

## Elakha Alliance 2023 Grant Recipient - Sea Otter Pelts for Education

Using the sea otter pelt as an educational tool is a powerful way to engage the community in conversations about the importance of sea otters in restoring kelp forests along the Oregon coast.

Here is how the Elakha Alliance has utilized the pelt over the last several months:

**Visual Aid:** The sea otter pelt serves as a tangible and visual representation of these animals, allowing community members to see and feel the fur up close. This helps in creating a connection and sparking interest in learning more about sea otters.

**Educational Presentations:** We have incorporated the sea otter pelt into presentations and outreach events. We can discuss the history of sea otters in the region, their role in maintaining the health of kelp forests, and the reasons behind their decline and subsequent efforts for reintroduction.

**Interactive Learning:** By allowing people to touch and examine the pelt, it provides an interactive learning experience. Participants can feel the dense fur that helps sea otters stay warm in cold waters, learn about their adaptations for hunting and living in marine environments, and understand how their presence impacts the ecosystem.

**Storytelling:** The use of the sea otter pelt can be integrated into storytelling sessions, where the narrative of sea otters and their relationship with kelp forests comes alive. This approach can be particularly effective with children, as stories help them relate to and remember complex ecological concepts in a more engaging way. We can also share stories about how the Indigenous peoples have used sea otter pelts in their regalia.

**Inspiring Action:** Seeing and learning about sea otters through the pelt can inspire community members to take action to support conservation efforts. Whether it's through volunteering, participating in beach clean-ups, or supporting policies that protect marine habitats, individuals can feel empowered to contribute to the restoration of sea otter populations and the preservation of kelp forests.

Overall, using a sea otter pelt as a tool for outreach can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for these charismatic marine mammals and the crucial role they play in maintaining the health and balance of coastal ecosystems. It can also encourage a sense of stewardship and collective responsibility for the protection of our oceans and the myriad species that call them home.

Please see the photos below, and [here's a link to the recent KOIN TV Interview](#) we did with the pelt on display.



