From:	jesse jones
To:	TSP comments
Subject:	Public comment in support of rocky habitat designations
Date:	Thursday, April 15, 2021 5:39:57 PM

Dear Rocky Habitat Working Group,

I support the following proposals submitted to the rocky habitat working group in December, 2020: Ecola Point MCA, Chapman Point MCA, Cape Lookout MCA, Cape Foulweather MCA, Coquille Point MEA, Blacklock Point MCA, Cape Blanco MRA, Crook Point MCA. I'm a coastal resident and have read these proposals. Each one provides state agency staff with common sense and economical solutions to mitigate increasing human impacts on Oregon coast's rocky shores. Each one sought local input and gathered opinions from stakeholders and residents about protective conservation measures during a highly restrictive pandemic. Each one states clearly the ecological value of these sites, based on biological surveys, historical monitoring, current science and anecdotal evidence. Each one was carefully written with the guidance of state agency staff to ensure guidelines were being followed, though no current state staff members advocated for any sites.

Oregon needs to be ahead of the curve in protecting these places and each proposal suggest ways to do this. Some proposals recommend increasing volunteer training to educate visitors with the goal to counteract the degradations that occur when thousands of visitors converge on a place. They are counting on an already strong legacy of volunteers who contribute thousands of hours of beach cleanups, bird surveys, wildlife monitoring and intertidal education. And, they are counting on everyone who manages volunteers, from state parks to conservation organizations, to keep doing what they are doing to engage and sustain their volunteer base. While we all know that managing volunteers is not free, volunteers provide hundreds of thousands of dollars in in-kind services to our state and must be considered when we plan for the future.

The reviewers in the working group stated that designations may bring unwanted attention to these sites. This reasoning fails to recognize the Oregon coast's popularity with visitors. Every site proposed is already mentioned on hiking websites, travel blogs, and Instagram. They are not inaccessible, nor unknown. Letters submitted from residents who live close to or have visited these sites for years provide statements of increased visitation - more cars in the parking lots, more people on the trails and on the beach. Let's listen to these people who took time to comment. There may be some secret spots on the Oregon coast, but none of them were proposed in this initial round to be designated. Each site proposed has a written history, a history of at least some monitoring if not a lot, and a history of visitation.

I commend the recommendations brought forth in these proposals and think they are an excellent starting point to guide the behavior of people who use and visit intertidal areas. Of course it's a balance of ecology and economy, and the proposers were careful to note this balance. The recommendations are hardly restrictive. They show an awareness of and respect for fishers and recreationists, two groups who also understand that without the health of the intertidal zone, their livelihoods and hobbies would not exist.

Please support these proposals and recommend them to OPAC, and thank you for your work in the last year for helping the public with them.

Very sincerely,

Jesse Jones
Astoria, Oregon