

5. Cape Perpetua Proposal Area: *Smelt Sands Beach to Berry Creek*

The cliffs of Cape Perpetua rise 800 feet above sea level, making this the highest spot on the Oregon coast and offering a superior view of Oregon's coastline below. As a popular tourist and camping spot, its health and scenic beauty contribute to the local economy of nearby communities Yachats and Florence. The landscape from Cape Perpetua to the Heceta Head includes Cummins Creek and Rock Creek Wilderness Areas, with the largest intact stand of coastal temperate rain forest of Sitka spruce and western hemlock in the lower 48 states. Where the Pacific Ocean crashes into the Siuslaw National Forest, rocky reefs shelter colorful and diverse aquatic life, making for some of Oregon's most popular tide pools.



Heceta Head (Ben Nieves)

On September 30, 2008, a group of Yachats residents submitted a proposal to create marine protections for this special area. Based on their recommendations, the Our Ocean coalition included this area as part of a more comprehensive proposal for a statewide network of marine protected areas and reserves. The city of Yachats passed a resolution supporting that proposal.

Prime habitat: The large rocky promontories of Cape Perpetua and Heceta Head, combined with the productive ocean waters and expansive sandy seafloor environments, mark a unique transition from the nearshore rocky reefs to the north off Seal Rock and the subtidal reefs and kelp forests to the south at Cape Arago. This nearshore area hosts important forage species such as sand lance, crabs, flatfishes, and sharks, and sustains foraging seabirds and marine mammals. The small but productive Cape Perpetua Reef Complex within this site hosts a diversity of rockfish species (including the depleted yelloweye rockfish).

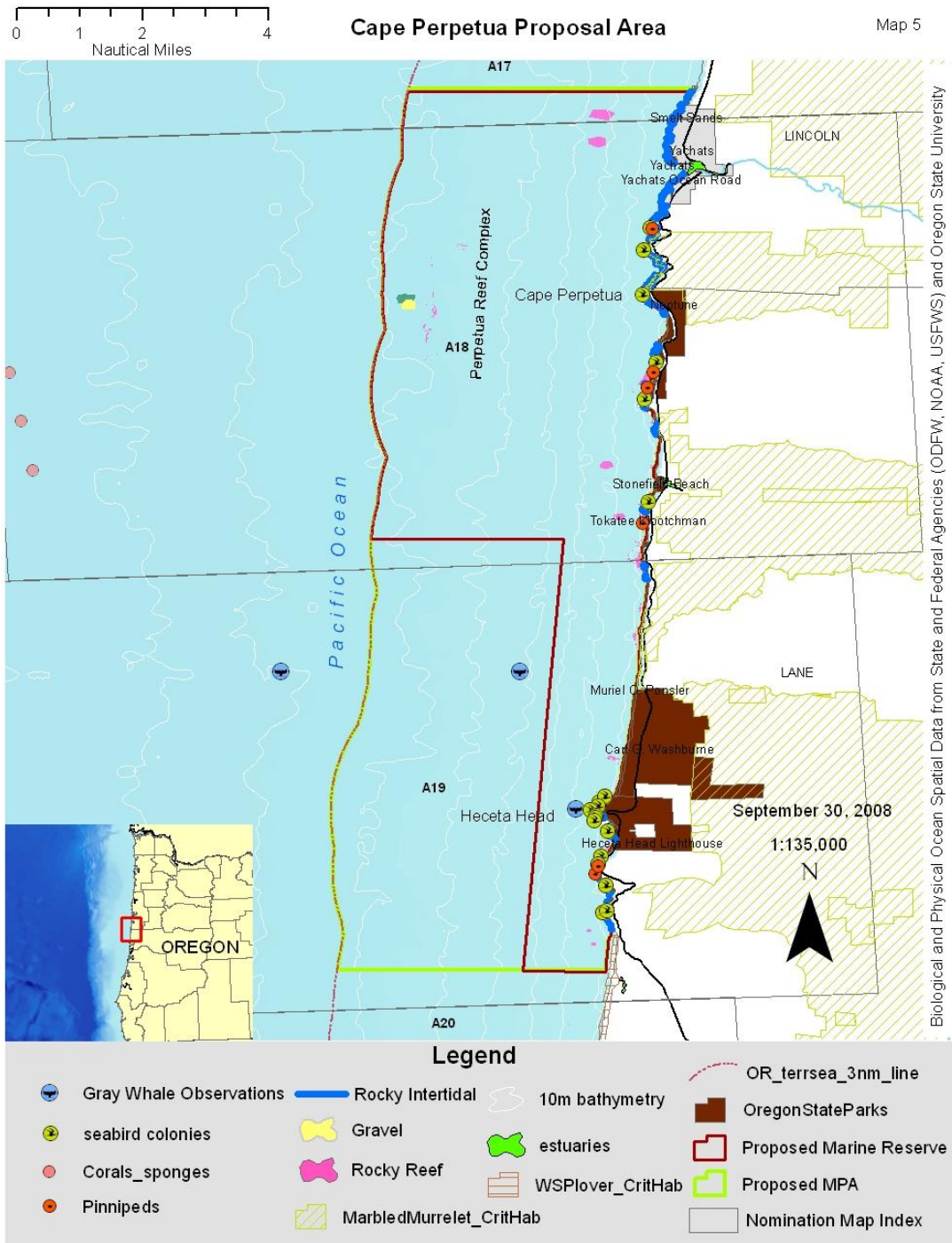
Proposed Protection: This site includes a **flexible marine protected area**, which contains a smaller, **fully-protected marine reserve**.

- Half of this **marine reserve** area extends from shore out to the state's three-mile boundary.
- The other half extends from shore just out to 25 meters in depth. The rest of the area is a less-restrictive marine protected area.
- The overall proposed protections extend from Smelt Sands Beach to Berry Creek, 14 nautical miles.

The importance of a network

By providing a network of safe havens for marine life to feed and breed, marine reserves allow the ocean's natural productivity to restore the abundance of fish species and other marine life. Scientific research from existing marine reserves shows that a network of reserves and marine protected areas facilitates larval dispersal of aquatic species and makes them resilient. A network is necessary to protect a sample of all of Oregon's ocean habitats.

OPAC recommended that the Cape Perpetua marine reserve site for further evaluation.



One nautical mile = 1.1507 terrestrial miles.

Audubon Society of Portland
 Coast Range Association
 Environment Oregon
 Natural Resource Defense Council
 Oceana
 Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition
 Pacific Marine Conservation Council
 Pew Environment Group

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