



## **Association of Oregon Counties**

# **Oregon Coast Trail Connections Project Begins New Stage**

The Oregon Coast Trail (OCT) connections project is relaunching to an important phase in its work. The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted a series of community based efforts to help address gaps and safety issues along various portions of the OCT.

In early April, the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) renewed its contract and partnership with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) to facilitate a county commissioner-led process connecting the gaps in Oregon's 362 miles of hiking path along the Oregon coast between Oregon's state lines.

Sixteen points have been identified on Oregon's coast trail as disconnected, or have other updates needed based on safety, convenience, or accessibility concerns. These points were identified through stakeholder engagement, local meetings for each of the trail segments, and conversations with local, state, and federal government partners.

The work of this commissioner-led, collaborative project started in 2017 as a directive from the Oregon State Legislature. Through 2017 House Bill 3149, the Legislature tasked OPRD with developing an action plan to address the gaps along the OCT.

The trail work has been divided into three sections – the north coast, led by Tillamook County Commissioner Erin Skaar; the mid coast, led by Lincoln County Commissioner Doug Hunt; and south coast, led by Coos County Commissioner Melissa Cribbins. Commissioners and stakeholders will be reworking to finalize the plan of action to connect the disconnected trail segments. The finalized plan will inform how state agencies, local governments, federal agencies, private landowners, and other partners can make needed updates and investments in the trail.

Contributed by: Megan Chuinard | Public Affairs Associate