



NOAA FISHERIES

Office of Habitat
Conservation

*The Southern Flow
Corridor project was
led by:*

- *Tillamook County*
- *Port of Tillamook Bay*
- *Tillamook Estuary Partnership*
- *Tillamook Bay Habitat Estuary Improvement District*

*Project partners
included:*

- NOAA
- *Federal Emergency Management Agency*
- *Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board*
- *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
- *Institute for Applied Ecology*
- *Many additional partners*

Southern Flow Corridor — Protecting Farms and Fish, Reducing Flooding

About the Project

Over the past 150 years, close to 90 percent of the tidal wetlands in Oregon's Tillamook Estuary have been lost to development and agriculture. This habitat loss contributed directly to the decline of the area's salmon species, including chum, Chinook, and threatened Oregon Coast coho salmon.

Additionally, the area was prone to frequent seasonal flooding, often with catastrophic impacts. Oregon's winters bring storm surges, heavy rainfall, and snow melt. Combined with high tides, this often causes flooding in the area.

Flood losses in Tillamook County exceeded \$60 million from 1996–2000.

Through the landscape-scale Southern Flow Corridor – Landowner Preferred Alternative project, NOAA and partners worked to remove old levees, fill, and tide gates to create tidal estuary habitat. The project, completed in 2017, reconnected 443 acres of marsh habitat and opened 13 miles of tidal channels to migratory fish. It also reduced flooding to 4,800 acres of the surrounding community.

Below: Pre-restoration conditions at the Southern Flow Corridor project site. Credit: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership.



Community and Economic Benefits

In addition to creating habitat and reducing flooding, the Southern Flow Corridor project has provided a multitude of other benefits. According to a report from researchers at Oregon State University, the project:

- Supported 108 jobs and \$14.6 million in total economic output in Oregon.
- Increased the value of homes in nearby residential areas by 10 percent, with an average benefit of \$19,000 per home.
- Reduced flooding on Highway 101, a major transportation corridor. Fewer highway closures saves approximately \$7,200 in travel costs per flooding event.
- Stored 27,000 tons of coastal blue carbon. The estimated value of this carbon storage ranges from \$530,000 to \$736,000.

- Improved water quality by decreasing the amount of sediment that accumulates in Tillamook Bay. Less sediment decreases the amount of dredging needed to maintain shipping lanes, saving approximately \$1,500 to \$8,000 per year.

By helping increase the abundance of salmon in Tillamook Bay, the project is also expected to produce significant recreational fishing benefits. The publicly accessible project site also provides opportunities for activities such as hiking, kayaking, wildlife viewing, and a dog park.

The report was produced by researchers at Oregon State University, with support from the Tillamook Estuary Partnership and the Institute for Applied Ecology. It was funded by the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, with technical support from its NOAA Restoration Center.



Above: Restored tidal marsh after the completion of the Southern Flow Corridor project. Credit: Tillamook Estuaries Partnership.

More Information

Learn more about the Southern Flow Corridor project at: tillamookoregonsolutions.com

View the *Socio-economic Impacts of the Southern Flow Corridor Restoration Project* report at: ossfc.files.wordpress.com/2021/11/sfc-socioecon-final-memo-oct2021.pdf

Learn more about the Office of Habitat Conservation at: fisheries.noaa.gov/habitat-conservation

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