



Governor Kulongoski's Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC) recommended six sites for further evaluation from nine ecological hot spots proposed for protection by local stakeholders

This is a first step to better ensuring that Oregon's ocean health and productivity is sustainable, but more work is needed to implement this historic discussion. A process for evaluating and negotiating designation with a broad group of stakeholders must be defined so that the system that Oregon designates is based on the best available science and allows Oregonians with diverse perspectives to contribute to a transparent and definitive plan.



Here is how a network of marine protected areas including marine reserves protects the future of our nearshore ocean:

Our ocean faces threats on several fronts

Global warming, pollution, increasing population, growing demand for fresh seafood and coastal development are putting marine ecosystems in Oregon's nearshore waters under increasing stress. Some of the effects are easy to see. Others are more subtle – rising ocean temperatures and acidification levels, for instance.

Protecting Oregon's coastal legacy

Marine reserves and protected areas are a common-sense solution to address these threats, which will protect Oregon's coastal legacy for future generations.

Development of a system of reserves and protected areas should be based on the best available science. Studies of hundreds of marine reserves around the world have shown that they help to increase the abundance, size and diversity of marine life, including commercially valuable fish stocks.¹ Marine reserves and protected areas act like an ecological insurance policy for our ocean, and should be used to protect all our habitat types, including canopy kelp forest and rocky reefs. They are shown to be particularly effective in temperate waters like Oregon's.

Marine Protected Areas provide more flexible protection---many commercial and recreational activities could still be allowed

Marine protected areas are protected from *some* activities like oil drilling, bottom trawling, commercial harvest of forage fish (small fish fundamental to the food chain) and offshore development. *Marine reserves* are areas of the ocean fully protected from any activity that removes animals or plants or alters habitats, except for scientific monitoring. A *marine protected area* is much more flexible and allows policy makers to permit some activities and ban others. The marine protected areas proposed by Our Ocean would permit recreational fishing, commercial salmon fishing, commercial “hook- and-line” trolling, crabbing and sea urchin harvest. Marine reserves remain open for recreational activities, such as diving, surfing, clamming on shore and kayaking.

Revitalizing entire ecosystems

In contrast to current management techniques, marine reserves and protected areas work like a savings account and the “interest” revives entire ecosystems instead of focusing on individual species. This means the benefits of reserves and protected areas extend to all species, including fish, seabirds, marine mammals and plants. The ecosystem approach has consistently been proven effective in helping species grow larger, more abundant and more diverse.

Designating a network is Important

The recent Ocean Policy Advisory Council recommendation includes only two sites instead of the network that scientists recommend. A network including the eight sites proposed by Our Ocean and community members is crucial because it involves all of our nearshore waters as part of a larger ecosystem. Networks of marine reserves and marine protected areas are proven to provide more protection than individual, unconnected sites.

Community priorities + ecological benefits = the perfect plan

Prudent marine protections must strike the right balance between maximizing ecological benefits and minimizing adverse impacts on ocean users. Community members spent several months looking at the scientific data, holding community meetings, and interviewing ocean users. The proposals that resulted (both from Our Ocean and local communities) reflect that thoughtful process.

¹ Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oregon, 2007. *The Science of Marine Reserves* (2nd Edition, United States Version), www.piscoweb.org, 22 pages.