



News

NEWS RELEASE – *for immediate release*

Media Contact: Alyssa Rash, 971-900-7708, alyssa.rash@dsl.oregon.gov

July 9, 2025

State Land Board Appoints Kaitlin Lovell as Director of the Oregon Department of State Lands

SALEM, Ore. – The State Land Board voted unanimously today to appoint Kaitlin Lovell as Director of the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL). Lovell will begin her four-year term in early August 2025.

Lovell brings more than two decades of experience in environmental policy, restoration, and natural resource law. Since 2007, she has led habitat protection and restoration initiatives for the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, where her work has focused on environmental regulation, permitting, land use, and innovative financing strategies for large-scale environmental projects. She also played a key role in developing a publicly owned mitigation bank in Portland.

Earlier in her career, Lovell served as salmon policy coordinator and counsel for Trout Unlimited. She helped shape science-based state and federal policies and contributed to Oregon's first recovery plans for salmon and steelhead populations in the Oregon Coast, Lower Columbia, and Willamette regions. She also worked as assistant university counsel at Cornell University.

Lovell holds a J.D. from Cornell Law School with a concentration in public law and a B.S. in environmental science from Bucknell University. She has served on several DSL advisory bodies, including the Elliott State Research Forest Board of Directors and a committee reviewing Oregon's wetland and waterway permitting rules.

Lovell will begin her tenure by visiting communities across Oregon to hear directly from the people and partners DSL serves. As director, she plans to deepen the agency's understanding of local needs and opportunities while strengthening relationships with Tribal Nations, local governments, and community partners and groups.

"The work of the Department of State Lands matters to every corner of Oregon," Lovell said. "I'm committed to listening, learning, and building trust across the state so we can steward Oregon's lands and waters together."



“Kaitlin is a proven leader who understands how much healthy lands and waters contribute to a thriving Oregon,” Governor Tina Kotek said, chair of the State Land Board. “Her long commitment to public service makes her well prepared to lead DSL at a time when stewardship and long-term sustainability must guide our work. I know she will work hard to ensure DSL’s programs and services reflect the needs and values of all Oregonians.”

By Oregon law, the State Land Board appoints the DSL director to a four-year term. The director leads the agency in managing lands to benefit schools, protects waterways and wetlands, and oversees South Slough Reserve and the Elliott State Research Forest.

Vicki Walker, who served as DSL director from 2018 until her retirement on June 30, announced her intent to step down in December 2024.

Until Lovell begins her role in August, Deputy Director Bill Ryan will serve as interim director.

About the State Land Board and the Department of State Lands: The State Land Board consists of Governor Tina Kotek, Secretary of State Tobias Read, and State Treasurer Elizabeth Steiner. Established by the Oregon Constitution in 1859, the Land Board oversees the state’s Common School Fund. The Department of State Lands is the Land Board’s administrative agency, managing the lands and resources that help fund Oregon’s public schools and protecting the state’s waterways and wetlands for the many benefits they provide.

###

www.oregon.gov/dsl