

April 13, 2021

Re: Proposed amendments to Rocky Habitat Management Strategy

Dear Members of the TSP Working Group:

As a local member of the community who works and volunteers for many marine habitat preservation causes through my position at the Seaside Aquarium including the Marine Mammal Stranding Network, and hosting monthly Seaside beach cleanups, I have become aware of plans by the North Coast Rocky Habitat Coalition to amend the Oregon Territorial Sea Plan's Rocky Habitat Management Strategy.

The North Coast Rocky Habitat Coalition (NCRCH) stated goal is to protect coast habitats from significant harmful human disturbances, but there is not significant evidence that Ecola Point State Park is under duress. This point cannot be overstated. Due to the limited beach access, very few people actually visit the intertidal area and surrounding beach. In fact, Ecola Point State Park is a beach that I choose in my various capacities to visit for just this reason: few people actually make it to the intertidal areas. The only way to access the intertidal area is during negative tides; and even then the areas are not obvious to the public, and one must hike a quarter-mile or more to reach them. This secluded area is used primarily by local residence to fish, clam, and crab.

By giving this secluded area a special designation I fear, and my field experience corroborates, there is a significant chance the NCRCH will create the exact opposite effect they intend. The designation will likely draw more attention to the area. Such designations act like neon signs to visitors; and with limited funding available, a place which once thrived due to limited usage will now suffer due to increased usage with no ability to enforce regulation.

The NCRCH's proposal, however well-meaning, needs scientific studies/monitoring proving that the area is under significant stress to prove its validity. Otherwise, it runs the risk of negatively affecting not only the habitat itself but also the people who have utilized the area responsibly for years.

Thank you for your time,

Tiffany Boothe