



2025 OREGON COAST ECONOMIC SUMMIT

COOS BAY/ NORTH BEND AREA
SEPTEMBER 26

PRESENTED BY



Oregon Coastal Caucus

Welcome to the **Oregon Coast Economic Summit**

As an active participant in Oregon's Rural and Coastal Economic Development, the Oregon Coastal Caucus is pleased to extend a personal "thank you" to all our speakers, sponsors, attendees and Taste of the Oregon Coast participants for taking the time from their busy schedules to visit us in our wonderful corner of the state.

We greatly appreciate your support in helping us develop a collaborative pathway to address issues common to rural-coastal communities, and possibilities for our shared future. Special thanks to this year's primary partners – the Coquille Indian Tribe and the Ko-Kwel Casino Resort – Pacific Power, our Tsunami Level Sponsor, and all of the other organizations and individuals who have supported this program through sponsorship, volunteerism and time.

We hope that you will find this to be a memorable event packed with informative panels to address our coastal and rural economic development needs and opportunities. This year's programming is aimed at continuing, creating and enhancing collaborations – across sectors and disciplines – in support of regional economic development solutions, particularly as we prepare for the 2026 Legislative Session. OCES again will feature informative panel discussions on a wide range of topics that recognize the unique economic diversity of our coastal and rural communities.

You have a vital role to play in sustaining and contributing to the very constructive discussions, dialogues and developments that have become a hallmark of the OCES. We are grateful for your attendance, support and continued interest in helping us to address the challenges and chart the future of a more economically diverse and robust Oregon Coast.

Sincerely,

Rep. David Gomberg, Chair
Coastal Caucus

2025 OREGON COAST ECONOMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

SEPTEMBER 25

999 N FRONT ST, COOS BAY

6:00 - 9:00 PM

Taste of the Oregon Coast Reception

Kick off the Oregon Coast Economic Summit with this networking event hosted by Blue Ridge Strategies.

SEPTEMBER 26

SALMON ROOM
THE KO-KWEL CASINO RESORT

7:30 AM

Breakfast is Served

8:00 AM

Welcome by Coastal Caucus and our host, the Coquille Tribe

8:15 AM

Breakfast Keynote: Iceland Ocean Cluster – 100 Percent Fish

9:00 AM

Networking Break/Locate Breakout Sessions

9:15 AM

Breakout 1

Willow Room: Iceland Ocean Cluster – Deep Dive

Hazel Room: Critical Nexus Between Government Services and Economic Success

Cedar Room: Leveraging Arts and Culture for Community and Economic Growth

10:00 AM

Networking Break/Return to Salmon Room

10:15 AM

Coastal Caucus Roundtable

10:45 AM

Comments by Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Jeff Merkley and Congresswoman Val Hoyle

11:15 AM

FEMA EIS and its Impacts on Coastal Oregon

11:45 AM

Lunch is served

12:00 AM

Sponsor Presentation: Pacific Power Sponsorship Comments (Salmon Room)

12:05 PM

Lunch Keynote: Blue Economy Innovation with the Port of San Diego

1:00 PM

Networking Break/Locate Breakout Sessions

1:15 PM

Breakout 2

Willow Room: Port of San Diego – Deep Dive

Hazel Room: Industrial Symbiosis

Cedar Room: Oregon Trade Caucus – Getting Oregon Ready to Take on the World

2:00 PM

Networking Break/Return to Salmon Room

2:15 PM

Pacific Coast Intermodal Port: The Biggest Topic in Oregon Economic Development

3:00 PM

Networking Break/Locate Breakout Sessions

3:15 PM

Breakout 3

Willow Room: Building Businesses and Workforce in the Blue Economy

Hazel Room: Oregon's Hidden Blue-Green Treasure Meets a Science Lab in Reedsport

Cedar Room: A Partnership that Works – How ODFW, the Coquille Tribe and Others Are Restoring Salmon Runs in the Coquille Watershed

4:00 PM

Networking Break/Return to Salmon Room

4:15 PM

Business Pitch Opportunity

4:45 PM

Coastal Caucus Closing Remarks

5:00 PM

Adjourn

2025 OREGON COAST ECONOMIC SUMMIT

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Tsunami



Big Wave



White Cap



Tide Pool



Custom Sponsorship Packages



2025 OREGON COAST ECONOMIC SUMMIT

COASTAL CAUCUS



**Senator
David Brock Smith**

Senator David Brock Smith, a third-generation resident of Senate District 1, grew up in Port Orford, attended SOCC and SOU, and returned home to run his family's restaurant and lounge before entering public service. He has served as Port Orford City Council President, Chamber of Commerce President/Director, Chair and Vice Chair of the Curry County Board of Commissioners, and District 4 Chair with the Association of Oregon Counties. Elected State Representative for House District 1 in 2017 and appointed to the Senate in 2023, he has worked extensively on committees focused on public lands, energy, public safety, and economic development, and continues to represent Curry County and parts of Coos and Douglas Counties—Oregon's Fish, Farm & Forestry District.



**Senator
Dick Anderson**

Senator Dick Anderson was elected to the Senate in 2020 and is the former Mayor of Lincoln City. He serves on the North Lincoln Health District Board and the Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Board, and previously served on the Lincoln County Foundation and the Oregon Coastal Zone Management Executive Committee. Raised in Wallowa County, he spent 35 years in the financial industry before retiring and moving to the Oregon Coast, where he continues to stay active through local volunteer work with the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), B'nai B'rith Camp, Family Promise of Lincoln County, and the Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce.



**Senator
Suzanne Weber**

Senator Suzanne Weber moved to Tillamook in 1970, where she taught first through third grade for 30 years before operating two small businesses and serving on the Tillamook City Council and as mayor. As mayor, she prioritized economic development and advocated for legislation that allows Oregon's rural communities to set their own priorities. Throughout her career, Sen. Weber has been dedicated to supporting kids, families, and the well-being of Northwest Oregon's rural communities.



**Representative
Court Boice**

Representative Court Boice was elected to the State House of Representatives in 2024. Prior to being a state representative, Representative Boice served as Curry County Commissioner for six years and as a member of the Oregon State Marine Board for eight years. Boice has also been a proud member of Oregon's Coastal community, having been the owner and operator of the Paradise Wilderness Lodge from 1973 through 2007 and a part owner of Jerry's Boats from 1973 to 1997. He has also served as a member on various Oregon boards and commissions including the Association of Oregon Counties, Oregon Coast Zone Management Association, and the Coquille Tribal Grant Funding Board of Trustees.



**Representative
David Gomberg**

Representative David Gomberg is serving his sixth term in Oregon's House District 10, covering Lincoln County and parts of Lane and Benton Counties. He co-chairs the Ways and Means Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee, serves on the Emergency Board, Governor's Commission on Senior Services, Oregon Innovation Council, Seismic Safety Commission, and Ocean Science Trust, and has focused on infrastructure, wildfire recovery, emergency response, and rural economic development, securing over \$70 million for local projects. For more than 35 years, he owned and operated a kite design and manufacturing business, performing worldwide and earning induction into the Kite Hall of Fame in 2005.



**Representative
Cyrus Javadi**

Longtime Oregon resident, Cyrus first moved to the coast in 2008, originally living in Astoria and now residing in Tillamook. He earned his Bachelor's degree in accounting and worked in the financial industry, before pursuing his passion for healthcare and earning his Doctorate in dental surgery. He currently operates a private dental practice in Tillamook. He has served as a Commissioner for the Port of Tillamook, the Dental Director for the Tillamook County Health Department, the Secretary for the Oregon Dental Association, and a member of the ODA Board of Trustees.



**Representative
Boomer (Duane) Wright**

Representative Boomer (Duane) Wright has had a long career in education, earning a Bachelor's in Education from Oregon College of Education in 1972 and a Master's with Administrator Certification from the University of Oregon in 1982. He served as Vice Principal of Siuslaw Middle School, Principal at Rhododendron Elementary, Siuslaw Middle, and Siuslaw Primary Schools, and Superintendent of the Mapleton School District before retiring in 2002. Afterward, he worked as Florence community liaison for SELCO Credit Union and as General Manager of Sea Lion Caves, and continues to contribute to education as a substitute teacher in local high schools.

2025 OREGON COAST ECONOMIC SUMMIT

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Jason Giffen
Vice President, Planning & Environment, Port of San Diego

Jason Giffen has over 25 years of experience in the planning and environmental fields, with an applied concentration on coastal and marine environments in California. For the last 12 years, he has implemented a robust portfolio of environmental programs at the Port of San Diego advancing environmental protection (air, land, water, & wildlife), climate action planning, coastal resilience, nature-based solutions, maritime sustainability, and blue economy innovation.

He is a seasoned thought-to-action catalyst adept at advancing innovative partnerships with triple-bottom line benefits, including pilot project facilitation through the Port's Blue Economy Incubator and expanding the reach of ports as catalysts for innovation and sustainability. He holds a master's degree in international environmental policy from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies and executive education in Sustainability Leadership through Harvard University's Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment



Paula Sylvia
Director, Aquaculture & Blue Technology Department/Blue Economy Incubator, Port of San Diego

Paula Sylvia is the Director of the Aquaculture and Blue Technology Department, which includes the Port's Blue Economy Incubator at the Port of San Diego. She oversees a variety of planning and pre-development and long-term planning initiatives aimed at developing environmental and economic opportunities for aquaculture, blue technology, and other nature-based solution businesses in and around San Diego Bay.

She also oversees the Port's Blue Economy Incubator, a platform to support entrepreneurship and innovation partnerships to facilitate and scale pilot projects and build a portfolio of nature-based solutions and new businesses that can deliver multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits to the region. She holds a Master of Science in Aquaculture from the University of Stirling, Institute of Aquaculture in Scotland, and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix, USA.



Dr. Alexandra Leeper
CEO, Iceland Ocean Cluster

Dr. Alexandra Leeper is the CEO of the Iceland Ocean Cluster. She is passionate about leadership for the sustainable use of ocean resources. Her role is that of a scientist intrapreneur in the blue and circular economies, from which she draws on diverse experiences from working all over the world in universities, consultancies, and at sea.

Alexandra has a background in marine resources and completed an industrial doctorate in aquaculture and circular economy in 2021 in collaboration with Matís, Food and Biotech Iceland and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. Her work focuses on sustainable value creation, positive impact in the blue economy and supporting the development of ocean clusters around the world. She is committed to promote the visibility and connection of women in the startup sector and is herself a co-founder of Hringvarmi, an agri-tech startup that utilises waste heat for controlled environment food production.

PLENARY SESSIONS

MAIN STAGE

BREAKFAST KEYNOTE: ICELAND OCEAN CLUSTER – 100 PERCENT FISH

8:15 AM

DR. ALEXANDRA LEEPER

Dr. Alexandra Leeper, CEO of the Iceland Ocean Cluster, will introduce the audience to the 100 Percent Fish concept. The Iceland Ocean Cluster pioneered the philosophy of working toward using the whole fish that is harvested for value-added products, in addition to the traditional food value. This has opened up increased prosperity by using parts of the fish that currently are turned into fertilizer or often discarded. This model has shown that one single cod that is worth about \$15 in filets can generate around \$4,700 by utilizing the rest of the fish to make products.

COASTAL CAUCUS ROUND TABLE

10:15 AM

THE COASTAL CAUCUS

The Coastal Caucus – the bicameral, bipartisan legislative body of coastal legislators – will speak their minds on coastal issues with a familiar face – moderator and former State Senator Arnie Roblan.

CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION MESSAGES

10:45 AM

SENATOR RON WYDEN, SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY AND CONGRESSWOMAN VAL HOYLE

While Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Jeff Merkley and Congresswoman Val Hoyle – all of whom represent the coast – were not able to attend in person due to their duties in Washington, D.C., they have provided us with video messages to talk about economic development, community and other priorities, as they see them.

FEMA EIS AND IMPACTS ON COASTAL OREGON

11:15 AM

BETSY JOHNSON, JEREMY ROGERS

Oregonians for Floodplain Protection members Betsy Johnson, former State Senator, and Jeremy Rogers, General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs for the Oregon REALTORS, will unpack the impacts that the FEMA EIS process for the National Flood Insurance Program will have on coastal Oregon, and the public comment process, which is open until Oct. 6.

LUNCH KEYNOTE: BLUE ECONOMY INNOVATION WITH THE PORT OF SAN DIEGO

12:05 PM

JASON GIFFEN, PAULA SYLVIA

Port of San Diego Director of Aquaculture and Blue Technology Department/Blue Economy Incubator, Vice President of Planning and Environment, and others will outline the innovative work that is happening at the Port of San Diego to support the blue economy development, which is fiscally, environmentally and economically responsible.

PACIFIC COAST INTERMODAL PORT: THE BIGGEST TOPIC IN OREGON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2:15 PM

CADDY MCKEOWN, BRIAN CLEM, MELISSA CRIBBINS, ARNIE ROBLAN

It's the biggest show in town when it comes to statewide economic development projects. Representatives of the Port of Coos Bay and the Pacific Coast Intermodal Port will give an overview of this project, which has potential to transform the regional economy by creating thousands of good-paying career-track jobs around the state. Former State Representatives Caddy McKeown and Brian Clem will be joined by PCIP Executive Director Melissa Cribbins and Port Commissioner (and former State Senator) Arnie Roblan to discuss this game-changing project.

BUSINESS PITCH OPPORTUNITY

4:15 PM

This is YOUR turn to share your ideas! Do you have an idea for a business or industry that checks all the boxes – economically feasible, environmentally and culturally responsible and creates good paying jobs in Oregon's coastal communities?

This is your chance to grab a microphone and share away! Maybe you'll find partners and collaborators by speaking your dream into reality! Just be sure that you do it in less than a minute ... that's the hard part!

BREAKOUT 1

9:15 AM

ICELAND OCEAN CLUSTER DEEP DIVE

WILLOW ROOM

DR. ALEXANDRA LEEPER

So you just couldn't get enough of 100 Percent Fish during the keynote?

This is your chance to join Dr. Alexandra Leeper, CEO of the Iceland Ocean Cluster, for a continued conversation about this topic. This is a chance for participants to ask questions and get more details than can be provided in a 45-minute session.

CRITICAL NEXUS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS

HAZEL ROOM

TRACY CREWS, BOB EDER, AARON HUANG, JEREMY CHILDRESS

Oregon's coastal economy depends on information and innovation. We'll hear from coastal business owners, commercial fishers, and Oregon State University's Sea Grant Program. Panelists will provide an open discussion on how they rely on marine science to support innovation and resiliency within their business sector and discuss how such innovation may be challenged in light of recent and ongoing funding and program reductions for marine science.

Panelists will share ideas on keeping our economy healthy and innovative in light of funding reductions for marine science. Panelists will include Tracy Crews, Sea Grant, Associate Director of Education, Bob Eder - Newport fisherman, Aaron Huang - Oo-Nee Sea Ranch, Owner, and Jeremy Childress - The Sexton Corporation, CEO.

LEVERAGING ARTS AND CULTURE FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

CEDAR ROOM

LYDIA HEINS, PAUL SCHUYTEMA, CHANTELE MEYER, SEN. DICK ANDERSON

Join panelists Lydia Heins, Coos Art Museum; Paul Schuytema, Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County; Rod Cross, City of Toledo; Chantelle Meyer, City of Florence will dive into how arts and culture fuel coastal economies. Using AEP6 data from regions like Florence, discover the financial impact on local businesses and the importance of this data for future planning. Sen. Dick Anderson will be moderating this forum!

BREAKOUT 2

1:15 PM

PORT OF SAN DIEGO – DEEP DIVE

WILLOW ROOM

JASON GIFFEN, PAULA SYLVIA

Were the ideas you heard during their keynote so inspiring you were thirsty for a whole lot more? This is the session for you! Go into greater depth of how the work they are doing in San Diego is benefiting the Port, the environment and entrepreneurship. Ask questions that dive into the questions you have about what's happening and how we can implement these same philosophies in communities right here on the Oregon Coast. Heck, geographic lines don't really matter THAT much, so you might even find a partner for one of your ideas in Southern California!

INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS

HAZEL ROOM

AMY WENTWORTH, JIM MCCAULEY, REP. CYRUS JAVADI

Join Amy Wentworth, Senior Director of EHS and Facilities Maintenance at Pacific Seafood and Jim McCauley, Legislative Director for League of Oregon Cities to learn about industrial symbiosis and opportunities on the coast to use this philosophy to grow our economy!

The concept was pioneered in Denmark around 1972 and creates public and private partnerships to create a circular approach to production. The main principle is that residue and waste from one company becomes a resource for another, benefiting both the environment and the economy.

This can apply fishing industry, agriculture and many other natural resources, as well as other industries. Rep. Cyrus Javadi will be the moderator for this panel!

OREGON TRADE CAUCUS – GETTING OREGON READY TO TAKE ON THE WORLD

CEDAR ROOM

REP. DANIEL NGUYEN, REP. SHELLY BOSHART DAVIS

Oregon already punches above its weight class when it comes to international trade, but decline comes from resting on laurels, and there's a whole lot of growth potential.

Join Rep. Daniel Nguyen and Rep. Shelly Boshart Davis, the co-chairs of the brand new Oregon Trade Caucus, which focuses on growing international trade. Fresh off the group's first trade mission to Vietnam, the panel will contextualize Vietnam in Oregon's broader trade profile, as well as spend some time on questions and answers to learn what folks find most helpful as the caucus picks up speed and starts organizing more events.

They will be reaching industry and finding out what kind of pro-trade agenda they can focus on to increase Oregon opportunities. Come prepared with a list of headlines and ways that Oregon is challenged and share solutions that can help to turn that around!

BREAKOUT 3

3:15 PM

BUILDING BUSINESSES AND WORKFORCE IN THE BLUE ECONOMY

WILLOW ROOM

ALEXANDRA LEEPER, MIKE VAINIER, MARK GREGORY,
SARA STEPHENS, CURTIS BROWN, REP. DAVID
GOMBERG, SEN. SUZANNE WEBER

What, exactly, is a “Blue Economy” that we keep talking about? Does it exist in Oregon? How prevalent is it? What is being done, or, more importantly, what COULD be done, to affect positive economic growth through ocean-oriented industries in a responsible way?

This panel will be discussing just that. Join Dr. Alexandra Leeper, Iceland Ocean Cluster; Mike Vainier, Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership; Mark Gregory, Oregon Small Business Development Center Network; Sara Stephens, Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board; and Curtis Brown, San Diego area entrepreneur, to learn more! This panel will be co-moderated by Rep. David Gomberg and Sen. Suzanne Weber!

OREGON'S HIDDEN BLUE-GREEN TREASURE MEETS A SCIENCE LAB IN REEDSPORT

HAZEL ROOM

SCOTT OHLGREN, ROI WURGAFT

For the past 40 years, Oregon has possessed a little-known but world-class asset as rare and valuable as any found in Silicon Valley or the Willamette wine country: a nutraceutical-grade microalgae that grows nowhere on earth except in Upper Klamath Lake.

Because of new genome sequencing research, and a first-ever breakthrough in indoor cultivation developed at a state-of-the-art food innovation lab on the coast at Reedsport, this Oregon-only unique blue-green aquatic gem now has the chance to transform into a globally recognized, high-value nutraceutical and biotech resource—creating new industries, driving export revenue, and positioning Oregon as the world leader in sustainable microalgae innovation. This talk will highlight capacities of the Wurgaft Food Innovation Center, a bioscience research center for Oregon, which has the capability to unleash the potential for Oregon’s sustainable blue-green algae, secure hundreds of millions of dollars in product development and high-value exports worldwide, from right here on our coast. It seeks multidisciplinary collaborations with institutions such as Oregon State University for student applied field research, and building employment pipelines for high paying jobs directly into the bioscience field.

Based in coastal Reedsport, Oregon, this state-of-the-art, food-grade facility is uniquely equipped to accelerate every stage of development—from lab-scale ideation to full commercial readiness. Unlike traditional labs, it can bridge the entire productization journey with rare in-house capabilities in extraction, fractionation, filtration, spray drying, custom blending and many more.

A PARTNERSHIP THAT WORKS – HOW ODFW, THE COQUILLE TRIBE AND OTHERS ARE RESTORING SALMON RUNS IN THE COQUILLE WATERSHED

CEDAR ROOM

REP. COURT BOICE, CAM PARRY, JOHN OGAN,
HEATH HAMPEL, SEN. DAVID BROCK SMITH

Not too long ago, the entire population of Coquille River salmon were a breath away from extinction. That is unacceptable. Salmon has been a cornerstone of Northwest culture for thousands of years, dating back prior to European settlement.

It’s also a major economic driver on the coast, and the Coquille River system, in particular has a long history of attracting people with its abundance. So Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Coquille Tribe and others banded together to create a partnership that is the first of its kind, at least in Oregon.

They’ve successfully brought back salmon runs in the Coquille. There’s still work to be done, but we are on the right track! Panelists will include Rep. Court Boice; Cam Parry, fish habitat expert; John Ogan, Coquille Tribe; and Heath Hampel, Coquille River STEP Association. Sen. David Brock Smith will moderate this panel!

