



CHARLESTON COASTAL AND OCEAN LIFE COMPLEX PROJECT DESCRIPTION—DRAFT # 1

Introduction

The small, but vibrant, ocean port of Charleston Oregon is at the strategic hub of a large number of maritime, recreational, estuarine enhancement, marine research, and fisheries activities. For many years, a unique number of public and non-profit agencies have, for the most part, interacted informally within the Charleston area. In April of 2008, through Governor Kulongoski's designation of an Oregon Solutions project in Charleston, these agencies have begun collaborating in producing a vision and implementation plan for creating a new "Coastal and Ocean Life Complex" [placeholder name only] along Boat Basin Drive in Charleston. The agencies involved in this collaboration include the following:

- University of Oregon's Oregon Institute of Marine Biology
- Oregon International Port of Coos Bay
- South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Coos Watershed Association
- Oregon State University Sea Grant Program
- United States Coast Guard
- Charleston Merchants Association
- Charleston Community Enhancement Corporation
- Coos County
- Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
- Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw
- Bureau of Land Management

The Vision

The partners in the Charleston Oregon Solutions project will collaborate toward the creation of a multi-dimensional and multi-use development focused on promotion and stewardship of coastal and ocean resources in the Charleston and Coos Head vicinity. This vision will be achieved largely, if not exclusively, on public lands adjacent to Charleston Harbor. Viewed together, these properties provide dramatic and underutilized resources as an ideal starting point for successful collaboration. The Charleston Coastal

and Ocean Life Complex will include existing public and non-profit organizations currently operating in the area that will join to create an unparalleled combination of visitor attractions, offices, research facilities, meeting spaces, and scenic and natural areas.

Charleston Coastal and Ocean Life Complex—Existing Elements

The Charleston Coastal and Ocean Life Complex consists of a number of inter-related public properties along the southern end of Charleston Harbor and extending into the Coos Head area. Attachment A to this document is a map [to be included later] that shows each of these public properties. A brief description of these properties, existing uses, and unique features follows (the letters correspond with the parcels on the map):

- A--The University of Oregon. The Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB) and surrounding university property is approximately 140 acres in size and includes coastal forest, rocky intertidal, sandy beaches and salt marsh. The marine laboratory currently has 61,506 square feet of indoor space in 26 buildings comprising administrative space, a library, 5 teaching labs, 3 dorms, 8 residences for visiting scientists and graduate students, research labs for 6 resident faculty members and their students, a dining hall with kitchen, a dock house, research space for visiting investigators, and various kinds of common-use laboratory facilities available to visiting scientists and student groups. A computer-controlled seawater system pumps high-quality water from the mouth of Coos Bay on incoming tides, and the seawater is fed by gravity into all research and teaching laboratories on campus. Much of the university's property is currently designated as a biological preserve, but the upper portion includes some relatively flat areas with development potential. The boathouse auditorium and adjacent residential quarters have some historical importance due to their original use as a Coast Guard lifeboat station established in 1914. The University of Oregon also leases a portion of the OIMB campus site adjacent to the Coast Guard property to the Oregon Department Fish and Wildlife. ODF&W maintains an office building on this site housing up to 24 staff members working in overcrowded conditions. Finally, OIMB leases a small area (5,000 sq ft?) of shorefront property from the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay. The leased parcel is located on the SW corner of the small boat basin, across the street from the OIMB campus. OIMB maintains a small dock, boathouse and public display area on the parcel. Although quite small, the leased parcel is strategically located along the Charleston waterfront adjacent to a seafood processing facility, the Charleston fishing fleet, and will serve as a key gateway to other project elements. Importantly, this site is the location of Phase I of this project described later in this document.
- B--Port of Coos Bay. The Oregon International Port of Coos Bay is a major public land manager and economic force in the community of Charleston. The Port operates the Charleston marina complex that includes a 12 acre shipyard

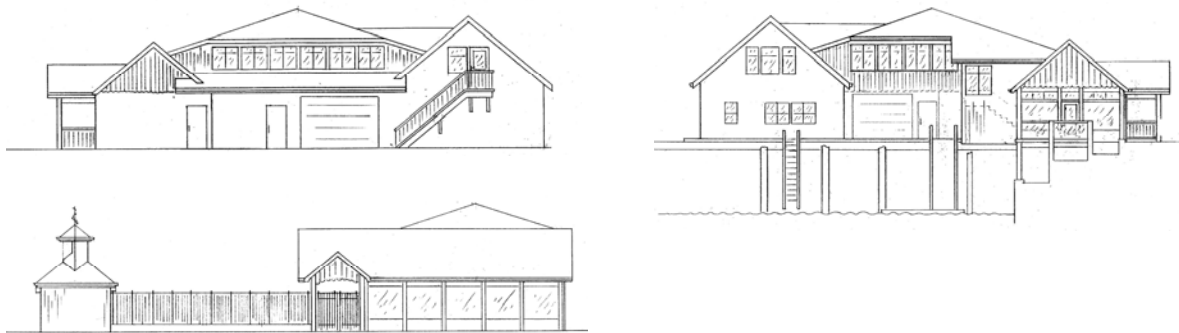
facility located at the mouth of Joe Ney Slough and the Marina and an extensive marina complex that encompasses approximately 30 acres of filled lands adjacent to the marina. The Marina complex includes a range of facilities to support water based commercial and recreational activities. This includes docks, and moorage, an RV park, storage for fishing equipment, marine supply shops, other retail space, public amenities and other goods and services for fishers and mariners.

- C--The United States Coast Guard. The Coast Guard maintains two residential structures with 10 housing units, a communications facility, plus an aids to navigation station on 3.67 acres situated along the harbor front and nestled between the main OIMB campus and Boathouse Auditorium. Although public access is restricted to the Coast Guard property, OIMB has a right-of-way in front of the Coast Guard property and along the waterfront between the main campus and the Boathouse Auditorium and surrounding university property. The Coast Guard also maintains a lookout tower on a 2.3 acre parcel on top of Coos Head at an area known as "Chicken Point". This area is frequented by local residents and fishermen as an ideal location to observe the bay entrance and ocean conditions. It also provides a destination for hiking trails from the Boat Basin area.
- D--The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw. The Confederated Tribes recently acquired forty-three acres on Coos Head, the site of a former U.S. Navy and Air National Guard station and an important ancestral site. The property includes open areas with extensive views to the north. There are eight structures on the property that were formerly used as a gym, administration building/galley/barracks; officers club/theater/medical; officers quarters; general maintenance; vehicle maintenance; and fuel shed; boiler building; and two miscellaneous storage buildings. The tribes are making plans to build a new tribal headquarters on this site which will require infrastructure improvements.
- E—The US Bureau of Land Management manages over 100 acres of land on Coos Head and along Bastendorf Beach. The lands on Coos Head that are managed by BLM include undeveloped forested and wetland habitats that are situated between the properties managed by the University and those recently acquired by the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. BLM ownership extends to the base of Coos Head and includes dune and ocean shore habitats along Bastendorf Beach.

In addition to the above public properties, the surrounding area contains other extensive public lands including those under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Department of State Parks, the Coos County Department of Parks, The US Army Corps of Engineers and the Oregon Department of State Lands

Phase I Elements:

OIMB is taking the lead on constructing and staffing a public outreach and display facility in Charleston, **the Charleston Marine Life Center**. Preliminary architectural plans for the project have already been completed, and the estimated cost for the entire project will be less than \$300,000. Current plans for the facility include a marine mammal gallery with a killer-whale (orca) skeleton as its centerpiece; displays on sustainable fisheries and marine resource conservation; large, built-in seawater tanks that highlight the diversity of local marine habitats and organisms and a shallow tidepool touch tank. A second-story display area will include a large 3-D map showing natural areas that may be visited in the Charleston/Cape Arago region and displays on the natural history of these spectacular local ecosystems. Three views of the proposed structure are shown below:



Conceptual Design: Butch Schroeder, North Bend

The dockside property on which this project will be constructed belongs to the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay and is leased to the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology through a long-term legal agreement that has been in existence since 1982. The lease renews automatically every 10 years as long as OIMB continues to use the attached docks for scientific and educational purposes, maintains a salmon ladder that the public can observe, and maintains displays of living marine animals that are open to the public.

The Port of Coos Bay has recently adopted a capitol improvements master plan that includes pedestrian and streetscape improvements leading from the Charleston commercial district to the Marine Life Center project. These improvements will include sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities and are expected to take place _____.

Phase II Elements:

The **Coasts and Oceans Facility** [placeholder name only] will become the centerpiece of phase II of this project and it is the primary focus of the Oregon Solutions project as designated by the Governor. This facility will provide office space for a number of local public and non-profit marine-related agencies, research facilities, public displays and visitor information services, meeting rooms and classroom space. Necessary site

improvements will include ample parking for employees and visitors, outdoor gathering and observation spaces, trailheads, and related infrastructure improvements [to be described in greater detail upon site selection]. Potential tenants and space allocations for the multi-use building include the following:

- OIMB public display containing marine life interpretive information, a running seawater aquarium, marine mammal area, video displays, map displays, live viewing stations possibly including nearby rookery and underwater camera feeds, and related marine information totaling approximately 5,000 sq. ft.
- Offices for four OIMB staff to manage and plan the displays (600 sq. ft.)
- Office and public area display space for twenty-four Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife staff to replace existing offices along with public counter area, wet lab space, library, training and meeting area space, storage, showers, walk-in freezer, and lunch room (6,000 sq. ft.)
- Offices for the Coos Watershed Association. This space must be sufficient for up to five personnel and eligible for “green certification” (LEEDS certification for the entire building may be an important criterion).
- Administrative offices for the South Slough National Estuarine Marine Reserve sufficient for at least eight staff members (1,000 sq. ft.)
- Office space and access to a classroom for the Oregon State University Sea Grant agent who will focus on community development (800 sq. ft.).
- Classroom, meeting rooms, and event space for agency tenants and other local agencies such as the Coos Bay Power Squadron, a local non-profit that trains mariners and provides event space for other non-profits (2,000 sq. ft.)
- Joint administrative, wet-lab, research and storage space (1,000 sq. ft.)
- Common area space, rest-rooms, meeting rooms, hallways, etc. (20%)
- Other elements could include:
 - public information on fishery management, condition of local species, current technologies, and other fisheries information of interest to the public.
 - General public information on local tourism activities including access to local marine life tours.
 - Information about the Coast Guard, its history in the area, and its current activities.
 - Information about local shipping activities, shipwreck history, boating safety, and other maritime information.

The general location for the Coastal and Ocean Life Center building will be determined through the Oregon Solutions collaborative process. A potential site listed in the original project assessment due to its strategic location is the Coast Guard barracks property located between the OIMB buildings. This site offers commanding views of the water, access to potential trailheads, immediate proximity to the OIMB campus, and availability to necessary infrastructure. However, selection of this site would require Congressional action as well as identification of a suitable alternative site and construction funding to replace all of the Coast Guard’s existing facilities. It may be possible to identify suitable

property for a land exchange within the adjacent public lands at a higher elevation for improved protection from storms or a tsunami event.

Future Elements:

[This section will be developed through further work group discussions and will describe in some detail potential natural area trails, upper elevation development sites, Confederated tribes development plans, future Port master plan improvements, BLM plans, etc.]