

Sharing Your Success

NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training Program Communication Toolkit materials have guidance on how to create a News Blast to share your success!

About: The news blast guidance provides tips for publishing updates on project activities. The example template provided would be appropriate to insert into existing organization communication outlets such as weekly/monthly newsletters or website updates. Please feel free to fill in or edit the placeholders as appropriate to tell your story.

How to use these materials: When text added to the news blast template is brief and concise, it is suited for email updates to distribution lists, website blurbs, or inclusion in other news-focused outlets. When more details on project specifics are added to the template, the news blast is suited to submit to a program or community e-newsletter that reaches audiences interested in knowing more about the participants' activities—for example, local educators and parents.

General tips for writing news articles:

- Tell the numbers, i.e., the number of students/teachers impacted and community partners involved.
- Try to address who, what, when, where, why, and how
- Be sure to include where your program/activity takes place.
- Use the format: relevance, response, results.
 - Begin your news blast with “relevance” – what is the initial problem, need, issue, or opportunity?
 - Then you tell your “response” – what you did to address the initial problem, need, issue, or opportunity.
 - You end with “results” – what happened as a result of the project? Who benefited and how?
- Be sure to acknowledge your funder. When possible, say how your funder is included in your project.
- Create an attention-grabbing headline! Use action words to highlight what you are trying to convey.
- Include quotes. Quotes are a great way to share information and convey buy-in from others. Quotes should be no more than two sentences each, and no more than two quotes per news blast should be used.
- Include photos or photo decks that media can use.

Template:

[Local Area] [students/teachers/other audience] to [do what?] with [Community Partner]

In [local area], there is a [state the problem/ need for the project]. [Organization] is helping/has helped address this problem through the project, [state project name/details].

As part of this project, [tell what you are going to do or have done, what you have or will accomplish].

With support from the [funder], in [give time frame], the project will/has [Include project impacts].

[Insert a quote(s) from organization leadership, project participant or beneficiary, funder, and/or community partner. For example, "We are excited to launch this project, which will get our students out investigating their own backyard, using rigorous protocols while also taking care of their own place," said Springfield Principal Skinner. If a project participant or beneficiary does not have time to develop their own quote, you can draft a quote and get their approval.]

This environmental action project was the culmination of students' active participation in a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE), which consists of activities driven by rigorous academic learning standards that aim to increase understanding and stewardship of watersheds and related ecosystems. To read more about how MWEEs connect students, communities, and nature through hands-on environmental exploration and meaningful partnerships, visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/groundswell/>.

Adapted from: <https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/resources/comms-toolkit/news-blast>