



2025  
**PEOPLE'S  
COAST SUMMIT**

**Reedsport, OR**

**October 21 & 22, 2025**

# 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

## Conference Overview

### OCTOBER 21

- 9:00am - 10:20am** Welcome + Morning Breakfast @ **Reedsport Community Center**  
KEYNOTE PANEL: Revitalizing the Heart of Community: The Power of Oregon Main Street
- 10:30am - 12:00pm** Session 1 Workshop Breakouts
- **Discovery Center** *Travel Oregon International Sales 101*
  - **451 Fir** *Grants 101: Crafting Compelling Proposals with Travel Oregon*
  - **City Council** *Telling Your Story Through Social Media and Partnerships*
  - **Tiki Bar** *People's Coast 101 Study hall*
- 12:20pm - 1:30pm** Networking + Lunch @ **Reedsport Community Center**  
KEYNOTE PANEL: Getting There: Transportation and Tourism on the Coast
- 1:30pm - 2:00pm** Social Mixer + Networking @ **Reedsport Community Center**
- 2:00pm - 3:30pm** Session 2 Workshop Breakouts
- **Discovery Center** *Content Strategies: A Guide to Starting (and Elevating) Your Content*
  - **451 Fir** *Lorax Like a Local: How to Share Your Stewardship Message*
  - **City Council** *Sustainable Trails: Destination Development & Funding Stability*
  - **Tiki Bar** *Fueling Small Business Success: Tools, Funding & Financial Know-How*
- 3:30pm - 5:30pm** ACTIVITIES: Multiple locations (see pg. 11)
- 6:00pm - 7:30pm** Dinner @ **Winchester Bay Marine Activity Center**  
KEYNOTE & FILM SCREENING: "What We Lost Along the Way" – Storytelling, Nature, and Narrative Autonomy on the Oregon Coast
- 7:30pm Onwards** After Party! @ **Winchester Bay Marine Activity Center**

### OCTOBER 22

- 9:00am - 10:20am** Morning Breakfast @ **Reedsport Community Center**  
KEYNOTE: Gathering with Purpose: A New Wave of Coastal Events
- 10:30am - 12:00pm** Session 3 Workshop Breakouts
- **Discovery Center** *Demystifying the FIT Travel Trade: Connecting with International Markets*
  - **451 Fir** *Grants 101: Crafting Compelling Proposals with Travel Oregon*
  - **City Council** *Level Up with AI: Smarter Tools for Tourism*
  - **Tiki Bar** *Opening Doors: Inclusive Employment in Tourism and Hospitality through the Employment First Initiative*
- 12:20pm - 1:30pm** Lunch @ **Reedsport Community Center**  
KEYNOTE: Beneath the Surface: Sharks, Science, and the Surprising Future of Coastal Tourism



# 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

## Important Locations



### General Sessions

Reedsport Community Center  
451 Winchester Ave

### Breakfast & Lunch

Reedsport Community Center  
451 Winchester Ave

### Dinner

Marina Activity Center  
263 Marina Way, Winchester Bay



### Evening Keynote & After Party

Marina Activity Center  
263 Marina Way, Winchester Bay

### Breakout Sessions

Umpqua Discovery Center  
409 Riverfront Way

451 Fir Ave Building  
451 Fir Ave

City Council Chamber  
451 Winchester Avenue

Hoaloha Tiki Bar  
454 Fir Ave

# OCT 21

## 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT Keynote Speakers

### Revitalizing the Heart of Community: The Power of Oregon Main Street

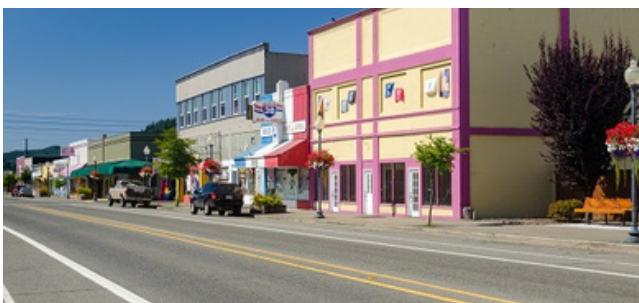
**OCT 21 @ 9:30 AM - REEDSPORT COMMUNITY CENTER**

Downtowns are the heartbeat of Oregon's communities, rich in character, culture, and potential. Yet many face challenges, from underutilized spaces to shifting economic trends. In this inspiring keynote, hear how the Oregon Main Street Program is helping communities across the state reimagine and reinvigorate their downtowns whether they're just getting started or building on existing momentum.

You'll hear from Sheri Stuart of Oregon Main Street, who will share the importance of the program and how it supports communities through hands-on technical assistance, training, and access to the Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant, a competitive funding opportunity that helps bring downtown visions to life.

Joining Sheri are two recent grant recipients: Stephanie Wilson from the City of North Bend, which was awarded nearly \$200,000 to support critical safety and accessibility upgrades to 17 commercial properties in the city's Main Street district. Rosa Solano from the City of Reedsport, which received \$400,000 to rejuvenate the main street stretch to improve local landscapes and create tangible economic upshots

Together, these speakers will share how the Main Street approach, combined with strong local leadership and strategic investment, is breathing new life into Oregon's downtowns, creating spaces that are economically resilient, socially vibrant, and uniquely reflective of their communities.



### PRESENTED BY

#### **Sheri Stuart**

State coordinator of Oregon Main Street (OMS)

#### **Rosa Solano**

Main Street Program  
Director: Reedsport

#### **Stephanie Wilson**

Main Street Program  
Director: North Bend

# OCT 21

## 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT Keynote Speakers

### Getting There: Transportation and Tourism on the Coast

**OCT 21 @ 12:20 PM - REEDSPORT COMMUNITY CENTER**

The way people move defines the way communities thrive. In this closing keynote, hear from Kathy Kleczek (DLCD), Janice Langlinais (Oregon's Adventure Coast), Bobbi Price (Yachats City Manager), and Caroline Fitchett (Salmonberry Trail) as they share how transit solutions—ranging from seasonal shuttles to regional trail connections—are energizing Oregon Coast communities.

Together, they will explore how transportation planning intersects with livability, walkability, and climate goals, creating more equitable, accessible, and sustainable places for both residents and visitors. This conversation highlights how strong transportation links are essential to vibrant communities, healthy tourism economies, and long-term stewardship of the People's Coast.



### PRESENTED BY

#### **Kathy Kleczek**

Land Use and Transportation  
Planner: DLCD

#### **Janice Langlinais**

Executive Director of the  
Coos Bay-North Bend-  
Charleston

#### **Bobbi Price**

Yachats City Manager

#### **Caroline Fitchett**

Executive Director:  
Salmonberry Trail Foundation

# OCT 21

2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

## Keynote Speakers

### Keynote & Film Screening: "What We Lost Along the Way" – Storytelling, Nature, and Narrative Autonomy on the Oregon Coast

**OCT 21 @ 6:00 PM - WINCHESTER BAY MARINE ACTIVITY CENTER**

Join us for a special screening of *What We Lost Along the Way*, a deeply personal and visually striking documentary that follows filmmaker Devin Boss and his friends, Solamon Ibe and Mat Randol, as they explore the Oregon Coast from Yachats to Newport to Florence. Through their shared experiences as Black men in outdoor spaces, the film invites viewers into moments of healing, reflection, and connection with each other and the natural world.

Rather than answering predetermined questions, Boss centers the film on shared presence and authenticity, asking: "Why do we assume this isn't for us?" His narrative opens a door into the complexities of belonging in nature and the power of reclaiming space through story.

**Following the screening, a panel conversation will feature:**

#### **Devin Boss**

The filmmaker and CEO and Founder of North East Productions, on narrative autonomy and how his vision evolved through the filmmaking process.

#### **Tim Williams**

Executive Director of Oregon Film, on supporting authentic voices through the Outside Adventure Film Grant program and the importance of letting stories unfold beyond prescriptive expectations.

#### **Mo Sherifdeen**

Travel Oregon's Director of Integrated Marketing, who will share how this project reflects Travel Oregon's commitment to equity and sustainability by spotlighting and diverse lived experiences and redefining how we share the "Oregon story."



This keynote will leave attendees with a renewed perspective on the role of tourism in storytelling. It's a call to action for destination managers, marketers, and community leaders to elevate local voices and create space for authentic, lived narratives, especially those not often seen in traditional destination marketing.



# OCT 21

## 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

# Workshops

## SESSION 1

10:30 AM

### TRAVEL OREGON INTERNATIONAL SALES 101

Thomas Moser

#### UMPQUA DISCOVERY CENTER

International tourism is a key part of Oregon's economy. Research shows that international visitors stay longer, spend more money and visit the United States during off peak travel periods. From overseas sales missions, to local familiarization tours, to the receptive operator buying chain, you'll find out how Travel Oregon is attracting over 1.5 million international visitors to Oregon and how your organization can benefit by working with these markets. This session will help you develop successful tactics and identify existing resources to help drive your organization toward success in the international tourism marketplace.

### GRANTS 101: CRAFTING COMPELLING PROPOSALS WITH TRAVEL OREGON

Dawn Smallman, Deb Vaughn

#### 451 FIR

Join Travel Oregon for Grantsmithing 101, a hands-on, conversational workshop designed to sharpen your grant writing skills and deepen your understanding of the grantmaker's perspective. This session will help you avoid common pitfalls, align your proposals with funder priorities, and craft compelling narratives and budgets that stand out. You'll gain insights from real-world examples and reviewer feedback while building a stronger, more strategic approach to securing funding. Ideal for nonprofits, destination organizations, city and regional leaders, and tourism businesses ready to level up their grants game.

### TELLING YOUR STORY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARTNERSHIPS

Alanna Kieffer

#### CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

In a world flooded with content, how do you create meaningful, consistent messaging that benefits your brand and your community? Social media doesn't have to feel overwhelming. Alanna will share her tips for making social media more approachable, enjoyable, and strategic. You'll learn how to develop a content calendar, use AI tools to brainstorm content ideas, and schedule posts in advance all to reduce stress and time. The workshop will cover how to build authentic community and influencer partnerships, what to ask for (and offer), and how to ensure the collaboration feels aligned and worth sharing. Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to refine your strategy, you'll walk away with actionable tools to help you plan, post, and connect with purpose.

### PEOPLE'S COAST 101 STUDY HALL

OCVA Staff

#### HOALOHA TIKI BAR

Join us for an informal and interactive session with OCVA staff members, where you'll dive deeper into their current projects and explore how their work aligns with your organization's goals. This is a great opportunity to ask questions, find areas of collaboration, and gain a clearer understanding of how OCVA can support your efforts. During a summit filled with valuable information, take advantage of this one-on-one time to engage with the team and connect in a meaningful way!

## SESSION 2

2:00 PM

### CONTENT STRATEGIES: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO STARTING (AND ELEVATING) YOUR CONTENT

Amara DePaul

#### UMPQUA DISCOVERY CENTER

Whether you're just beginning or looking to elevate your existing content, this hands-on workshop will guide you through the essentials of creating content that connects, informs, and inspires. Designed for small business owners, city staff, or community leaders, this session will help you clarify your message, identify your audience, and build a content strategy that fits your time and resources. We'll cover how to get started when you don't know where to begin, creating content pillars that align with your mission and values, tools and tips for writing, photography, and video, and more.

### LORAX LIKE A LOCAL – HOW TO SHARE YOUR STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

Taryn Sutton

#### 451 FIR

There are many stakeholders along the coast with shared goals and values, from protecting natural resources to fostering respectful visitor behavior. Why not join forces to amplify those messages? In this interactive session, Yaquina Head's Education Coordinator, Taryn Sutton, will share practical strategies to help you "Lorax Like a Local" — speaking for the coast in ways that inspire action, foster community pride, and resonate with residents and visitors alike. Walk away with tools, examples, and collaboration ideas to strengthen and unify stewardship communication across our region.

### SUSTAINABLE TRAILS: LESSONS FROM THE OREGON COAST FOR DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING STABILITY

Daniel Fenn, Eddie Kessler, Trevor Bradford

#### CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

What is a sustainably built trail—and why does it matter? This workshop explores the fundamentals of sustainable trail design, construction, and maintenance, with real-world examples from the Oregon Coast. Hear from Trevor Bradford of Trailkeepers of Oregon, who brings expertise in trail stewardship and volunteer coordination, and Daniel Fenn from South Slough Reserve, offering insights from land and habitat management. Whether you're working with volunteers or paid crews, you'll gain practical strategies for creating trails that minimize impact, reduce maintenance, and enhance the user experience.

### FUELING SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS: TOOLS, FUNDING & FINANCIAL KNOW-HOW

Derek Tonn

#### HOALOHA TIKI BAR

This session will begin with an introduction to the free, confidential one-on-one advising services available through your local SBDC—on topics ranging from business planning, branding and identity, business acquisition and/or exit strategies to accessing regional and statewide networks of other partners and resources. From there, we will explore the topic of financial literacy, tailored for small business owners on the Oregon Coast. Designed to be practical, eye-opening, and empowering, this session will help entrepreneurs build financial goals rooted in real life, supporting long-term business sustainability and personal well-being.

# OCT 22

## 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT Keynote Speakers

### Gathering with Purpose: A New Wave of Coastal Events

**OCT 22 @ 9:30 AM - REEDSPORT COMMUNITY CENTER**

What kinds of tourism events make a real impact? This keynote explores how innovation, sustainability, and tribal partnership can transform the tourism landscape through events that spark joy, deepen connection, and reflect local values

Join Kim Cooper Findling for a behind-the-scenes look at Lincoln City's Fourth of July drone show, which took an innovative and sustainable approach to a classic coastal event. Alanna Kieffer will share the vision behind the Winter Waters event series—an inspiring model for off-season culinary food series rooted in local collaboration and coastal identity.

We'll also hear from Lisa Norton and Leslie Palotas about how partnerships like Take Action Lincoln County can help us move beyond land acknowledgments and into meaningful tribal engagement with events like the Nesika Illahee Pow-Wow, an annual celebration of Siletz culture and community.

Together, these stories will offer inspiration for how place-based, purpose-driven events can elevate the coast for residents and visitors alike.



### PRESENTED BY

#### **Lisa Norton**

Chief Administrative Officer for the  
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

#### **Leslie Palotas**

Community Connector at the Economic  
Development Alliance of Lincoln County

#### **Kim Cooper Findling**

Director: Explore Lincoln City

#### **Alanna Kieffer**

Marine Biologist & Educator



# OCT 22

2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

## Keynote Speakers

### **Beneath the Surface: Sharks, Science, and the Surprising Future of Coastal Tourism**

**OCT 22 @ 12:20 PM - REEDSPORT COMMUNITY CENTER**

Buckle up for a jawsome dive into one of the most thrilling and misunderstood stories of the Oregon Coast: sharks! This keynote is more than just bite-sized facts about fins in the water. It's a deep dive into the powerful role sharks play in our coastal ecosystems and the creative opportunities they offer for tourism.

Join Dr. Sulikowski from Oregon State University's Big Fish Lab as he takes us on a journey from Oregon's surf to some of the most remote waters on Earth, where his team studies shark movement, reproduction, and the fragile habitats that sustain these keystone predators. You'll hear the latest on Oregon Coast sharks, how science is shifting the narrative around these charismatic creatures, and why protecting sharks is good for the ocean and the climate.

But we're not stopping there! We'll also explore how these incredible animals can inspire new visitor experiences from "Sharktoberfest" shoulder season celebrations to science-based shark charters, helping tourism professionals tap into the thrill without the fear.

This keynote is packed with science, storytelling, and...sharks! Don't miss your chance to see sharks in a whole new light and maybe leave with shark-fueled marketing ideas of your own.

### **PRESENTED BY**

**Dr. James Sulikowski**

Dr. Sulikowski is the Director of Oregon State University's Coastal Oregon Marine Experiment Station (COMES) and a Professor in the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences (FWCS). His interdisciplinary research integrates aspects of physiology and ecology to provide an understanding of how humans and a changing environment affect the movements, and spatial/temporal distribution of sharks in both the coastal and pelagic environments. Dr. Sulikowski's 25 years of experience using a variety of techniques, including hormone analyses, electronic tracking, and ultrasound imaging, has resulted in over 120 peer reviewed publications and over 13 million dollars in external grant funding. His work has been featured on such media outlets as the BBC, Discovery Channel's Shark week, Nat Geo Wild, The Today Show, as well as many other local, regional and national affiliates.



# OCT 22

## 2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

# Workshops

## SESSION 1

10:30 AM

### DEMYSTIFYING THE FIT TRAVEL TRADE: CONNECTING OREGON PARTNERS WITH INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

Thomas Moser

UMPQUA DISCOVERY CENTER

The FIT (Flexible Independent Traveler) market is a vital gateway to bringing high-value international visitors to the Oregon Coast - but the process of working with travel trade professionals can feel complex and unfamiliar. This session will guide Oregon tourism partners through the fundamentals of the FIT landscape, with a focus on how international products are purchased and packaged by receptive tour operators.

Attendees will learn key industry terminology, explore the differences between Oregon's core international markets, and gain insight into how these markets approach visiting Oregon. Whether you're a DMO, hotel, attraction, or other tourism partner, you'll leave with a clear understanding of the role receptive tour operators play and how to confidently engage and follow up with them. This is your opportunity to move beyond mystery and start building meaningful travel trade connections that lead to more international business.

### GRANTS 101: CRAFTING COMPELLING PROPOSALS WITH TRAVEL OREGON

Dawn Smallman, Deb Vaughn

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Join Travel Oregon for Grantsmithing 101, a hands-on, conversational workshop designed to sharpen your grant writing skills and deepen your understanding of the grantmaker's perspective. This session will help you avoid common pitfalls, align your proposals with funder priorities, and craft compelling narratives and budgets that stand out. You'll gain insights from real-world examples and reviewer feedback while building a stronger, more strategic approach to securing funding. Ideal for nonprofits, destination organizations, city and regional leaders, and tourism businesses ready to level up their grants game.

### LEVEL UP WITH AI: SMARTER TOOLS FOR TOURISM

Zack Martin

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

From streamlining guest communication to automating bookings and content creation, AI is changing the way tourism businesses operate. This hands-on workshop will introduce practical tools, tips, and use cases for incorporating AI into your workflow, whether you're a small business owner, DMO, or tour operator. Learn how to boost efficiency, enhance customer experience, and free up time for the creative, human side of your work. This workshop is a great jumping off point for anyone who has started exploring the potential for AI in their business, and are ready to take the next steps in learning how to utilize these tools efficiently and responsibly.

### OPENING DOORS: INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT FIRST INITIATIVE

Arica Sears, Melanie Hartwig

HOALOHA TIKI BAR

What happens when the tourism industry becomes a leader in inclusion? Along the Oregon Coast, that question is being answered through the collaborative efforts of the Employment First Initiative, employers, and workforce partners committed to expanding supported employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In this session, Arica Sears, Deputy Director of the Oregon Coast Visitors Association, joins Melanie Hartwig of the Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS) and a panel of business leaders who have embraced inclusive hiring. Together, they will explore how accessible employment practices not only transform lives—but also strengthen businesses and communities. With Oregon's coastal economy relying on service-driven sectors, this session offers a compelling look at how inclusion can be a strategic advantage—and a moral imperative. Join us to learn how your organization can be part of this movement toward a more accessible and equitable workforce.

2025 PEOPLE'S COAST SUMMIT

# OCT 21 Summit Activities

**October 21 between 3:30-5:30 PM**

**Break up the conference by exploring Reedsport.  
Choose one of the activities offered below!**



## EXPERIENCE THE DUNES WITH RIDIN' DIRTY RENTALS

**\*Limited to 15 participants.  
Sign up early to reserve your spot!**

Buckle up for an unforgettable adventure across the Oregon Coast's iconic sand dunes! Join Ridin' Dirty Rentals for a free 90-minute guided tour in a side-by-side dune buggy. This immersive experience offers a thrilling ride through a one-of-a-kind coastal sand ecosystem and an up-close look at one of the region's most popular recreation activities. All gear provided — drivers, helmets, and goggles included. Just bring your sense of adventure!

**Register here**



## TOUR AND TASTING AT STILLWAGON DISTILLERY

**464 Fir Avenue, Reedsport OR**

Enjoy a tour of Stillwagon Distillery where you will see how handcrafted spirits are produced. Fermentation, distillation, infusion of real fruits and spices to create unique flavor profiles using ingredients sourced locally, in Oregon, and elsewhere. Tasting our almost 30 unique flavorful spirits is an education in flavor combinations and how it can be used in cocktails and culinary use.



## TOUR THE UMPQUA DISCOVERY CENTER

**409 Riverfront Way, Reedsport, OR**

Explore the Umpqua Discovery Center on Reedsport's riverfront, where you will be taken on a journey through time in the Tidewaters and Time cultural history exhibit. Listen as the early pioneers tell stories about life in a tidewater town and watch videos of how logging was done in the past. Walk through the fish cannery and tidewater town, and explore the natural history of the area. The combination of genuine historical artifacts and high-tech sound and light will heighten your appreciation of the experience.



