

Oregon Task Force on Nearshore Research
Public Comment
Submitted between August 1 and September 1, 2010

Comment #1.

I would like to offer the following public comment regarding the "Recommended Long-Term Funding and Coordination Strategy for Implementing Nearshore Priorities of Oregon".

1) In the executive summary, one of the stated goals:

" Moreover, the State of Oregon needs to ensure the public has confidence in that scientific information, that it is free of conflicts of interest and that limited scientific funding is directed to the most pressing research and monitoring needs"

I would like to suggest, further, that the following recommendation #4 is in conflict with the above goal:

4) Create an *Oregon Ocean Science Trust* as a stand-alone non-profit 501c3 entity with the overall mission being to provide a funding mechanism to support the implementation of the state's Nearshore Strategic Plan and identified research and monitoring needs.

Why? Creation of a 501c3 entity to accept donations will essentially allow anyone with deep enough pockets to funnel monies to this project and then wait until the next federal tax cycle to recoup the funds from the federal government. Clearly, organizations with the most short term cash reserves will be able to benefit greatly from this situation. There will be pressure from well funded groups to steer this process. Regardless of the stated purpose, money will be used to influence the process and if this is allowed to occur, the Oregon legislature will not be able to control the process and the outcome. This item essentially gives control of the political to groups with the most short term funding. Make no mistake, this is a political process regardless of the over-use of the term "unbiased" in the task force recommendation document. Fox News similarly uses the term "fair and unbiased" - and just like this process we all recognize that if you have to tell someone your fair and unbiased then you obviously aren't.

We can further delve into the detail portion (Recommendation #4) of the document for this item:

1) *The demands for nearshore research, monitoring, data management, education, and outreach far exceed available funding.* - **Demands for funding for any conceivable human activity anyone can think of far exceed available funding. This statement simply expresses the human condition.**

2) *The state does not or cannot take advantage of all potential funding sources, especially from non-governmental sources.* - **I'm guessing this is saying that the state should sell its natural resources to the highest bidder? This is a political question of how should we manage our natural resources. Should we auction off each fish caught in Oregon? Those that support a more socialist agenda believe so - that way the maximum economic value of each fish is exacted by the State and its value redistributed back to all Oregonians. I'm not certain that most Oregonians would support this agenda. Allowing the State to accept funds from**

entities other than tax payers opens up the State to huge political pressures from non-State entities that donate. This further opens the door to potential corruption by State officials. NGO's should not be allowed to participate in the political process in Oregon. The nearshore strategy is a political process and allowing NGO funding essentially gives control to NGO's and bypasses the legislature.

4) *The State of Oregon is in need of a trusted and transparent mechanism to pursue, receive and allocate funding from a wide range of sources to address nearshore research, monitoring, education, outreach, and data management needs.* - **Totally agree. However, please refer to the recent series in the Oregonian regarding state budget problems. They have reported many times that this stated goal has been used many times and yet the State budget continues to increase and become less transparent every year. In my opinion, this statement is a "feel good" statement that has no effect other than tries to assure "we the people" that the State is "working on it".**

Finally - the following paragraph is particularly troublesome in that it is clearly meant as a "feel good" statement with no specific actionable items"

"It is important that neither the Trust's Board nor staff be selected on the basis of interest group involvements. The Board of Directors would be responsible to oversee the Trust's functions and set general policies. The Board of Directors should be independent of the Oregon Ocean Work Group, the OPAC, and STAC. The work of the Trust would be governed by clear, strong procedures and standards to seek and receive funds only from sources interested in funding priorities as described in the Nearshore Strategic Plan. This type of a non-profit body is the mechanism most frequently employed for the same purposes related to nearshore and ocean research in other states, including Washington and California. This 501c3 framework enables diverse private and public entities to contribute resources for objectives and purposes aligned with those of the state while retaining high standards for accountability and transparency of process."

While I support this concept, no actionable items have been identified and therefore this is a hollow statement. Furthermore, holding up California as an example is particularly troublesome as it is clear that in California the entire natural resource management system is controlled by NGO's. I realize that the authors of this document are in need of stability in their careers and therefore their particular agency's budget, and that turning over control of State resources to NGO's is the best way to assure stability in their lives - but is that what we as Oregonian's want? We are owned by private corporations (PEW, Packard, Etc.)?

I want to strongly object to the use of non-Government entities to fund State of Oregon programs!

Dean Ferguson
37733 Highway 30
Astoria, OR 97103
503-791-4617

Comment #2

My name is Tammy Sterba and I live in Otis on the Salmon River

I am opposed of the Cascade Head marine reserve.

I am opposed of a marine protected area also.

I feel that if we allow for the footprint to be placed here, within a few short years we will loose all rights to fish in this area. This is a place of heritage for my family. We fish and crab in this area. I feel that it would be a great tragedy if these privileges were taken away at this time and for future generations. I have a 15 year old son that will be receiving his first boat when he turns 16, like his father did when he turned 16, and it would be very sad if he was unable to fish these waters that he is so familiar with and looking forward to fishing next to his father and grandfather and uncles.

Comment #3

Comment on Final Report
Oregon Task Force on Nearshore Research
August 31, 2010.
Bernie Bjork
Grassroots Coordinator, Lower
Columbia Alliance for Sustainable Fisheries
36293 Bartoldus Lp
Astoria, OR 97103

Dear Task Force;

I am writing to make Comment on your latest report. First off, I am not happy receiving this report on August 24th, and being asked to comment on it by August 31st.

I have been disappointed by this process from the very beginning. The lack of transparency has been glaring, from the the inception of HB-3106, to the behind the scenes letter written by the Coastal Caucus to the Packard Foundation talking about funding Oregon's Marine Reserves, etc., to setting up 'stacked deck' meetings of environmental entities with no commercial fishermen, to creating Committee positions for pre -selected individuals who were wanted on this Task Force (what is Community-based fishing?). And the list goes on.

The 17 page report has a lot of talk about transparency, and involving local communities, without really explaining who, why, when, and where. No true details as to how the local fishing communities are going to be brought in to the equation. For example on page 9, "2) Develop, through an open transparent public process, ...". Like the transparency that has been shown so far in this process? Then on page 10 more talk of Transparency, and then 'Fiscal Conservatism'. Is that the same kind of fiscal conservatism that has gotten Oregon in debt to the tune of \$250,000,000.00? Then also on page 10 we have, Engagement of Community Groups and Individuals, with a lot of talk about engaging the community, when I've seen absolutely none of

this through this entire process. This entire report is nothing but 'Fluff'. I am sorry to be this negative about your report, but I have to. I truly can not believe this is happening in the state I grew up in.

I have deep respect for some of the people who are on this Task Force. But you all have to understand that you have a long way to go to gain the 'Confidence' of our local fishermen, seeing what has occurred the last 10 years in the way of closed areas, and way too much regulation. Forcing our fishermen to deal with extreme environmental groups bent on putting them out of business because they are somehow “clear cutting” the bottom of the ocean. This Nearshore process is way too much 'Fluff', that we truly can not afford in these poor economic times. The source of funds to pay for anything to do with research, fisheries enhancement and enforcement, has to come from the tax payers of Oregon (with some possible Federal tax payer monies). Keep the Packard Foundation out of the equation, unless you want to hand over 'Control' of the coast to them. My recommendation is to let it go, and then have the state concentrate their energy on fisheries, harbor, and port enhancements. Help develop 'Confidence' for small business to take the risk.

Thank you for allowing me to comment.

Truly;
Bernie Bjork

Comment #4

Oregon Task Force on Nearshore

Dear Task Force;

I am writing to make Comment on your latest report. Unfortunately this will have to be short because of the time frame.

First off, I whole heartily agree with a letter submitted by Bernie Bjork.

Second, I am extremely cautious of any bureaucracy that is created that can create its own rules, and whose mission does not take into consideration any economic impacts on the community.

I also agree with Bernie Bjork in the aspect of who funds this. As in the final report, it states:

To achieve this desired outcome, the scientific approach needs to be free from political influence, prioritized, coordinated, targeted at key issues and be funded through unbiased/objective processes that ensure the science is free of conflicts of interest and holds public confidence. As such, this is the key, overarching recommendation of the Task Force.

We must keep such entities as the Pew Foundation out of our business, or they will eventually dictate and circumvent the above paragraph.

Should I be elected to the office of Senator, I will do my best to make sure that any rules that are proposed or that do come out of this committee will have **both** the environmental and economic interest of the communities taken into consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Horning
Senate District 16 Candidate
bob@bobhorning.com
www.bobhorning.com
503-647-7754

Comment #5

Please do not let our Oregon state beaches be taken over and run by non state organizations. As a resident of the beach (Falcon Cove) it is unfair that agencies can take over and close access to these public beaches and the resources we have relied on for 70 + years.

Heidi Lent

Comment #6

Dear Dr. Brandt,

Please see the Our Ocean public comment on the final Nearshore Taskforce Recommendations. It was a pleasure to work with you. I look forward to our continued discussions.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment.

Best,

Susan

PS. I apologize for the delay in our submission. I experienced technical difficulties. Please confirm receipt as my internet access has been failing.

Susan Drew Allen
Director

Our Ocean
4189 SE Division
Portland, OR 97202
503.477.2882-cell
www.ouregonocean.org



August 31, 2010

Dr. Steve Brandt

Nearshore Taskforce Chair
Oregon Sea Grant Program
Oregon State University
322 Kerr Administration Building
Corvallis, Oregon 97331-2131

Subject: Nearshore Taskforce Final Recommendations

Dear Dr. Brandt:

Thank you for your leadership on the Nearshore Taskforce. We have appreciated your accessibility and thoughtful consideration of our suggestions. Our Ocean firmly supports scientific research in Oregon's nearshore in the hope that these deliberations create a meaningful infrastructure that yields a greater understanding of our state's largest natural resource. Please see our comments below in the six major recommendation areas:

- 1) Develop a multi-year *Nearshore Strategic Plan*.

Our Ocean supports the development of a longer-term Nearshore Strategic Plan because it is essential to developing more comprehensive management of Oregon's Territorial Sea. Development of a multi-session approach will foster more continuity between the biennial state processes and bring into focus more over-arching priorities between agencies.

- 2) Establish an *Oregon Ocean Work Group* to aid in the development of the Nearshore Strategic Plan and aid in long-term coordination of state activities.

Greater agency coordination is vital to ensuring that state government is efficiently executing the Nearshore Strategic Plan and other related marine policy forums. In 2010 alone, Oregon has

had portions of three separate and district policy discussions in the revision of the Territorial Sea Plan, the Oregon marine reserves process and the Nearshore Taskforce. All policy forums have had multiple meetings requiring extensive preparation from lead agency staff. This workgroup could serve as a coordinating body to better ensure that all ocean-related discussions are operating at peak efficiency.

- 3) Establish the *Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee* (STAC) as an independent science advisory body.

The establishment of STAC as an independent resource to the state is a thoughtful and important opportunity for the legislative and executive branches of the state can begin to fully utilize scientific advisors in the creation of policy. Further, we are heartened to see that the STAC will add additional disciplines to its existing membership. This is a very common sense recommendation that will allow the core STAC membership to address a greater array of questions, providing more technical support to policy makers as more uses are required of the nearshore.

- 4) Create an *Oregon Ocean Science Trust* as a stand-alone non-profit 501c3 entity with the overall mission being to provide a funding mechanism to support the implementation of the state's Nearshore Strategic Plan and identified research and monitoring needs.

Our Ocean supports the creation of the Oregon Ocean Science Trust because we believe that it will aid in providing long term funding for marine research. It is important to note that we only support the creation of a Trust if it is used to implement research and monitoring elements of Oregon's strategic plan. Further, the creation of the Trust must stipulate a broad and diverse board to ensure that all stakeholder interests and a broad, state-wide distribution of participants are represented. Special attention should be paid to recruiting individuals who have a background in philanthropy, funding, banking and marine science.

- 5) Ensure that citizens and communities are fully involved in the processes associated with the first four core recommendations.

Our Ocean believes that access and outreach is a key component to the long term success of Oregon's Nearshore science. This outreach should be consistent with Oregon State Planning Goal One and should include inland and coastal communities as well as both port and non-port regions. Oregon's Territorial Sea is managed in the public trust and as such we all share an important role in the sustainable management of Oregon's largest natural resource, which is why we believe strongly that there should be public comment periods associated with all of the first four NSTF recommendations consistent with state guidelines that allow ample time for interested parties to submit comment.

Our Ocean strongly believes that learning more about our ocean will give policymakers an opportunity to better inform policy. Because there are many types of groups who would like to participate, we believe that formalizing community teams is a likely next step; however that next step requires many more conversations and further evaluation. We are hopeful that a recommendation to further discuss this issue among stakeholder leaders will be considered.

- 6) Establish a coordinated data management system under the auspices of the Oregon Coastal Management Program to integrate disparate and diverse data sources.

The establishment of a coordinated data management system is a logical step in developing the support needed to create a trusted institutional bank of information for Oregon-specific research. Our Ocean supports the creation of a data management system but would like to ensure that this data will be accessible to the public rather than select groups – preferably online for ease of access. Equal access will foster stronger understanding of our ocean – which is an important step to long term stewardship.

Oregonians have a proud history of environment stewardship. The ocean belongs to all of us, and we will all benefit from productive, healthy and sustainable coastal waters that are managed with a strong base in best available science. Our Ocean and our over 200,000 endorsing citizens statewide, is committed to full participation in the next steps of Oregon's Nearshore Taskforce Processes.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public testimony.

Sincerely,

Susan Allen
Director, Our Ocean

CC. Caren Braby, ODFW