

Ecotrust: Waite Ranch Tidal Wetland Restoration Project

DATA SHARING PLAN

The Waite Ranch monitoring program is designed to track the restoration trajectory of the site and to facilitate the advancement of estuarine ecology and the practice of estuarine restoration. It is therefore high priority to make data generated through the monitoring program available to researchers, practitioners, and the interested public.

Laura Brophy, Waite Ranch Ecological Technical Lead, has developed a rigorous sampling methodology for data collection on all the ecological parameters described in the attachment “Effectiveness Monitoring Parameters and Indicators.” The sampling design follows QA/QC protocols used by Green Point Consulting, South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, the Institute of Applied Ecology, Oregon State University and the Siuslaw Watershed Council’s Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program. The monitoring parameters selected include controlling and structural elements prioritized in national and regional guidance (e.g. NOAA/NCCOS documents): tidal inundation regimes, salinity, elevations, soil physical and chemical characteristics, and plant and fish communities. This data will be used to analyze linkages between structural characteristics of the site and their ecological functions.

Collected data will be transferred from field notebooks, and downloaded from monitoring dataloggers into spreadsheets. To make data readily available to restoration practitioners, a web portal will be tested on the existing South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve website and linked to the Oregon Coastal Atlas. Users will locate project sites using an interactive Google Earth map linked to reference data and metadata for each site. Descriptive site information will be available as well as links to other datasets, relevant publications and reports, websites and tools. Starting no later than two years after the data are created, data collected on Waite Ranch will be available to the general public via the Oregon Coastal Atlas, or upon request to McKenzie River Trust (ph: 541-345-2799) or the Siuslaw Watershed Council (ph: 541-268-3044). Data sharing will occur through multiple channels on an ongoing basis.

To date, Waite Ranch baseline and monitoring data has been shared with: NOAA, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife through funding reporting processes; ESA PWA engineering firm for the engineering assessment and preliminary design; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for regional hydrology research; Geosciences Inc. to aid in the geotechnical analysis of the property; the Institute of Applied Ecology through the Estuary Tidal Group; Waite Ranch neighbors; and interested public. Both wetland delineation and cultural resource data has been shared with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Waite Ranch baseline and monitoring data has also been shared through the Siuslaw Watershed Council’s (SWC) collaborative Tech Team meetings, and future data summaries and interpretation will be shared at the SWC’s general meeting presentations, newsletters, website, and other media outlets.

Data is and will be shared with the project’s Advisory Group members and their associated organizations through meetings and direct requests. We anticipate many more opportunities for Waite Ranch monitoring data sharing to occur including through tidal estuary studies and research articles, conference presentations (e.g. American Fisheries Society), project update

reports, lessons learned reports targeted at other restoration practitioners, and through possible inclusion in the Science Review and Data Analyses of Tidal Wetlands of Oregon Report.

Waite Ranch effectiveness monitoring data collection will contribute to existing tidal estuary restoration monitoring data and serve as a model for future programs. The project's Ecological Technical Lead will use data from the monitoring program's reference sites to establish a reference conditions database for tidal estuary habitats. The programs at Siuslaw National Forest's Pixieland and Tamara Quays tidal wetland restoration sites as well as the Salmon River estuary of Oregon served as examples for the design of this monitoring program. Program design facilitates maximum comparability with the network of ongoing Pacific Northwest estuarine restoration projects, including those at the Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Yaquina River estuary.

All monitoring sub-contracts funded under this NOAA award will be consistent with and incorporate the data sharing plan above.