

## **The Coastal Law Project's Vision Statement**

Our vision is of an Oregon coastal region where both human and natural communities thrive, and where resources are shared sustainably and equitably.

### **About the Coastal Law Project:**

The Coastal Law Project is a collaborative partnership formed in 2004 between the Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition and Crag Law Center to protect and preserve the Oregon coast and its ecosystems for all people. You can learn more about our history [here](#).

The Oregon coast is the pride of the state, crucial as a public resource for recreation, resource-based economies, and vital species habitat. However, it is under ever-present and increasing threat from climate change, harmful resource extraction schemes (including fossil fuel infrastructure), and ill-advised development proposals, as well as the ongoing loss of public beach access due to hardened protection structures. Through a range of tools including legal representation, public education about conservation laws and land use, and policy advice, the Coastal Law Project works with coastal communities to protect sensitive coastal and marine ecosystems, preserve and promote equitable public beach access, and defend coastal watersheds. The partnership draws upon the respective expertise and knowledge of our two organizations to identify and address issues critical for the preservation of the Oregon coast. Together, Crag and Oregon Shores hope to work alongside people and communities to help preserve Oregon's treasured coastal region for generations to come.

### **The Coastal Law Project's Core Values:**

The Coastal Law Project seeks to address a broad range of issues affecting the Oregon Coast. Underlying our approach to these issues are the following core objectives:

- Assisting communities in addressing conservation and resource-management needs and concerns
- Supporting public participation in resource management and regulatory decision-making
- Expanding access to decision-making through education and engagement
- Protecting coastal species and ecosystems now and for future generations
- Promoting climate adaptation and equity (climate justice/climate resilience)
- Fostering stewardship based on sustainability, traditional ecological knowledge as well as the best available scientific evidence, and ecosystem-based management practices
- Protecting long-term public beach access, both to and along the shore

These objectives reflect the core values that guide our work.

### **The Coastal Law Project - Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI)**

Since its inception in 2004, the Coastal Law Project partnership has focused on supporting grassroots, community-based efforts to protect and defend the Oregon coast. But not all people have an equal voice in decision-making that affects our environment and our communities. The coast, as everywhere in Oregon and America, has a history of injustice toward indigenous peoples, systemic racism, and corporate dominance, leading to unequal access to social, political, and economic power. These systemic problems persist today. A vision of the Oregon coast where everyone is welcome on the beaches, waters, and natural areas—regardless of race, ethnicity, income, class, gender, and immigration-status—cannot be achieved until all people have equitable access to environmental justice. To realize the Coastal Law Project's mission, we must help to elevate the voices of those who bear a disproportionate burden of environmental harm and who have been historically underrepresented in environmental decision-making, including Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and lower-income communities.

The Coastal Law Project is committed to ensuring that all people are welcomed and have a seat at the table when it comes to protecting the Oregon coast's natural communities, ecosystems, and landscapes as well as preserving access to these special places in an ecologically sustainable way. We are working to better address the ways racial and class inequity play out in Oregon coastal environmental advocacy, internally and externally. Implementing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion principles will allow us to use our limited resources for the greatest impact, create space for new leaders, improve our own thinking and approach to our work, confront injustice, and cultivate a culture of compassion within our organizations. We can use our power and position to promote these values and remain focused on the needs of coastal communities.

### **The Coastal Law Project's JEDI Commitments**

Here is our current approach to accounting for, integrating, and expanding justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in our work:

- We will consistently implement justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) principles into our work, process, and communications. We will prioritize time and resources to support equity and inclusion within our organizations as well as with the public and communities we serve.
- We will actively engage, listen, and help to elevate diverse voices in coastal communities. Whenever possible, we will center the voices of growing Latinx as well as other communities of color and low-income communities on the coast, as these perspectives will be key to generating sustainable solutions to environmental challenges, effective responses to climate change, and achieving environmental justice.
- We will create more intentional ways to engage, build relationships, and collaborate with organizations on the coast or working on coast-related issues led by people of color.

- We will work alongside sovereign tribal nations and native people to protect the environment and achieve common goals. Native peoples have lived along Oregon's shores for as long as 10,000 years. Today, descendants of the original inhabitants of the Oregon coast still live and work here, and many are members of federally recognized tribes including the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, Coquille Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. We recognize that sovereign tribal governments are concerned with complex issues far beyond the environment, and our organizations cannot and do not seek to speak for tribal sovereigns. We are committed to pursue dialogue with sovereign tribal nations about our efforts to protect the Oregon coast, and ensure our organizations are in a position to elevate the interests and voices of tribal sovereigns and native people.
- We will question and work to challenge dominant narratives about community values and the relationships of people to the land.
- We will challenge implicit bias and structural barriers in our legal system and within the environmental movement.

As we work toward our JEDI commitments, it is important to establish a process to measure our progress and improve our process. To that end, the Coastal Law Project will take the following steps to evaluate our progress:

- For each project, Crag will consider who is impacted and whether those folks have barriers to participating in the relevant decision-making process.
- We will reach out to leaders and/or organizations working with these communities to understand whether their interests align with the Coastal Law Project goals, and if so, offer assistance in their participation.
  - Assistance could take the form of comment sign-on, amplification of those groups' comments in our own submittals, and external communications.
- If we are unable to assess who will be impacted and whether they have barriers to effective participation in decision-making, we will work to understand why and work to learn and grow from our mistakes.

We relied on the following materials to inform our charter document revision:

Crag Mission & Values (including EDI process): <https://crag.org/mission-and-values/>

Crag Communities Statement: <https://crag.org/our-work/communities/>

Crag CLP page: <https://crag.org/our-work/communities/coastal-law-project/>

Surfrider JEDI page: <https://www.surfrider.org/pages/diversity-equity-inclusion>

Columbia Riverkeeper Equity Page + Internal Links: <https://www.columbiariverkeeper.org/about-us/equity>

Beyond Toxics About Us: <https://www.beyondtoxics.org/about/>