

Rocky Habitat Site Proposal Initial Recommendation

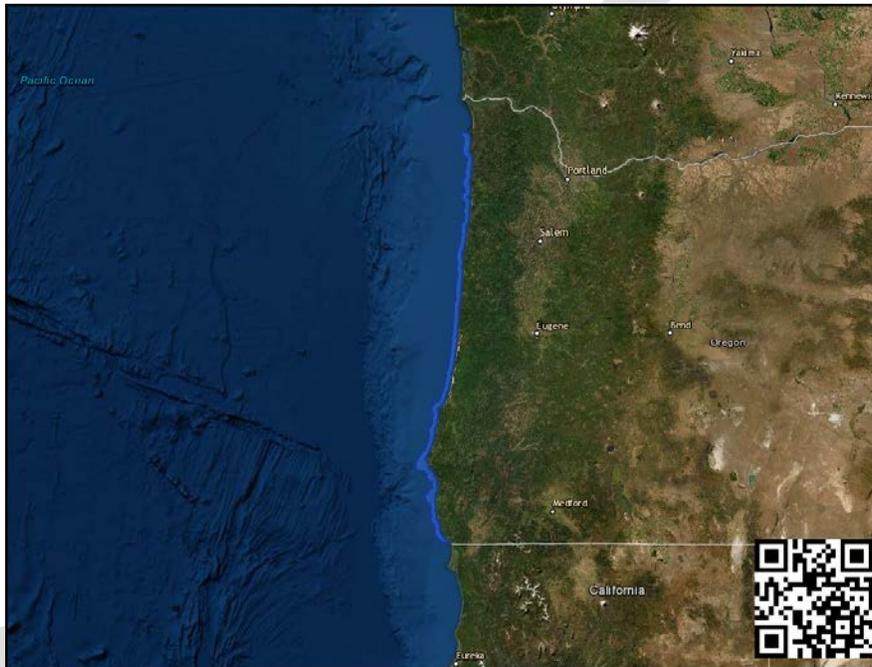
The Rocky Habitat Management Strategy Initial Proposal Process (2020-2021)

Proposed Site

Site Name: Oregon Kelp Forests Marine Research Area

Site Map: http://seasket.ch/y0uvvr4X_7

Proposal Materials: <https://bit.ly/383xSWD>



Initial Recommendation

This document is a draft summary of the site proposal evaluations conducted by the Rocky Habitat Working Group. The final drafts will be included in a recommendation packet that will be forwarded to the Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC). The summary below represents an initial draft of the recommendations made by the Working Group for the Oregon Kelp Forests Marine Research Area. Proposal recommendations will be made available for a 30-day public comment period, during which proposers and other members of the public are invited to submit their feedback. The Working Group will review the feedback for consideration prior to making their final recommendation determinations.

Initial recommendations were crafted using a ranking system whereby the members of the Working Group entered a vote for each proposal where 1 = *Recommend*, 2 = *Recommend, with considerations*, 3 = *Reservations, even with considerations*, and 4 = *Do not recommend*. Consideration are those components of a proposal, identified through the evaluation process, which must be addressed to facilitate its implementation. A vote of modified consensus was agreed upon where no more than 20% of the voting Working Group members could vote *Do not recommend* (4) in order for a proposal to receive a recommendation to move forward for consideration by OPAC.

Average Vote Ranking: 4.0

Initial Recommendation: Do not recommend

Summary of Considerations

The Rocky Habitat Working Group identified the implementation considerations listed below for the proposed Oregon Kelp Forests Marine Research Area. Any potential recommendation from OPAC should address these considerations as outlined in the following summary to ensure that implementation of the proposed site is a) consistent with state agency authority and coastal policy, b) appropriately inclusive and representative of stakeholder interests, c) reasonably achievable within the existing framework of rocky habitat site management, and d) in balance with the merits and goals of the proposed site.

Any potential recommendation for implementation of this site should address the following considerations:

- The proposal does not meet the completeness and sufficiency standards to facilitate proper proposal review

This proposal focuses on broad-based, coastwide management of kelp forests, and is not specific to any particular rocky site. While there is broad recognition of the importance and timeliness of addressing management of kelp forests in Oregon's territorial sea, the provisions and activities proposed do not fit into the framework of the rocky habitat site-management designation process.

However, many of the recommendations potentially have merit for application in a coastwide context outside of a site-specific designation, particularly with respect to research, diver partnerships, and exploratory management programs for kelp conservation. The Oregon Kelp Alliance is already focused on similar recommendations, and site-by-site considerations may be relevant for future designations provided research, monitoring, and management is adequately supported and well understood.

At this time, the Rocky Habitat Working Group does not recommend Oregon Kelp Forests Marine Research Area for potential recommendation to LCDC, with an understanding of the merits, perspectives, and considerations described above and in the full packet of evaluation materials.