

National Ocean Science Trusts Launch West Coast Ocean Science Action Agenda

Providing the science needed to address serious ocean and coastal challenges facing the West Coast.

SALEM, OR, UNITED STATES, March 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Two ocean science trusts in the United States have joined forces to launch a major initiative to generate new and significant strategic investments in West Coast ocean and coastal science and research and monitoring. The “West Coast Ocean Science [Action Agenda](#),” the handiwork of the California and Oregon Ocean Science Trusts, is intended to provide the science needed to address serious ocean and coastal challenges West Coast states are facing in the coming decade. These challenges include an ocean experiencing heatwave events, species affected by low ocean oxygen levels, more acidic waters that affect shell growth, harmful algal blooms, and sea level rise, among others.

“Now more than ever, the West Coast needs to speak with one voice to enhance consistent, sustainable, long-term investments in ocean and coastal science,” said Laura Anderson, Chair of the [Oregon Ocean Science Trust](#).

The West Coast has long embraced technology and innovation and is at the forefront of developing marine



West Coast Ocean Science Action Agenda Announcement



Oregon Ocean Science Trust logo



California Ocean Science Trust logo



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*Laura Anderson, Oregon
Ocean Science Trust Chair*

carbon dioxide removal strategies, scaling approaches to sustainable agriculture, and addressing the impacts of climate stressors on valuable commercial, recreational, and subsistence fisheries. However, funding for the science needed to fuel this innovation has been piecemeal, inconsistent, and insufficient to address existing and emerging ocean and coastal issues.

The Action Agenda will convene scientists, academic leaders, policy makers, and others to describe West Coast ocean and coastal science priorities that will drive funding

and investments to the West Coast. “Unlocking funding to address these critical science priorities will enable us to collectively tackle the most significant West Coast ocean and coastal issues while recognizing the importance of equitable access, meaningful engagement, and improved awareness,” said Liz Whiteman, Executive Director of the [California Ocean Science Trust](#). “We seek to put science to work to accelerate progress toward a vision of a healthy, equitable, and productive ocean and coastal future for the West Coast.”

The West Coast’s blue economy is immense, a significant driver of the West Coast economic engine, and vital to the nation’s prosperity. In 2021, California’s marine economy had a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$51.3 billion, supporting 511,324 employees and 26,054 businesses. In 2019, Oregon’s blue economy had an estimated GDP of \$3.1 billion. A NOAA 2024 marine economy report documented the value of Oregon’s marine economy increased 54% during the past decade. Washington State has a maritime industry valued at \$38 billion annually.

California State Senator John Laird, a long-time supporter of environmental protections, marine protected areas, and coastal restoration, expressed his support for the Action Agenda. “The serious threats our ocean and coasts face cannot be overstated,” said Laird. “It will take us working collectively to generate the scope and scale of science needed to address existing and emerging issues, such as ocean acidification and hypoxia, ocean-based carbon dioxide removal, and sea level rise, and ensure the long-term sustainability of our blue economies, fisheries, tourism, and coastal protection from extreme events.”

Oregon State Senator Dick Anderson, who represents Oregon coastal District 5 and is a member of the Oregon Ocean Science Trust, emphasized the importance of ocean science as the coast grapples with aging transportation infrastructure and the need to support Oregon’s blue economy. “Coastal storms bring floods, storm surge, and, as we observed recently, damage to coastal highways,” said Anderson. “Having the science and information on hand to address coastal erosion and other effects that hamper transportation will help to ensure critical systems, such as stormwater infrastructure, emergency facilities, and roads, are not affected.”

Francis Chan, Associate Professor and Director of the Cooperative Institute for Marine Ecosystem

and Resources Studies at Oregon State University, commented on the importance of the initiative. "The rise of ocean acidification and hypoxia as well as marine heatwaves challenge our ability to discern when conditions are within the range of natural variability and when conditions are anomalous and pose great challenges to marine life and ocean users," said Chan. "We need strategic investments in ocean and coastal science and monitoring to detect and characterize changes in coastal habitats and our ocean and to use that science to inform responsible and responsive policy and management."

The two ocean science trusts, the only ocean science trusts in the United States, developed and launched a website (<https://www.oceanscienceagenda.org>) describing the initiative, why it is important, what is at stake, and the solution. The website also describes the collective vision of the Action Agenda:

- Research and monitoring to address emerging challenges - The issues facing our ocean and coast are challenging, complex, and evolving. Strategic investments in cutting-edge technology to conduct research and monitoring is needed to address these challenges.
- Policy makers with access to science and information - Addressing complex challenges today cannot be achieved with outdated science and knowledge. Conducting relevant science and monitoring and placing it in the hands of policymakers will help to ensure the best possible management and policy decisions.
- Sustainable commercial, recreational and tribal fisheries - Fisheries are core to the economy, culture, and livelihoods of West Coast people. Ensuring the long-term sustainability will provide certainty to global food supply as well as the cultures and values of people living along and visiting the West Coast.
- Responsible energy development and infrastructure - We need research to understand potential impacts of this development to guide sound implementation of this development.
- Enhanced coastal resilience - Our coast is facing unprecedented climate challenges, from storm surge and sea level rise, to landslides and erosion. Research and monitoring will help us develop sand management and other policies to inform strategies that address coastal erosion and other resilience issues.
- Innovative climate solutions - Understanding how to evaluate the efficacy, safety, and viability of capturing and storing carbon dioxide is critical to achieving national and regional climate goals.
- Institutional and capacity investments that close knowledge gaps - Closing knowledge gaps in ocean-related education, training, and career pathways requires an understanding of the institutional and capacity investments needed.

Track progress implementing the Action Agenda.

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