

March 26, 2018

For more information about the PCW, or about the *Coos Estuary Land Use Analysis* project,

Contact: South Slough Reserve Watershed Monitoring Coordinator, Jenni Schmitt

Phone: 541.888.8270 ext. 312 (Monday-Friday 8-4:30)

Email: jenni.schmitt@state.or.us

**“The Coos Estuary Management Plan May Be Getting Easier to Work With”
Coos Bay, OR**

The Partnership for Coastal Watersheds (PCW) will hold an Open House on April 25th, to solicit feedback on products from the Coos Estuary Land Use Analysis Project. The Open House is from 3:00-7:30pm at the Mill Casino’s 2nd floor meeting rooms with introductory presentations describing the PCW process, statewide planning goals, and the current condition of the Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan at 3:00 pm and repeated at 5:30 pm. The event is free and open to the public and refreshments will be provided.

“This event offers a great opportunity for anyone interested in current and future management of the Coos estuary to learn more about the Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan (CBEMP).” said Jill Rolfe, the Coos County Planning Director. The CBEMP, the regulatory basis for local development and conservation decisions made in and around the Coos estuary, has only been minimally updated since it was adopted in 1985 and has become increasingly difficult for everyone to work with. Since its creation in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s, many conditions including the economics and demographics of the many communities along the Coos estuary have changed and the CBEMP is now largely outdated.

Through a series of workshops, the Coos County Planning Department in collaboration with the PCW has collected and evaluated local stakeholder suggestions for key CBEMP refinements based on a balance of their needs and those of the estuary and its surrounding communities. Recommendations were then developed based on their suggestions. Stakeholder input benefitted from several newly compiled and summarized information sources: 1) The Communities, Lands & Waterways: Data Source or “Data Source,” a status and trends report assessing environmental and socio-economic conditions in the Coos estuary; and 2) the Coos Estuary Map Atlas, a series of maps and tables of the CBEMP area. “Both resources reveal current and potential development and conservation areas within the boundaries of the CBEMP and reflect current and future likely conditions in the estuary” Rolfe said.

The PCW is a local group of civic-minded community members representing county and city planners, natural resource managers, and business, development, and conservation interests. Since 2012, the PCW has developed multiple projects using a collaborative process and insightful discussion, involving a broad cross-section of community stakeholders. In 2016, the PCW received a \$246,000 grant from the National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative (a program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that is managed by the University of Michigan Water Center) to help Coos County develop the technical information and community feedback it needs as it considers updating its CBEMP. The Coos Estuary Land Use Analysis Project, is administered by the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve and implemented in partnership with Coos County and the PCW. The PCW will complete this Project in fall 2018, with a report presented to the Coos County Board of Commissioners along with all public input. For more information on the PCW and its projects visit: www.partnershipforcoastalwatersheds.org or contact Jenni Schmitt (Jenni.Schmitt@state.or.us; (541) 888-8270 x312)

-end-