

OREGON CENTRAL COAST ESTUARY COLLABORATIVE



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Partnership Overview

The Oregon Central Coast Estuary Collaborative (OCCEC) is a network of estuary conservation and restoration practitioners collaborating to improve the health and resilience of estuaries on Oregon’s central coast. The Collaborative includes extensive experience in estuarine science and restoration practice, including scientists, practitioners, land managers, and conservationists who are fully committed to improving and protecting the Alsea and Yaquina estuaries, as well as others on the central and north coast. The Collaborative seeks to inform and advance future estuarine restoration actions; share experiences; and further public understanding of the importance of estuaries.

In July 2022, the OCCEC was awarded funding through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant program. A FIP is an OWEB investment that addresses a Board-identified priority of significance to the state; achieves clear and measurable ecological outcomes; uses integrated and results – oriented approaches as identified through a strategic action plan; and is implemented by a high-performing partnership.

Goals by 2027:

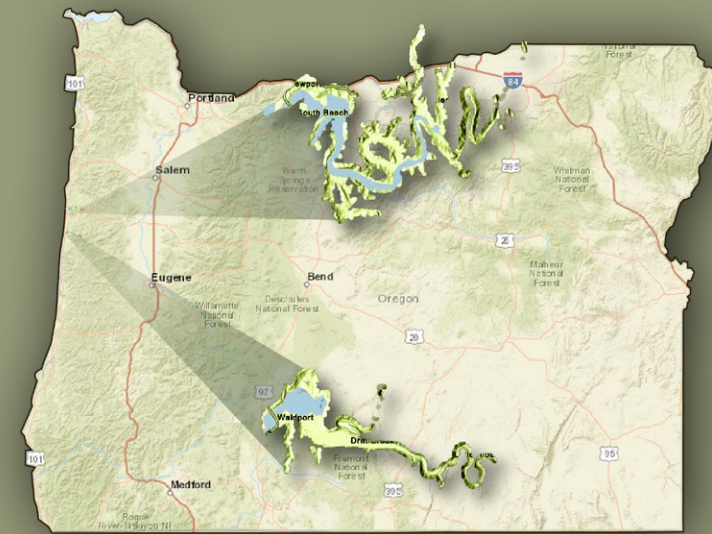
In the Alsea and Yaquina estuaries:

- Restore 900 acres of functional tidal wetlands.
- Protect at least 100 acres of current tidal swamps and landward migration zones.
- Protect at least 400 acres with conservation easements to allow for future restoration.

Initiatives are eligible for up to six years of OWEB funding. For the 2021-23 biennium, OWEB awarded \$1,523,000. When combined with investments from 2021 to 2027, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$7,834,950.

Core Implementing Partners

- Bureau of Land Management
- Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians
- Ducks Unlimited
- Fred M. VanEck Forest Foundation
- Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District
- McKenzie River Trust
- MidCoast Watersheds Council
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
- The Wetlands Conservancy
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service



Ecological Outcomes

Restore ecological function of each estuary across the FIP geography.

Improve opportunities to advance estuary conservation, restoration and resiliency on the Central Oregon Coast.

Increase functional tidal wetlands to increase hydrologic connections to tidal flows, restoring channels, and replanting native tidal wetland vegetation.

Strategies

1. Collaborate to reach key landowners about restoring tidal wetlands; fund and implement estuary restoration projects.
2. Help develop, gather & share information to support estuary conservation and restoration decision making. Explore and better understand tide gates and tidal wetland restoration in working landscapes.
3. Inform other planning processes to incorporate ecological function and climate change considerations. Promote policy that benefits estuary health.
4. Reduce impacts from transportation and other infrastructure on estuary connectivity.

Conservation Actions

- Complete technical designs for alternative restoration actions, including tide gate design and removal; culvert upgrades; and Large Woody Debris placement.
- Identify priority locations for conservation protection, including remaining intact tidal wetlands and potential future tidal wetlands.
- Develop and implement invasive species Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) programs for estuaries that don’t have them.
- Consult with interested landowners and Tribes about potential acquisition projects.

Near-term Ecological Outcomes

- Local estuary plans incorporate current updated data and information about climate adaptation planning.
- Funding, permits and agreements are in place for priority restoration actions.
- Priority dikes and tide gates are removed.
- Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) methods are in place, helping to detect new invasive species prior to establishment.

Longer-term Ecological Outcomes

- Restoration designs lead to removal or breaching of impediments to water flow.
- Enhanced, replanted wetland vegetation.
- Increased landowner acceptance and understanding of the ecological benefits estuaries provide and the projects that restore them.

