



# 2024 Year in Review



**Carbon Action  
Alliance**

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We are excited to share this Annual Report with highlights of our current work, recent events, and ways we are engaging new partners. In 2024, we brought together different perspectives to find shared solutions to decarbonization through carbon management deployment.

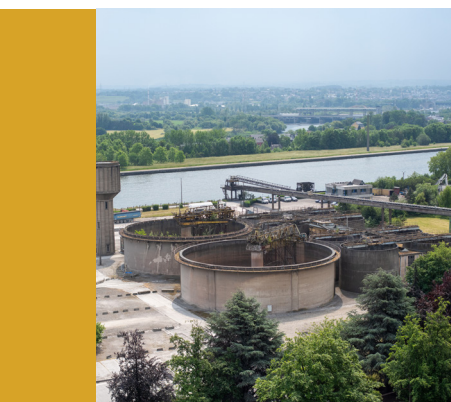
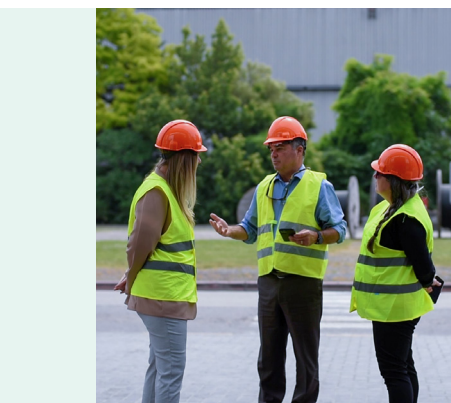
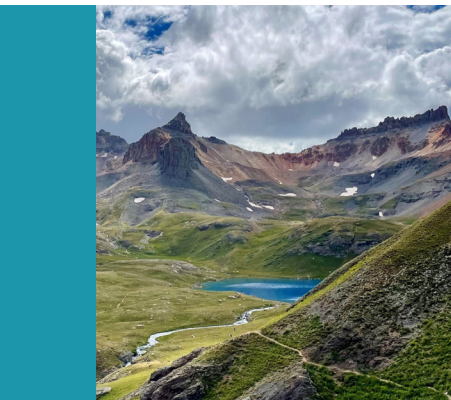
The Carbon Action Alliance (Action Alliance) launched in October 2022 to provide the Great Plains Institute's (GPI) core industrial innovation and carbon management projects with a broader platform to engage with stakeholders across the country. It serves as an education and advocacy network at the federal, regional, and state levels, coordinates communications efforts, and aligns stakeholders and local communities to ensure carbon management projects and infrastructure are included as a part of an equitable approach to reducing emissions across energy and industrial sectors. The Carbon Action Alliance also coordinates the team's Environmental Justice Fellowship program.

This year, we have advanced the four pillars that guide our work:

- **EDUCATE:** Meet people—whether in local communities, state or federal governments, tribal nations, nonprofits, labor organizations, businesses, or elsewhere—where they're at with educational resources
- **ACT:** Communicate carbon management and industrial decarbonization project deployment benefits and opportunities to decisionmakers
- **CONNECT:** Help shape the carbon management narrative through engagement and storytelling
- **INVOLVE:** Foster an equitable and informed approach to project deployment

As the Action Alliance enters its third year, our work to inform and engage the public about industrial innovation and carbon management opportunities is as important as ever. Together, we can explore best practices, address challenges, and pave the way for successful deployment.

**Bridget Callaghan, Carbon Action Alliance Manager**





# Educate

Meet people where they're at with educational resources

Education plays a pivotal role in the successful and responsible deployment of carbon management technologies. **An informed and engaged society is better equipped to understand the urgency and complexity of environmental challenges, fostering a collective commitment to address climate change.** By prioritizing education, the Action Alliance empowers all stakeholders to actively participate in the transition to a low-carbon future, ensuring that the benefits of these technologies are shared equitably and that no one is left behind.

Feature:

## Carbon Management Civic Toolkit

The world's leading scientists affirm that carbon management technologies are essential to achieving mid-century climate goals. Thoughtful collaboration and fact-based communication are necessary to engage stakeholders in deploying these technologies. To support this, the Carbon Action Alliance released the [Carbon Management Civic Toolkit](#) in May, designed to equip local communities with the knowledge and confidence to engage on the topic of carbon management.

The toolkit provides accessible, web-based resources to mobilize grassroots engagement in carbon management projects nationwide. **It offers ready-made materials and educational content, helping stakeholders advocate for solutions in their communities and fostering a more inclusive approach to addressing climate challenges.** The Civic Toolkit includes interactive tools, presentations, messaging guides, and educational flyers for local distribution.

**The online resource bank is divided into four sections:**

- Identifying Carbon Management Stakeholders
- How to Educate about Carbon Management
- How to Communicate about Carbon Management
- Communities and Carbon Management

Explore the  
Carbon  
Management  
Civic Toolkit





Communicate project deployment benefits and opportunities to decision makers

The Action Alliance strives to raise awareness, inform the broader public, and mobilize support for industrial innovation and carbon management technologies nationwide. In 2024, we made strides in tracking and developing messaging about carbon management, both to progress conversations around climate solutions and to counter criticism and misinformation about carbon management.

15 blogs published over 16,000 website views

## Highlights from the past year include:

- Crafting a carbon management [messaging guide](#)
- Creating a [handout](#) with tips to help anyone discuss carbon management with their community.
- Attending the Society of Environmental Journalists' Conference in Philadelphia in April, engaging over 1,000 journalists at our Action Alliance table to discuss carbon management technologies, their role in climate models, and related questions and concerns.



## Media Highlights:

- Our conference, CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024, included in E&E News' [Biden energy official on CCS, natural gas and faster permitting](#)
- Our staff authored [a blog](#) in Carbon Capture Magazine

published 11 newsletters

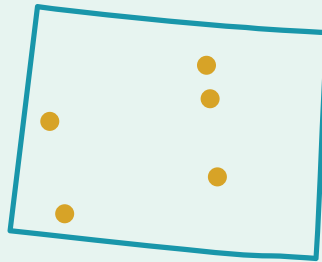
around 350 newsletter subscribers

# Decision Support Tool

In September, the Action Alliance launched the [Colorado Decision Support Tool](#), a geospatial resource developed with SWCA Environmental Consultants to assist local decision-makers and stakeholders in navigating carbon management initiatives. The tool features three interactive maps with extensive data layers, enabling users to evaluate community needs, advocate for their vision of a project, and create custom maps for meetings. It also helps project developers in addressing community concerns early, fostering transparent discussions, and guiding community benefit agreements.

## Colorado Roundtables

In May, GPI, SWCA Environmental Consultants, and Keystone Policy Center hosted roundtables in five Colorado communities—Pueblo, Durango, Grand Junction, Greeley, and Commerce City. Over 50 participants—including environmental justice advocates, industry representatives, NGOs, academics, local governments, and community members—provided feedback on the tool and discussed carbon management technologies.



Participants expressed diverse perspectives on the costs, effectiveness, and impacts of carbon management but showed strong interest in using the tool to empower communities, enhancing infrastructure planning, and address local needs.

### Learn how stakeholders shaped the tool!

To help users get the most out of the tool, GPI created a variety of resources:

- **[Video Tutorial](#)**: Watch a step-by-step guide to using the tool.
- **User Guides**: Access detailed instructions directly within each interactive map.
- **Examples**: Explore practical ways to use the Social Map, Environmental Map, and Comprehensive Map.
- **Discussion Guide**: Plan and facilitate meaningful conversations with your community using our tailored guide.





# Connect

Help shape the narrative through engagement and storytelling

Fostering human connection is essential to addressing major challenges. The Carbon Action Alliance engages new audiences and inspires collective action by sharing stories that highlight the real-world impact of carbon management projects. By building partnerships and shared knowledge among governments, businesses, and communities, the Action Alliance helps stakeholders align efforts, resources, and expertise to achieve shared goals.

In 2024, the Action Alliance released a video highlighting the success of an impactful partnership—the Capturing Better Futures Initiative. This collaboration between CapturePoint Solutions, the United Association (UA), and the Vernon Parish School District created a Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway for 30 students in its first year and has continued to thrive in its second. Participants gained hands-on skills in pipeline construction, welding, and related trades, leading directly to UA-registered apprenticeships. As the first program of its kind in the US, the initiative addresses workforce development needs in the carbon management sector, bridging labor gaps, and creating opportunities for future workers.

Feature:

## Telling the Vernon Parish Carbon Management Story

To amplify this success, the Action Alliance produced a [storytelling video](#) that was featured at multiple conferences and has been viewed on the Carbon Action Alliance YouTube page over 1,100 times. The video highlights how collaboration between industry and labor unions can drive workforce development and prepare the next generation for careers in the evolving energy sector.



Over  
**1,100**  
views

CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024Keystone  
Resort in  
Colorado

113 participants  
from 16 states & 2 countries

CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024 brought together 113 attendees to explore carbon management solutions—including capture, removal, transport, reuse, and storage—needed to meet climate goals. Through speaker presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, the event emphasized the importance of prioritizing communities and fostering open, inclusive dialogue to ensure the responsible and equitable deployment of these technologies.

The Carbon Action Alliance's intentional outreach to researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, health professionals, NGOs, and the public resulted in a diverse and inclusive gathering, recognized and valued by participants. The event underscored that effective community engagement requires flexibility and collaboration with a broad range of partners. Attendees particularly appreciated a hands-on carbon storage activity and real-world case studies—which proved more impactful than theoretical discussions in advancing meaningful community engagement.



For more insights, read our full CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024 reflections:

- CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024 [Event Summary](#)
- [5 Things We Learned About Community Engagement at CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024](#)
- [Play-Doh, Pasta Shells, and Vegetable Oil: Lessons from an Interactive Carbon Storage Activity](#)
- VIDEO: [Looking Back on CO<sub>2</sub>NNECT 2024: Highlights and Takeaways](#)





# Involve

Foster an equitable and informed approach to project deployment

Honest and genuine community engagement is essential to successfully deploying carbon management technologies and addressing climate change. In late 2023, the Carbon Action Alliance launched the Carbon Management Environmental Justice Fellowship program—a paid, full-time 15-month experience that includes a three-month policy immersion and research program, followed by a one-year commitment of active engagement and advocacy through the Action Alliance. In January 2024, the Action Alliance hired its inaugural fellow, Vilas Annavarapu.

Feature:

## Environmental Justice Fellowship

Meet Vilas:



[Read his blog](#)

For his action project, Vilas developed a novel approach to building community buy-in for carbon management technologies. Instead of starting at the project-level, Vilas identified the importance of helping communities understand the “big picture” challenges of climate change and the pathways required to decarbonize the economy.

Vilas built a relationship with the Mississippi People’s Movement (MPM), a hub of over 20 community-based organizations across the state, by asking lots of questions. He interviewed member organizations to understand their immediate priorities and assess their interest in climate action. Together, they decided to host an in-person gathering of MPM members for a Climate Learning Convening.

Vilas is consolidating insights from the convening, MPM hub member interviews, and organizational expertise to create a Just Transition Plan for Mississippi. This plan will guide MPM’s advocacy efforts and highlight the role carbon management technologies can play in meeting net-zero climate goals, particularly in the industrial sector. After a collaborative process with GPI, the Action Alliance, and MPM, the Just Transition Plan will be published and serve as a long-term action guide. At the end of his fellowship, Vilas will share the project’s outcomes nationally through podcasts, videos, and presentations.

# Climate Convening

In October, the Action Alliance held a Climate Learning Convening in Jackson, Mississippi through its Fellowship program. This convening aimed to provide MPM members a dedicated space to learn about climate change from experts, facilitate discussions to develop a statewide just transition plan, and ask tough questions. Here's what we learned:

It can be easy to assume that the financial and climate benefits of solar or wind installations are so high there's no need to talk about the "why." People want to know the "why." Professor Leah Stokes' (UC Santa Barbara) big picture presentation helped MPM members understand the steps needed to electrify each sector of the economy as well as the places where renewables fall short. Dr. Simone Stewart (National Wildlife Federation) went into a deeper dive on those technologies. The big picture makes clear the steps we need to take along the way.



**Want to  
know more?**

[Watch the video](#)

[Read the blog](#)

Community members walked away from the convening more knowledgeable about what it takes to fight climate change and the role carbon management technologies can play. In the next step of his action project, Vilas will develop a Just Transition plan for MPM that includes carbon management as a strategy for industrial decarbonization. This approach indicates the promise of a new path forward—one reliant on committed relationships, an investment in long-term learning, and ensuring the needs of communities are always prioritized.



# Meet Our Team



## **Bridget Callaghan**

### **Carbon Action Alliance Manager**

Bridget oversees the development and activities of the Action Alliance. She manages education and advocacy efforts that bring together GPI's federal, state, and regional carbon management efforts and build awareness and support for the implementation of priority policies and needed technology and infrastructure deployment. Bridget directs outreach to Action Alliance project partners and stakeholders.

Before GPI, Bridget led advocacy and grassroots engagement programs in the healthcare sector and has experience in both health and environmental policy sectors. She holds a master's in public policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and is based in Minneapolis, MN.



## **Alejandro Calderon**

### **Labor Engagement Manager**

Alejandro manages outreach and engagement with organized labor in the energy and industrial sectors for the Action Alliance and across GPI's carbon management initiatives. He leads efforts to mobilize state and local labor leaders and members as a crucial constituency voice in support of federal and state carbon management and industrial decarbonization policy priorities.

Previously, Alejandro was with the Labor Union SEIU-United Service Workers West, where he represented union workers from downtown Los Angeles and LA's westside corridor of Century City, Westwood, and Beverly Hills. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Italian from the University of Kansas and is based in Orlando, FL.

# Meet Our Team



## **Diana Leane**

### **Communications and Public Relations Strategist**

Diana manages communications for the Action Alliance. She produces content for the website and works with the public and reporters to answer questions on the complexities of carbon management and decarbonization. Prior to joining GPI, Diana worked as a freelance journalist and published work on the environment and health in Energy News Network, Detroit Public TV's Great Lakes Now program, and the Chicago Tribune. Diana holds a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University and received a bachelor's degree in journalism from Boston University. She is based in Chicago, IL. Feel free to reach out to her with any questions or any ideas for types of content and collaborations you'd like to see in the future.



## **Vilas Annavarapu**

### **Environmental Justice Fellow**

Vilas Annavarapu joined the Great Plains Institute in 2024 as the inaugural Environmental Justice Fellow. As a member of the Carbon Management team, he works with communities to deploy equitable carbon management technology and CO<sub>2</sub> storage through cooperative community engagement, outreach, research, and advocacy.

Prior to this role, Vilas served as the Equity Fellow for the Center for Social Entrepreneurship, a barista, and a 6th-grade computer science teacher. He holds a master's in teaching from the University of Mississippi and is a Jefferson Scholar alumnus of the University of Virginia. Vilas is the co-founder of Riverside Collective, a community cooperative in Jackson, Mississippi that addresses issues of economic democracy, equitable education, and environmental justice.





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