

# COASTAL COMMUNICATORS

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

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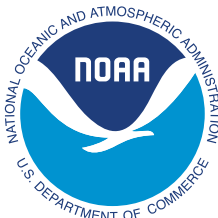
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A WRITER IS SOMEONE  
FOR WHOM WRITING IS  
MORE DIFFICULT THAN  
IT IS FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

— Thomas Mann

June 2024, Issue 65



## COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS

### GETTING YOUR MATERIAL ON THE DIGITAL COAST

NOAA's [Digital Coast](#) is a curated website used by people working to address coastal issues. The site is managed by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, but content comes from a variety of sources.

The Digital Coast is good for the coastal management community because they can visit one website to find a wide variety of relevant data, tools, and training. Users also know the information has been vetted, is the best in its class, and is targeted to meet the needs of coastal communities. Another helpful aspect is the format: all content is presented in the same way, which saves everyone time.

The site is also helpful for data and tool providers because presenting information on the Digital Coast can greatly expand the reach of these products and services. It's one of those classic but elusive win-wins.

If you have information that you think should have a home on the Digital Coast, please read the following. The process can sometimes feel more art than science. The goal isn't to see how much information can be added to the site; instead, the staff tries to be very selective with their decisions to avoid information overload and duplication. At the same time, collecting information from a variety of sources is important to the site's success. Currently there are close to 900 organizations that contribute content to the Digital Coast.

#### Data

A [Digital Coast data set](#) must be authoritative information that has a clear use in coastal decision-making. Large-area coverage is preferred, but this can include collections of smaller area data (i.e., collected as part of a larger, coordinated effort). The site usually does not include small, independent data holdings typically already served at the state or county level. Individual data entries, such as those within a state clearinghouse, generally are not included, but the larger, more comprehensive entries may qualify.

*CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE*

## Tools

A [Digital Coast tool](#) should help users get to a desired end, or help answer a specific question. Ideally, the tool should be widely applicable—not specific to a certain location or municipality. State and locally based tools are typically not included, unless the tool is applicable to other geographies. Submitting something for the tool section is where most of the misunderstandings occur, as some users consider case studies and research findings to be a tool. To be labeled a tool in the Digital Coast world, it is preferable to have something that allows users to enter variables and receive a result, or to provide step-by-step instructions that allow the users to arrive at a result.

## Training

The [Digital Coast Academy](#) combines instructor-led training and a range of on-demand resources, including interactive modules, guides, videos, case studies, and quick references. All included resources must be learning products designed for adult learners—that is, they must be designed to improve understanding of a topic or performance of a work-related task. Products should be nationally or regionally relevant.

## Stories from the Field

[This section](#) highlights the use and impact of a particular Digital Coast product or service, so a Digital Coast product or service must be featured. [Impact stories](#), found elsewhere on the site, showcase how the agency and its main programs (grant programs, coastal management, research reserves, coral reef program, and the Digital Coast) make a difference regarding the health of our nation's coasts.

## Summary

All resources found on the Digital Coast must represent the high-quality content our users demand. All products must be maintained (no post it and forget it) and have no user restrictions or licensing issues. Contact [coastal.info@noaa.gov](mailto:coastal.info@noaa.gov) if you have questions, ideas, or future content additions.

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# COMMUNICATION PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

**Featured products:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species Act Fiftieth Anniversary Campaign (#ESA50)

**Source:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Instagram (@usfws) and Facebook

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

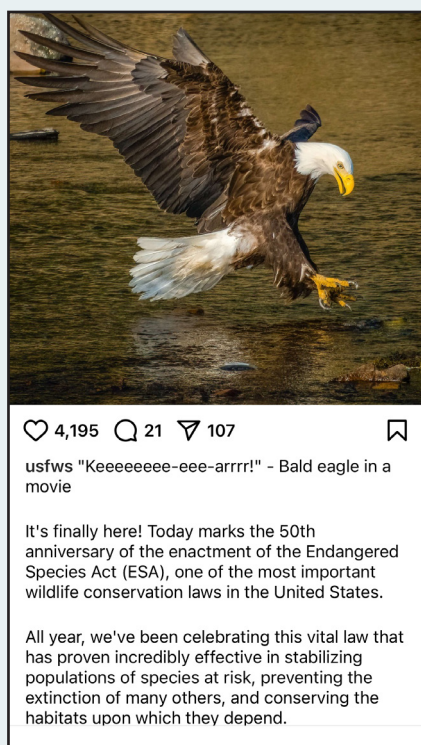
**What it is:** A yearlong social media campaign celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Endangered Species Act. Throughout 2023, posts on the Fish and Wildlife Service's accounts highlighted the act itself, as well as the many species that have benefited from it. Using the hashtag ESA50, private and government partners (like us!) and members of the public joined in on the fiftieth anniversary fun.

**Why I like it:** There are times when I worry about the influence of social media, and there are times when I embrace it. In the case of the latter, it usually involves funny photos of

animals and preferably encourages appreciation of them. In general, the Fish and Wildlife Service has mastered the use of humor and cute animals on their social media. Like many of the best and most successful accounts, Fish and Wildlife's posts are always equally on trend and on brand, and they ultimately serve their objective, which is to educate people about the work they do and why they do it.

The fiftieth anniversary did all of that and ensured others did too. Posts were equal parts entertaining, engaging, and educational, and by partnering with others (did I mention that includes NOAA?), they expanded their reach and their impact. But don't just take my word for it. The campaign won two 2024 Webby awards—"Webby Winner" for best social campaign and "People's Voice Winner" for best social campaign.

*(Please note: this is not an endorsement of the designers, websites, or any proprietary tools, but simply this writer's opinion on a good communication product.)*





## FROM US TO YOU

### OUTREACH TOOL SPOTLIGHT – COASTAL FLOOD EXPOSURE MAPPER

The Coastal Flood Exposure Mapper, one of the Digital Coast's most popular tools, creates maps that show the people, places, and resources at risk of flooding—an especially effective tool for communicating a community's coastal story. Heard of it, but not sure how to actually use it? The tool's landing page features a brief but thorough video tutorial. Find it here:

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/flood-exposure.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/flood-exposure.html).

### UPCOMING SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and tag along with these themes:

*June 1 to 30: 30 Days of Ocean*

- ✦ June 1: National Ocean Month kickoff; World Reef Day
- ✦ June 2 to 8: New Blue Economy

- ✦ June 8: World Ocean Day
- ✦ June 9 to 15: The ocean is for everyone
- ✦ June 16 to 22: Conserve, restore, and connect to coastal and marine ecosystems
- ✦ June 23 to 30: Coastal resilience

### OCEANREPORTS

In honor of NOAA's "30 Days of Ocean" campaign and the global celebration of all things ocean on June 8, we're highlighting OceanReports—the web-based mapping tool that provides users with a better understanding of their ocean "neighborhood" of choice. Using the tool, coastal and ocean planners can find statistics related to natural resources, infrastructure, conservation, and more. Once users have gathered the data they need, they can print and share custom reports—which means this tool is a veritable sea of useful information. Find it here:

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/ort.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/ort.html).

### FAST FACTS—CORAL REEFS

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/coral-reefs.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/coral-reefs.html). If you have an idea for a new group of fast facts or illustrations, please let us know.



**\$3.4 billion** value every year, benefiting fisheries, tourism, and coastal communities

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

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