

Video Message from Oregon's Coast

Dr. Jane Lubchenco

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Hi, this is Jane Lubchenco, coming to you today from the grounds of the Hatfield Marine Science Center, a vibrant hub of research for NOAA, for other federal and state agencies, and Oregon State University researchers, here in Newport, Oregon.

Having spent over 30 years doing research along the Oregon coast, it's a special treat for me to be back in Newport, a vibrant community along the coast that combines a great travel destination, a rich maritime history, proud fishing traditions and wonderful recreational opportunities.

I'm here for three events that underscore the importance of keeping coastal communities like Newport vibrant.

Today, I participated in a press event celebrating 7 million dollars that NOAA has awarded to 3 critical habitat restoration projects in Oregon, under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

These projects will help recreational and commercial fishing, open miles of waterway for endangered salmon, support more resilient coasts in the face of climate change, and create jobs in a state with high unemployment.

One of those projects is here in Newport. Spearheaded by our partners at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, it will employ off-season commercial fishermen to recover and recycle nearly 4,000 crab pots and other marine debris lost at sea.

This project has both ecological and economic benefits. It will significantly reduce ghost fishing by wayward crab gear, reduce boating hazards, and provide jobs to Oregon fishermen.

Keeping coastal communities vibrant also depends on having good working relationships with our diverse constituents who work and live along the coast.

This afternoon, I held the first in a series of roundtables with different interest groups. Today's was a very productive listening session with local commercial fishermen. We discussed a number of critical issues, including the use of catch shares in West Coast groundfish fisheries, and marine spatial planning.

The third event of this trip is a wonderful celebration of the 35th anniversary of the founding of the first National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Founded in 1974, and located near Coos Bay, the South Slough Research Reserve is a shining example of how sound science and coastal stewardship can work in tandem.

Scientific research conducted there serves as a basis for conserving and restoring critical fish and marine habitats across the nation, and understanding the impacts of climate change.

South Slough is one of 5 reserves that are monitoring wetland ecosystems and their relationship to sea-level rise, as part of NOAA's Climate Monitoring Network.

Science also underpins the reserve's robust educational programs, which have inspired and informed thousands of teachers, students and decision makers about the importance of healthy estuaries for sustainable fisheries and healthy coastlines.

I congratulate all the NOAA personnel, and our state and local partners, in achieving South Slough's 35-years worth of strong legacy of in estuarine research.

Until next time, this is Jane Lubchenco.