

DEPOE BAY NEAR SHORE ACTION TEAM



NSAT Purpose statement:

The Depoe Bay Near Shore Action Team (NSAT) exists to take an active role in any decision making process that may affect our near shore ocean. In order to preserve and enhance a vibrant coastal community, maintain healthy ecosystems, sustain popular fisheries and foster enjoyable recreational opportunities, NSAT is forming partnerships with governmental, educational and scientific agencies and the commercial/charter/sport fishing community. These partnerships will provide valuable scientific, experiential and historic information to decision makers. NSAT also assists in communication efforts which keep the community informed and educated regarding near shore issues.

Appointed by the Depoe Bay City Council, this 14 member group includes charter and commercial fishermen, scientists, researchers, marketers, educators, business owners and concerned citizens. NSAT meets monthly at the Depoe Bay City Hall.

NSAT slogan:

NSAT: working together to maintain a healthy ocean and a vibrant community.

Connections:

NSAT is dedicated to preserving the intimate connection between Depoe Bay and its near shore ocean.

Depoe Bay was born of the ocean and continues to rely on the ocean for its life breath. Our safe harbor with its short run to the open ocean links land and sea in an inseparable bond.

We define Depoe Bay's near-shore ocean as the area from Yaquina Head, north to Cascade Head covering just over 25 miles of shoreline. It extends from shore out to the 30 fathom curve (1½ - 4 miles) and encompasses a surface area of approximately 85 sq. mi. (54,675 acres).

Our near-shore ocean is an incredibly diverse region featuring 2 major rivers, numerous streams, salt marsh estuaries, tidal mud flats, rocky inter-tidal zones, basalt bluffs, sandy beaches, sheltered bays and secluded coves. Deeper water finds bull whip kelp beds, reefs, rock piles and pinnacles interspersed among a variety of sandy to muddy sea beds.

This diversity, combined with nutrient rich waters from our cold water upwelling provides us with abundant commercial, charter and sport fisheries. Notable species include clams, urchins, Dungeness crab, pacific pink shrimp, Coho salmon, Chinook salmon, halibut, ling cod, cabezon and a large variety of rockfish

Our whale population is another positive resource. More than **81000 visitors** toured the Depoe Bay Whale Center in 2005 and **803 whales** were spotted. The whale watching industry has provided a valuable source of income for many Depoe Bay charter boats.

As times have changed so has Depoe Bay, but our reliance on the ocean remains constant. Where once there were 3 fish processing plants and the harbor was home to commercial tuna and salmon fleets, now only a small vestige of those days remain with **5 active** commercial boats and the return of a processing plant set to open soon. Today's harbor provides over **2000** sport fishing launches each year and boasts a thriving charter fleet consisting of **19** boats. Depoe Bay skippers represent a total of **650** years experience making their living from the sea. The experience and knowledge these captains possess are precious resources that not only benefit our local economy but are representative of that very special "Oregon" way of life.

Actions:

We in Depoe Bay cherish our near-shore ocean and actively work to preserve it.

- Local volunteers spend countless hours operating a salmon enhancement program highlighted by a salmon hatchery on North Depoe Bay Creek. Our local citizens and professional fish scientists see the salmon enhancement activity as a way to give back some of what we take.
- Depoe Bay citizens were active in developing the Habitat Refuge in Whale Cove, the Boiler Bay Inter-tidal Research Reserve, the Pirate Cove Sub-tidal Research Reserve and both the Otter Rock and Yaquina Head Marine Gardens.
- Local volunteers are assisting OSU in their mussel research project in Boiler Bay and Fogarty Creek.
- NSAT is partnering with ODFW to use our boats as research platforms for their Acoustic Rock Fish project off the Siletz reef.
- NSAT is working with the State Parks in a local anti-pollution campaign.

NSAT recognizes that changes are coming in the way we use and regulate our near shore ocean. As we look to the future NSAT stands ready to take an active part in the planning and management of these future ocean-governance schemes.