

# COASTAL COMMUNICATORS

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

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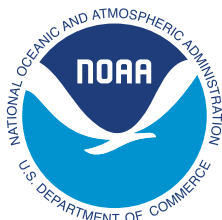
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START WRITING, NO MATTER  
WHAT. THE WATER DOES NOT  
FLOW UNTIL THE FAUCET  
IS TURNED ON.

— Louis L'Amour

January 2025, Issue 69



## COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS

### LET NOAA BE YOUR OUTREACH PARTNER

For the past year in particular, my office has been engaged in the administration of several high-profile grant programs that fund projects designed to increase the resilience of our nation's coasts.

For the project partners, even if outreach wasn't on their radar as they developed the project proposal, the need for outreach became apparent as the project started to take shape. After all, when you are undertaking transformational work for the coast and your community, you want people to know about it and get excited with you!

Project leads have contacted our office asking about NOAA's role in their outreach effort. This article attempts to answer that question.

#### Outreach Basics for Your Project Team

While many of the project teams likely have extensive outreach experience, it's always helpful to go back to the basics. This approach is also how our office handles outreach tasks.

**Create back-pocket information.** From day one, it's a good idea to keep a running list of project stats and information, such as acres protected, people employed, area of impact, and results. Included in that list should be interesting tidbits about your project, before and after stats and pictures as they become available, and ideas about the human-interest angles associated with your project. A bite-sized (i.e., a paragraph or two), nontechnical project write-up should also exist, and some basic slides might be helpful.

Why? All of the aforementioned elements represent the basic building blocks of any outreach effort. Even if you haven't created an outreach plan, pulling this information together and keeping it updated will be worth a lot in terms of being prepared for any questions or last-minute outreach opportunities that may come your way.

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**Define your audience.** Note: “Everybody” isn’t a particularly good answer. Talk it over with your colleagues and determine who your top five audiences are, what they are interested in, how you can connect with these audiences, and what you want them to know or do as a result of your outreach efforts. The audience list could include homeowners near your project; potential funders or partners for future projects; local organizations with the same goals as your project or organization; and local governments.

When you’ve defined your top five audiences, think about the best ways to reach said audiences and go for it! If that’s easier said than done, avail yourself to the outreach assistance NOAA can provide.

### **NOAA’s Outreach Approach**

NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management uses the same process outlined above. We develop back-pocket information for the project as a whole, as well as the individual projects (see our [impact story database](#) to get a feel for the bite-sized articles we keep on hand for every project). The audiences we focus on include leadership within our larger government organization (National Ocean Service, NOAA, Department of Commerce, and the White House); partner organizations, including the coastal zone management organizations and research reserves; and specialized organizations as appropriate, such as the Association of State Floodplain Managers and the National Association of Counties. We answer inquiries from Congress and the media, work to garner media coverage, and make use of social media, blogs, website stories, newsletters, special events, conference presentations, etc.

### **Outreach Services Available from NOAA**

**Overall grant information.** Each funded project is part of a larger effort designed to make the nation’s coasts more resilient to storms and other natural disasters. Adding this background information to your local communication efforts can be helpful. After all, you are an extremely important part of a much larger story!

**NOAA leadership participation.** NOAA leadership may be able to attend your kickoff meetings and gatherings when large announcements are made. We can also provide a quote from NOAA leadership to add to your stories and press releases.

**NOAA website.** For all of the grant programs, lots of project details are available on the NOAA website. Feel free to link to the NOAA website instead of repeating the information on your site.

**Social media.** Consult with our social media specialists to see what kind of campaigns are ongoing or on the horizon. Your team and ours can share and support each other’s efforts. If you’re interested, reach out to [Caitlyn McCrary](#) and [Sara Edwards](#).

**One-on-one consultations.** While NOAA can’t take over your outreach efforts (you probably wouldn’t want that to happen anyway!), we can talk things over with you and provide support where we can. Contact the NOAA program officer assigned to your case, and they will arrange the meeting.

Your projects have the potential to transform our nation’s coasts, and in a very good way. We look forward to helping you spread the word about these efforts. It’s an exciting time for sure!

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# COMMUNICATION PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

**Featured products:** NOAA Meeting the Moment Video

**Source:** [noaa.gov/multimedia/video/noaa-meeting-moment](https://noaa.gov/multimedia/video/noaa-meeting-moment)

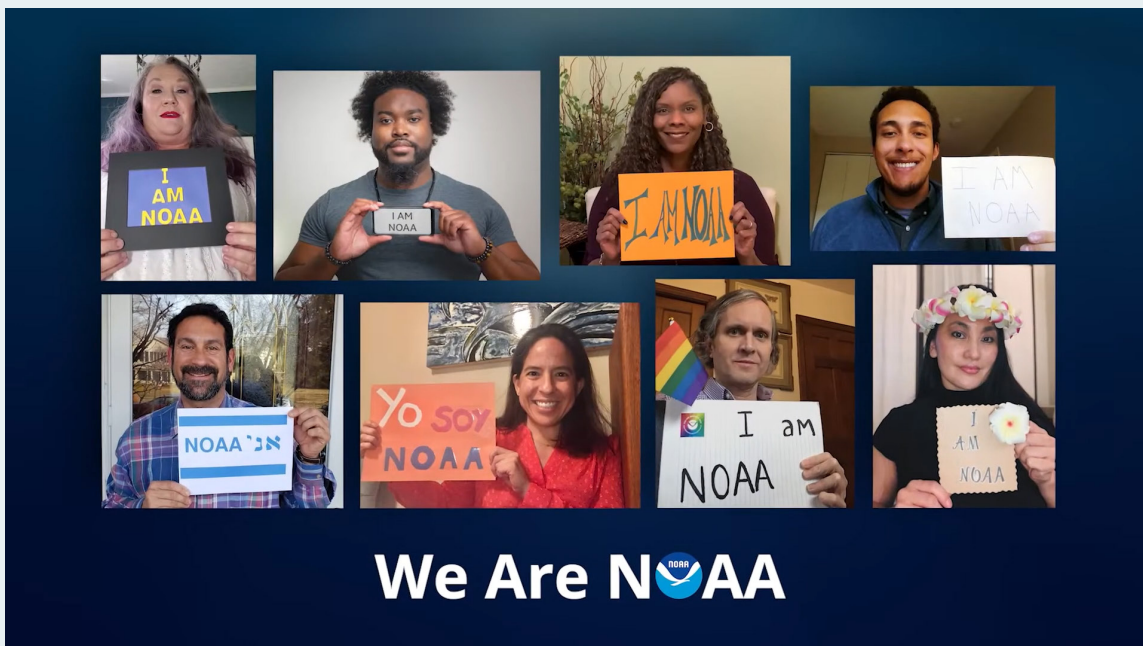
**Submitted by:** Pamela Jacobs, Lynker for NOAA's Office for Coastal Management

**What it is:** A video released in 2021—though no less relevant today—that remarkably, in under three minutes, sums up all the work NOAA does “from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun.”

**Why I like it:** While searching for this month's featured product and trying to decide between several excellent candidates, I stumbled upon this video. My first thought: I should show this to anyone who ever asks, “What exactly does NOAA do?” My second thought: they managed to encapsulate the work of an agency whose organizational chart reads like the entire taxonomic tree of life on

Earth in two minutes and 56 seconds—quite the feat. And my third thought: this makes me proud to work (on contract) for NOAA.

By the 30-second mark, the video has already summarized NOAA's mission and the work of all six line offices. In the minute that follows, it covers NOAA's diverse scientific pursuits and equally diverse workforce and partners. And in the final half, the video emphasizes the ways in which NOAA's work affects everything from the economy, infrastructure, the seafood industry, and safe navigation to climate science, weather prediction, natural disaster mitigation, and conservation of the planet's resources. Through thoughtfully and artfully combined images and words, the video ultimately shows how NOAA “touches the lives of every American.” In fact, you might just want to keep this handy for the next time someone asks you what you do for a living.



## FROM US TO YOU

### OUTREACH TOOL SPOTLIGHT— SEA LEVEL CALCULATOR

Streamlined, easy-to-access data can be a science writer's best friend—having one authoritative source of information makes it easier for everyone to communicate. Enter the Sea Level Calculator, a new tool on the Digital Coast that combines functionality from a variety of existing tools and provides users with site-specific information sourced from NOAA and NASA data and projections, as well as the 2022 interagency *Sea Level Rise Technical Report*. While the Sea Level Calculator was designed for a technical audience, the tool includes visuals, terminology definitions, explanatory videos, and FAQs specifically made with the nontechnical user in mind, meaning everyone who needs to communicate sea level information can do so with confidence and ease. Find the Sea Level Calculator here: [coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/sea-level-calculator.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/sea-level-calculator.html).

### UPCOMING SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

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

- ♦ January 1 to 31: Mentoring Month
- ♦ January 5: National Bird Day

### COASTAL RESILIENCE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The launch of the [Climate Resilience Regional Challenge](#) brought an unprecedented opportunity for equity-centered, regionally focused work that will ensure long-lasting climate resilience for coastal communities around the country. Now, with the recent launch of the Coastal Resilience Fellowship, early-career professionals can join these efforts, gaining invaluable experience while directly contributing to this work. We can't wait to follow along with the projects and the fellows and see what inspiring stories we can tell through their journeys. Learn more and keep up with the fellows here (fellowships begin in June 2025): [coast.noaa.gov/funding/ira/resilience-challenge/fellowship.html](https://coast.noaa.gov/funding/ira/resilience-challenge/fellowship.html).

### FAST FACTS—HIGH TIDE FLOODING

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



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