

2023 PROJECT OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

The [West Coast Ocean Alliance \(WCOA\)](#), the designated Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) for the West Coast, will receive approximately **\$3.9M of new funding over the next two years** from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This Law authorized funding for established Regional Ocean Partnerships for five years to support the interstate and intertribal management of ocean and coastal resources. The **summary below highlights the projects the WCOA plans to support with the first year of funding**, covering December 2022 through November 2023.

➤ **WCOA 5-year Strategic Plan**

The WCOA will develop a **new 5-year strategic plan** to guide all activities of the WCOA. This work will include extensive engagement with WCOA members to inform planning efforts, as well as outreach with regional ocean stakeholders to help define the most appropriate regional role and associated activities for the WCOA moving forward.

➤ **WCOA Staff & Capacity**

The funding will support the WCOA Executive Director, a **new full-time Project Coordinator** and a **new full-time Tribal Coordinator**. This team will facilitate more efficient engagement with WCOA members, expand outreach activities, and help oversee project progress and deliverables.

➤ **Tribal Capacity and Support**

The WCOA will create a **new funding program dedicated to tribal government members of the WCOA**, to ensure Tribes can participate in all WCOA activities they choose and support additional tribal ocean planning work relevant to WCOA regional priorities, if applicable.

➤ **West Coast Fellowship Program**

Working with Sea Grant offices on the West Coast, the WCOA plans to **launch a new fellowship program to support WCOA regional priorities**. The WCOA fellowship program will create a regional cohort of fellows to further increase the capacity of the WCOA to engage in member-driven projects related to ocean planning, science, data, and management.

➤ **Regional Ocean Summits**

The WCOA will fund and facilitate **three separate in-person gatherings** of WCOA members and stakeholders, focused on the **topics of tribal engagement, offshore wind, and an all-inclusive WCOA meeting**. These meetings will allow the WCOA to effectively convene ocean partners, help determine the future efforts of the group, strengthen relationships, and build new partnerships.

➤ **West Coast Aquaculture Inventory**

The WCOA will create a **new regional database to track existing, proposed, and potential future areas of ocean-based aquaculture** on the West Coast. This will increase WCOA member and stakeholder awareness and transparency of aquaculture development, while also informing future WCOA work on developing best practices for aquaculture management and policy.

➤ **Tribal Engagement Training Program**

The WCOA will **develop and launch a new tribal engagement training program**. The WCOA will work with the Alliance's tribal members to build on the existing [tribal engagement guidance document](#) to develop tribal engagement training for federal, state, and other relevant audiences.

➤ **Enhanced Communication**

The WCOA will **enhance all aspects of communications, outreach, and public engagement**, including an improved website, expanded use of social media, public engagement tools, and other mechanisms to build awareness about WCOA efforts. Communications work will also focus on amplifying future WCOA project outcomes achieved in partnership with WCOA members.

➤ **West Coast Ocean Health Dashboard**

The **West Coast Ocean Health Dashboard, being developed in partnership with the West Coast Ocean Data Portal, will add new regional ocean health indicators** through contracts with regional scientific and data experts. The growing suite of indicators will strengthen the role of the dashboard as a leading tool to identify ocean planning needs and progress on the West Coast.

➤ **West Coast Ocean Data Portal**

The WCOA will support **ongoing technical maintenance and improvements for [the West Coast Ocean Data Portal](#)**, which serves as the primary mechanism for the coordination and sharing of ocean-related data for WCOA activities.

For more information about the projects listed above or the general activities of the West Coast Ocean Alliance please visit our website at www.westcoastoceanalliance.org or contact WCOA Executive Director John Hansen at john@westcoastoceanalliance.org.