

Oregon Coast FY2024 Community-Initiated Project Quotes:

"The Oregon Kelp Alliance is excited by this opportunity to engage coastal communities in the work of protecting and restoring Oregon's kelp forests. These essential habitats have undergone significant changes in recent years due to warming oceans, loss of predators, and population booms of purple sea urchins, which eat kelp. The Oregon Kelp Forest Protection and Restoration Initiative will put coastal communities to work promoting healthy kelp forests at six sites along the Oregon coast, while building local capacity for continued kelp forest stewardship," **said Tom Calvanese, Project Director, Oregon Kelp Alliance (ORKA).**

"The Ocean Foundation is excited and honored to serve as the Oregon Kelp Alliance's fiscal sponsor. Our staff members provide financial, administrative, legal, and project counseling support so that project leaders can focus on program planning, fundraising, and outreach. As a result of the services provided, we are confident that the Oregon Kelp Alliance will succeed in its efforts to engage coastal communities and drive change for years to come; and we're grateful for the generous support of all stakeholders," **said Ben Scheelk, Blue Resilience Initiative, The Ocean Foundation.**

"The City of Astoria is grateful for the assistance provided by Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden to address our community's aging infrastructure. This high priority waterline resiliency project will upgrade existing drinking water pipes installed in 1928 and 1970. Without this critical funding, the project would have been delayed for another decade with debt service as the only option to pay for this essential infrastructure," **said City of Astoria Mayor, Sean Fitzpatrick.**

"We're very grateful for the hard work Sen. Merkley's office has put in to advance this funding," **said Mayor Henry A. Balensifer III, City of Warrenton.** "This project will significantly improve drainage in flood-prone areas in our Hammond district and replace failing infrastructure. This will also advance our aims to improve that district into the Gem of the Pacific."

"OSU greatly appreciates the work of Oregon Senators Merkley and Wyden to advance an opportunity for timely and needed investment in work to chart risks and options for navigating the intersections of Oregon's vital fisheries with potential offshore wind energy development," **said Dr. Francis Chan, Director of the Cooperative Institute for Marine Resources Studies at Oregon State University.**

"The Port of Astoria would like to extend a huge thank you to our Congressional Delegation for prioritizing and championing infrastructure investment into the Astoria waterfront. Congresswoman Bonamici, Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley understand how important the commercial fishing and seafood industry is to our entire region. This Community Project Funding award for the rehabilitation of Pier 2 will support these industries in a way that is more environmentally friendly, safer, and more economically viable," **said Will Isom, Executive Director, Port of Astoria.**

"Resources for Oregon's most vulnerable populations are hard to find, especially in rural areas. Tillamook County's first no-barrier navigation center will accommodate employment and housing support, life skills training, peer support, laundry, food preparation, and will be a daily drop-in center for people to safely rest in a welcoming space. With the support of Senators Merkley and Wyden, Representative Bonamici and Tillamook County Commissioner Skaar, we will finally make this vision a reality," **said Jeff Blackford, Executive Director, CARE Inc.**

The Port of Garibaldi is highly supportive and reliant on the US Army Corps of Engineers efforts to maintain the Jetty system and dredging of federal channels in Tillamook Bay. Proper maintenance of the waterways is critical to the region's economy and public safety. With over 100,000 crossing a year, both commercial fishing and recreational, the impacts of not dredging the federal channel, would be devastating to the many business owners and community, causing the loss of the many jobs that are reliant on safe access to the waters accessed from the Port of Garibaldi," **said Michael Saindon, General Manager, Port of Garibaldi.**

"Senators Wyden and Merkley are truly champions for Oregon Ports, ensuring that adequate funding is appropriated to keep navigation in our waterways safe for the maritime industry. These funds will ensure that River Miles 12 to 15 in the Federally Authorized Coos Bay Navigation Channel can be dredged to their fully authorized depth of -37'. This is not only crucial to promoting safety in navigation but also preserves the viability of the terminals in the harbor, which are key economic drivers for the region," **said John Burns, Chief Executive Officer, Oregon International Port of Coos Bay.**

"On the Oregon Coast, Maritime sector jobs comprise a significant percentage of the total workforce; however, ports and marine construction and repair facilities struggle to find workers. Thank you to Senators Merkley and Wyden for supporting Oregon Coast Community College's Maritime Construction and Technician Job Training Program. Building a pipeline of technicians capable of supporting Oregon's expanding Maritime Workforce is critical to the future success of our State," **said Dr. Birgitte Ryslinge, President of OCCC.**

"The Port of Newport greatly appreciates the support of Senators Merkley and Wyden and State Representative Val Hoyle for continuing to invest in our International Terminal. These funds will help us maintain our International Terminal, to serve our existing customers while staying attractive to prospective customers and support economic opportunity in Lincoln County," **said Paula Miranda, Executive Director Port of Newport.**