

BUILDING A DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT FOR CLIMATE ACTION

A series of overlapping, stylized green hills in various shades of green, creating a layered effect.

2025 NJCRC COASTAL ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION TECHNICAL WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 11, 2025



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WHY CLIMATE ACTION NEEDS BETTER COMMUNICATION

Bridging Knowledge and Awareness

Effective communication bridges the gap between climate science and public understanding to drive meaningful action.

Unified Messaging Toolkit

A digital communications toolkit consolidates key messages, visuals, and strategies to amplify climate campaign impact.

Inspiring Change and Trust

Communication in climate action inspires change, builds trust, and mobilizes communities for resilience and sustainability.



1. DETERMINE YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT & CAPACITY

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Notifying the public of what is to come via legal notice, email blast, or announcement with no participation or process for comment/input.

vs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Planning/design already in motion. Host one or two community meetings to gather input or comment, which is taken into consideration into the final product/design/plan.

vs.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Involving the public, project partners, and impacted stakeholders before the project begins in a meaningful and thoughtful way where their voice, values, and needs are driving the design, plan, or output of the project from start to end. A true collaboration that results in a product that is desirable for the community.



2. UNDERSTAND THE VALUES OF YOUR AUDIENCE

The first step is to ****LEARN TO REMOVE YOUR PERSONAL BIAS.****

Understanding Audience Values

Identify audience values like safe homes, economic stability, and social justice to connect effectively.

Role of Heuristics in Communication

Heuristics such as fairness, transparency, familiarity, and urgency shape how messages are interpreted by audiences.

Active Listening and Research

Engage in active listening and research to avoid assumptions and uncover true audience priorities.

Tailored Climate Messaging

Tailor climate messages to audience insights to ensure relevance, resonance, and impact in communication.



2. UNDERSTAND THE VALUES OF YOUR AUDIENCE



YALE PROGRAM ON
Climate Change
Communication

Eight in ten Americans say homeowners insurance costs in the United States are increasing

■ Increasing a lot ■ Increasing a little ■ Staying about the same ■ Decreasing a little ■ Decreasing a lot ■ Don't know



"Generally, do you think the cost of homeowner's insurance in the United States is..."

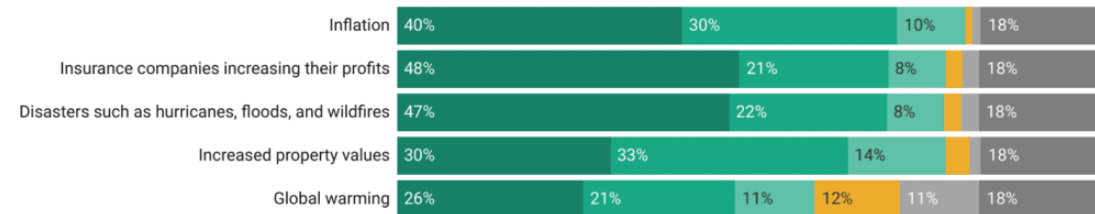
May 2025 — Base: 1,040 Americans

Source: Yale Program on Climate Change Communication;
George Mason Center for Climate Change Communication

69%
of Americans
think disasters such as
hurricanes, floods, and
wildfires contribute to
increasing homeowners'
insurance costs.

Most Americans say disasters are increasing homeowners insurance costs in the United States

■ A lot ■ Some ■ A little ■ Not at all ■ Don't know ■ Not asked (did not say costs are increasing)



"How much, if at all, do you think each of the following contributes to the increasing cost of homeowner's insurance?" and "How much, if at all, do you think global warming is affecting the increase in the cost of insuring a home in the United States?"

May 2025 — Base: 1,040 Americans

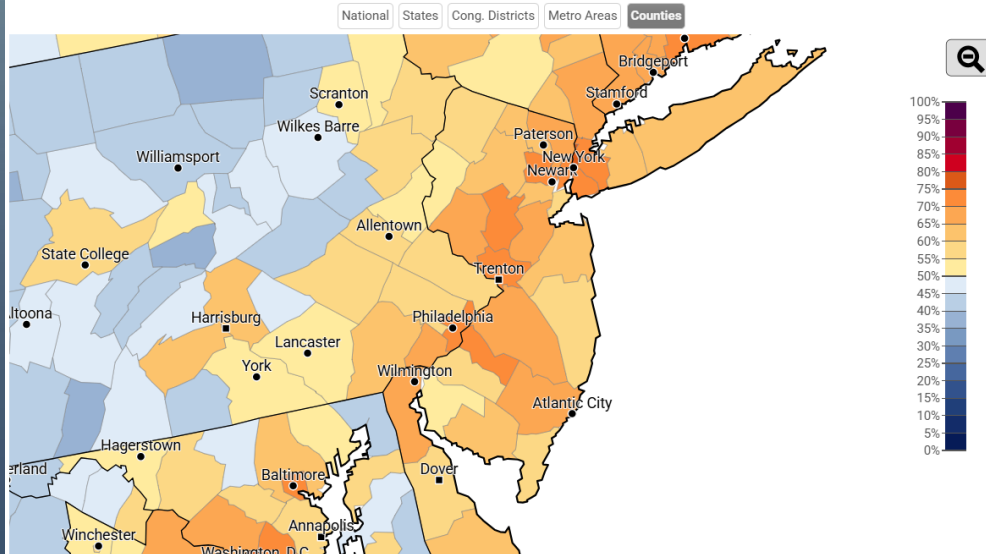
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George Mason Center for Climate Change Communication

2. UNDERSTAND THE VALUES OF YOUR AUDIENCE

Estimated % of adults who think global warming is affecting rising sea levels in the U.S. a lot or some (nat'l avg. 58%), 2024

Select Question:

Click map or:



68%
of Americans in
Burlington County, NJ
think global warming
is affecting rising sea
levels in the U.S.

3. CRAFT YOUR MESSAGES USING VALUES-BASED NARRATIVES

Think about who is receiving the info.

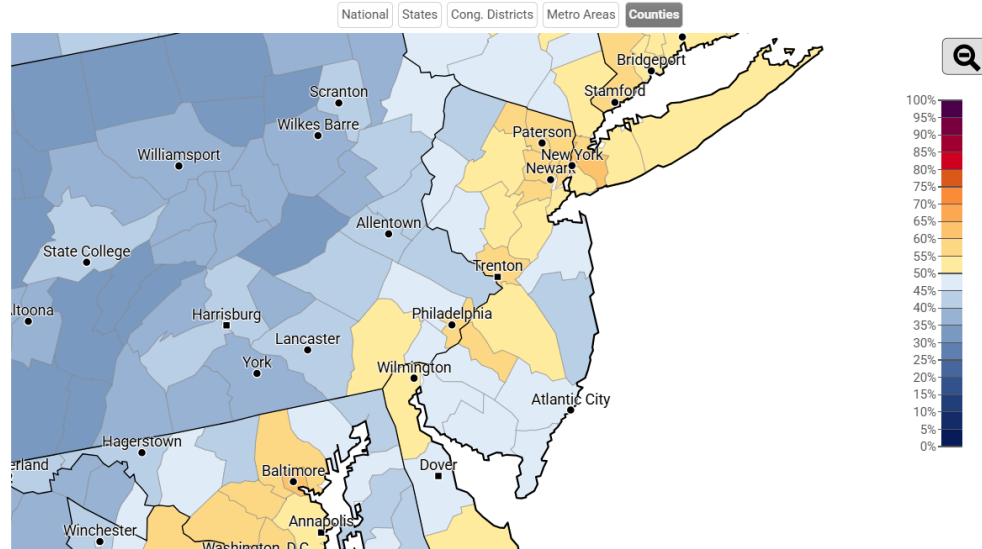
- *Why is this important?*
- *What is the big picture?*
- *Historical information?*
- *How will it make their lives better?*
- *How is it relevant to the community?*
- *How does it relate to what people value?*
- ***Is there existing opinion data that can give you insight into their position?***



3. CRAFT YOUR MESSAGES USING VALUES-BASED NARRATIVES

Estimated % of adults who somewhat or strongly agree that they have personally experienced the effects of global warming (nat'l avg. 49%), 2024

Select Question: Has personally experienced the effects of global warming
Click map or: New Jersey | Select a County
Absolute Value



UCSB
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

YALE PROGRAM ON
Climate Change
Communication

Utah State
University

bit.ly/yaleclimate

52%
of Americans in
Burlington County, NJ
have personally
experienced the
effects of global
warming



3. CRAFT YOUR MESSAGES USING VALUES-BASED NARRATIVES

Are New Jerseyans concerned about extreme weather?

Source: Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll



77%

of voters are concerned about property and infrastructure damage caused by extreme weather events like flooding.



66%

said the state government should be doing more to protect property, coastlines and infrastructure from extreme weather events.

93%

of NJ voters say it is important for NJ to invest in projects that will reduce flood risks, strengthen our infrastructure, protect our water supply, and make communities more resilient to extreme weather events.

Source: <https://www.fdu.edu/news/fdu-poll-finds-3-in-4-nj-voters-worried-about-damage-from-extreme-weather/>



3. CRAFT YOUR MESSAGES USING VALUES-BASED NARRATIVES

<u>SCIENCE</u>	<u>MEDIA</u>	<u>POLICY</u>	<u>BUSINESS</u>	<u>COMMUNITY</u>
Accurate	Dramatic	Realistic	Actionable	Archetypal
Qualifying	Engaging	Speaks to Need	Speaks to Revenue	Circumscribing
Highlight Uncertainty	Highlight Certainty	Highlight Risk	Highlight Benefit	Highlight Certainty
Cautious	Certain	Careful	Candid	Anthemic
Build Case for Further Research	Build Audience and Interest	Build Constituency	Build Business Case	Build Following
Objective	Persuasive	Popular	Visionary	Persuasive
Generate Understanding	Generate Ratings	Generate Momentum	Generate Shareholder Interest	Generate Action
Steer Clear of Policy	Commit to a Conclusion	Commit to Policy Recommendations	Build Science-Based Business Scenarios	Community Ethos

Source: Paul Lussier, M2U Media/ Yale University



4. CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR TOOLKIT



SOCIAL MEDIA SHARES

- *Write sample social shares*
- *Tag key accounts*
- *Create a hashtag*
- *Tell a story*
- *Create a conversation*
- *Use shortened links (bit.ly)*
- *Use free resources*
- *Include memes and GIFs*
- *Influencer & partner tagging*

Schuylkill River Water Quality Project StoryMap Release

Sample Social Media Shares

Twitter tags:

@schuylkillriver
@SchuylkillCtr
@Berksnature
@BartramsGarden
@StroudCenter
@PrincetonHydro

Instagram tags:

@schuylkill_river_greenways
@schuylkillcenter
@Berksnature
@BartramsGarden
@StroudCenter
@Princeton_Hydro

Facebook tags:

@SchuylkillRiverGreenways
@schuylkillcenter
@Berksnature
@BartramsGarden
@StroudCenter
@PrincetonHydro

Sample Social Media Shares

JUST RELEASED: Today, we're launching an interactive Schuylkill River StoryMap, which documents the results of our year-long study to document the ecological status of the Schuylkill River. Check it out: bit.ly/schuylkillriver

What is the ecological status of the Schuylkill River? What are the local perceptions? Our interactive Schuylkill River StoryMap aims to showcase the results of our year-long study. Take a look: bit.ly/schuylkillriver


It's #RiversMonth in Pennsylvania, and we're celebrating with the launch of the Schuylkill River StoryMap, which documents the results of our year-long study to document the ecological status of the Schuylkill River. Check it out: bit.ly/schuylkillriver

4. CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR TOOLKIT

PRESS ADVISORY & PRESS RELEASE

- Increase the reach and visibility of your outreach campaign
- Disseminate the facts
- Advertise for upcoming events

****PRESS ADVISORY****



FLOATING WETLAND ISLANDS TO BE INSTALLED IN TWO LAKES IN ASBURY PARK BY DEAL LAKE COMMISSION & VOLUNTEERS

To prevent harmful algal blooms from forming in Sunset Lake and Wesley Lake in Asbury Park, dozens of volunteers will help install 12 floating wetland islands in the lakes

WHO: Deal Lake Commission, Princeton Hydro, dozens of volunteers

WHAT: Installation of floating wetland islands in Wesley & Sunset Lakes

WHERE: Wesley Lake Drive
Next to The Carousel Building
Asbury Park, NJ 07712

WHEN: Wednesday June 16th at 10:00 AM (press event)

ASBURY PARK, NEW JERSEY — The Deal Lake Commission, in partnership with their lake consultant Princeton Hydro, is organizing dozens of volunteers to help install 12 floating wetland islands in Sunset Lake and Wesley Lake to help combat harmful algal blooms (HABs). **The press event will be held on Wednesday June 16, 2021 at 10 AM at Wesley Lake, located at Wesley Lake Drive, next to The Carousel Building in Asbury Park, NJ 07712.**


Floating wetland islands (FWI) are a low-cost, sustainable solution for lake management, as they naturally uptake excess phosphorus and nitrogen and improve water quality. These excess nutrients accumulate in stormwater runoff and enter the waterbody during rain events, which could fuel algae growth. In fact, one pound of phosphorus can produce 1,100 lbs of algae each year, and each 250-square foot island can remove 10 lbs of

For Immediate Release: December 12, 2023

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NEW JERSEY STORMWATER RETROFIT BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES GUIDE RELEASED

New Jersey Future and Princeton Hydro publish new resource to aid local governments, nonprofits, developers, and property owners in retrofitting stormwater infrastructure and integrating sustainable green infrastructure solutions

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY — New Jersey Future, in partnership with Princeton Hydro, just launched the New Jersey Stormwater Retrofit Best Management Practices (BMP) Guide. This comprehensive resource stands as a pivotal tool to aid local and county governments, nonprofits, developers, and property owners in retrofitting stormwater infrastructure and integrating sustainable green infrastructure solutions.

"As climate change is exacerbating flooding across the Garden State, it is imperative that we update our existing stormwater infrastructure to both handle the increased quantity of stormwater and filter out pollutants," said Dana Patterson, Director of Marketing and Communications for Princeton Hydro, who helped design the guide and oversee its creation. "This comprehensive stormwater retrofit guide is a treasure trove of insights, strategies, and practical guidance aimed at empowering communities to retrofit outdated stormwater features in order to improve water quality and reduce flooding in their neighborhoods."

Historically, stormwater management measures, often seen in the form of detention basins in residential developments, shopping centers, and corporate complexes, have been designed to control peak flow (i.e., the maximum flow of water during a storm event) and do not necessarily provide a water quality improvement benefit. A stormwater retrofit aims to modify the existing drainage system to further improve stormwater control and treatment practices. Retrofits can reduce runoff volume, filter out pollutants, increase groundwater recharge, and help mimic pre-development hydrology.

"The majority of New Jersey's stormwater management systems were designed and implemented before the MS4 permitting program was created in 2004 and before the NJ Stormwater Management Rule required green infrastructure," said Lindsey Sigmund, Program Manager for New Jersey Future. "New Jersey Future believes that green

4. CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR TOOLKIT

CAMPAIGN BRANDING

- Universal branding that all partner organizations can use
- Create a logo (make a PNG file w/ transparent background)

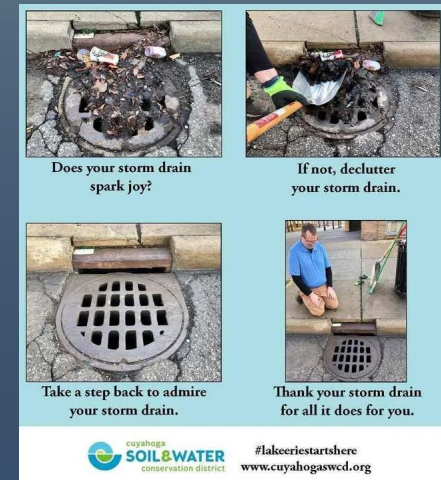


Example of campaign logos created by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication as part of their annual #ClimateThanks Campaign. The toolkit, including this branding material, was distributed to all partner organizations prior to the launch of the campaign so they could great custom graphics for social media release.

4. CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR TOOLKIT

GRAPHICS

- Get to the point
- Educate about the issue, use renderings
- Create an emotional connection
- Use fun graphics or memes
- Be trendy!
- Use free tools like Canva



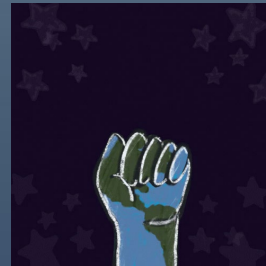
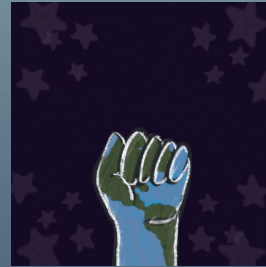
4. CREATE CONTENT FOR YOUR TOOLKIT

ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSIVITY

- Incorporating culturally relevant visuals increases engagement and resonates with varied audiences.
- Designing easy-to-navigate materials accommodates different abilities and backgrounds.

TRANSLATE YOUR CONTENT

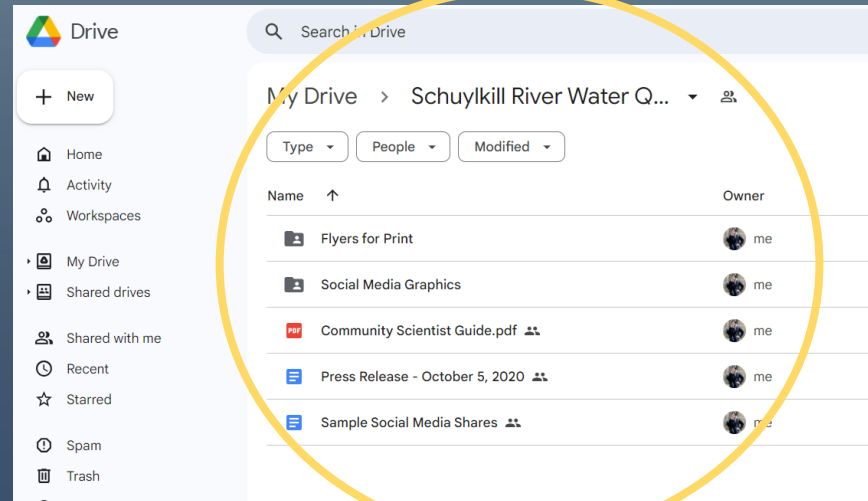
- Ensures climate messages reach diverse communities effectively
- Helps non-native speakers navigate spaces more easily
- Promotes a welcoming environment for all



5. ASSEMBLE YOUR DIGITAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

GIVE YOUR PARTNERS WHAT THEY NEED & PACKAGE IT UP IN ONE PLACE

- Campaign Logos
- Branded Graphics
- Social Media Shares
- Social Media Tags
- Press Advisory/Release
- Long form - Blog Post
- Flyers for Print
- Resource Links



6. IDENTIFY YOUR CAMPAIGN PARTNERS

GET ORGANIZED

- Who are your core partners?
- Who are your ally organizations?
- Who do you want to reach and who has relationships with those constituents

CREATE A SPREADSHEET

- Record the name of the organization, points of contact, email address, phone number for tracking
- Identify your targeted distribution methods
- Note dates of when you reached out to each partner and if they are committed to join the campaign



ORGANIZATIONS TO CONSIDER

- ✓ Statewide environmental nonprofits
- ✓ Local watershed groups
- ✓ Faith-based groups
- ✓ Elected officials
- ✓ Outdoor recreation groups (fishing, boating, hiking)
- ✓ Professional Societies (AWRA, SAME, ASCE, ASFPM)
- ✓ Schools / Academic Clubs
- ✓ Businesses
- ✓ Reporters



7. DRIVE ACTION RESILIENCE

CREATE A COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Pick a “Go Live” date
- Communicate expectations for release of information
- Share the link to the toolkit
- All partners distribute the same press release at an agreed time to maximize coverage
- Schedule a social media ThunderClap to push your content higher in the algorithm



REVIEW

1. Determine your level of engagement & capacity
2. Understand the values of your audience
3. Craft your messages using values-based narratives
4. Create content for your toolkit
5. Assemble your digital media toolkit
6. Identify your campaign partners
7. Drive action for resilience

QUESTIONS?



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THANK
YOU!

PRINCETONHYDRO.COM