

The Charleston Coast and Ocean Center

A destination for locals and visitors at the end of Boat Basin Drive

What it is: The partners on this project envision it as a way to sustain and expand the economic and cultural vitality of the Coos Bay area by collaborating to create a multi-dimensional, multi-user complex focused on accessing, learning about, and caring for coastal and ocean resources.

Why it is important: The coastal community of Charleston, Oregon is home to a wide array of marine-oriented, recreational, cultural, research, educational, and fisheries activities. Charleston's future role as a center of coastal and maritime activity is closely linked to the viability of these key industries. Studies have shown that there are several needs that, if met, will help to assure the future viability of the community of Charleston and the institutions based there.

Three main needs characterized by the Oregon Solutions team:

- (1) Support collaboration among local organizations that sustain coastal and ocean resources
- (2) Increase coastal access and infrastructure through improved visitor access to coastal features
- (3) Increase public information and educational opportunities while maintaining the integrity of coastal and marine dependent activities

What has happened so far: In March of 2008, Governor Kulongoski formally designated the "Charleston Coast and Ocean Center" as an Oregon Solutions project. The organizations and individuals that were involved in the Oregon Solutions collaboration are identified in the box to the right. Many of the project partners and both conveners signed the Declaration of Cooperation on February 3rd, 2009. We have now embarked on a locally managed part of the project that will finalize site and architectural plans and garner community and financial support to complete the project.

The project vision: Upon completion, the facilities in Charleston will provide workspace, meeting rooms, and classroom space for a number of local public and non-profit marine-related agencies, research facilities, and information services. At a minimum, new construction will meet the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard. Necessary site improvements include parking for employees and visitors, outdoor gathering and observation spaces, trailheads, and related infrastructure improvements.

Charleston Oregon Solutions Project Collaborators

Conveners:

- Senator Joanne Verger
- Representative Arnie Roblan

Project Partners:

- Oregon International Port of Coos Bay
- South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Coos Watershed Association
- University of Oregon/
Oregon Institute of Marine Biology
- Oregon State University
Extension/ Sea Grant

Community Stakeholders:

- Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians
- Coos Bay Power Squadron
- U. S. Coast Guard
- Charleston Merchants Association
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
- U. S. Bureau of Land Management
- Charleston Community Enhancement Corporation
- Coos County
- South Coast Development Corporation

Other Project Team Participants:

- Governor's Economic Revitalization Team – Jeff Griffin
- U of O Federal Affairs Director – Betsy Boyd
- Office of Congressman Peter DeFazio – Ron Kreskey
- Citizen Representative – Ann Donnelly

Oregon Solutions Project Manager:

- Steve Bryant

Project vision components:

- (1) The 5,000 sq. ft. Charleston Marine Life Center focused on marine education.
- (2) A central administrative and public education building of approximately 20,000 sq. ft. for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, the Coos Watershed Association and the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.
- (3) Acquisition and relocation of the existing 3.67-acre Coast Guard housing complex and integration of this site into the project for public access, outdoor activities, and future expansion.
- (4) Infrastructure improvements to Boat Basin Drive, including pedestrian, street and storm drainage improvements, public parking, landscaping and lighting.
- (5) Improvements to the Oregon Coast Trail system including connections to the natural areas and parks along Cape Arago Highway.
- (6) A marine business incubator facility, possibly to be constructed and operated by the International Port of Coos Bay

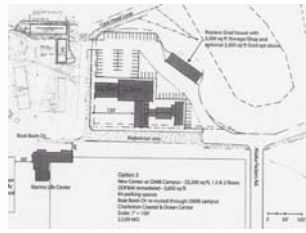
Development of Current Coast Guard Housing Property

- Integration of this site into the “Charleston Coast and Ocean Center”
- Development of public access, outdoor activities, and future project expansion



Central Building

- Approximately 20,000 sq ft
- Office and administrative space for OIMB, ODFW, CWA and SSNERR
- Public use space for natural resource education
- Public meeting spaces and parking
- Estimated cost: \$9 million



Charleston Marine Life Center

- 5,000 sq ft
- Operated by OIMB
- Aquarium displays, touch tanks, killer whale skeleton
- Office space for OSU Sea Grant program
- Estimated cost: \$450,000

