



MidCoast Watersheds Council

Watersheds of the Salmon River, Siletz River, Yaquina River, Alsea River, Yachats River, and Ocean Tributaries

To: Ocean Policy Advisory Council
Rocky Shores Working Group

December 3, 2020

The MidCoast Watersheds Council wishes to support the proposal from a citizen, Fran Recht, to designate the nearshore area around Fogarty Creek State Park as a Marine Conservation Area.

Though small, about 85 acres along 1.2 miles of rocky-intertidal shoreland, it has significant amounts of kelp (of many different species) and seagrasses which supports juvenile salmon, among other fish. Marine mammals and birds utilize the rocks and kelp beds as well.

We support this nearshore habitat conservation effort as it bolsters our conservation and restoration work that is generally concentrated more up-stream in the salmon-supporting rivers, streams and estuaries.

We also see this area as an important site for understanding if, at least on a localized basis, kelp forests can help minimize the impacts of ocean acidification and hypoxia. It may be especially important as there is a long term research reserve just to the south that Oregon State University (Lubchenko/Menge lab and others) has used for the study of intertidal species dispersal and connectivity.

The shallow nature of this rocky shores site makes it one that is not used for fishing by the charter boats that go north from Depoe Bay, so there will be limited if any impact on economic activities. The main use of Fogarty Creek State Park is beach goers looking for agates and hanging out on the beach. These activities and tide-pooling (which is difficult due to the very slippery nature of the algae) will be undisturbed.

We hope you will support this proposal.

Sincerely,


Paul Engelmeier

MidCoast Watersheds Council Board Chair
On behalf of the MidCoast Watersheds Council

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