



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Elakha Alliance funds third-party economic impact analysis to evaluate the costs/benefits of sea otter reintroduction on coastal communities, fisheries stakeholders, tourism industry and more.

A third part Economic Impact Assessment will begin in January 2021, led by The Research Group, a leading research team out of Corvallis Oregon, highly respected in the world of marine and coastal economics. Principal investigators include Shannon Davis, principal with The Research Group in Corvallis; Hans Radtke, a veteran economist based in Yachats, Oregon; and Gil Sylvia, former director of the Coastal Ocean Marine Experiment Station at Oregon State University Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport.

The goal of the assessment is to understand potential economic impacts of reintroduction of sea otters to the Oregon coast. The study will be closely linked to a Feasibility Study examining a broad suite of factors surrounding return of sea otters to Oregon.

The economic assessment will examine the potential impact of sea otters on shellfisheries such as Dungeness crab and sea urchin, the value of ecosystem services of nearshore kelp forests and estuarine eelgrass beds, impacts on coastal

tourism and outdoor recreation sectors, particularly on the southern Oregon coast, and the potential value of carbon sequestration by kelp and eelgrass as so-called Blue Carbon.

The assessment will cost \$45,000 and is supported by the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund, Oregon Wild, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Oregon Coast Visitor Association, and a private donor.