

Reflecting on a rocky relationship





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Rocky habitats along the Oregon Coast are a primary attraction for the tourist economy and enrich the lives of all those living in coastal communities. For the first time in 25 years, the state of Oregon is updating its Rocky Habitat Management Strategy and is asking community groups to submit proposals urging protective designations for coastal rocky habitats.

"Cape Foulweather and Cape Lookout should be protected as Marine Conservation Areas under Oregon's new Rocky Habitat Management Strategy," said Dawn Villaescusa, president of the Audubon Society of Lincoln City. "Capes Foulweather and Lookout are home to some of the largest colonies of nesting seabirds along the Oregon Coast, have high ecological value and are relatively inaccessible. Both areas also have significant kelp beds just offshore, which serve as nurseries for a wide variety of marine species."

While the goal of the Marine Conservation Area designation is to conserve the natural ecosystem by limiting adverse impacts to habitat and wildlife, Audubon's proposed designations call for no change in coast-wide regulations for recreational or commercial fishing.

For Cape Foulweather, Lincoln City Audubon is proposing that a Marine Conservation Area designation be applied to rocky habitat from Whale Cove south to just short of the existing Marine Garden at Otter Rock. At Cape Lookout, Audubon urges that both the north and south sides of the cape be included in a Marine Conservation Area designation.

Villaescusa is thrilled that the state has given community groups the opportunity to help conserve key rocky habitats that residents and tourists alike treasure.

"Our investment in the Rocky Habitat Management process will reap benefits for not only the birds and other wildlife, but also for future generations of Oregonians," she said.

The deadline for submitting proposals to the Working Group of the Ocean Policy Advisory Council is December 31.

For more information, including updates on the progress of the campaign, go to www.lincolncityaudubon.org or call 503-910-3784.

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involved to help protect rocky coastal habitats:
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• Join the Facebook group on Facebook and share your stories, photos and videos about your favorite rocky sites on the Lincoln and Tillamook coast

• Click on the "Contact Us" link on the Audubon website to be added to the Coastal Habitat mailing list and receive regular updates on Rocky Habitat protections project.

• Become a Rocky Habitat Campaign volunteer. There are plenty of things to accomplish, from simple tasks like letter writing to site research and monitoring and stakeholder outreach.

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