From:	Zechariah Meunier
To:	TSP comments
Subject:	Cape Blanco MRA Public Comment
Date:	Thursday, April 15, 2021 3:45:41 PM

Dear OPAC members,

I am writing to voice my ardent support for the designation of Cape Blanco as a Marine Research Area under the amendments to the Rocky Habitat Management Strategy. As part of my graduate research at Oregon State University, I conduct field work at many sites along the Oregon coast. Two of my field sites are located on the north and south ends of Cape Blanco. The proposed Marine Research Area boundaries encompass both of these field sites and I support this delineation. This area represents critical habitat for intertidal organisms and vulnerable life history stages of nearshore species. In four years of work at Cape Blanco, I have witnessed many incredible species thriving in the intertidal including river otters, harbor seals, brown pelicans, nesting peregrine falcons, black oystercatchers, ochre sea stars, giant green anemones, red rock crabs, and over 50 species of algae and surfgrasses. In fact, the south end of Cape Blanco is my favorite field site because of its spectacular wildlife, relatively pristine conditions, and unique geology with a four-way arch and fossil deposits.

Other researchers in my lab have been working at Cape Blanco for over two decades. It is a core site in our long-term research to understand the dynamics of rocky intertidal ecosystems and how they are affected by climate change and other stressors. I am very supportive of applying the regulatory standards for a Marine Research Area to Cape Blanco, specifically eliminating commercial and recreational take of invertebrates and marine aquatic vegetation as well as requiring a permit for scientific or educational take. I hope these regulations allow Cape Blanco to exist in its natural state for decades to come.

Thank you for your consideration,
Zechariah

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