



October 20, 2022

Tillamook County
c/o Sarah Absher
201 Laurel Ave,
Tillamook, OR 97141

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm writing on behalf of Wild Salmon Center (WSC) to express the organization's support of The Nature Conservancy's permit application to Tillamook County to restore its property along the lower Kilchis River, known as the Kilchis Porter Project, in the Tillamook Bay basin. One of the most biologically rich regions in the Pacific Northwest, the Tillamook Bay basin has been recognized as a Salmon Stronghold by the State of Oregon through the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership. Lying in the heart of this stronghold, the Kilchis River boasts robust populations of fall Chinook and chum salmon, and contributes to the region's strong populations of winter steelhead. These runs anchor extraordinary recreational fisheries that are critical to the local economy and draw visitors from around the world.

Since European settlement, over 90% of the basin's tidal wetlands have been eliminated as these habitats were diked, drained, and filled to accommodate agricultural uses and promote urban and rural-residential development. These activities have also severely impaired water quality in the floodplain, limiting salmonid use of the few remaining tidally-connected wetland habitats. Wild Salmon Center applauds The Nature Conservancy's goals of the re-establishing tidal spruce swamp and associated off-channel habitats – directly addressing key factors limiting salmonid populations in the basin, most notably the loss of inter-tidal wetland habitats.

Wild Salmon Center encourages Tillamook County to approve The Nature Conservancy's permit application. If we can provide further information on our support of this project or the salmon stronghold initiative, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cyndi Curtis".

Cyndi Curtis
North Coast Manager

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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TILLAMOOK ESTUARIES PARTNERSHIP

Healthy watersheds for a thriving community

503-322-2222

P.O. Box 493
613 Commercial Street
Garibaldi, Oregon 97118

www.tbnep.org

October 18, 2022

Dick Vander Schaaf
The Nature Conservancy of Oregon

Dear Mr. Vander Schaaf:

I am writing on behalf of Tillamook Estuaries partnership to support The Nature Conservancy's Kilchis Porter Tract Restoration Project. The proposed project falls within the focus area of the Tillamook Bay National Estuary Program and will restore critical spruce swamp habitat and provide important refuges for juvenile fish, including the threatened Oregon Coast coho salmon.

This proposed project, and the corresponding collaborative efforts with community members, advances all three overarching goals within the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership (TEP) Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP), our 10-year action agenda:

- Maintain and improve the beneficial uses of estuaries and watersheds for humans and native aquatic and terrestrial species;
- Conserve and restore ecological functions of Tillamook County's estuaries and watersheds to benefit native species and the communities that depend on them; and
- Foster awareness of Tillamook County's estuaries and watersheds, engage in problem solving, and take action to conserve and enhance our natural resources.

Specifically, this project will advance five of TEP's priority actions listed in its CCMP:

- Conserve and restore key habitats in the estuary
- Maximize ecosystem connectivity to ensure a landscape array of ecosystem processes and ease of species movement
- Provide genetically appropriate native vegetation and promote its use among habitat restoration and enhancement partners
- Assess, prioritize, and enhance key native species populations, emphasizing contribution to ecological functions
- Assess and implement best management practices for key habitat conservation

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any additional information in support of this project.

Sincerely,

Executive Director

OUR MISSION

Tillamook Estuaries Partnership is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of Tillamook County's watersheds through active stewardship, scientific inquiry, community engagement, and education.

80285 Woodland Hts Rd
Arch Cape, OR 97102

RE Support for 851-22-000328-PLNG/851-22-000329-PLNG

October 11, 2022

Dear Planning Commissioners:

As a coastal resident, I know as well as you do that our fishing families and local economy rely on salmon thriving. For 100 years, we have altered their habitat - by installing dams, culverts, and dikes, and by clearing and filling wetlands. This has resulted in less salmon, altering our natural environment, and hurting our salmon industry. Now salmon face climate change impacts – too warm of streams and rivers, ocean hypoxia events (“dead zones”), and loss of their shell-making prey (e.g., pteropods). We must work quickly to help slow their decline to ensure that fishing is part of our future.

There are relatively few places that tidal Sitka spruce swamp may be effectively restored. This habitat type is critical to juvenile salmon recovery. With this project, The Nature Conservancy has been working diligently to do just that. I understand that it has been difficult, but they have done the work to show that restoration can help support salmon, while protecting neighboring farms.

Change is sometimes hard, but in this era, we must do the work to know that our kids and grandkids might be fishermen too. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Nadia Gardner