Oregon Ocean Science Trust Meeting Summary

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Virtually on GoToMeeting
Meeting documents and video recording are posted on the Oregon Ocean Science Trust (OOST) website:
https://www.oregonoceanscience.com/trust-meetings

OOST Members present
Chair Laura Anderson, Vice-Chair Dr. Karina Nielsen, Dr. Ted DeWitt, Dr. Keith Wolf, Cristen Don; Senator Anderson; Representative Gomberg

DSL Staff
Jean Straight; Caiti Hudson; Linda Safina-Massey

Interested parties and Presenters
Lisa DeBruyckere, Creative Resource Strategies; Charles Steinback, Ecotrust Fisheries; Liz Whiteman, California Ocean Science Trust; Sara Hamilton, Oregon Kelp Alliance

Welcome and Introductions
Chair Anderson welcomed everyone. Board members, members of the public, and DSL staff introduced themselves.

Approval of October 2025 meeting summary
Cristen Don moved, and Keith Wolf seconded; the motion to approve the meeting summary from October 30, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.
Vote:
Ayes: Laura Anderson, Karina Nielsen, Ted DeWitt, Keith Wolf, Cristen Don (5)
Nays: None

Discussion with Charles Steinback – The nexus of science, policy, and the blue economy
(Please see the GoToMeeting video for the detailed comments and discussion beginning at the 6:03 minute mark.)

- Chair Anderson – We invited Charles to this meeting because we talk about the blue economy during our board meetings as well as at our Ocean Science Summit regarding our priorities on how we engage with businesses and the needs of businesses. This will be an informal conversation versus a PowerPoint guided presentation. Years ago, Charles was involved in the 100 Pennies Mapping and GIS mapping for fisheries.
- Charles introduced himself. I am currently living in Alaska, grew up in Astoria, OR. The economic collapse that was due to the natural resources impact in the 1980s made a huge

impression on me which led to my career path. I started as an unpaid intern and have continued learning how to package technology that will be most effective and efficient for understanding the ecosystem from conservation to economic development. Currently, we call that the blue economy.
    - Overview of Pacific Northwest, east coast and international ocean science experiences
    - How to combine social, economic, environment, communities
    - Native conservancy in Alaska – kelp farming
    - I wish that when I was with Photon that we had had the ability to work with research and institutions to prototype and demonstrate that the advancing technology is working. The applied research of being able to demonstrate and test is extremely important and valuable. He provided the example of what the Port of San Diego is doing to encourage that work to bring in more investors.
    - Nexus with long-term ecological ocean monitoring and finding investors.
- Followed by Q&A with board members.
    - Long-term ocean monitoring nexus?
    - Non-profit vs. for-profit differences?
    - Carbon sequestration, i.e. sea kelp, collecting data
    - Public and private investors are very beneficial for growth, various kinds of funding sources. Examples of current collaborations/organizations in Oregon.

Trust Administrative Items – (Documents shown onscreen for each topic.)
(Please see the GoToMeeting video for the detailed comments and discussion beginning at the 52:00 minute mark.)

- Discussion of options & next steps to stagger OOST appointments to the Land Board – Lisa DeBruyckere and Ted DeWitt
    - Discussion regarding the benefits verses challenges of each term scenario.
    - Need clarification and additional information regarding what options are possible within the current statue.
        - **Action item:** Lisa will reach out to DSL for guidance and feedback.

- Status of Trust-funded grant projects to date – Lisa DeBruyckere
    - The last project will be completed by January 31, 2026. Everything has gone very well with all the projects.

- Review of draft bylaw changes/amendments – Karina Nielsen and Lisa DeBruyckere
    - They walked the board through the draft document noting and explaining the language changes as well as the addition of Appendix A.

Cristen Don motioned to approve the bylaws as amened January 7, 2026.
Ted DeWitt seconded the motion.
There was no further discussion on the item.

Vote:
Ayes: Laura Anderson, Karina Nielsen, Keith Wolf, Ted DeWitt, Cristen Don (5)
Nays: 0

- Review of Trust budget – Lisa DeBruyckere
  - Current contracts/projects
  - Cash balance/Discretionary Funds
  - Grants
    - Successful grants:
      - West Coast Ocean Alliance (joint grant application with California OST) $65, 600
      - Builder's Initiative 2025: $35,000
      - Builder's Initiative 2023: $300,000
    - Applications in Process:
      - Northwest Area Foundation – WCOSAA engagement with Tribes $150,000
      - Paul M Angell Family Foundation – Capacity building $100,000
      - UNESCO – Blue Carbon Workshop $13,000
      - UNESCO – WCOSAA engagement with Tribes $150,000
    - OOST is exploring applying for several grants in 2026
    - Unsuccessful grants:
      - Oregon Community Foundation
      - Autzen Foundation
      - Blue Convergence
- 2026 Work Plan/Gantt Chart – Lisa DeBruyckere –
  - This chart shows the progress on each task; listed by due date. I will update the chart monthly and share it with the board quarterly.
- 2026 Legislative Engagement Plan & Briefing Packet – Lisa DeBruyckere
  - Legislative Engagement Roadmap
    - I needed a roadmap to get through the short session that starts next month. After the short session, I will build a roadmap to kick off the next full legislative session.
    - Lisa walked the board through each section.
    - Q&A with board members.
- Fund Development Plan
    - Recommend changing some of the target dollar amounts.
    - Potentially in 2027 and beyond as the West Coast Science Action Agenda comes online, we can secure funding on a regular basis similar to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative with federal and state funding.
    - Donor pipeline
    - Key Performance Indicators
- Website Maintenance Logs – Lisa DeBruyckere

- Activity statistics on LinkedIn, Google analytics, etc.
- Overview of how much time people spend on the OOST website and on the West Coast Action Agenda website as well as which pages they spend time reviewing the information.
- Q&A with board members.

- Communications Calendar – Lisa DeBruyckere (created by Cory Archer who was not able to attend this meeting)
  - This draft document shows the communications plan for 2026.
  - Focus on target audiences such as the Oregon State Legislature and research partners.
  - Overview of activities and key messages. We already have several legislative packets that we have created, and Cory will assist with presentations that we might be asked to give or need to give at the legislature.
  - Legislative tour series, perhaps in the fall of 2026.
  - Social media key messages with a focus on our partners.
  - Fall press release to remind folks of who we are and what we have done such as the amazing research that was accomplished with legislative dollars over the last couple of years.
  - Communications strategy – materials: Annual Report; 4-page Legislative Briefing; and Informational Session Slide Deck.
  - Lisa noted that there is only approximately $35,000 for the communications budget, which is the reason that she is doing the majority of the website work, etc.
  - Q&A with board members regarding the Legislative Concept (LC) process as well as the focus and logistics of the Legislative Tour Series.

Board Member Open Mic

(Please see the GoToMeeting video for the detailed comments and discussion beginning at the 2:07:13 minute mark.)

- Laura – I would like to debrief our earlier conversation with Charlie Steinback. Some questions for the board to consider:
  - Did that conversation shift anything for you about the role the OOST could play in the blue economy?
  - Did the conversation expand or clarify anything for you?
    - Cristen – I am thinking that there could be other approaches to how the OOST is doing RFPs. Some possibilities might be encouraging interdisciplinary partners to work together; look at different ways of packaging and distributing money.
    - Karina – We could be very intentional/specific with the RFPs: shorter timeframe; some already identified applied science needs that local start-ups or businesses are trying to get information on; or telling them that they need to come with an industry partner.
    - Laura – The OOST serves the state; we are a very open source. We are collaborative as well as an innovator and investor in ocean science. I think that investing in business and in the blue economy in a way that is

meaningful by supporting science could be very compelling for the legislature.
        - Senator Anderson – I agree and we talked early on about making that connection and showing the value of science such as assisting private enterprise, the common good, and assisting the economy. I noted during the conversation a concern point: Are we putting public dollars into specific research to assist a private enterprise? However, ultimately, we do want to support science to prove the benefits so that the private sector takes it on and we all benefit.
        - Laura – We could have a grant program around open-source data that supports businesses with baseline information i.e. how much collagen is in this fish skin? The OOST could provide information that benefits many businesses, not just one business.
    - Laura – If we want to continue having these kinds of conversations, what direction would be most useful for this board? I had reached out to some organizations that Charles mentioned.
        - How do we want to structure board meetings? For the informational side of the meetings we could invite folks from the community to help us understand how to intersect there as well.
            - Cristen – More education on blue economy would be beneficial. Especially from people with different perspectives on how to build a sustainable blue economy.
            - Ted – I feel that we might struggle with figuring out who good partners might be for the OOST. Maybe more outreach to the larger coastal Chambers of Commerce?
            - Karina – Regarding the human dimensions piece, from marine protected areas/marine reserves to port development on the south coast to offshore wind, etc. the social science is useful. Educating the board on the environmental/human dimensions would be helpful.

The West Coast Ocean Science Agenda – Lisa DeBruyckere and Liz Whiteman

(Please see the GoToMeeting video for the detailed comments and discussion beginning at the 2:22:50 minute mark.)

- Lisa –
    - We have been compiling a lot of the documents that folks are sending us and recommending to us that have already articulated science priorities for the west coast. We are also using AI a little bit to check our work and see if it provides any new insights into what we have already done.
    - We will begin our 2026 Tribal engagement. Liz will speak to the funding piece on this that will allow this work to begin and continue.
- Liz –
    - The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) has released our Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030. Our goal is to lift us as high level science advisors in the state as well as

concretely implementing how we serve as a fiscal platform and fiscal steward on behalf of the ocean science community.
    - We are looking at what exists in the landscapes from what is written into reports through De Novo convenings that offer an opportunity particularly for Tribal led dialogues for articulation for science priorities from local constituencies and Tribal governments that can serve approximate value and benefit for convening in places along the west coast.
    - We are waiting on the release of funds from the West Coast Ocean Alliance; it is a matter of the contracting process with the Alliance staff that held this up. I have assurances from their leadership that that contract will move forward this month. Then we can very quickly subcontract to OOST and get that work going.
    - In the meantime, we were able to secure a couple of smaller grants that allow us to move forward with planning a convening in Humboldt Bay.
    - I am headed to D.C. next week for a briefing with the Oceans Caucus Foundation. We have 30 different meetings with offices on the hill in the space of two and a half days, including with some Oregon representatives. I have been coordinating with Lisa; we are taking our two-pager action agenda as part of the packet for outreach and relationship building in D.C.
- Lisa –
    - We are scheduling a meeting with the Advisory Committee for the West Coast Action Agenda in February. They have been providing valuable guidance and suggestions as we move through the process.

Public Comment

(Please see the GoToMeeting video for the detailed comments and discussion beginning at the 2:31:41 minute mark.)

- None.

Adjourn

Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 2:51 PM.