a communicator's best friend, but one that wears many hats.



## FROM US TO YOU

### OUTREACH TOOL SPOTLIGHT – ENOW EXPLORER

Complex economic data are some of the most difficult things to communicate to a diverse audience. This tool simplifies that process, allowing users to obtain, compare, and share economic data on the six sectors dependent on the ocean and Great Lakes, down to the state and county level. It's like having a personal economist available on demand. Access it here: [coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/enow.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/enow.html).

### UPCOMING SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Join us in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Coastal Zone Management Act all year long. Use #OceanandCoasts50 and get social each week with the following themes:

- ✦ April 4 to 8: Support natural infrastructure
- ✦ April 11 to 15: Bring reusable bags
- ✦ April 18 to 22: Volunteer
- ✦ April 25 to 29: Plant native species

### IMPACT STORY DATABASE – RESEARCH RESERVES

On April 22, more than one billion people in over 190 countries celebrate Earth Day. We can't think of a better representation of what Earth Day is all about than the nation's 30 research reserves, where countless people observe, protect, and explore this planet's most precious resources. If you'd like to share stories that showcase the work being done throughout the reserve system, you can find over 100 of them in our impact story database. See all research reserve stories here: [coast.noaa.gov/states/stories/?prog-filter=National%20Estuarine%20Research%20Reserves](https://coast.noaa.gov/states/stories/?prog-filter=National%20Estuarine%20Research%20Reserves).

### FAST FACTS – NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

This is one of the many graphics and facts available for your use in presentations and handouts. Grab this one at [coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/natural-infrastructure.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/natural-infrastructure.html). If you have an idea for a new group of fast facts or illustrations, please let us know.



## Natural Infrastructure



Wetlands and reefs  
and mangroves...oh my!



Billions in savings (\$23 billion/year),  
services (water quality and storm protection),  
and value (37% higher property value).

Coastal Communicators is published by the NOAA Office for Coastal Management.

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Send questions or suggestions to [coastal.info@noaa.gov](mailto:coastal.info@noaa.gov).

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*Improving communication skills, one newsletter at a time.*