

Template for Developing Messages

A checklist for developing and evaluating messages and communications materials

1. Follow the Rules of the Road.

- Start from the positive
- Adhere to values, language, and message recommendations
- Give people something to do—call them to action
- Use specific names of places
- Pictures, pictures, and more pictures

2. Define Issues and messages in terms of average Alaskans and what they care about most.

Demonstrate that you understand their interests and are on their side.

- Pride
- Recreation & Quality of Live
- Future Generations

3. Explain the Alaska values that motivate conservationists.

Show people that you share their values, that you are one of them.

- Pride
- Independence
- Responsibility
- Balance & Fairness
- Conservation
- Accountability
- Priorities

4. Define issues and solutions that show flexibility and balance.

Demonstrate that you care more about finding solutions than playing politics.

- Forge alliances with other organizations, businesses, elected officials, local celebrities and others who may not be traditionally active on conservation issues.
- Use local spokespeople.
- As community-based groups, participate in and support community events that have nothing to do with environmental issues: parades, youth sports, holiday celebrations & services, senior centers, tutoring, etc.

Alaskan Core Values

- Pride
- Independence
- Responsibility
- Balance and Fairness
- Accountability
- Priorities
- Conservation
- Future Generations

Language

Good Language to Use

- Checks and Balances
- Right to know
- Conservation/ Conserve
- Take care of
- Places to go
- Keeping it healthy
- Opportunity
- Unique/ Special
- Contaminated/ Contamination (when talking about pollution or polluted areas)
- Enforcement
- The real Alaska, before it is gone

Language to use in characterizing flawed proposals

- Short-sighted
- Wrong priorities/ priorities out of line
- More of the same
- Out of balance
- Trying to eliminate environmental protections
- Outside influence
- Developers' influence
- Uncontrolled development

It is critical for environmental and conservation groups to use qualifiers that make it clear that communication are not coming from industry. The word grassroots probably provides differentiation, but it may also carry negative connotations. It is better to use the following instead of grassroots at this time:

Good qualifiers to use

- Non-profit
- Not-for-profit
- Volunteer
- Community