

# Federal Grant Application Request

## Department of State Lands

### Land Acquisition within the South Slough Watershed

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**Analyst:** Linda Gilbert

**Request:** Approve the submission of a federal grant application to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program in the amount of \$1,000,000, to acquire 240 acres of land within the South Slough watershed.

**Recommendation:** Approve the request.

**Analysis:** The South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve is a federally designated 4,800 acre protected area in the Coos Estuary. The Reserve improves management and public understanding of estuaries and coastal watersheds. The Department of State Lands supports the Reserve as well as 1,105 acres adjacent to the Reserve boundaries. This request seeks funding to purchase 240 additional bordering acres that have been offered by a willing seller.

The US Fish and Wildlife announced this conservation grant opportunity in February, with a June 28 deadline. The match for the \$1,000,000 is 33%. The Department will meet the requirement through a combination of adjacent tidal lands, cash from an existing Reserve trust fund, and from project participants such as the South Coast Land Conservancy.

If the grant is awarded and additional expenditure limitation is necessary, a budget adjustment can be made in the 2014 Legislative Session or during the Interim.

The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends approval of the request.



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

## Department of State Lands

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May 30, 2013

### State Land Board

The Honorable Richard Devlin, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Peter Buckley, Co-Chair  
Joint Legislative Committee on Ways and Means  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301-4048

John A. Kitzhaber, MD  
Governor

Kate Brown  
Secretary of State

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Ted Wheeler  
State Treasurer

### Letter of Request to Apply for a Federal Grant

The purpose of this letter is to request permission from the Joint Legislative Committee on Ways and Means to apply for a grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program to acquire 240 acres of land within the South Slough watershed from a willing seller. The USFWS program provides federal matching funds for projects that protect, restore and manage coastal wetlands and shorelands.

Match, consisting of not less than 33% of the total project costs, in the form of project management, in-kind support and other non-state funding is available and is currently being negotiated with project participants.

### Agency Action

USFWS issued a Federal Funding Opportunity Announcement (F13AS00079) for the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program on February 8, 2013. The deadline to submit on-line applications for this grant program is June 28, 2013. The USFWS expects to announce projects selected for funding in January 2014.

A previous USFWS Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program grant awarded to the Department of State Lands (DSL) on behalf of the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (SSNERR) funded the restoration of DSL-managed tidal wetlands in the South Slough inlet of the Coos Estuary south of Charleston.

### Background

The Oregon legislature designated portions of the South Slough inlet in the Coos Estuary as a protected area in 1974 to improve the management and public understanding of estuaries and coastal watersheds. Some of the DSL managed lands in the South Slough watershed include the area managed as the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve; the first reserve of its kind in the U.S. DSL supports the SSNERR Management Commission's effort to develop and conduct ongoing programs of research, stewardship, and education focused on estuaries and coastal watersheds.

In 1999, the SSNERR Management Commission adopted a "Cooperative Plan for Watershed Conservation" to guide conservation-oriented actions in the South Slough watershed. The FY 2014 USFWS Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant program funding will support the objectives of the South Slough Cooperative Plan for Watershed Conservation by protecting and restoring tidelands and shorelands in the central portion of the South Slough inlet.

Federal grant funds will be used to acquire a 240-acre shoreland parcel from a willing seller. DSL will manage shorelands acquired with federal funds for conservation and educational purposes in accordance with the objectives of the USFWS coastal wetlands conservation grant program. Federal funds will also be used to restore natural functions of the shorelands that have been impacted by previous activities including removal and control of weeds and pests, erosion control, and planting of native species.

DSL tidelands adjacent to the shoreland parcels, contributions from a local land trust, and in-kind support from other community organizations will be used to meet the non-federal matching requirements of the grant program. Inclusion of DSL tidelands in the proposal will not change current practices or uses of the tidelands. Current zoning and the agency's management priority for the tidelands already prioritize protecting the natural functions and values of these tidelands.

When the final application is submitted, DSL will provide copies to the Department of Administrative Services' Chief Financial Officer and the Legislative Fiscal Office. Should the application be successful the agency will return to the legislature to request limitation during the 2013-15 biennium.

**Legislation Affected**

Chapter 412, Section 2(3), Oregon Laws 2011

Thank you for your interest and assistance. If you have any questions, please contact Cyndi Wickham at 503-986-5227.

Sincerely,



Mary M. Abrams, Ph.D.  
Director

cc: Richard Whitman, Office of the Governor  
Josh Goldberg, Office of the Secretary of State  
Michael Selvaggio, Office of the State Treasurer  
Lisa Pearson, DAS, CFO  
Linda Gilbert, LFO  
Cyndi Wickham, Finance and Administration