



WESTERN FLYER
FOUNDATION

Strategic Plan Overview

2024 - 2026



Mission

To stir curiosity through marine research, education, and a blend of science and art inspired by John Steinbeck, Ed Ricketts, and their journey on the *Western Flyer*.

Vision

We share Steinbeck and Ricketts's vision of an interconnected world, where species are bound together, and curiosity about life is an abiding source of inspiration to understand and protect it.

Who We Serve

Our research and education programs serve scientists, students, and educators, and our outreach activities serve all community members.



Where We Operate

The *Western Flyer* will be based in Monterey Bay, California, nine to ten months per year. During the other months, the vessel will travel to ports along the Pacific coast from Baja California Sur, Mexico, to as far north as Alaska.



Our Values

Curiosity

We aim to spark joy and curiosity in science and the ocean, incorporating art, literature, and other humanities.

Collaboration

Building community and collaborating with local partners is a core feature of all our programs.

Adaptability

We are open to exploring new ideas, taking risks, learning, and adapting as needed.

Objectivity

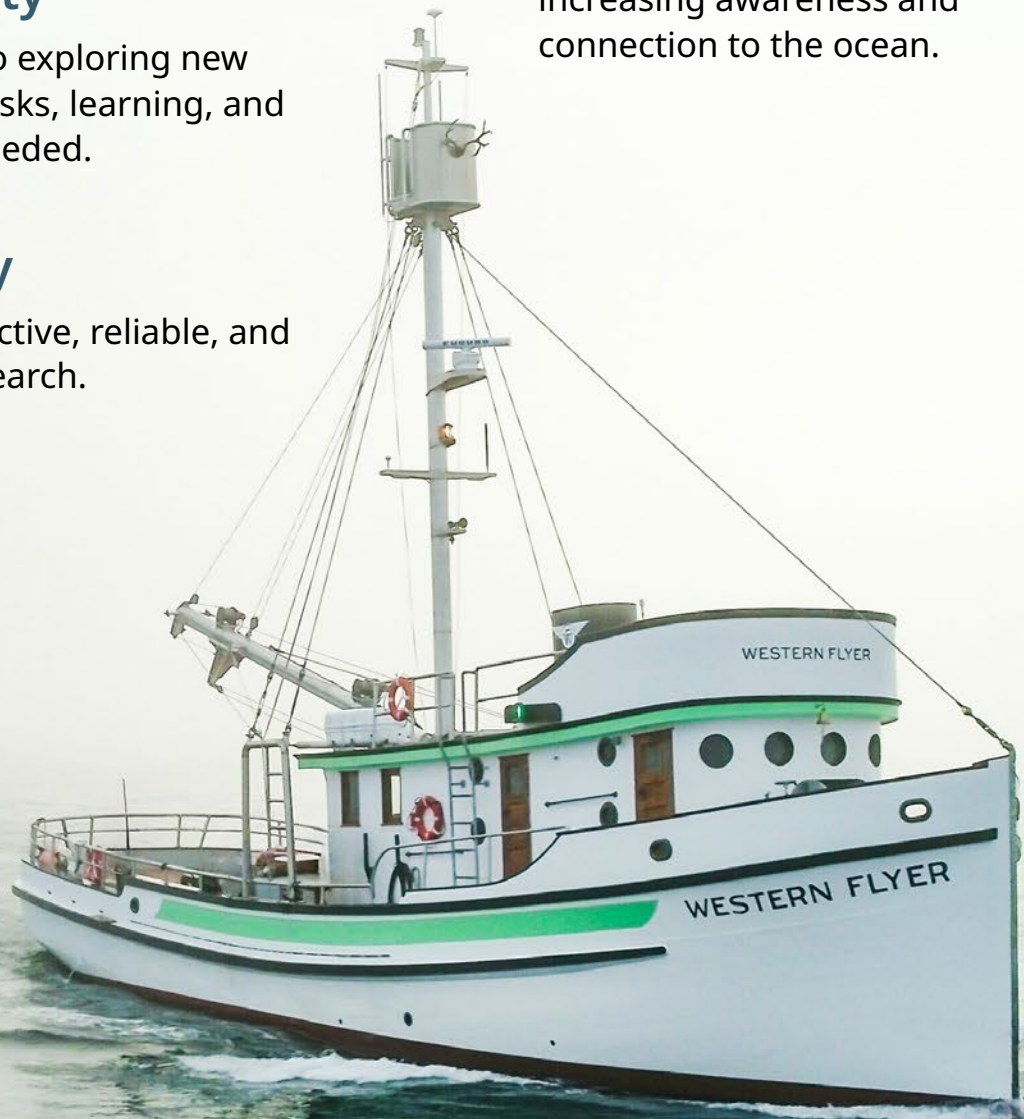
We foster objective, reliable, and innovative research.

Inclusivity

We welcome all people, embrace and respect differences, and make spaces where everyone can be their full and authentic selves.

Stewardship

We are stewards of the historic *Western Flyer* and work to instill an environmental stewardship ethic in students and researchers by increasing awareness and connection to the ocean.



Goals and Objectives



1

Outfit, protect, and maintain the historic *Western Flyer*.

- Complete the final phase of restoring the *Western Flyer* as a functional marine research and teaching vessel.
- Maintain the *Western Flyer* to ensure its safety and operations while preserving its historical integrity.
- Implement robust maritime safety and operating protocols.

2

Deepen our scientific understanding of the ocean.

- Equip the *Western Flyer* with cutting-edge marine science instrumentation.
- Develop and implement an innovative and rigorous marine research program in and beyond Monterey Bay.
- Establish partnerships and a charter program for the *Western Flyer* that support important research while generating revenue for the organization.





3

Stir curiosity through integrative science and art education programs.

- Develop and pilot onboard marine science programs for post-secondary students.
- Expand, develop, and pilot land-based educational activities integrating science and art, serving K-12 students in the Monterey Bay region.
- Research and pilot education programs in other ports on the West Coast, including the Pacific Northwest and the Gulf of California, Mexico.
- Prioritize working with students with known barriers to educational opportunities due to race, geography, gender, and socioeconomic status.

4

Raise awareness, connection, and community around the *Western Flyer*.

- Hold outreach events that engage the public, raise awareness, and build community.
- Hold a successful return trip to the Gulf of California in 2025.
- Enhance our marketing & communications strategy through media communications, storytelling, and the arts.



5

Strengthen the organization's financing and infrastructure.

- Secure long-term berthing, office space, and educational facilities in Monterey.
- Secure reliable revenue that exceeds operating expenses.
- Retain and recruit expert board members, staff, contractors, and volunteers.
- Implement a regular system of evaluating our organization and programs.



Photo credit: Pat Webster



Photo credit: Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies, SJSU

WesternFlyer.org



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