



IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY FUND REPORT

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Oregon Coast's needs and opportunities are as dynamic as its ever changing landscape. We value investing in the visionary goals and subregional pressure points our stakeholders outline in our bi-annual survey. However, we experience unforeseen events and timely requests that require immediate support.

For that reason, we are extremely grateful for the Immediate Opportunity Fund that Travel Oregon provided in our annual budget. This year has proven to be 'unprecedented' in a number of ways, with COVID-19 being a large wave in a set of changes our stakeholders experienced.

As you'll see in our report, we were able to partner with local communities to respond to an array of projects at critical times of need.



MARCUS HINZ
DIRECTOR, OCVA



VISITOR READINESS WIDGET

\$11,2500

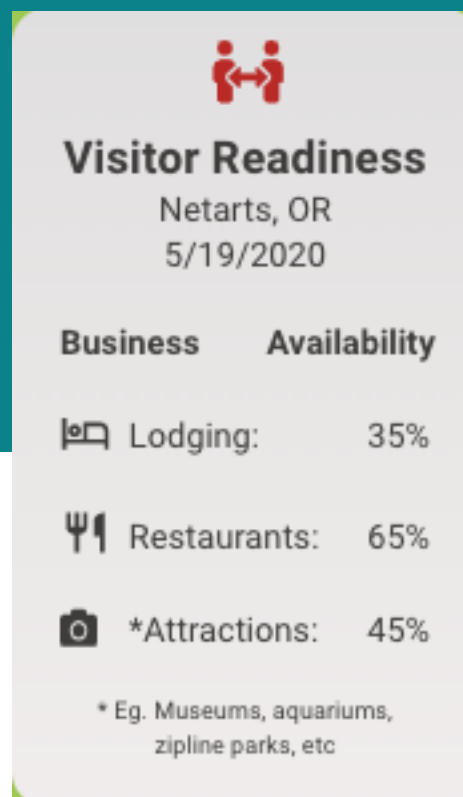
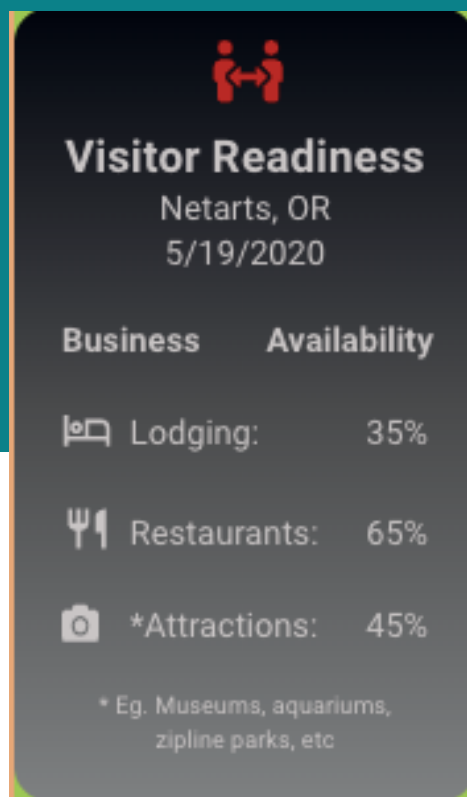
One of the challenges during the onset of COVID-19 was a clear understanding of what was open, to what capacity things were open, and therefore how visitors should prepare when coming to the Oregon Coast.

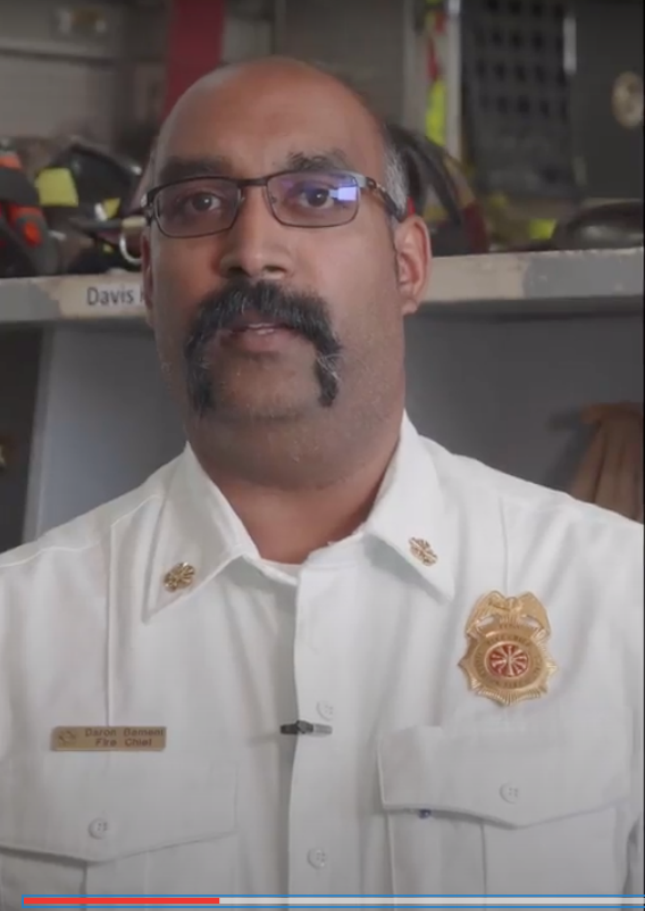
OCVA partnered with 10 Bridges to develop a simple 'Visitor Readiness Widget'. Information displayed included lodging, dining, and attractions.

This concept was conceived before the state came up with the phased...

...opening approach. When the widget was developed most coastal communities decided to communicate what phase they were in rather than use the widget.

However, several websites within Astoria and Yachats did use the widget. Additionally, the data input process was tested and towns on the North Coast, like Pacific City, are looking at repurposing the widget to communicate parking capacity.





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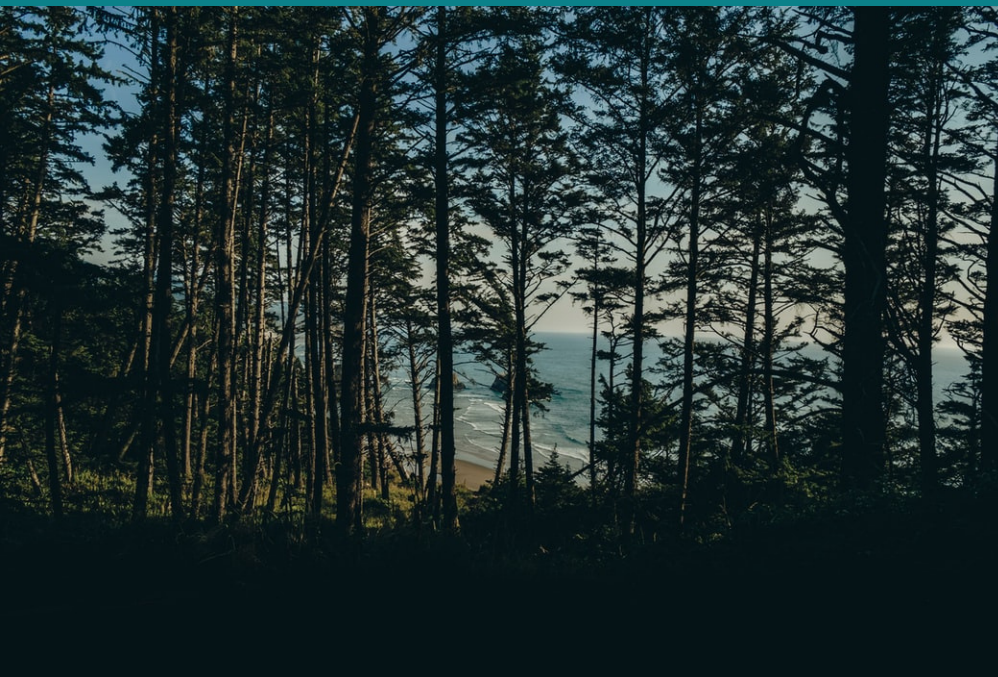


TILLAMOOK COUNTY VISITOR SAFETY \$11,599.62

This project facilitated a collaboration between all seven fire chiefs in Tillamook County to produce one shared county-wide report on search and rescue operations involving visitors. Our effort involved establishing a structure and protocols for collecting data, funding data collections systems and producing a destination marketing video welcoming visitors to the county and warning them of common dangers.

"We are the fire chiefs of Tillamook County. As we begin to welcome people back to the Oregon Coast, we want to help make the trip a memorable one for all the right reasons"

The marketing video ends in a call to action for viewers to make a tax deductible donation, which will go towards funding volunteer training and specialized equipment purchases. This is incredibly useful as "more than 95% of personnel across all seven fire districts are volunteers with full time jobs, yet they are often required to receive specialized training at the same level as a full time, paid fire fighter.



"While Ecola has been closed this summer, more people have been flocking to Oswald West", Havel said, resulting in an overwhelmed water system and illegal parking along the side of U.S. 101. With Ecola State Park now open, park officials hope some crowds will choose to go there instead.

- OregonLive, Aug. 2017

OREGON COAST TRAIL: ECOLA STATE PARK \$45,000

Due to COVID-19, OPRD experienced an unusually swift and acute budget shortfall. OCVA was able to contribute \$45,000 toward the completion of the Oregon Coast Trail at Ecola State Park, which had washed out back in 2016.

Ecola State park is a popular stop on the North Coast. The park's backbone is an 8-mile segment of the Oregon Coast Trail (OCT), also designated as part of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

The OCT is a major investment of OCVA and this gap was a significant one on the North Coast. Fixing 'gaps' like this washed out trail in Ecola State Park is part of a larger statewide effort as mandated by Oregon Governor Kate Brown in 2018, when she designated this work as an official Oregon Solutions project.

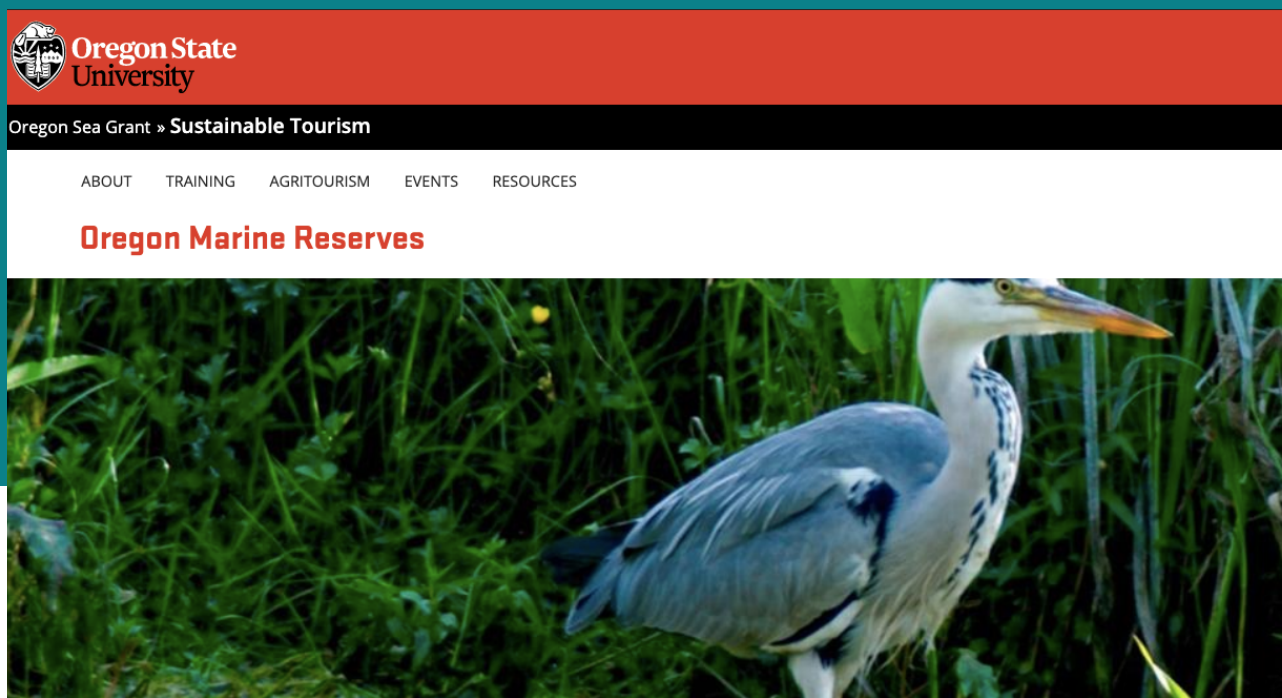
OREGON MARINE RESERVE AREA TRAINING PROGRAM (MRTP)

\$10,000

Oregon has five marine reserves that run the length of our coastline. These unique designations to large sections of our Pacific Ocean are managed by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Reserves Program and are supported by a number of other organizations like Surfrider, Oregon State University and SeaGrant.

The Marine Reserve Area Training Program (MRTP) is available as a stand-alone program, however, it was developed in conjunction with the Guide and Outfitters Recognized Professional (GORP) program.

As part of the efforts to help inform people about Oregon Marine Reserves we funded an online trivia quiz to support six online short courses (30 minutes) that address the reserve system and each of the five reserves. The information is primarily intended for interpretive volunteers and professional guides. The courses are also open to the public.



Oregon Marine Reserve Area Training Program (MRTP)

[Click Here to get started with MRTP](#) You will go to OSU Registration System (Ideal Logic) Page. Then once logged in scroll down to find the MRTP



KELP RESTORATION VIDEO PROJECT \$13,031

The video will feature on-location interviews in Port Orford with scientific, tourism, fishing industry, and local cuisine perspectives. The first phase of a two or three phase 3-minute video series that summarizes the impact of declining bull kelp as a result of increased and uncontrolled purple sea urchin populations, water temperature changes, changing ocean chemistry, and other potential changes along the southern Oregon coast, specifically in Port Orford.

"In Port Orford, Oregon's sea urchin capital since the initiation of the fishery here in the early 1990's, career urchin divers began to bring attention to the emerging urchin population boom and bull kelp disappearance in 2014,"
- Oregon Kelp Alliance

The Port Orford community along with Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, University of Oregon, the Oregon Coast Visitors Association, local restaurants, commercial urchin divers, local tour companies, and Oregon Sea Farms have come together to form the Oregon Kelp Alliance (ORKA), which has received support from Oregon Sea Grant to develop a plan for research and monitoring as part of a multi-faceted action plan to both restore a pilot area of bull kelp and increase awareness of the issue through eco-tourism and media.

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

\$41,684.25

Our local food systems investments are shortening supply chains for coastal restaurants, fishers and farmers to enhance their economic resilience while also improving the visitor experience. Based on research funded and collected by OCVA, we are strategically working with food NGO's to create marketing product, content and campaigns, as well as increasing the local processing, distribution, aggregation and storage of local foods where it matters the most.

Fresh seafood in particular is the Oregon Coast's unique food proposition, which is in high demand by visitors expecting to find fresh locally-caught seafood during their visit. The commercial fishing industry is an authentic cultural heritage industry for the coast and experiences in our small fishing villages can blend aspects of agricultural, culinary and cultural tourism as draws for visitors.

To further support small fishers in the seafood industry we are exploring ways of joining forces with and supporting the Maritime Sector Workforce Education Investment Initiative. Senate Bill 867 established the Task Force on Maritime Sector Workforce Development. It directs the task force to study and develop descriptions of the maritime sector and maritime sector workforce in Oregon . Additionally, it will develop recommendations to the State Workforce Investment Board to incorporate the maritime sector into statewide workforce investment system plans.

