

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 33: Department of State Lands

South Slough

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Representative Levy

The Natural Resources Subcommittee heard a request from the Department of State Lands on the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.

During the December 2024 meeting of the Emergency Board, the Department of State Lands requested and received permission to apply to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for two separate grants to support land acquisition of three parcels into the South Slough. Both grants were successful, totaling \$2 million in federal revenues awarded and requiring no match.

The first parcel is an adjacent 80 acres currently residing in the Common School Fund portfolio where timber harvest has halted due to endangered species presence on the land. The second and third parcels total 113 acres of adjacent wetland and upland habitat currently owned by Coos County. The acreage has not been profitable for timber harvest due to lowland terrains and waterflows.

Ongoing management costs of the parcels are anticipated to be minimal, and the transactions have no impact on county property tax or harvest tax revenue. The State Land Board has approved due diligence actions for the parcels, and the

agency anticipates that final board approval for land acquisition will be granted in early 2026.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$2,002,800 in Federal Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of State Lands in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for land acquisition into the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.