

# Rocky Habitat Site Proposal Initial Recommendation

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

## Proposed Site

**Site Name:** Coquille Point Marine Garden/Education Area

**Site Map:** [http://seasket.ch/y0uvvr4X\\_7](http://seasket.ch/y0uvvr4X_7)

**Proposal Materials:** <https://bit.ly/3kFGYhy>



## 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 Coquille Point Marine Garden/Education 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:** 1.6

**Initial Recommendation:** Recommend, with considerations

## Summary of Considerations

The Rocky Habitat Working Group identified the implementation considerations listed below for the proposed Coquille Point Marine Garden/Education 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:

- No need for subtidal invertebrate harvest restrictions
- Additional clarification of metrics of site success
- Clear expectations for agency coordination, support, costs for volunteer stewardship program
- Reconciliation of final site boundaries

The original 1994 Territorial Sea Plan recognized the Coquille Point site as “well-suited” for education and awareness programming opportunities, with a focus on protecting the high diversity of nesting seabirds present. The site is a high visibility, high use area, adjacent to Coquille Point, a unit of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge, in the city of Bandon. The shore area is accessible via trails and two stairways, and intertidal rocks and nearshore seawalls are easily viewed from the beach. A nearby U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) office manages National Wildlife Refuge land at the headland and offshore islands, and coordinates volunteer stewardship and education programs with local organizations such as Shoreline Education for Awareness (SEA).

Overall, this is a strong, well-written proposal with straightforward, practical goals. Site goals are focused on raising awareness of the unique and sensitive nature of the site, and communicating stewardship oriented site use when visiting. On-site volunteer interpreters presently promote continued stewardship, protection, education, and enjoyment of the site to help meet these goals and to protect the ecological resources and biodiversity by encouraging lawful, appropriate human activities. There is active management at Coquille Point headland by USFWS to maintain accessibility and support the educational program. The concerns expressed in the proposal are primarily focused on using community education about proper site use to reduce wildlife disturbance, particularly to nesting seabirds and harbor seal pupping areas. The proposal links continued use and education to support existing wildlife disturbance measures, efforts to protect the biodiversity of the intertidal area, and reduce trampling. There were substantial outreach and engagement efforts made in development of this proposal, with strong support expressed by the local community. The proposal has also received endorsement from the City of Bandon planning commission. As a high profile and use area with a demonstrated conservation need, there is ample opportunity to maintain volunteer and financial capacity for continued site support.

The existing stewardship efforts have a well-established (>30 yrs.) track record of existing site-specific programs through formal partnerships with USFWS, and a ready volunteer workforce to do the work proposed. The proposal aligns well with a Marine Garden/Education Area management prescription, and the existing rocky habitat management designation framework. However, extending those restrictions into the subtidal area would not address an identified need since the primary human use impact to invertebrates is only in the intertidal area. Impacts to existing users is likely to be minimal given opportunities for rocky habitat harvest within walking distance to the north and the south. The proposer acknowledges that measurements of success created by designation as a Marine Garden may not be easily determined through species-specific criteria, however they suggest efficacy of outreach and enforcement efforts as the primary measures of success. Additional coordination with agencies will be necessary to define expectations and roles for programmatic support. Volunteers conducting on-site education would need to be properly vetted and trained to conduct outreach activities appropriately. The vetting process may be likely to include background checks, which would need to be coordinated with the appropriate agencies.

The extent of the proposed area is appropriately discrete, allowing for focused education, enforcement, and monitoring. However, inclusion of harvest regulations in the subtidal habitat as proposed would be more comprehensive than most other existing rocky habitat designations and require strong justification for implementation. Slight boundary adjustments were made during the evaluation process, to clarify proposer intent (see below). The proposer expressed a focus on rocks that were accessible at low tides, and that had seabird colonies or harbor seal pupping areas. DLCD coordinated with the proposer to adjust the SE boundary to fully include several smaller rocks where kayakers and other small watercraft have been observed approaching the rocks, or that may potentially be accessible at the most extreme low tides. However, final site boundaries will need to be reconciled with the involved agencies to ensure site goals are balanced with proper site access, use, and management.

Site boundary adjustments clarified during Agency Analysis:



Original site boundaries



Updated site boundaries

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The Rocky Habitat Working Group recommends OPAC consider Coquille Point Marine Garden/Education Area for potential recommendation to LCDC, with an understanding that this recommendation hinges on appropriately addressing the considerations described above. These considerations include:

- not implementing invertebrate harvest restrictions in subtidal areas,
- clarify, in coordination with agencies, additional metrics of site success as appropriate,
- clear expectations set for agency coordination, support, costs for volunteer stewardship program,
- and reconciling site boundaries with the appropriate agencies.

Where possible, the Working Group supports addressing the considerations and concerns above through statewide and site-specific non-regulatory management plans, where appropriate, with a focus on volunteer monitoring, interpretation, education, and awareness efforts. Additional considerations for potential recommendation include the other merits and perspectives identified above and in the full packet of evaluation materials, in balance with the proposed site goals.

DRAFT

**From:** [Loren Morris](#)  
**To:** [Moses, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** Rocky Shores Habitat  
**Date:** Monday, April 19, 2021 7:27:48 AM

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Michael in response to the working Groups recommendations on SEA's Marine Garden Proposal for Coquille Point, we would like to respond by noting that we agree to the recommendations and have no issues with the recommendations and look forward to our proposal going before the OPAC Board.

Thank You,  
Loren Morris  
SEA President

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10