Division of Water
ACWA Communications Plan Guide

This purpose of this communications plan guide is to serve as a strategic pathway for developing effective messaging to serve the goals of Alaska Clean Water Actions (ACWA) grant-funded outreach projects and tasks. It should be used and referenced throughout the life of the project to ensure that all communications align with the key objectives, target the right audiences, and effectively convey the intended messages to achieve outcomes.

Key Objectives of the Communications Plan

Outline the tangible and measurable communications outcomes.

Target Audience

Identification: Identify and list the target audience(s).

Challenges & Opportunities: List potential challenges and opportunities in reaching target audience(s).

Research: Explore the cultural and regional influences that may determine the way specific community group communications are delivered and received.

Key Messages

Problem Identification: Identify and list project goals and potential problems.

Solution Positioning: Position organization as part of the solution.

Call to Action: Have a clear call to action.

Specific Messages – target audience(s)?

Common Messages – any audience?

Approach for Communications Activities

Implementation: Develop a clear strategy with specific actions for your target audiences.

Events: Consider future community events that can incorporate key communication activities.

Media outlets: Identify media outlets (i.e. radio, social media, newsletters) to determine how to communicate the information needed to project partners and stakeholders to achieve communications goals.

Budget

Cost Estimates: What is the estimated cost of each activity? Can it be done in-kind? Does it fit within the project budget?

Funding Sources: Are there project partners who can underwrite it? Are there discounts available?

Timeline

Actions Schedule: Chart out what actions need to happen each month or week leading up to your deadlines.

Leverage Existing Events: What is already on the calendar that can be leveraged?

Evaluation

Evaluation Method: How and when will you evaluate the success?

Reach Measurement: How do you know if your message is reaching the target audiences?

Behavior Change: How will you measure behavior change since your messaging started?

Plan Development and Review Process

Draft Review: Present the draft plan to your DEC Project Manager for review and feedback.

Finalization: Finalize the plan and submit it as a grant project deliverable.

Implementation: Implement your plan.

Communications Plan Matrix

The communications plan matrix is designed to help grantees systematically organize and manage communications activities, laying out an effective roadmap for who needs to communicate what, when, how, and to whom. This matrix should act as a resource for grantees. The pre-filled information can be changed to meet the needs of the project.

	Deliverable Type	Description	Delivery Method	Frequency	Owner	Audience
Reports	Status report, final report, internal report	Regular update on critical project issues. Regular	E-mail, newsletter, website, social media	Daily, weekly, bi-weekly, quarterly, bi-annual,	Lead team member	Funder (DEC), public, internal

		update on project quality performance.		annual, as needed		
Presentations	Power Point, poster session, public speaking engagement, virtual (Zoom, Teams)	Events to communicate project status and outcomes to the targeted audience.	In-person, virtual	As needed	Lead team member	Agencies, organizations, public, internal
Project Announcements	Press release, news article, social media announcement, website, newsletter article, stakeholder briefing document, video announcement	Key outputs used to formally communicate project milestones.	E-mail, newsletter, website, social media, radio, townhall meeting, newspaper article	As needed	Lead team member	Agencies, organizations, public, internal
Meetings	Internal meetings, stakeholder meetings	Meetings that provide team members and external partners with project updates, strategic planning, information gathering, and task check-ins.	Virtual or in-person	Regularly, as needed	Lead team member	Agencies, organizations, public, internal