



## Board Briefing Book May 2023

Prepared by:

E. Elaine Placido, DPA, Executive Director

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## Meeting Agenda:

**Board of Directors Meeting Agenda**  
**May 18, 2023, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Teams meeting link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)**

- 9:30      Review of Agenda  
Review of Retreat Meeting Notes – no approval required.  
Introductions
- 9:45      Executive Director Report
- Written Report/Board Book follow up
  - Grants Update, Pending and Received
  - Annual Event planning – Date, Venue, Board member requests
- 9:55      Committee Reports:  
Board Development Committee Report & Presentation– Committee Chair Lagomarsino
- The Committee sent the proposed slate for the Board of Directors, including Committee members, to the Executive Committee for review and approval to send to the full Board.
    - The DEI position is listed as vacant on the proposed slate. There are multiple Board members who are interested in serving and current practice is to invite all staff and Board members to attend. The Director recommends appointing two members as official members of the DEI Team while continuing to welcome all participation. This approach will need to be approved by the Board and added to the slate. The proposed members are Rosemary Furfey and Mary Lou Socia.
  - The Committee would ask the Board for a potential second approval date at the September Board meeting for additional Board member appointment.
- Executive Committee Report –
- The Committee received and approved the [nomination slate](#) for the Board of Directors for 2023/24, effective July 1, 2023, and sends it to full Board for approval.
  - The Committee received and approved the [Board meeting calendar for FY24](#), July 2023 through June 2024, and sends it to the full Board for approval.
  - The Committee received and approved two policy changes:
    - A revision to the Finance Policies, [Procurement Policy](#).
    - A revision to the Employee Handbook, [Holiday Pay Policy](#).
- 10:25      Board Action Items:
- Receive and Approve for submittal to EPA the [EPA Workplan for FY24 and FY25](#) – Presentation by Director Placido
  - Receive and Approve for submittal to EPA the [BIL Workplan for FY 24](#) – Presentation by Director Placido
  - Receive and Approve the Organizational Budget for [FY24](#) and [FY25](#) – Presentation by Director Placido
- 11:00      Break
- 11:15      Board Action Items, Continued:

- Receive and Approve for submittal to EPA the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership [Equity Plan](#) - Presentation by Director Placido
- Board member forms for 23/24 – [990's, Conflict of Interest Acknowledgements, Board Member Commitments](#).

11:45 Board Member General Check Ins

12:00 Adjourn

Upcoming Meetings (Pending Board Approval of Calendar)

Board Development Committee: August 21, 2023, 1-2:30pm

Executive Committee: September 7, 2023, 9:30 – 11:00am

Board of Directors: September 21, 2023, 9:30 – 12:00am

## Prior Meeting Record – Board & Staff Retreat (No approval required).

### Overview

A full-day retreat was held on February 16, 2023, at the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership offices. The retreat was facilitated by consultants Amy Stork and Allison Handler. This document reflects discussion notes from the day. The conclusion includes suggested objectives for the upcoming Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) Update.

### Retreat Objectives

- Create opportunities for the board and staff to connect.
- Explore key ideas and questions for the CCMP Update, focusing on the key issue areas of climate change, environmental justice, recreation and access, and community education.
- Provide guidance for process design.

#### 1. Context for the planning process

- Many funding opportunities are coming up through EPA and other sources.
  - ◆ 25% of EPA funding for the region will be coming to the Lower Columbia study area.
  - ◆ Water quality is the driving concern.
- Everything selected for funding needs to be consistent with the CCMP, even for organizations other than the Estuary Partnership
  - ◆ Anything in the CCMP is also eligible for the state water quality revolving loan fund; some of these loans are forgivable.
  - ◆ EPA can also fund technical assistance centers for grant writing to help lower capacity organizations seek funds.
- A subsequent email from EPA discussed the difference between an CCMP update and a CCMP revision; this effort is an update.

#### *Reflections and questions:*

- CCMP – so many partners don't know it is a tool. Make the connection so they can tie in.
- There are issues with Estuary Partnership capacity and partner capacity. Need a new way to support participation in this process.
- How does each person's work fit in with the CCMP update, including support (admin) work?
- What are the future Requests for Application?
- Design CCMP to match funding and/or highlight new goals? Or should the funding not dictate the goals?
- How to make sure language reflects shared understanding, e.g., "Vulnerable communities."

#### 2. Climate change discussion

##### *Additional Context (beyond pre-retreat info provided by Estuary Partnership staff):*

- **Definitions:** Climate change discussion includes mitigation (preventing change by sequestering carbon or reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (adapting to impacts of change, for example by increasing flood plain estimates)
- **Infrastructure:** Resiliency, restoration, and enhancement are new frameworks. Many opportunities for "nature-based solutions". For example, the Farm Bill contains funds for carbon sequestration on working lands; the Inflation Reduction Act contains funding. Adapted infrastructure needs will be large scale. To incorporate climate change, long-term maintenance needs to be a factor in

infrastructure design; the Estuary Partnership is already changing site prep and maintenance, including planting, but it does not fit with current funding models.

#### *Reflections:*

- Climate change is an umbrella topic for the CCMP update.
- Look for ways to do partnership and climate work in small ways through practices and activities.
- Longevity of investments: Design for future; Federal changes
- Tension between urgency of action and the need to update the plan.

#### *Questions to answer in the plan update:*

- **Climate Change Action:** Very big picture. Where do you approach the problem? What is the point of entry? Where do we fit in?
- **Integration:** How do we change our perspective and model what we want others to do? How do we incorporate Climate change into community needs and vice versa? How to incorporate people into an ecosystem focused plan?
- **Practicalities:** What are the capacity and budget implications for both maintenance and new infrastructure? Can we mine the Estuary Partnership's CO2 emissions of our general programming - school bus trips, staff driving to & from project sites, class visits – and mitigate for it?

### 3. Environmental justice discussion

#### *Additional Context (beyond pre-retreat info provided by Estuary Partnership staff):*

- **CCMP:** Environmental justice was not there in the 2011 CCMP update.
- **Mapping:** There are historical tensions in the Estuary Partnership geography between reality on the ground and what is represented in an EJ screen.
- **Language matters:** EPA term is “overburdened” communities; underrepresented is another term. Racialized discourse: Environmental racism is a root term from the environmental justice (EJ) movement. The EPA approaches environmental justice with the Civil Rights Act as a foundation.
- **Tokenizing:** Tokenizing happens to native communities and others

#### *Reflections:*

- EJ is another umbrella topic for the CCMP update
- **New approach:** EJ calls the Partnership to work differently: approach the community then develop projects instead of the other way around. We can look to communities to identify the problems then use our technical expertise to help fix. See ourselves as part of the community that approaches problem: co-design Exciting paradigm shift: Our goals might need to shift to truly co-produce. Give credit to where the knowledge comes from. Changing approaches means new time allocations and skillsets and may require different funding.
- **Feelings:** Jazzed!! Could have talked for another hour. Curiosity- how to wrap our arms around issues, how to balance big picture and details. Challenges of our study area – overwhelming & exciting.
- **Other reflections:** We need to understand communities throughout our service area. Bring this subject to native community for reactions and ideas.

*Questions to answer in the plan update:*

- **Data:** Can the updated CCMP help us clarify how to work across broad geography, while still EJ focused? How are data sets utilized and what is their relationship to each other? Can we use mapping to choose where we work? Can we use impact areas not just where people live? Can our methodology include health impacts?
- **New approach:** How can we reflect our long-term commitment to change in the CCMP? Why? What does the implementation of the Estuary Partnership's different approach to addressing communities look like (i.e., vs. taking a project to an area)? How to have a framework for approaching communities? How do we share credit in a real way? Do we have to have ownership and put our name on things? How do we balance giving the community work with community engagement? How do we find out what communities need? From them? From partners? From study? Can we hire a community liaison from within the community to help as a bridge?
- **Practicalities:** How can metrics reflect going deeper? Where does the funding come from to develop the relationships and trust? How do we set reasonable expectations for a time of transition in the way work happens and the timelines? Do we have the skillsets? If not, do we bring new skillsets into our organization? What are the projects and how do we do the projects?
- **Decolonizing:** How to have more focus on decolonizing the restoration industry and bringing in new points of view? How do we give capacity / funding to other communities? Can we plan a conference like Bioneers for the Lower Columbia? Topic focused on Decolonizing Restoration + art, etc. ....
- **Cautions:** How can the CCMP and funding sources be structured so the EJ actions do not become tokenization? Is an "update" tokenism (vs. a full revision)? How do we ensure the tail does not wag the dog?

4. Recreation and access discussion

*Additional Context (beyond pre-retreat info provided by Estuary Partnership staff):*

- **Planning documents:** Action 15 in CCMP — "Identify & Improve Access to River". Our strategic direction elevated access.
- **Expanded views of "access":** Most of our access = water trail and boating. Access also includes food, subsistence, fishing, traditional foods, tribal traditions, and ways of life (e.g., two canoe families need access. Water trail mostly focused on Columbia River.
- **Access is an equity issue.** Climate impacts tribal food sources. Access for food harvest locations, sharing the knowledge, creating partners. Access to the river is a quality-of-life issue with climate change. Access also depends on skills (swimming, etc.)
- Water trail most visited on web, but not a lot of organizational capacity to manage (unlike other aspects of CCMP)

*Reflections:*

- Recreation and access impact other goals: People more likely to participate in other activities if they have access.
- Be inclusive with access – not everyone has ability to walk to river / walk along river / paddle
- Other barriers to access + engagement
- More important with climate change and heat domes – drownings are more common.
- Access = infrastructure
- Define access + needs



*Questions to answer in the plan update:*

- **Who benefits and who is burdened:** How do we support access and reduce exploitation of living things? Is this access available to all, and safely? What are our safety responsibilities? What are the implications for and of houseless communities along the river(s)?
- **Data and mapping:** Do we want to have an access data set beyond the current (now targeted to non-motorized launches). What about algae blooms locations? How do public access points compare with EJ maps? Public transport?
- **Who does what:** How can we highlight the work of others to find out our role? Blackberry barrier: Who does trail work? Who maintains access? What do we do about water facilities impacted by increased drought?
- **Guides:** Is there a detailed Water Trail Guide like there is in the Willamette? (If not, this could be a good resource to develop for the region). How do we modernize website for high water trail website visits?

## 5. Community education

*Additional Context (beyond pre-retreat info provided by Estuary Partnership staff):*

- Action 14 in CCMP
- Community education includes more than school-age kids
- There is a deficit of women and People of Color in STEM
- WA's Outdoor School is new – 2021 but both states now have this requirement (uneven implementation and disparate Access to “Outdoor School for **All**”)
- Transformational education experiences change behavior
- Municipalities are required to educate associated with water / stormwater
- Lots of environmental education in Portland, less elsewhere in the study area

*Reflections:*

- There are various educational philosophies in our region. Different teaching strategies, cultural differences. Mainstream science education is western, reductionist empiricism.
- Different student needs and ways of learning: Trauma history and how it shows up
- We're not the only organization in the Metro area doing environmental education
- Other education opportunities with toxics reduction
- Big opportunity is workforce development. Field work and internships are a good career segue / training ground.

*Questions to answer in the plan update:*

- **Planning and coordination:** Who are the other orgs working on this and what are the gaps? Is there an Estuary Partnership role in asset mapping? What are the “shared actions” and “our” actions? Overburdened communities – maybe goals for the whole region? How do we identify who is the overburdened student community?
- **Philosophical:** Topics woven together as a fabric: How to help kids with climate stress, help them have more control; Who has access to science? Access is a result of privilege.
- **Education content:** How to incorporate more traditional ecological knowledge and other ways of learning and knowing? Transformational experiences for students and community: how do we access research resources to determine how to have that impact, e.g., what ages to work with? Separation from land is the root of all these issues (Western thought); how to move toward a different way of thinking. Are we the ones to do that? Interweaving: how do we work in that mindset? How do we hear from tribal and other cultures? And the interdependencies?

- **School-based:** Teachers – what resources do they need? How can we increase impact through work with teachers? What is our role vis-à-vis the gaps in science-based education? PPS Climate response policy – our intersection?
- **Non-school-based:** We must fit into the system if we work in schools. Do we work outside that system sometimes? After school, summer needs, esp. Do we want to teach communities more than Elementary Age? How to build on Water Trail interest? What opportunities are there for other age groups? What are the needs? Are there adult education opportunities for behavior change (community based social marketing)?
- **Funding:** Is education in future RFAs?

## 6. Themes and interconnections + implications for CCMP update

### *Interconnections*

- **Community and environment connection.** People are at the heart of all these areas discussed.
- **Who benefits and who is burdened?** Climate, access, education: conservation hasn't benefitted all communities equally, and climate impacts are also inequitable. Some people benefit from the inequities. Big challenges include special interests, corporations. Opportunities abound nonetheless. We need to pull back and create more balance.
- Community education needs to help people understand how we are all affected by climate change.
- How do we weave into the plan ideas about reciprocity, gift economy, other ways of knowing and thinking?

### *Implications for the CCMP*

- **Make linkages explicit in CCMP.** Describe the links and identify tasks that interconnect. Consider urgency and long term.
- **Broader equity focus:** Weave in EJ in the CCMP update. Center equity in this discussion. Need to prioritize among all the opportunities, e.g., heat map and EJ overlay; multiple wins impact for our work. It can't be just words: Outcomes.
- **Partnership:** Not just us. look through lens of partnership to address climate, EJ, community education, access. Many opportunities to connect with people throughout our area. Where does the Estuary Partnership lead, support, shape, track? How do we involve community partners in this rewrite? Structure / framework, priorities and strategies, outcomes. What would a relationship driven CCMP look like? How can we use leverage where we are lead entity with places where other organizations lead?
- **Make the CCMP a resource for partners and public.** Format, content, distribution to partners, usability.
- **Capacity:** Gut check. How can we absorb all the money coming our way and do our current work and do a deeply community engaged CCFP update? Could we use the PKS international liaisons to connect us to community via their network? How can we make the CCMP usable as a document that guides us, especially linked with our strategic direction? Living documents. This will be a complex planning process. We should have a facilitator. We should tie CCMP to other plans--show how they fit together. We can contract someone to write our update.

## 7. Draft objectives for CCMP Update (the plan document)

- **Increase the plan’s attention to key topics including climate change, environmental justice, recreation and access, and community education, and make clear the linkages between these topics.** Define actions that address multiple topics at once.
- **Clearly acknowledge the multifaceted and reciprocal relationship between people and the environment.** The update should include information on how human behavior can degrade our shared ecosystem, and how creativity, connection, and shared effort can honor and restore ecosystems to benefit all of life.
- **Include an explicit analysis of who is burdened by environmental impacts.** The CCMP should center racial equity and encourage analysis of environmental issues through and with an overlay of community impacts from those concerns. In doing so, the plan should work from definitions and language that recognize the affected communities.
- **Adopt a more nuanced approach to shared actions.** Involve community partners, respectfully and responsibly, in the plan update. Explore the strengths and assets of our communities and identify roles beyond “shared” and “lead,” including more specifically how the plan can help position partners for EPA funding, and how the Estuary Partnership can play roles that support other partners.
- **Make sure the plan is practical and implementable.** A useful and realistic plan will include long-term perspectives that lead directly into implementable actions. These ideas should tie to the Estuary Partnership’s strategic direction, so there is a clear relationship between the documents. The plan should leave room for adaptation to the rapidly changing operating context.
- **Make the CCMP a resource for partners and the public.** Ensure that the process as well as the format, content, and distribution of the updated document help bring partners and the public into the work so they can then access more benefit from funding, programs, etc. Make sure the document is readable, intentionally crafted, and informative, including visual elements and simple formatting.

## 8. Desired qualities of the CCMP update process

The Estuary Partnership will also need to be attentive to the experience of staff, board, and partners within the planning process itself. The plan will need to balance engagement and efficiency, given how both the Partnership and community partners are overwhelmed by opportunity right now. The assistance of a professional facilitation team is an important factor. Staff and board discussed specific ideas for the update process in the February 2023 retreat:

- **Engaging and inclusive:** Inclusive of multiple voices (7 mentions); Engages the community (Internal / External) in the process (4 mentions); Equitable (2 mentions); Open; empowering
- **Thoughtful:** Thoughtful (2 mentions), Authentic (2 mentions), Meaningful, True, Sincere, Compassionate, Respectful, Humility, Whole-hearted, Patient (2 mentions), Patience
- **Bold and Courageous** – includes Bold, Courageous, Courage, Exciting, Energy, Tenacious, Visionary, Forward-thinking, Futuristic / forward-looking, Change-making, Growing Creative (2 mentions), Creativity, Innovative (2 mentions)
- **Fun and Active** – includes Engaging, Active, Positive, Fun, Be outside in nature, Youthful exuberance, Childlike curiosity, Responsive, Holistic, Delicious, Spicy

## Executive Director's Report:

This past quarter has been extremely busy. Since our meeting in February, we completed a “limited scope” audit by EPA, which we are still awaiting the results of. And we’re expecting one for our large NFWF Steigerwald award at some point soon. We completed job task analysis, updated the JDs for the finance positions and recruited for the new Financial Accounting Coordinator position, selecting Jana Magnuson. Jana trained with Tom and Connor for three weeks prior to Tom’s departure in early April. Jana and Connor are really hitting the ground running. This week our QuickBooks desktop data is all being migrated onto the cloud. We begin digital time keeping in the next few weeks, with the intent to be live and exclusively digital with the beginning of the new fiscal year.

I had the pleasure of traveling to DC for the spring ANEP/EPA meeting with Erinne and Jasmine. The meetings with EPA were full day meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, with half day on Thursday. We also had ANEP meetings that started on Monday of that week. I took a lot away from the ANEP discussions and the Wednesday EPA meeting that featured a rather dizzying array of lightning talks. Not a huge fan of the lightning talks as they were topics that we could have spent a lot more time on, but they were still helpful. Erinne and Jasmine had put together a fantastic itinerary of meetings with members of our delegation and completed this year’s briefing “book.” I felt extremely fortunate to have our outstanding Communications Team with me as they were able to handle a couple of the meetings on their own while I was in the EPA/ANEP sessions. Great connections were made including gaining two new signatures on this year’s ANEP appropriations letter.

Since our last meeting I’ve participated in:

- Three NEP Director’s meetings
- Three ANEP External Affairs Committee meetings – including one to talk specifically about hosting ANEP during the upcoming CERF conference.
- One Columbia River Basin Restoration Working Group meeting.
- Participated in the Bay to Bay Community Workshop in Chinook, WA
- One tour at Steigerwald with Representative Glusenkamp-Perez
- Tours/Visits at East Fork Lewis River/Ridgefield Pits project
- Presented to OWEB Board
- Three DEI Steering Team Meetings, including facilitating one and hosting the monthly DEI Topic (emotional intelligence) in May.
- Two Benefits Renewal meetings with representatives.
- Met with three prospective Board members.

Much of my work has been just working through the lengthy list of items that are due for June 1<sup>st</sup> and which you all will be approving at the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Those items include a few items that you’ll receive that were already approved by the Executive Committee on the 4<sup>th</sup>;

- A revision to the Procurement Policy – this is an important update that provides a clear policy for procurement, updated thresholds, and clear implementation procedures.
- A revision the Employee Handbook – this revision added Juneteenth as a paid holiday, making it our 9<sup>th</sup> paid holiday, and provided clear implementation procedures for paid holidays for staff who are less than 1.0 FTE or who do not work on a recognized holiday.

In addition to the two policy revisions above you will receive two items that the Executive Committee reviewed and approved to send forward to the full Board for approval;

- The Board Meeting Schedule for 2023-24
- The Proposed Board Terms and Member Slate for 2023-24

And finally, the full Board will be receiving, and I will be seeking approval on the following documents:

- The final draft of the EPA Workplan for FY24 and FY25- this is due to EPA by June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The final draft FY24 BIL Workplan – this is due to EPA by June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The final draft Equity Plan – this is due to EPA by June 1<sup>st</sup> and is a requirement for our BIL funding. While this Plan is consistent with the EPA template, I'm very pleased with how the Plan fits us and our study area. Keith and Kiomi (PSU Intern extraordinaire) did a great job of changing up the mapping each time I had another great idea. And I greatly appreciated the editing assistance and input of Erinne, Valerie, Madeline, and Keith.
- The FY24 and FY25 Organizational Budget – this is a full organizational budget including EPA, BIL, and all other funding sources for the next biennium. I believe the budget that I am presenting to the Board for approval is reflective of the goals and values of our Strategic Direction.

In addition to the items that you will be receiving and reviewing for approval on the 18<sup>th</sup>, I've also updated the Form 990s for this year to include the current Conflict of Interest Policy. Each of you should review and sign the forms. The Conflict of Interest Policy is included as page 3 of the document, so that you can easily review it. Note that "employee" in the policy includes Board Members.

And, we have also updated the Board Commitment Forms. It has been a few years since we have done these, and we have tried to freshen them up to reflect the varying levels of participation that we hope may be possible from Board members. Please take a few minutes to complete those forms. We will have hard copies of both the 990/Conflict of Interest form and the Board Commitment forms at the meeting, should anyone need them.

## Team Updates:

### Community Programs/Ed Team:

Between February 1 and May 1, the Education Team provided in-person classroom and field programs to:

- 67 classes within 19 schools
- 1,736 students
- 129 class lessons
- 32 student field trips

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

- 115 classes within 35 schools
- 2,997 students
- 217 class lessons
- 54 student field trips

### New Awards and Projects of Note:

- 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.
- WA Ecology Salmon Creek Clean Water Enhancement and Education (\$249,369). No new update. 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.
- City of Portland BES Community Watershed Stewardship Program (\$11,994). Fully funded and contract to be executed in June/July 2023. This project expands our current CWSP project which partners with Portland Public Schools and City of Portland Parks/Forest Park.
- Our proposed project Cowlitz Education Outdoors through the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office No Child Left Inside grant program (\$74,775) has a preliminary ranking of 4<sup>th</sup> for tier 2 funding. With the approval of increased funding for this program through the State budget, this project is highly likely to be fully funded. We should receive confirmation by the end of May. This project will fund classroom education for elementary students in the Kelso School District and provide field trips in coordination with Seaquest State Park and Silver Lake in Castle Rock, WA. This project meaningfully expands our educational offerings to more students in our study area beyond the Portland/Vancouver Metro area.

### Stormwater

- Baker Bay: Estuary Partnership staff and the project team presented the 60% Construction Documents to a joint Port of Ilwaco – City of Ilwaco meeting on Thursday April 27. Generally, the meeting went exceptionally well (one issue needs to be resolved). The team will move towards 90% design in the next month or so and submit that to Ecology for their review. The tentative construction schedule start is late September/October.

- Rainier SEP: Final construction documents are being developed and a potential contractor did a site visit on April 27. Hope is to build a stormwater treatment facility at the Rainier public boat launch parking lot before June 30.
- Grattix Box: We have held five Grattix box building events with a total of 23 volunteers (~92 hours), including substantial assistance from our VetWorks volunteer and support from the Port of Vancouver. We have built all 21 Grattix boxes. Coverings still need to be made/built for the boxes, but how to do that will be decided after more outreach. Six sites have agreed to accept a box. Outreach will continue until all boxes are earmarked and then they will be delivered and installed.
- Mittleman Jewish Community Center: The project's stormwater and water quality focused classroom lessons have finished and were very well received. Estuary Partnership staff excavated a portion of the project area to determine an overflow pipe's depth and are hopefully back on track with our original project plan. Additional design work is taking place.
- Washougal High School and Surrounding Streets: No new update. Still waiting for final word on Ecology funding for the City of Washougal's application to the WA Dept of Ecology Stormwater Financial Assistance Program. The grant was recommended for funding and based on scoring 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: We are using the Washington County Stormwater Assessment along with the assistance of partners 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 next week – May 16-18 at the Liberty Theater in Astoria, OR. There are 130 people registered as of last week. The agenda and compilation of abstracts are available from our website: <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/our-work/columbia-river-estuary-conference-2023>
- Catherine, Chris, and Doug will present at the CREC with Catherine proposing adding climate mitigation in addition to adaptation to ecosystem restoration projects within the lower Columbia River, and Chris and Doug discussing the Steigerwald Reconnection project with examples of how to include climate mitigation within individual restoration projects.
- Catherine is convening a session, with Chanda Littles of the USACE, on weaving climate adaptation and mitigation into resource conservation programs at the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation conference (CERF) in November 2023.
- Catherine, Chris, and Keith will present an update on our cold water refuge pilot project as well as our work on weaving climate adaptation and mitigation into our programming and individual projects to the Federal Caucus in June and July.
- We kicked off the Bay-to-Bay Coastal Resiliency project with WA Sea Grant with our first community meeting in Chinook, WA in April. We are hosting our next community meeting in Grays Bay this month.
- USGS submitted a draft Quality Assurance Project Plan to USEPA for our Tracking Toxics in the Lower Columbia (TLC) project. This project is funded under the Columbia River Basin Restoration

Act. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) is partnering on the project also. We hope to begin sampling during the spring freshet (this or next month).

#### Restoration Efforts:

*Steigerwald:* The project team continues to close out this three-year construction effort, including final regulatory and grant reporting. The team also completed all planting this past winter, with a grand total of 635,000 trees and shrubs planted at the site over the past four winters. Plant establishment efforts will continue at the site for at least two more years. The team also continues to give tours of the site and will present a session at the upcoming Columbia River Estuary Conference.

*East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reclamation Project (Ridgefield Pits):* After nearly a decade of planning and collaboration with over 25 stakeholder organizations and individuals, the vision for East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reclamation Project is coming into focus. The Estuary Partnership has been awarded \$20.5 million in grant funds for the project from three different sources: Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Grant (\$7.06m), Ecology's Floodplain by Design program (\$5.5m), and NOAA's Climate Resilient Coast Initiative (\$7.5m). This restoration project is enormous.

Large scale habitat restoration projects like the East Fork Lewis Floodplain Reclamation project are not immune from rising construction costs. The level of investment will allow us to work with our stakeholder group to potentially expand the restoration project scope, providing greater benefit to the county, local businesses and homeowners along the river, and course, to salmon and other wildlife.

In the long run, these funds will restore three river miles of the East Fork Lewis River – protect homes, county property, businesses, and create excellent habitat for salmon and steelhead. But in the short term, these funds equate to local jobs for construction crews and hands-on opportunities for students and community members to help restore an important local river.

#### Active Restoration Projects:

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 –Plant establishment maintenance continues at the Horsetail Creek Floodplain in the USFS Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area where 85,000 native plants were planted during 2020-2022.
- Mason Creek –We are working with Clark County (primary landowner) and local stakeholders to progress the project. We are contracting with a local engineering firm to develop final designs. We anticipate completing final designs and permitting in 2024 with construction beginning in 2024/2025.
- Dyer Creek- We are working in coordination with area stakeholders and the Ridgefield Pits project to develop final designs for Dyer Creek. 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 2024/2025.

- Multnomah Channel Marsh Natural Area (MCMNA) - We continue to work with Metro to specify restoration actions and phased approaches at the site. We have executed a contract with a local engineering firm to progress the floodplain restoration design plans and to assess the feasibility of
- Campen Creek – We worked with the City of Washougal and our engineer and cultural resources consultants over the past two months to select the design alternative and assess impacts to cultural resources. We anticipate completing the design and permitting in February 2024. We will be seeking funding for construction in 2024 and anticipate constructing the project during summer 2025.
- East Fork Thermal Assessment- in 2022, we completed the East Fork Thermal Assessment 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](#). 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 conducting a feasibility study at this site, in partnership with the USFWS, BPA, and USFS. 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.
- Lower Columbia River Barrier Assessment - We will complete a fish passage barrier assessment for the lower Columbia Region of Washington. This assessment will include a GIS-based comprehensive inventory of barriers for the region and a prioritization model that will determine where maximum salmon recovery benefits may be realized. Work commenced in spring of 2023 and is scheduled to be completed in fall of 2024.
- Horsetail Thermal Refuge Enhancement – We continue to work on developing a cold-water refuge project at the confluence of the Columbia River with Horsetail and Oneonta creeks. Current work includes analyses to assess the long-term trajectory of the site, potential impacts on the project associated with sedimentation from both the Columbia River and the Horsetail/Oneonta watersheds.


#### Monitoring Team:

#### Conference Presentations:

- 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)

- Ongoing coordination with BPA and BPA project sponsors to rollout monitoring data in an online data dashboard format. We successfully published the Level 3 monitoring data for BPA online on March 30th - [Link](#)
- We received 350K of funding and approval from BPA to purchase a new drone, sensors, and water quality sondes with money remaining from Steigerwald's construction budget. This equipment will be used to monitor Steigerwald and other BPA restoration sites. See the proposals [here](#) and a flier outlining the new drone [here](#) 
- 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.
- Winter biomass monitoring took place during the incredibly cold and snowy weeks of 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 next OWEB grant report summarizing WQ data from 2017-2022 is currently being finalized ([link to public dashboard](#)). Data from this program is regularly shared with the ODEQ and is publicly available.
- We have submitted a new 3-year WQ monitoring grant to OWEB (May 1), which would take the program from 2023 to 2025. The grant cover letter summarizing this work and all our partners can be found [here](#). The total project cost is \$401,890, and we are requesting \$270,865 in OWEB funds, which will cover approximately 67% of the project's total cost. External cash contributions amount to \$60,785, while external in-kind contributions from various partners are valued at \$70,240. These contributions demonstrate dedicated support from stakeholders who recognize the importance of our project.

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

- We are working with OHSU, the Cowlitz Tribe, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, PSU and other Partners to deploy our Eddy Flux towers in Astoria, Oregon, for testing. Construction of the first tower at Tongue Point started in March and will be completed the week of May 8th and our second tower will be deployed at the Cowlitz Tribe location (Wallooskee restoration site) in late May-early June.
- All the necessary research permits have been acquired and we're excited to work with PSU to incorporate soil chamber work into our data collection plan.
- We meet with all the researchers regularly to continue to develop our research design plans and coordinate our efforts accordingly.

## Communications & Outreach:

- Earth Day Oregon in April & Washington GiveBIG May 2-3 raised just \$3,778. We'll evaluate for next year whether this is a worthwhile use of resources.
- Annual Celebration is scheduled for Thursday, September 28 at Easton Broad in Portland. We will be requesting help from our wonderful Board members to sponsor our Wall of Wine.
- Nominations will be open in June for our annual Steward of the Year Award, so think about who a good honoree might be this year.
- We are beginning work on a 2-year strategic communications plan for the organization. This activity is identified in the Strategic Direction. We hope to have it finalized by the beginning of the fiscal year and will be sharing with the Board after that.
- Both Jasmine and Erinne traveled to Washington DC with Elaine in March to attend NEP meetings and meet with legislative staff. The trip resulted in our two new legislators (Marie Glusenkamp Perez and Lori Chavez-DeRemer) to sign on to the House request for the full congressional appropriation. MGP has also since visited the Steigerwald Reconnection Project.

## Social media stats:

- Top Facebook post: A hummingbird on its nest (at Steigerwald) with a reminder to look for nests before spring pruning on March 20  
<https://www.facebook.com/estuarypartnership/posts/pfbid0gAAkcF9ob6XH5xtpwS1GpcF6dmFtNzAa4JaVJQf49eBhheFmK3n3qLkUJx6BKWXhl> with a reach of 1,337 and 104 engagements (reactions, comments, shares).
- Top Instagram post: advertised a unique volunteer opportunity to survey for western painted turtles at Sandy River Delta on April 5, with a reach of 972 and 154 engagements.  
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CqrQVwOp8I-/> The post also successfully recruited many volunteers for the project!
- Top Tweet: Also, for the Sandy River Delta western painted turtle volunteer opportunity, with 833 impressions and 25 total engagements  
<https://twitter.com/ColumbiaEstuary/status/1644034766231199749>
- We are engaging more with LinkedIn as a way to reach another professional audience, and cross posting certain action- and news-oriented posts. The top LinkedIn post was still the deadline extension for the Principal Restoration Ecologist position, shared on February 27  
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7036108903780114432> with 203 impressions and 6 reposts.

## Media Coverage:

[Federal Funding: \\$1.8M for habitat restoration. The Chronicle, February 13, 2023](#)

[Camas, Washougal agencies benefit from 31 grants. The Columbian. March 7, 2023](#)

[Hockinson Schools and Lower Columbia Estuary partner in shrub planting. The Columbian, March 18, 2023](#)

[Advocates push legislature to fund East Fork Lewis River work. The Columbian. March 30, 2023](#)

[Native Shrub Planting Educates, Inspires HEES Students. Hockinson Schools, March 2023](#)

[Treeline: The Hope Issue, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, March 2023](#)

[Try This: Sakura Festival, History on Tap, Earth Day Guided Hike, The Columbian, April 20, 2023](#)

[East Fork Lewis River habitat restoration project wins state, federal grants. The Columbian, April 21, 2023](#)

[WA could get millions in federal salmon recovery dollars. The Seattle Times, April 21, 2023](#)

[Federal, state grants set for East Fork Lewis River rehab project. The Reflector, May 1 2023](#)

[Rian Sallee named WDFW's SW Regional Director. WDFW, May 1, 2023](#)

[WDFW announces new Southwest Washington regional director. Longview Daily News, May 1, 2023](#)

### DEI Steering Team:

The DEI Steering Team will meet next on June 12, 2023. Current projects include:

- A DEI Steering Team Retreat was held on April 18, 2023. The team used the time to discuss our organizational DEI training strategy, our team structure, and our DEI charter.
- One change that the team is piloting because of these discussions is to add all staff and Board members as optional attendees to our monthly meetings. We hope that this will empower staff and Board members to engage more deeply in our DEI work.
- The team made significant headway on solidifying a training strategy for the organization. The training will include foundational training for new staff members, ongoing training to continually grow knowledge and skill sets, and putting DEI knowledge and skills to work as we integrate DEI into our projects and programs.
- The DEI Steering Team is identifying and distributing tasks to teams based on the staff feedback collected in the Workplace Experience Report.
- In our June meeting, the team will hear updates from staff members in our Confluence Next Steps group, who have been exploring how to better incorporate ideas from Confluence Field School into our work.

### Safety Committee:

The Safety Committee will meet next on May 29, 2023. Current agenda items include:

- Revising our quarterly workplace inspection procedures.
- Revising our emergency management procedures to reassign Tom Argent's previous role as emergency responder after his retirement.
- Clarifying our incident reporting procedures.
- Updates on previous agenda items including psychological safety training, site evaluation tool, and committee makeup.

Funding Report:

Account Name	Grant Name	Grant Ask Amount	Grant Funded Amount	Grant Campaign	Grant Status
<b>Proposals in Preparation:</b>					
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Woodard Creek Construction Phase 2	\$729,138.00		Restoration	Prepare
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	East Fork Lewis Preliminary Designs	\$260,997.00		Restoration	Prepare
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	Columbia Co. WQ Monitoring	\$270,000.00		Monitoring	Prepare
<b>Total in Preparation:</b>		<b>\$1,260,135.00</b>			
<b>Pending Proposals:</b>					
Environmental Protection Agency	Columbia River Basin Restoration Funding Asst. Program - Toxic Reduction Lead	\$4,827,696.00		Stormwater	Pending
Autzen Foundation	Backyard Watershed Connection Project	\$5,000.00		Education	Pending
The Standard	Connecting Students with Science	\$5,000.00		Education	Pending
NOAA	Lower East Fork Floodplain Reclamation	\$7,000,000.00		Restoration	Pending - Awarded
Washington Department of Ecology	Lower East Fork Floodplain Reclamation	\$5,500,000.00		Restoration	Pending- Awarded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Cowlitz Education Outdoors	\$74,775.00		Education	Pending

Washington Department of Ecology	Salmon Creek Clean Water Enhancement and Education	\$249,368.96		Education	Pending
Washington Department of Ecology	Campen Creek Stormwater Improvement Project	\$349,397.00		Stormwater	Pending
NOAA	NOAA PNW B-WET	\$134,754.00		Education	Pending
Gray Family Foundation	GFF Environmental Education	\$37,171.00		Education	Pending
Oregon State Marine Board	Waterway Access Grant - Education	\$39,632.80		Paddling & On-water	Pending
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services	Community Watershed Stewardship Program	\$11,950.00		Education	Pending
Oregon Community Foundation	Community Impact Fund	\$30,000.00		Education	Pending
	<b>Total Pending:</b>	<b>\$18,264,744.76</b>			
	<b>Total Pending, awarded:</b>	<b>\$12,500,000.00</b>			
<b>Closed/Funded Proposals:</b>					
Camas-Washougal Community Chest	Student Outdoor Science 2023	\$10,000.00	\$9,000.00	Education	Closed - Funded
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services	Portland Harbor Big Canoe Paddles	\$33,524.13		Paddling & On-water	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Fish Passage Barrier Assessment	\$299,731.00	\$299,731.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Ridgefield Pits	\$7,000,000.00	\$7,053,969.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Dyer Creek Final Design	\$175,548.99	\$182,109.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Mason Creek Final Design	\$192,681.68	\$199,297.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Lower Woodard Creek	\$162,859.00	\$162,859.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	Monitoring	\$33,323.67	\$33,324.00	Monitoring	Closed - Funded
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Headquarters	BIL - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Projects	\$1,818,000.00	\$1,818,000.00	Other Grants	Closed - Funded
Washington Department of Ecology	Burnt Bridge Creek Water Quality, Education, and Restoration Project	\$103,591.00		Education	Closed - Funded
Metro	Lower Willamette River Recreation Project	\$24,158.34		Paddling & On-water	Closed - Funded
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Headquarters	EPA Base	\$700,000.00	\$750,000.00	Other Grants	Closed - Funded
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Headquarters	Tracking Toxics	\$344,020.36	\$344,020.36	Monitoring	Closed - Funded
Bonneville Power Administration	Eco Monitoring	\$1,114,013.00	\$1,114,013.00	Monitoring	Closed - Funded
Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District	Tualatin Watershed Explorer	\$19,648.00	\$19,648.00	Paddling & On-water	Closed - Funded
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Explore Local	\$138,360.00	\$138,360.00	Education	Closed - Funded
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services	Connecting Students with Science - Forest Park	\$9,889.00	\$9,889.00	Education	Closed - Funded
Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District	Columbia SWCD Water Quality Monitoring Program	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	Monitoring	Closed - Funded
U.S. Forest Service	US Forest Service Challenge Cost Share Agreement	\$57,507.00	\$57,507.00	Restoration	Closed - Funded
<b>Total Closed - Funded</b>		<b>\$12,271,855.17</b>	<b>\$12,226,726.36</b>		
<b>Declined Proposals:</b>					
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Crabapple Creek Crossing Replacement Project	\$298,500.00		Restoration	Declined

## Committee Reports

### Executive Committee Report:

The Executive Committee met on Thursday May 4<sup>th</sup>. At their meeting the following actions were taken:

- Reviewed and approved a [Procurement Policy Revisions](#)
- Reviewed and Approved Employee Handbook Revision, [Holiday Pay Policy](#), to add Juneteenth as a paid holiday and clarify implementation.
- Reviewed and approved the proposed [Board Calendar for 2023/24](#)
- Committee approved sending the following documents to the full Board for Approval on May 18<sup>th</sup>:
  - Equity Plan
  - EPA Workplan and Budget for FY24 and FY25
  - BIL Workplan and Budget for FY24
  - Organization Budget for FY24 and FY25

The Committee met the new Financial Accounting Coordinator – Jana Magnuson. Jana provided an overview of the projects she is working on including some significant process improvements. And the committee discussed with Jana what they are looking for in future reporting.

The Committee received a report from the Board Development Committee, including;

- Review of the proposed “slate” of Board members for appointment for 23/24, to be presented to full Board.
- Review of the proposed “slate” of Board officers for appointment or reappointment for 23/24, to be presented to full Board.
- Considered and approved a potential second nomination date in September.

### Board Development Committee Report:

The Board Development Committee met on April 24<sup>th</sup>; at their meeting the following action was taken:

- DEI Steering Team – The Committee discussed asking Rosemary Furfey to serve on the DEI Steering Team. Elaine Placido suggested that two Board members serve on the team together to spread the workload between them. Mary Lou also volunteered to serve on the team.
- Executive Committee – The Committee agreed to nominate Mary Lou Soscia as a Board member at large to fill the vacancy in the Executive Committee.
- Board Nominations (May Slate) – Elaine Placido gave updates on two promising Board candidates. Barbara Bergquist is a longtime volunteer with the Estuary Partnership who also has financial expertise. Season Long is the Environmental Health Manager in Cowlitz County, has been to annual events and brings knowledge of environmental health and local government. Elaine will also contact Amy Boyd to discuss a possible role on the Board. The Committee agreed to nominate these candidates for consideration at the May Executive Committee and Board meetings.



- Board Nominations (Future Slates) - The Committee hopes to nominate Chad Brown, Derron Coles, Winta Yohannes, and Carlos Garcia for consideration in September. They also hope to nominate Shantae Johnson next year.
- The Board Development Committee discussed their calendar and committee structure. The current calendar presents a heavy workload in the first quarter, including interviewing current Board members, meeting with potential Board members, and determining which candidates to nominate at the May meeting. The Committee suggested removing the individual interviews with Board members from the calendar. Elaine Placido also discussed the Committee's structure, wondering whether the use of committees works against the Estuary Partnership's goals of shared governance and collaboration. In addition, the Committee discussed the orientation of new Board members, suggesting that the Communications Team could have a greater role in this process.