

CA CRC Commission Meeting
September 11, 2021
Public Outreach: Zone E

Our team has worked extensively in our public outreach to be inclusive and representative of all Californians to our Central Coast region to a combined population of over 2.3 million people, stretching from Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties to the coastlines of San Luis Obispo, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties and the slightly inland county of San Benito.

With 6 counties to collaborate with, we strategically established relationships with each of them. We reached out to all incorporated cities, community centers in census-designated areas, County and city government entities including various departments and local agencies such as Public Libraries, School Districts, Public Servants, health departments and community based organizations. At the beginning of our outreach efforts the Ventura county public library helped by sharing our message with local chapters. This then transitioned to good partnerships and good participation from residents of Ventura county.

For our July 22nd 2021 COI meeting in zone E we applied our lessons learned on previous COI meetings to have successful participation. We learned that in order to successfully reach all of our contacts we needed at least a two week timeframe to outreach. Our outreach efforts targeted local government entities, chambers of commerce, business associations, local media and non-profit organizations that catered to general populations and specific demographic groups such as the Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP) and the Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy.

With the help of support staff Marlene and I, we quickly established relationships with local government entities and local media outlets. Our team made sure to contact all Mayors and city managers, they received updates about the commission. At the county level, clerks to the board of supervisors were responsible for bringing up our meetings to their official agendas and to share it with other officials and the general public. Local government officials such as the City of Thousands Oaks, City of Arroyo Grande, Staff from Ventura County Board of Supervisors and Monterrey Board of Supervisors were key partners that helped us in our outreach efforts by sharing our events to their contacts with local media. Another instrumental partner was KAZU- an NPR-member radio station. They allowed us to create a 30 second PSA to promote our July 22 and August 27 COI meetings.

The continuous conversations with stakeholders has allowed us to learn of new partnerships and unique approaches to engaging different communities. We learned in previous COI meetings that community calendars and social media platforms are effective to target different audiences. Newsletters from community partners were also effective. This action came predominantly from the Chamber of commerce and farm bureaus. We realized that these partners sent out either a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly newsletter. In some instances when we had missed a newsletter, some partners would send their members a mass email with our information. In other instances partners committed to a social media post. The San Luis Obispo chamber of commerce was instrumental in connecting us with other community partners and sharing our events. With Marlene on board, we were able to increase our networks and add veterans and environmental organizations. Organizations such as The Sierra Club, Veterans for Peace, and Buen Vecino.

A challenge for our team during the outreach process for zone E was that community members were fatigued. Additionally, as soon as the state gradually opened, families resumed their summer vacations.