



Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition Charter

Appendix I: Coalition Guidelines for Press Releases & Special Events

Coalition Press Releases & Public Statements

Purpose: This SOP outlines the steps and required approvals needed to develop and distribute a press release and/or public statement on behalf of the Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition under either a partner-led effort or under the Coalition's brand.

Context: The Coalition aims to accelerate giant sequoia forest stewardship at a landscape scale in response to a changing climate. Coalition partners fulfill this by raising public awareness and support, and inspiring public investment. Coalition partners meet this need through their organization's work, and at times may make public statements or release information on behalf of the Coalition with the appropriate approvals. Similarly, the Coalition's Rally Branch meets this need at a Coalition-wide scale through facilitating media and public events, maintaining the Coalition's external website, and distributing resources, reports and key findings through press releases as prioritized in the Coalition's annual work plan.

Definitions: N/A

Process (how to) & Approvals: The following process should be undertaken when determining whether a Coalition partner, or the Coalition as a whole should issue public statements and/or prepare and distribute a press release on behalf of the Coalition. It includes key considerations, what should be included in the statement/release, what review process should be followed, and what approvals are required prior to the release.

As described in the Coalition's Charter, any Coalition partner (member or affiliate organization) can issue public statements on behalf of the Coalition or disperse non-publicly released documents, data, or other information created as a Coalition product (p.11).

If the statements or the content of the release are deemed (by a Rally Branch Co-Chair and a Coalition Co-Chair) as non-controversial general statements or consistent with approved Coalition messaging¹ AND are deemed not likely generate concern for another Coalition partner, these guidelines below do not apply and the partner can pursue as directed by their own organizational guidelines.

Similarly, if press releases just highlight or reference the Coalition, and incorporate existing language from pre-approved Coalition materials, then they are also exempt from the guidelines below.

¹ This includes messaging that has been distributed through the Coalition for internal/external use (e.g. mission, vision, etc.), messaging adapted from the external Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition's website, etc.

For content that does not fall into the above, the proponent in coordination with the Coalition's Partnership Coordinator must follow these guidelines:

1. Ensure that any statements or materials do not conflict with the core tenets, the work of individual partners or the Coalition's charter and purpose.
2. Receive concurrence from the appropriate branch chair(s) (e.g., the branch where the project or work is initiated through) if the content involves the release of new information generated in partnership, or information that spans the giant sequoia range.
3. If the focus is on specific grove(s) or specific research and findings from a member or affiliate, receive concurrence from the applicable land manager(s) or principal investigator at the Steering Committee level.
4. Provide the draft press release or statement content to the Rally Co-Chairs and Partnership Coordinator to distribute to the Rally Branch members for their review and edits within 5 business days².
5. Upon completion of the steps above, provide a brief written summary (including the receipt of required individual partner(s)' review and approvals, partner/individual approvals for included quotes, brief assessment of potential for controversy, and release timing, distribution, etc.) to the Coalition and Rally Co-Chairs with a request for approval to release. If the Co-Chairs determine that all requirements are met, there is negligible risk of controversy, and neither regional/State nor Washington level review required, approval shall be provided within 5 business days. If the request is not approved, the Co-Chairs shall provide recommendations for modifications or rationale for not releasing under the Coalition brand.

*Any press releases or public statements under the Coalition's name that may generate controversy should be distributed by the Partnership Coordinator to the member organizations for a review period of no less than 5-days before release, to allow for discussion, editing and, when necessary, a decision vote on the Coalition position. Refer to the Coalition's Charter - "Making Decisions as a Group" section for guidance on potentially controversial white papers, editorials, or similar written materials.

6. Prior to release, identify Coalition member and affiliate spokespeople, pending the content, availability, and ability to speak on behalf of the Coalition. As footnoted above, agency and Tribal quotes may require up to 14 business days for higher level review.
7. Coordinate the release timing and distribution with the Rally Branch, to include providing Branch members with an embargoed copy of the press release or statement content prior to release.

Style Guide & Documentation: The final approved public statement and/or press release and associated materials must be copy edited prior to release and should be filed in the Rally Branch files in the Grove. If the release is on behalf of the Coalition, it must be consistent with these brand and style guidelines.

² Note, this may be amended if the release is timely and requires expediting approvals. This would be facilitated through the support of the Partnership Coordinator. Also, approvals may require more time if there are partner quotes requiring a higher level of review (e.g. federal agencies requiring regional or Washington level review (typically less than 14 days), Tribal Council review (typically 14 days or less pending availability and content, etc.)

Filing will follow a standard naming nomenclature (date, press release number, who is named as the lead (2024.08.28 GSLC Press Release 01 or 2024.08.28 BLM Press Release 01). The release and subsequent media linked to the release should be provided to external web coordinator for posting on the Coalition's external website.

References:

- GSLC Brand Guidelines

Approval and Revision History: Provide a brief written summary outlining who approved the content and releases, and any incorporated changes incorporated received during the process that led to the final content.

Coalition Special Events

Purpose: This SOP provides guidance and outlines the steps and required approvals needed to successfully coordinate a special event on behalf of the Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition (Coalition) under the Coalition's brand.

Context: The Coalition aims to accelerate giant sequoia forest stewardship at a landscape scale in response to a changing climate. Coalition partners fulfill this by raising public awareness and support, demonstrating concepts and stewardship activities consistent with the Coalition's core tenets, illustrating science and research needs and findings, and inspiring public investment, etc. Coalition partners meet this need through their organization's work and by coordinating events or activities on behalf of the Coalition.

Definitions: N/A

Process (how to) & Approvals: The following process should be undertaken when coordinating an event³ on behalf of the Coalition under the Coalition's brand.

8. Work jointly with the Partnership Coordinator to ensure that the event purpose, content and desired outcomes do not conflict with the Coalition's [core tenets](#), the work of individual partners or the Coalition's charter and purpose.
9. Receive concurrence from the appropriate branch chair(s) (e.g., the branch where the project or work is initiated through) and the Coalition Co-Chairs to initiate the design and development of the event under the Coalition's brand.
 - a. Co-Chairs should determine whether the event will require any tribal council, regional or national approvals⁴. These approvals may extend to press releases, communications, messaging, and agency staff participation, and would be coordinated through the agency(ies) public information officers.
10. If the focus is on specific grove(s) or specific research and findings from a member or affiliate, receive concurrence from the applicable land manager(s) or principal investigator at the Steering Committee level.
11. Establish a small event planning team to include representatives from the agency(ies)/organization(s) where the event is being held, including: the Partnership Coordinator, a Rally Branch member, a partner who has content expertise, and other staff who are identified as essential. *[Note: this is optional, but recommended]*
12. Upon completion of the steps above, work jointly with the Partnership Coordinator and other identified support team members to:

³ This applies to events and activities that are conceived to meet one or more of the purposes described above, and for events that originate from partners and are adopted as Coalition events.

⁴ Note, this may be amended if the release is timely and requires expediting approvals. This would be facilitated through the support of the Partnership Coordinator. Also, approvals may require more time if there are partner quotes requiring a higher level of review (e.g., federal agencies requiring regional or Washington level review (typically less than 14 days), Tribal Council review (typically 14 days or less pending availability and content, etc.)

- a. Prepare an event planning guide for Coalition partners. This [planning guide](#) provides a template that can be modified based on the event needs. In addition to the content listed with the sample planning guide, the following should also be included:
 - i. Roles for participating partners beyond the key speaking roles (e.g., material distribution, public awareness & education, etc.).
 - ii. Guidance on material content and design (e.g., Coalition branded – see below – or co-branded with partner branding). If the Co-Chairs determine that all requirements are met, there is negligible risk of controversy, and neither regional/State nor Washington level review required, approval shall be provided within 5 business days. If the request is not approved, the Co-Chairs shall provide recommendations for modifications or rationale for not hosting the event under the Coalition brand.
- b. Provide initial outreach communications to Coalition partners within 30 days if feasible, otherwise as soon as timing allows to notify them about the event, request representation and discuss roles and communications through their networks (pending the type of event and communications needs). It is recommended that the final Coalition partner planning guide, event agenda and associated logistics be shared with Coalition partners no less than 5 days prior to the event.
- c. Provide continued communications to Coalition partners with draft planning materials, logistics and media strategies.
- d. Schedule and host a pre-event planning and logistics meeting for attending partners at minimum 5 days prior to the event (as feasible).

Use of the Coalition’s Brand, Logos & Materials:

As described in the Coalition’s charter, logos, slogans, graphics, or other marketing/branding items developed for the Coalition may be used by any Coalition member or affiliate for promotional purposes within the following parameters:

- Follow the Coalition’s [Brand Guidelines](#)
- ✓ Align with the Coalition’s core tenets and any other provision within the charter.
- ✓ Consistent with approved Coalition messaging⁵

Event Communications

Communications planning should focus both internally (within the Coalition partners and their respective staff) and externally (targeted audience, media, general public, etc.). The Partnership Coordinator shall serve as the conduit with the larger Coalition, providing event details and helping coordinate planning and communications meetings as appropriate. [This Communications Plan](#) provides a template for what to prepare for the event beyond the planning guide referenced above. It includes

⁵ This includes messaging that has been distributed through the Coalition for internal/external use (e.g., mission, vision, etc.), messaging adapted from the external Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition’s website, etc.

frequently asked questions, internal background information, key and supporting messages, Coalition partner roles, additional information, contact information, etc.

Coalition approved messaging should be used if appropriate. If new messaging is needed, work with the Rally Branch to prepare messaging specific to the event's themes and purpose. Distribute the event communications plan, including messaging for Rally Branch approval no less than 14 days prior to the event (as feasible) and distribute to the partners no less than 7 days prior to the event.

Event Outreach & Media

Refer to and follow guidance in [Coalition Standard Operating Procedure #1: Coalition Press Releases & Public Statements](#). Additionally, prepare an event media planning guide ([here](#) is a sample media planning guide) for Rally Branch approval no less than 14 days prior to the event (as feasible), and distribute with the event planning guide to partners prior to the event. The Rally Branch Co-Chairs will determine who should release and track media participation and subsequent post event coverage.

As noted in the referenced SOP #1, time should be allocated to allow for any necessary Tribal, regional, or national approvals.

Event Signage & Materials

For Coalition focused or sponsored events, the signage and materials should be branded following the Coalition's brand guidelines. This includes directional, educational, and event logistics signage. Where feasible, QR codes should be included on signs to link to the event materials or information about the Coalition and its partners. The Rally Branch will collaborate with the Partnership Coordinator to determine who will design and print signs.

Sign numbers, type and locations will be determined by the hosting partner(s) in a signage plan ([here](#) is an example template) based upon their guidelines and knowledge of the event location and any associated requirements (parking, accessibility, etc.).

Pending the event location, purpose and audience, the Rally Branch will identify event material needs, using existing materials (e.g., Coalition 1-page mission/purpose statement, etc.) where feasible. Event-specific materials will use the Coalition's brand. The Rally Branch will also provide guidance on what partner materials could be distributed or referenced during the event based upon the event's purpose.

Event Safety Plan

This [Safety Plan](#) provides a guide for what should be considered by the Coalition's hosting partner. It includes an analysis or potential hazards, an assessment of risk, and considerations and actions to reduce those. It also includes an emergency action plan.

Event After Action Meeting & Learnings

Following the event, the Rally Branch and planning team should conduct a brief after action review, with the goal of integrating learnings into future Coalition events. Here is [a template](#) and guidance for conducting a review.

Style Guide & Documentation: Filing will follow a standard naming nomenclature (date, event/activity name (e.g., 2024.08.30 Alder Creek Cultural Burn). A specific folder should be created using that nomenclature, with final copies of pertinent documents, materials and images included.

Approval and Revision History: Provide a brief written summary outlining who approved the content and releases, and any incorporated changes incorporated received during the process that led to the final content.

