

OCRf Project Proposal Form

Thanks for your interest in applying for a grant from the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund. More information, including information on the Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee's program priorities, available funds, and guidelines for preparing your application are available online here: <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/OCRf/committee.asp>. Questions can be referred to the Department of Fish and Wildlife via email: odfw.ocrf@state.or.us or by phone: 971-719-1192.

Email *

bob@elakhaalliance.org

Project Information

Project Title *

Sea Otter Restoration Community Engagement

Project Overview *

Please provide a short summary that could be used to describe your project on the OCRf website. (2000 character max)

The Elakha Alliance will engage with communities, groups, and individuals on the Oregon coast, with emphasis on the southern coast, around our mission to return sea otters to their former habitats.

Primary Contact Person *

Robert Bailey

Primary Contact Email Address *

bob@elakhaalliance.org

Primary Contact Phone number *

503-507-9507

Lead Organization *

Elakha Alliance

Mailing address *

PO Box 704 Siletz OR 97380

Lead Organization Federal Tax ID

82-4364170

Geography/Ecoregion *

Consult the Oregon Conservation Strategy Ecoregions: <https://oregonconservationstrategy.com/ecoregions/>. Check all that apply.

- Blue Mountains
- Coast Range
- Columbia Plateau
- East Cascades
- Klamath Mountains
- Nearshore
- Northern Basin & Range
- Willamette Valley
- West Cascades

Project Location (City) *

Oregon coast

Project Location (County) *

Curry, Coos, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Tillamook, Clatsop

Project Start Date

MM DD YYYY

01 / 01 / 2022

Project End Date

MM DD YYYY

12 / 31 / 2022

Funding Amount Requested *

65000

Total Project Cost *

120000

Project Description

Tell us about your project.

Project goals and objectives *

Please describe the project goals and objectives. (2500 character max)

The mission of the Elakha Alliance is "to restore a healthy population of sea otters to the Oregon coast and to thereby make Oregon's marine and coastal ecosystem more robust and resilient." A key strategy in this mission is "build regional consensus that a restored, healthy Oregon sea otter population is an important goal worth pursuing."

The goal of this project is to provide the community outreach and engagement necessary to reach consensus. The objectives are to develop and maintain relationships with communities, coastal tribes, organizations and individuals on the Oregon coast with an emphasis on the southern Oregon coast.

Outcomes and Measuring Success *

Please describe the expected outcomes of your project and how success will be measured. (2500 character max)

Outcomes will include expressions of support from key organizations and individuals, an increase in the number of individuals and organizations reached with information about restoring sea otters to the Oregon coast.

Project Narrative *

Please describe your project in full. (8000 character max)

The project will involve the Elakha Alliance Director of Outreach and Community Relations, who will provide overall project implementation along the entire coast and a half-time South Coast Community Liaison who will lead outreach and engagement in communities in Coos and Curry counties on the southern Oregon coast. The Board President of the Elakha Alliance will provide additional contacts and engagement with individuals and organizations.

These project leaders will engage communities, organizations, and individuals at the appropriate level of interest and will focus on scientific issues, facts, and conclusions identified in the Elakha Alliance Feasibility Study (draft currently out for public review, final study due in early 2022) and Economic Impact Assessment (to be available for public review in early 2022), emerging scientific issues and concerns, and concerns or issues raised by communities, stakeholders, and organizations at the local level. A part of this engagement will seek to establish internship opportunities for tribal youth through Southwestern Oregon Community College in North Bend.

Activities will depend, to some degree, on COVID-19 protocols but we intend in-person one-on-one contacts, particularly on the southern coast, in-person or webinar presentations to and discussions with community, local government, tribal, professional, or interest groups, as well as extensive social media engagement on a variety of platforms. When possible, we intend to participate in-person in community events, tribal cultural events and others that will provide an opportunity to directly engage with individuals to inform them of our mission and discuss issues of concern or importance to them. The project leaders will consult with tribal members of the Elakha Alliance about opportunities to engage with tribal organizations and programs.

Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee Program Priorities *

Which of the Program Priorities does your project address?

- Conservation - Habitat restoration and improving habitat connectivity related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and evolving science recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and evolving science
- Conservation - Science, research, and monitoring directly related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, especially through community science activities.
- Recreation - Opportunities to engage and expand the number and diversity of Oregon's outdoor users.
- Recreation - Opportunities to introduce Oregonians to wildlife-associated recreation
- Recreation - Educational materials and opportunities related to responsible recreation, ecology, and wildlife conservation for kids and adults in multiple languages.
- Recreation - Research or planning that supports responsible recreational opportunities
- Recreation - Enhancement or restoration of trails and access to waterways in a way that preserves or enhances sensitive habitat or that resolves impacts related to informal or dispersed recreation in sensitive habitat

Program Priorities Narrative *

Please describe how your project advances the above priorities, including any connections you see to the Oregon Conservation Strategy. (1500 character max)

Conservation Habitat Restoration Priority: the ultimate goal of the Elakha Alliance is to restore kelp (and eelgrass) habitat by returning sea otters and reestablishing their role as guardians of the kelp. (NOTE: bull kelp and eelgrass are listed as a Strategy Species in the Oregon Nearshore Strategy and sea otters are listed as a Watch List Species, but neither bull kelp nor eelgrass are listed as a Strategy Habitat. At least 17 species of fish listed as Strategy Species depend on or use kelp habitat). The work of the Elakha Alliance, especially through community engagement and outreach, is critical to reach public consensus necessary to successfully return sea otters and thereby restore and enhance the habitats created by these Strategy Species and the other species that depend on them.

Recreation Opportunities Priority: It is clear from experiences elsewhere that the presence of sea otters, as with grey whales and other charismatic species, creates an outdoor recreation opportunity (with consequent need for education and information to enhance visitor experience and to protect the animals). While sea otters are not yet present on the Oregon coast, it is expected that successful restoration will stimulate new recreation opportunities where sea otters are present.

For projects that address a conservation priority, what are the primary taxa that will be affected?

- Birds
- Mammals
- Reptiles
- Amphibians
- Fish
- Plants
- Invertebrates
- Other:

OCRf Funds *

Describe the specific elements of your project that will be supported by the OCRf funds requested in this proposal. (1000 character max.)

OCRf funds will be used to support community engagement and outreach efforts for 2022. Specifically, OCRf funds will support the half-time South Coast Community Liaison position for all of 2022 and approximately five months of the costs of the Elakha Director of Outreach and Community Relations for which the Elakha Alliance will fund the balance of the year from other sources.

Partners *

Identify partner organizations that will be actively involved in the project and describe their roles

Key partners on the southern Oregon coast will be the Oregon State University Port Orford Field Station, Oregon Kelp Alliance (ORKA), and the Redfish Rocks Community Team, all of which are in Port Orford. Partners in coastwide outreach and community relations include the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Coquille Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, Oregon Zoo, Defenders of Wildlife, Oregon Wild, the Oregon Coast Aquarium and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Timeline *

Please identify the key milestones towards completing the project and achieving results.

February 1: Initial round of discussion completed with community leaders; finalize a south coast specific outreach plan for the remainder of 2022; April 1: Initial round of meetings and presentations completed as per the south cast plan; June 1: Additional round of meetings/presentations completed; summer/fall tabling/outreach activities identified, including OKRA activities; October 1: Additional round of meetings/presentations completed; presentation for Sea Otter Symposium; December 1: Additional round of meetings/presentations completed; Report and recommendations for 2023.

Other information

Please provide any additional information you'd like the Committee consider, including links to project website or other media.

Elakha Alliance draft Feasibility Study <https://www.elakhaalliance.org/feasibility-study/>

Oregon Kelp Alliance <https://www.oregonkelp.com/>

Redfish Rocks Community Team <https://www.redfishrocks.org/>

Oregon Nearshore Strategy Plants and Algae <https://www.oregonconservationstrategy.org/ocs-strategy-species/plants-and-algae/>

Past Projects/Experience

Describe two projects completed by the Lead Organization in the last 5 years and the results achieved

Project 1

1500 maximum characters

Completion of a Feasibility Study of the restoration of sea otters to the Oregon coast (with funding support from OCRF and others). This is the first ever such study and as such has stimulated wide interest in the need for and feasibility of returning sea otters to their former range along the Pacific coast. It will provide the basis for working with appropriate government agencies and the public to make decisions about where, when and how sea otters are to be translocated.

Project 2

1500 maximum characters

Successful launch of a new non-profit organization dedicated to restoring sea otters to the Oregon coast. The Elakha Alliance has received federal IRS 501c3 status, acquired sufficient funding to complete a strategic plan, complete a science-based Feasibility Study, institute a comprehensive program of community engagement and outreach, and establish partnership relationships with other organizations in Oregon and region-wide. The Elakha Alliance is now in a position to build long-term relationships with funders and other partners that will be necessary to successfully return sea otters to Oregon.

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