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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you regarding the protection of our natural treasures at Coquille Point. I support the proposed Marine Garden site at Coquille Point. I walk this beach every day, and I have witnessed people, their dogs and their drones harassing birds like the oyster catcher.

There is so much life in the intertidal space. Tidal pools are incredibly sensitive and fragile to humans. One poke of an anemone's center could cause it to squirt out water that it needs to survive. Detaching a sea star makes it incredibly vulnerable and possibly unable to easily reattach. Getting too close to seal pups could cause a nearby mother seal to not return to her pup and eventually cause abandonment and a slow death for the seal pup. Some people don't even realize the harm that they are doing. If this continues, I fear we will no longer get to reap the natural rewards of enjoying our marine habitats.

Marine Garden sites have been beneficial for the marine life and for the public in other coastal towns, and I believe a Marine Garden site at Coquille Point would be a tremendous advantage to Bandon as well. I support interpretive signage and volunteers that could offer education to the public about our rocky habitats, biodiversity, and ecological resources.

Knowledge is indeed power. People seem to be much more inclined to follow guidelines if they understand why and how their actions affect others and themselves, and can be part of the solution. How fascinating a trip to the coast would be for a visitor to see and to learn so much, and then take that knowledge with them. This could be a life-changing experience for kids and adults. I know it was for me when I first discovered the anemone and the plover through interpretive signage. I also support fines and consequences for knowingly and selfishly destroying our natural treasures, consequences which are already in place but seem to be difficult to enforce. I think designating a Marine Garden site would educate and help deter this kind of destructive activity, and create such a positive outcome for all.

Please protect Coquille Point and all the incredible life therein!

Sincerely,
Sara Aipperspach