

Board Briefing Book

February 2023

Prepared by:

E. Elaine Placido, DPA, Executive Director

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Meeting Agenda:

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda – Annual Retreat

February 16, 2023

## Retreat Objectives

* Create opportunities for board and staff to connect
* Explore the big picture of how the Estuary Partnership can best incorporate key issues into its Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) Update
* Focus on reflection and insights, not decisions; provide guidance to decision-makers

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Topic | Notes and key discussion questions |
| **9:00 – 9:30** | **Welcome** **Introduction to the Day** | * Introductions and connector exercise
* Review retreat objectives, agenda, structure of the day
 |
| **9:30 – 10:00** | **Setting the Context:** Purpose and history of the Estuary Partnership's CCMP process | * **Elaine:** Share knowledge about the purpose of CCMP updates, how updates have been completed in the past, etc.; Review the current thinking on the update of the CCMP by 2025 including that staff will refresh ecological content; focus of public input is 4 key topics; how CCMP fits in with 6-year implementation plans and annual workplans
* **Full group:** Any additional context
* **Small groups:** Reflections on the info provided. Each small group will have a management team member as facilitator/note taker
* **Full group:** Discuss themes
 |
| **10:00 – 12:30***With a break*  | **Context and reflections on each of four key issues proposed for inclusion in the 2025 CCMP Update:*** Climate change (Catherine)
* Environmental Justice (Elaine)
* Recreation and access (Chris H)
* Education (Valerie)
 | *For each topic, 30-40 min. Not enough time, but a starting point** **Staff leads (see left):** Share brief objective context about the topic at hand. Will be available in advance and on paper.
* **Full group:** Any additional context
* **Small groups:** Reflections on the info provided and any insights or implications. Same facilitators.
* **Full group:** Discuss themes
 |
| **12:30 – 1:15** | Lunch |  |
| **1:15 – 2:15** | Exploring our "WHY?" | * **Erinne and Jasmine** will lead an exercise to explore and practice speaking about the personal "Why" behind service to the Estuary Partnership
* **Board members** will be invited to join this session remotely even if they can't be part of the full day
 |
| **2:15 – 3:30***With a break* | Interconnections and engagement | * In **new** **small groups**, then in the **full group**, participants share insights about:
	+ What ties together the four elements discussed in the morning, along with the personal "Why"?
	+ What are the broad implications of these interconnections for the CCMP update?
	+ Specific ideas for engaging partners and community in the CCMP update (who and how)
* Each small group will again have a management team member as facilitator/note taker
 |
| **3:30 – 4:00** | Wrap up and next steps | * Where does the conversation go next?
	+ **Elaine:** Integration with Equity Plan; CCMP Update Team [participants TBD] to take info and come up with a proposed update process
	+ **Full group:** What qualities do you hope the process will have / what advice do you have for that CCMP Update Team as they create a proposed update process?
* Timelines
* Appreciations
 |

Prior Meeting Record for Approval:

**Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership**

**Board Meeting Record**

Thursday, November 17, 2022 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon   Estuary Partnership Offices

**Members Present**:  Matt Jones, Rian Sallee, Jane Bacchieri, Joseph Hattrick, Rosemary Furfey, Mark Bierman

**Ex Officio Members Present**:  Mary Lou Soscia, Jillian McCarthy, John Netto, Yvonne Valette

**Presiding Officer**:  Matt Jones

**Staff Present**:  Elaine Placido, Madeline Marucha, Erinne Goodell, Sneha Rao Manohar, Keith Marcoe, Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky

**Review and Approval of September 15, 2022 Meeting Record**

***Action: Approved.***

**Executive Director Update**

**Contracts and Grants.** Elaine Placido noted that the only update to the Contracts and Grants information in the Board book was that Metro Central has been moved to the "Pending Awards" section.

***Action: None Required.***

**Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee.** Elaine Placido noted that the changes to the Employee Handbook and HR Procedures would be covered later in the meeting. She also told the Board that the Executive Committee would receive the audit results in December.

**Board Development Committee.** Rian Sallee led a brainstorming exercise about Board recruitment and committee engagement. The results of this exercise are included in an attachment to these meeting notes.

***Action: None Required.***

**Board Action Items**

**Amendments to the Employee Handbook and HR Procedures.** Elaine Placido presented recent amendments to the Employee Handbook and HR Procedures. In the Employee Handbook, "Sick Leave" has been changed to "Wellness and Sick Leave" to encourage employees to care for their physical and mental wellbeing. In the HR Procedures, changes have been made to the Performance Evaluation so that 360 reviews are now optional for non-management staff and mandatory for managers.

***Action: Approved.***

**Legislative Briefing.** Elaine Placido gave an overview of recent local, state, and national legislative developments that may affect the Estuary Partnership, particularly in light of the recent midterm elections. The Partnership looks forward to cultivating relationships with several newly elected lawmakers.

***Action: None Required.***

**East Fork Lewis River Floodplains By Design Funding Strategy.** Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky discussed the funding of the Ridgefield Pits project. Floodplains By Design is the final funding source that the Partnership needs for the project, but it will need to be fully funded by the legislature for the project to receive funds. Jasmine encouraged Washington residents to contact their lawmakers regarding this funding.

***Action: None Required.***

**Annual Fundraiser.** Erinne Goodell reviewed this year's Annual Event, which netted over $12,000 and created community among staff, Board members, and partners. Erinne also detailed her plans for modifications to next year's event, which are aimed at cutting costs and developing the components of the event that were most valuable in community-building and fundraising.

***Action: None Required.***

**Monitoring Team Presentation,***Sneha Rao Manohar*

Sneha Rao Manohar presented on the current work of the Monitoring Team. This work included longer-term projects such as the Action Effectiveness Monitoring and Research Program and the Ecosystem Monitoring Program; new projects such as the CH4-C Project; and other Monitoring Team work such as the data software transition to Tableau.

***Action: None Required.***

**Other Business**

**EPA Funding Opportunities.** Mary Lou Soscia highlighted a few upcoming EPA funding opportunities for the Board.

***Action: None Required.***

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Submitted by: Elaine Placido, Executive Director; Madeline Marucha, Administrative Assistant

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Next Meeting: Staff and Board Retreat, February 16, 2023

**Attachment to Meeting Record**

**Board Development Committee Brainstorming Results**

**11.17.22**

**What strategies may be useful in increasing committee participation?**

* Reduce committees.
* Increasing committee meetings—Everyone got a little exhausted from pandemic—think of fun ways to meet: group dinner, group lunch, meet after LCEP meeting.
* Define skills needed, define activities or tasks, define products that will be accomplished.
* Have clear outcomes and products for committees; meeting schedule & time commitment are clearly communicated.
* As a new board member, it could be great to have staff review qualifications and specifically invite individuals who would help round out committees.  I would think we are all willing to serve in any way that would be beneficial.
* Link committee needs to the skills/knowledge grid.
* Reach out with invites to those whose skills match needs. Board members may not be sure of their qualifications for specific committees.
* Have new board members self-select the committee(s) they would like to commit to when they come on board. Include discussion of time commitment and expectations for participation during onboarding.
* Requiring Board members to serve on at least one committee for 2 years (perhaps in a 4-year time frame).

**What strategies may be useful in identifying potential new Board members?**

* Annual Board discussion. Ask each Board member to provide 1-3 names for people to consider/ talk to about serving on the board.
* Recruit people who have received Steward of the Year award to be on Board.
* Define our skill needs.
* Reach out to new networks of people.
* One-on-one meetings.
* Network for new names.
* Eco-Trust Academy.
* Look at who attends our fundraiser and supports our organization to see if there might be interested people who fit into needed categories.
* Board member activity in other Boards/community events.
* Networking with other local partners to bolster interest in and knowledge of the organization.
* Board recruitment volunteer planting.
* Seek youth reps/folks new in career with mentoring —"sell" opportunity to be on Board.
* Identify type of people we need—specific outreach to community groups—Env Ed Assoc of Oregon, Coalition of Communities of Color, PSU Graduate School.
* Have board members do more meet and greets with external partners and organizations.
* I think using the board member profile would be the most beneficial.  Especially if there is a particular profile trait we want to add, those could be highlighted and we can tap into our networks with those lenses.
* Consider adding more at large members to our Board composition.
* Identify desired composition of board (skills, representation etc.) ask board members to reach out through their networks and other committees they are involved with.
* Maybe reach out to staff about folks they're working with from partner organizations who have varied technical skills to join the committee while providing information about the responsibilities of being on the board.

Executive Director's Report:

## Strategic Direction:

* The Implementation objectives have been updated for February 2023, linked here and on the Board’s Resource Page: [Implementation Activities to Date\_2023\_ Feb 23.docx](https://estuarypartnership.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/EcvAuJvypJNHnbU9i48PnEgBle4oJwmIXEuxrCzeIyZfug?e=SCVEVI)

## Activities of Note:

* The BIL Agreement has been received and work is ongoing. I expect to complete the amended workplan for years three through five by mid-summer.
* The Equity Plan that is required as a component of our BIL funding is moving forward. I have completed a detail of our current work in environmental justice and I’m working with several potential methods to identify disadvantaged communities within our study area. Both Oregon and Washington use different methods to identify disadvantaged communities, there are also multiple methods within each state dependent upon the agency/office that is defining the communities and purpose of the definition. I am also working with the Title 1a schools in each state. I hope to have a draft for review by the middle of March.
* Our EPA base funding will increase in 24 to $850,000 – a very exciting and appreciated increase. You all will see the budget and workplan for the next two years, including this sizeable increase in EPA base funds, at your next set of Committee and Board meetings.
* We are working hard to upgrade our systems. The first two system upgrades that I hope to have in place in the next 60-90 days are a digital time keeping system – we intend to use QB Time to integrate fully with our QuickBooks accounting software. And I’ll transition to using QuickBooks for our organizational budgeting rather than Excel. Program and Project Managers are really hungry for useful, real-time budget and tracking capabilities, and these two upgrades to our processes will offer a substantial increase in those areas.
* I’ve nearly completed (and likely will by the date of the retreat) meeting with all members of staff for their annual coaching meetings. Some of the big things I’m hearing from the team:
	+ Work-Life Balance is incredibly important to our staff and they generally appreciate the support they get in that area from the Estuary Partnership.
	+ Employees have generally high job satisfaction – 7/8 out of 10.
	+ Most employees think that our staff, the diversity of the work that we do, and our strategic direction are our biggest strengths.
	+ Conversely, the lack of modern systems for payroll/timekeeping and lack of real-time financial reports for project managers, poor office lighting, the need for increased diversity on the staff and board, continued growth in technology, are the things we need to work on.
* Jasmine has been leading work on messaging for the EFLR project with Floodplains by Design (FbD), we were up in Olympia two weeks ago. Thanks to Matt Jones for participating, as well as several members of the Clark Skamania Fly Fishers.
* We have been asked to consider submitting a comment letter to the Clark County Hearings Examiner about the potential impacts to Steigerwald Lake NWR and the large public investment there, if a surface mine is permitted about 1/3 of a mile up Gibbons Creek from the site. I will be reaching out to the Board in the next week for review and approval of that letter.
* There are three of us headed to DC in March to meet with EPA, members of our delegation, and other important members of Congress. We will be thanking them and outlining some of our early success with BIL funds and talking about appropriations for the coming years.

## Team Updates:

## Community Programs/Ed Team:

Mid-school year is a rich time of intersecting planning and implementation for a variety of projects. Our Education Team has been hard at work enhancing and adapting curriculum for upcoming programs, coordinating with schools, teachers, and community partners, preparing sites for field trips, and looking ahead to summer Big Canoe programs and organizing an amazing summer for 2023.

This school year, we took on a major project through the RCO/OSPI Outdoor Learning Grant, where we are providing outdoor lessons on school campuses for six schools this year, in addition to providing in-class lessons, and three field experiences for each class. It has proven to be a big undertaking but also a creative and enlivening project for our team.

Between November 1 and February 1 the Educators provided in-person classroom and field programs to:

* + - 24 classes within 11 schools
		- 620 students
		- 28 class lessons
		- 13 service-learning student field trips

Totals for the 22-23 school year as of Feb 1, 2023:

* + - 53 classes within 18 schools
		- 1261 students
		- 88 class lessons
		- 22 service-learning student field trips

## New Awards and Projects of Note:

City of Portland Harbor Community Grant ($32,537) will fund a series of summer 2023 Big Canoe trips on the Portland Harbor section of the lower Willamette River. The focus of the trips will be community groups working on Portland Harbor issues/engagement.

WA Ecology Salmon Creek Clean Water Enhancement and Education ($249,369). Recommended for funding and scored well. Highly likely to be fully funded in late spring or early summer. Continues the Estuary Partnership ongoing riparian restoration work at Salmon Creek and associated water quality focused education.

## Stormwater

* + - Baker Bay: The Design Report (the initial design concept document) was accepted by Ecology. Our consultants, KPFF and Learning Landscapes are working on the 60% design.
		- Rainier SEP: Our design consultant, Juncus Studio, is working on a design for stormwater treatment facilities at the Rainier public boat launch parking lot.
		- Grattix Box: We have held two Grattix box building events with a total of ten volunteers. We have completed 60% of the construction. We will hold at least two more building events. Outreach has begun and three of the twenty boxes have found homes.
		- Mittleman Jewish Community Center: The project’s stormwater and water quality focused classroom lessons have started. The on-the-ground retrofit part of the project is stalled while we figure out some technical challenges around the project’s overflow.
		- Washougal High School and Surrounding Streets: The City of Washougal’s application to the WA Dept of Ecology Stormwater Financial Assistance Program was recommended for funding. Final decisions will be made in late spring/early summer, but given where the grant scored, it is highly likely to be funded. (The Estuary Partnership wrote and submitted the grant for the City – and through an MOU, will implement the project. The grant provides $390,502 to develop stormwater retrofit designs at the Washougal High School and three surrounding streets.
		- Tualatin SWCD TREE: Clean Water Services reviewed the Washington County Stormwater Assessment to be submitted for this project. We will be using the assessment to identify three locations to complete stormwater retrofit concept designs, that could hopefully lead to applying for funding for new projects on the ground.

## Science Team:

The Columbia River Estuary Conference (CREC) is scheduled for May 16-18 at the Liberty Theater in Astoria, Oregon. We received over 45 abstracts for traditional oral, lightning, and poster presentations. We also are hoping to hold panel discussions with tribal representatives on various topics such as co-management of resources, First Foods, and traditional fire management practices. Registration for the conference is now open.

Tracking Toxics in the lower Columbia River (TLC): This project is funded by USEPA under their Columbia River Basin Restoration Act. We are partnering with USGS and CRITFC to test 10 sites along the mainstem lower Columbia River for toxic contaminants. The 10 sites are the same sites sampled under our Ecosystem Monitoring Program in 2005-2007 and USGS’s ConHab project in 2008/9. We will be facilitating a working group to review results and update our sampling design in hopes of receiving future funding for contaminant source tracking and long-term status and trend analyses.

Bay to Bay: Coastal Hazard Resiliency: This project is funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Federation, and we are partnering with Washington Sea Grant. We are working on community outreach and identification of areas, assets of community concern for flooding in Baker and Grays bays. We will be hosting a series of workshops to work with community members to prioritize areas of concern and then develop nature-based solutions to reduce risks of flooding with sea level rise and increased storm intensity and frequency.

## Restoration Efforts:

### Steigerwald:

* Construction completed in December 2022. The team currently is closing out regulatory, landowner/real estate, and funder requirements.
* Presented sessions (along with Wolf Water Resources and Cornforth) at the American Water Resources Association and Restore America's Estuaries Conferences. Presenting again at the Columbia River Estuary Conference in May.
* Finalizing carbon sequestration accounting. We are presenting our methods for offsetting carbon dioxide emissions during the construction of the project through planting hundreds of thousands of trees and shrubs. We are developing a white paper to disseminate to other restoration practitioners in hopes of providing methods for the restoration field to reduce emissions and if unfeasible, incorporate offsetting GHG emissions into their projects.
* PIT tag array for detecting fish use at the site is installed and will be operational prior to the spring freshet.
* This year's winter of planting focuses on areas where construction was completed this past summer as well as infill planting to bolster plant densities in some of the previously planted areas. The planting endeavor is sizable with over 130,000 native trees and shrubs including over 30 species to be installed by revegetation contractors across riparian, wetland and upland habitats within the restoration footprint. While the bulk of these plants are in the form of bare root stock, roughly 40,000 willows, dogwoods, and cottonwoods will be harvested and planted as "live stakes" or "poles". A recent cooperative agreement with the USFS to harvest a substantial portion of live cuttings from the Sandy River delta area will provide nearby Columbia River, genetic-sourced materials. Additionally, EP staff collected over 30lbs of wapato seed and 500 tubers on site and will install them along the main Gibbons creek outlet channel as well as a couple of the recently created wetlands. Last winter, a larger mix of wetland species were planted (including both seed and tubers) and yielded promising results this past summer. EP's Community Education Team is again leading numerous volunteer and student group planting events this year at Steigerwald including the revegetation of the decommissioned, old parking lot area that is now in the active floodplain. This winter's planting effort will go on through April bringing the total number of trees and shrubs installed across 250+ acre planting footprint to over 650,000. Plant maintenance activities will continue at Steigerwald for the next two growing seasons to ensure best conditions for establishment.

### East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reclamation Project (Ridgefield Pits):

The overall goal for this project is to restore floodplain function over 300 acres and to improve habitat for native aquatic species over 3-miles of the lower East Fork Lewis River. The primary action will be to fill abandoned gravel pits, while retaining cooler water, and regrade the floodplain to mimic historic conditions. This project will correct legacy impacts of in-stream gravel mining which continue to negatively impact water quality, habitat and physical processes. We currently are working with regulatory agencies, Clark County, the project engineer (InterFluve), and other partners to develop the 60% engineering designs, which will be submitted with permits in late spring. We anticipate putting the project out to bid next winter with the main construction actions beginning in summer 2024. The team secured $7M of construction funding from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Board. We are working with our communications staff to build support for the Floodplains by Design Program in the hopes that program will provide the remaining funds required for project construction. We have been working with numerous project partners over the years including Clark County, DNR, WDFW, Columbia Land Trust, Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group, Clark-Skamania FlyFishers, Cowlitz Tribe and others.

In addition to the Steigerwald Reconnection Project and the East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reclamation Project, active restoration work continues at 9 additional sites:

Horsetail Creek Phase 2 - In 2022, revegetation efforts continued at Horsetail Creek Floodplain in the USFS Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Building on the success of Phase 1, which restored and enhanced habitat, moderated stream temperatures in Horsetail Creek, and removed barriers to fish passage, revegetation crews planted 20,000 trees and shrubs in the Phase 2 area of the 190-acre site. Revegetation efforts benefit riparian and floodplain habitat by shading streams and maintaining cool water temperatures for salmon and steelhead using the site. Funding for the Horsetail Creek Floodplain restoration project is provided by One Tree Planted, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Arbor Day Foundation, OWEB, PGE, USFS, and BPA.

Mason Creek –In 2022 we received funding from the Recreation Office State of Washington to complete final designs and permitting for the lower 1-mile of Mason Creek above its confluence with the East Fork Lewis River. The lower portion of Mason Creek offers important habitat and thermal refuge for juvenile salmonids. The project will benefit native aquatic species, including salmonids and lamprey. The project’s main objective is to improve floodplain connectivity and habitat conditions within a 1-mile stretch and to enhance approximately 10 acres of adjacent wetland. Another important component of this project is to improve riparian conditions. The lower 1-mile of Mason Creek is almost totally devoid of native shrubs, forbs and trees. We are working with Clark County, who is the primary landowner, and the Homeowners Association to develop designs that will accommodate landowner needs. We anticipate completing final designs and permitting in 2024 with construction beginning in 2024/2025.

Dyer Creek- In 2022 we received funding from the Recreation Office State of Washington to complete final designs and permitting for the Dyer Creek project which is located along the East Fork Lewis River immediately downstream of the Ridgefield Pits project (see above). The project will remove several thousand feet of rip-rap along the streambank, restore fish-passage to Dyer Creek, improve habitat conditions and improve floodplain connectivity. The upper portion of the project site will likely proceed in concert with the Ridgefield Pits project and may end up being connected, while the lower portion of the site will likely be a standalone site. We anticipate completing final designs and permitting in 2024 with construction beginning in 2024/2025.

Woodard Creek- We received funding from the Recreation and Conservation Office State of Washington in 2022 to develop final designs for a 1-mile section of the stream just downstream of restoration completed in 2021. The project will reconnect the stream to the entire valley bottom in an area of stream that has been severely impacted by anthropogenic factors. The project will benefit native aquatic species, such as salmonids and lamprey. The project will take place on US Forest Service land, and they are our primary partner on this project. Design and permitting will occur during 2023/24; we hope to begin construction in 2025.

Multnomah Channel Marsh Natural Area (MCMNA) - In 2022, we completed the MCMNA Restoration Feasibility Analysis, summarizing existing conditions at the 278-acre site and identifying opportunities for floodplain and tidal wetland enhancement. The site is owned and managed by Metro Regional Government and includes tidal wetlands, perennial and ephemeral streams, and riparian and forested habitats. Currently, two water control structures limit hydrological connection and juvenile salmonid access to critical off-channel rearing habitat. An undersized culvert on Crabapple Creek, the tributary flowing into the floodplain site, limits biotic and abiotic transfer of materials to and from upper watershed habitats. We are working with Metro to design and phase restoration actions that provide a mosaic of habitats supporting a diverse range of species including native fish, herptiles, and wetland and riparian plant communities.

Campen Creek – We are continuing to collect baseline data and assess design alternatives (including impacts to cultural resources) for the upper Gibbons Creek watershed, upstream of our Steigerwald Floodplain Reconnection project. We anticipate completing designs and permitting by spring 2024 with construction likely to occur in 2025.

East Fork Thermal Assessment- in 2022, we completed the East Fork Thermal Assessment along 20-miles between La Center, WA and Moulton Falls. The study assessed stream temperatures during the summer, identified potential thermal refuge enhancement sites, and ranked the sites based on ecological attributes and social constraints. Conceptual designs were developed for the top three priority thermal refuge enhancement sites. Collected data and site identification and prioritization information can be viewed in our ArcGIS online portal [here](https://lcep.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=92609a2e4c99482aae8ca5e9b2931ecd). The assessment was funded by LCFRB and completed in partnership with Clark County, WDFW, WA Dept. Ecology, and LCFEG. We anticipate the restoration designs will be further developed for the top ranked projects in 2023/2024. Potential restoration projects should benefit native aquatic species, primarily summer migrating salmonids.

Franz Lake National Wildlife Refuge – We are assessing available data and are in preliminary discussions with the USFWS, BPA, and USFS about potential restoration opportunities at this site. This site is also one of our long-term monitoring sites under the Ecosystem Monitoring Program.

Mirror Lake Upstream Reconnection (Rooster Rock State Park) - We are working with ODOT and the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Team to determine if this project is feasible, either through BPA funding or as mitigation for the IBR Project.

The Restoration Team continues to grow. We are recruiting a Principal Restoration Ecologist to help with these projects and potentially support our expansion into other projects.

## Monitoring Team:

#### Growing Team:

* Since November, we have welcomed a new staff member to the Monitoring Team, Andrea (Andi) Anderson Hurzeler, Andi's title is Research Scientist I. She will be assisting with all our monitoring projects and lending extra expertise to our GIS and UAV work.

#### Promotions:

* Dr. Sarah Kidd recently took on the new role of Senior Scientist and Manager of Estuary Monitoring and Research. Research Scientists Sneha Rao and Ian Edgar have taken on new leadership and project management roles within the monitoring program. Ian, with his recent promotion to Research Scientist II, now co-manages and implements the Ecosystem Monitoring Program and Action Effectiveness Monitoring Program. Sneha also was promoted to Research Scientist III and co-manages the CH4C project, the Columbia County Water Quality Monitoring program. She also implements the Ecosystem Monitoring Program and the Action Effectiveness Monitoring Program, focusing on utilizing remote sensing technology to improve our monitoring efforts. Sneha and Ian both started out as Research Interns with the Estuary Partnership in 2019 and 2021, respectively. Read the full Feb monitoring team e-update [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ejfhvvzubvraaou/Monitoring%20Team%20EUpdate_232023.pdf?dl=0).

#### Conference Presentations:

* Dr. Sarah Kidd Presented a Summary of the Monitoring Efforts at Steigerwald at the Restore America's Estuaries conference in Dec [(see it here).](https://youtu.be/MQYg9l6wKDU)
* Sarah Kidd, Ian Edgar, and Derek Marquis will be presenting EMP and AEMR research at the 2023 CREC conference in May 2023
* Sarah Kidd, Ian Edgar, and Sneha Rao will be leading a Tableau for Environmental Science Workshop at the CERF conference in Nov 2023

#### Ecosystem Monitoring Program (EMP) and Action Effectiveness Monitoring and Research Program (AEMR)

* This winter, we are working with all researchers to transition our traditional 300+ page reports to a hybrid Tableau report. We expect both the EMP and the AEMR reports to be published in June 2023.
* Sarah Kidd presented an update of the AEMR program at the annual ERTG meeting in Dec 2022.
* Winter biomass monitoring is planned for February 16, and 20-24th
* Summer monitoring is also tentatively scheduled July 10 – September 15

#### Columbia County Water Quality Monitoring Program

* Monthly water quality monitoring fieldwork is ongoing throughout the winter months.
* The Columbia County Water Quality Monitoring Program received another year of funding from OWEB in January 2023. The program, co-funded by the Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD), is currently in the sixth year of monitoring, with the overall objective of establishing long-term status and trends monitoring that informs on the ambient water quality of the County watersheds for salmonids and public health.
* Sneha Rao presented our 2022 findings at Columbia County Commissioners' Meeting on February 1, 2023 ([Session Video](https://evogov.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/meetings/143/videos/690.mp4)).
* The 2022 results will be published (Expected March 2023) in the upcoming report and our online public dashboard ([link to public dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/sarah.ann.kidd/viz/ColumbiaCountyWaterQualityMonitoringProgramDashboard/CCSWCDWaterQualityReportSummary)). Data from this program is regularly shared with the ODEQ and is publicly available.
* We have created a program summary that outlines the past accomplishments and history of the program which can be found here [(link).](https://www.dropbox.com/s/l5r83jpacc53yok/Columbia%20County%20Water%20Quality%20Monitoring%20Overview_Final_1192023_CCSWCD.docx?dl=0)
* We are in the process of applying for a 3-year OWEB grant with our partners (Due in May 2023) to further explore the water quality issues observed across the study areas. See a summary of our new research proposal here [(link).](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ry23vy80wchxxbj/CCWQM%20future%20vision_Final_232023.docx?dl=0)
* We are scheduled to discuss this new OWEB grant proposal with OWEB on February 14, 2023.

#### BIL – Methane Carbon Flux Study (CH4C)

* In December 2022, Sneha Rao, Ian Edgar, and Dr. Joe Needoba (OHSU) attended training for the eddy flux tower equipment in Lincoln, NE
* In February 2023, we are working with OHSU, the Cowlitz Tribe, and other Partners to deploy our Eddy Flux tours in Astoria, Oregon, for testing. Deployment is expected in March 2023.
* Work is ongoing to plan the details around the remaining years of the study, obtain necessary research permits, and promote collaboration with research partners.

## Communications & Outreach:

* End of year campaign raised $11,285 from 45 donors
* Next fundraising campaign to come is Earth Day Oregon in April
* Social media stats:
	+ Top Facebook post shared a photo and info about a larval lamprey from a field trip at Steigerwald on November 17 <https://www.facebook.com/estuarypartnership/posts/179111478118793> with a reach of 8,925 and 183 engagements (reactions, comments, shares)
	+ Top Instagram post was our all staff planting day at Steigerwald on December 16 https://www.instagram.com/p/CmPyhp9MOIl/ with a reach of ,4500 and 87 engagements (likes/comments/shares)
* Top Tweet was announcing the CREC call for abstracts that had a reach of 589 and 15 total engagements <https://twitter.com/ColumbiaEstuary/status/1608599971498168322>An additional highlight this past quarter is all the amazing coverage we’ve gotten on behalf of the East Fork Lewis River Reclamation Project, including a letter from the Clark County Council in support of funding the project (see articles below).

## Media Coverage:

[King tide viewers urged to share photos on MyCoast](https://www.chinookobserver.com/life/outdoors/king-tide-viewers-asked-to-share-photos-on-mycoast/article_6ca52954-6125-11ed-aab7-17d1baaf76b5.html) – *Chinook Observer*, November 10, 2022

[King tide viewers urged to share photos on MyCoast](https://www.waheagle.com/story/2022/11/24/wahkiakum-people/king-tide-viewers-urged-to-share-photos-on-mycoast/21621.html) – *Wahkiakum County Eagle*, November 24, 2022

[Port Continues Grattix Project Outreach](https://www.portvanusa.com/environment/port-continues-grattix-project-outreach/) – Port of Vancouver newsletter, December 1, 2022

[Commentary: An opportunity for extraordinary East Fork Lewis River reclamation](https://www.thereflector.com/stories/commentary-an-opportunity-for-extraordinary-east-fork-lewis-river-reclamation%2C307323) – *The Reflector*, January 16, 2023

[East Fork Lewis River habitat restoration at risk in Inslee’s](https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/jan/21/east-fork-lewis-river-habitat-restoration-at-risk-in-inslees-budget/) budget – *The Columbian*, January 21, 2023

[Clark County Council shows support for East Fork rehab project funding](https://www.thereflector.com/stories/clark-county-council-shows-support-for-east-fork-rehab-project-funding%2C307760) – *The Reflector*, January 23, 2023

[Users push Port of Ridgefield to expand, add boat ramps, make other improvements](https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/jan/24/users-push-port-of-ridgefield-to-expand-add-boat-ramps-make-other-improvements/) – The Columbian, January 24, 2023

[How a box of dirt earned a $67,000 EPA grant](https://columbiainsight.org/how-a-box-of-dirt-earned-a-67000-epa-grant/) – Columbia Insight, January 26, 2023

[Port of Vancouver’s Grattix Boxes provided gratis](https://www.columbian.com/news/2023/jan/30/port-of-vancouvers-grattix-boxes-provided-gratis/) – *The Columbian*, January 30, 2023

[2023 Metro Central Community Enhancement Grants make a difference](https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/2023-metro-central-community-enhancement-grants-make-difference?mc_cid=e3be990217&mc_eid=279483410a) – Metro, January 31, 2023

## DEI Steering Team:

The DEI Steering Team will meet next on February 13, 2023. Current projects include:

* The DEI Book Club is having its first meeting of the year on February 14. We will discuss Beverly Daniel Tatum’s *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria*? The other selections for this year are *The Intersectional Environmentalist* by Leah Thomas, *Collaborating in the Workplace* by Ike Lasseter, and selections from the Confluence Project’s Native Storytellers videos.
* LCEP is pursuing ongoing DEI training for its staff. Recently 8 staff members attended the [Building the Foundations](https://www.cdeinspires.org/our-services/leadership-development-programs/building-the-foundation-exploring-diversity-equity-inclusion/#:~:text=Open%20Enrollment%20for%20Building%20the%20Foundation%3A&text=CDE%20is%20offering%20an%20Open,advance%20equity%2C%20diversity%20and%20inclusion.) training from the Center for Diversity in the Environment. LCEP is sponsoring a session of [Confluence Field School](https://www.confluenceproject.org/) for 30 staff, Board members, and partners.
* The team is reviewing our organizational practices around land acknowledgement. This has led to a wider discussion of how to more respectfully engage with tribal governments and organizations.
* The Workplace Experience interviews have been completed, and the report will be distributed on February 15. The subcommittee will present to the DEI team at our February 13 meeting.

## Safety Committee:

The Safety Committee will meet next on February 22, 2023. Current agenda items include:

* Continuing work on the procedures for incident reporting, waivers, and site evaluation.
* Exploring training for psychological safety and psychological first aid.
* Exploring committee makeup to include more voices from the Science Team.

Funding Report:

For the Funding Report from this point forward, you will see a new format. We are using the grant tracking function in the Neon CRM and generating a report. The information is the same – grants applied for and awaiting a decision, grants awarded but awaiting an agreement, and grants awarded with signed agreements.

We currently are awaiting decisions on just over $16 million in funding proposals, including two large proposals for the EFLR and Ridgefield Pits. We are awaiting agreements for three proposals that totaled just over $7 million, including the large RCO agreement for the Ridgefield Pits project. And we have signed agreements for proposals totaling just over $5 million.

# Committee Reports

## Executive Committee Report:

The Executive Committee met on February 2nd. During that regular meeting of the Committee they completed the annual review of the Executive Director, received the funding report, and received several reports from the Executive Director. The Committee also received a report on the completed salary survey and approved several recommendations related to the salary survey and pay policies for the upcoming year, those approvals were:

* Approved the general methodology the Executive Director used to complete the salary survey including the proposed salary ranges, placements within ranges, and a number of updated job descriptions.
* Approved a proposed 3% periodic pay increase for those employees who may have been “topped out” of their current salary ranges during the current year.
* Approved a proposed 4% COLA effective the first pay period of the year (July 2023).
* Approved a proposed 3% periodic pay increase for the upcoming year (July 2023 – June 2024) effective on employee anniversary dates.

## Board Development Committee Report:

The Board Development Committee met in regular session on January 23rd. The Committee reviewed the current Board Profile Grid, Board Members Terms for the current year, and the 2022 Board and Staff Demographic Surveys. Following those reviews they have completed the following Board Recruitment Strategy. All Board members will be contacted by a member of the Board Development Committee or the Executive Director before the end of March. If you have comments on the Strategy, please reach out to Irma Lagomarsino, the Chair of the Board Development Committee, or to Elaine.

**Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership**

**Board Development Committee**

**2023 Board Recruitment Strategy**

The LCEPs Board Development Plan outlines the process to recruit new board members to its Board of Directors. Specifically, each year, the Board Development Committee will develop criteria to focus recruitment efforts based on the skills, knowledge, connections, and demographics needed on the board to meet LCEP needs. In other words, the BDC will use the most up-to-date board profile grid and compare the “who we need” with those currently on the board and also consider upcoming changes to the board’s composition (eg., board terms, retirements, job changes, *etc.*).

On January 23, 2023, the BDC reviewed the [board profile grid](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1k87ZSHWBNWE8CBFirgeax3C5Kd2k-jh2/edit), [board terms](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z0c27T7AdAJQ0itwME9D3seSjovYNiu_/edit), results of the [2022 board and staff demographic survey](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EbyFG3WyFwPj3dELwy9xcALOuWGIbStS/view), and the LCEP 2022-2025 Strategic Direction and identified the following significant gaps on the board:

Skills & Knowledge The board lacks members with experience in fundraising (especially, major gifts).

Connections, Influence & Representation The board lacks members with connections/influence/representation in (1) real estate, (2) financial/investment sector, and (3) major donors. In addition, while several board members have experience working with local governments, only one member represents a county government.

Demographics The board lacks a board member with BIPOC leadership experience and has only one board member in any of these categories: gender identity, disability, youth leadership, and LGBTQIA+. Glaringly, the board has no tribal representation. Also, the 2022 board demographic survey found that every board member is white, 86% have an annual salary of >$120k, and 46% are >55 years of age–a sharp contrast to the LCEP staff demographic results and the communities LCEP serves.

Based on these gaps, we will use the following criteria to focus our 2023 recruitment efforts on potential new board members in these categories and specifics:

* Skills/Knowledge in *fundraising* and/or *finance*
* Connections/Influence/Representation in the *financial/investment (major gifts)*, *major donors*, and/or work for or represent *city* or *county governments* in the LCEP domain.
* Demographically represent *BIPOC leadership*, *gender identity*, *disability*, *youth leadership*, *LGBTQIA+*, and/or *native American*.

Recruitment Strategy Using these criteria, members of the BDC will meet one-on-one with every board member to discuss the identified board gaps, board recruitment criteria and enlist their help in identifying prospective board members as part of our recruitment process (see assignments below). At the February 16 board meeting, the BDC will take a few minutes to make board members aware that we will be reaching out to them directly to ask for recommendations for new board members as part of our board recruitment strategy. The strategy will be included in the board book. In addition, the Executive Director will ask LCEP staff for their recommendations for potential new board members.

Assignments for BDC members The following BDC members, and the Executive Director, are assigned the following board members to meet with one-on-one by March 31, 2023:

Irma: Rosemary, Margaret, Lisa

Rian: Yvonne, Mark

Jane: Mathew, Kessina, Joseph

Tabitha: Susan, Rich, John

Elaine: Marylou

Tracking Recruitment Process (link to the spreadsheet to track outreach and recruitment of new board members [Recruitment Tracking\_23.24.xlsx](https://estuarypartnership.sharepoint.com/%3Ax%3A/s/management/EcEou6LLPcNEroPsfaPd_RQBAtK46lunS0pmUmX_WCTGxw?e=e40Gwb)).