

# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

## 2025 Columbia River Estuary Conference: *Echoes of the Estuary – Reflections for a Resilient Future*

May 13-15, 2025, at the Liberty Theater  
in Astoria, Oregon

**Abstracts Due: January 31, 2025**

The theme of the 2025 Columbia River Estuary Conference (CREC) is *Echoes of the Estuary – Reflections for a Resilient Future*. This theme weaves the deep history of indigenous stewardship and use of the lower Columbia River ecosystem with present day research and resource management which is increasingly echoing indigenous knowledge. After so much investment in recovering the lower Columbia River and nearshore ocean ecosystem, CREC provides the opportunity to take stock of our efforts and results, to look forward and plan next steps to ensure a resilient future, and to reconnect with each other to seek out new ideas and collaborate. It has been 30 years since the lower Columbia River was designated an “estuary of national significance” and roughly the same since NOAA’s Pacific Ocean transect monitoring and indicators system was established. What have we accomplished as a region and what have we learned? Most importantly, how do we apply these lessons to our future actions?

**Conference Format:** The conference will be a three-day event with invited and contributed presentations. Traditional oral presentations will be allocated 20 minutes (15-minute talk/5 minutes for audience questions) and lightning talks will have 7 minutes. There will be a formal poster session during an evening social. Poster presentations can remain throughout the conference within the same room as morning/afternoon breaks are held.

**Call for Presentations, Lightning Talks, and Posters:** Presentations that provide new scientific findings, contribute to a better understanding, describe innovative techniques, or discuss emerging issues, with management implications for the lower Columbia, plume, and nearshore ocean ecosystems or imperiled species are encouraged. Findings from outside this focal area are welcome if they provide context or broaden our comprehension of ecosystem processes, conservation practices, or species recovery approaches within the focal area. All presentations should include a synthesis and interpretation of results and a discussion of the application of these findings to management. Below are some suggested topics for inclusion in the conference:

### **Suggested Topics:**

- **Storytelling and Communicating Science** – Research has shown that the most effective way to communicate science, change opinions, and affect change is to tie into people’s emotions by telling stories. What are methods that you have tried to convey science, stewardship, or resource management activities that involve telling stories? What are some examples where this has been effective in the lower Columbia? Were you successful in overcoming “confirmation bias”?
- **Shared stewardship and co-management** – Natural resource management greatly benefits from indigenous ecological knowledge and management. What are examples of implementing indigenous ecological stewardship practices in research and resource management? How are we integrating indigenous knowledge into our resource conservation policies? What are case studies of effective collaboration that honor knowledge and experiences from historically marginalized communities?

- **Status or trends of the lower Columbia River and nearshore ocean** - What is the present status of the lower Columbia and nearshore ocean? What have we accomplished to date? What remains to be done? Are we detecting environmental shifts (e.g., in food webs, vegetation communities, hydrology) with our research and monitoring? How? What are the implications? How do we better link the estuary and nearshore ocean research and management together in the future?
- **Changing environmental conditions** - How have we integrated shifting environmental conditions (e.g., warming water temperatures, ocean acidification and hypoxia, earlier growing seasons, sea level rise, more intense storms) into our research and restoration? What specific steps have we taken to help species adapt or reduce impacts from these changes? How do we change our work to help species survive or recover? How have we integrated climate change into restoration project design? How do we continue to integrate predicted impacts (more intense storms, warming temperatures, changes in flow, rising sea levels) into our work? Are we explicitly identifying and designing projects that restore thermal conditions of watersheds, or reduce further loss of floodplain habitats by keeping up with sea level rise?
- **New understanding of ecosystem condition and function** - What are new findings or historically excluded perspectives that provide us with a better basic understanding of the lower Columbia, plume, and nearshore ocean? How does this information help us in designing ecosystem restoration or listed species recovery actions?
- **Multi-species management and ESA listed species recovery** - How do we integrate multi-species conservation within restoration projects? Are we managing for change from shifting conditions?
- **Innovative technologies and new data products** - What are innovative technologies or data products and how have they been applied? How do these improve our understanding or management activities?
- **Columbia Basin issues, including Columbia River Treaty, toxic contaminants, invasive species, Snake River dam removal** - What are the implications of these issues on the lower Columbia, plume, and nearshore ocean?

*Please submit abstracts online by January 31, 2025: <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/CREC-abstract>*

*Please submit no more than one abstract as a lead presenter for a traditional oral presentation.* Authors can lead a separate lightning or poster presentation as well as serve as a co-author on multiple traditional oral presentations.

For each abstract submittal, you will be required to select your preferred and second choice presentation formats – oral, lightning, or poster.

**First choice:** Oral presentation preferred.

**Second Choice:** Lightning presentation.