



The Honorable Ted Kulongoski  
Governor of Oregon  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, Oregon 97301-4047

Dear Governor Kulongoski:

On behalf of the Audubon Society of Portland and its ten thousand members, we are pleased to provide comments on the discussion paper prepared by the staff of the three states related to the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health.

We thank you and your staff, particularly Mike Carrier and Jessica Hamilton, for your strong leadership on conserving and protecting the health of Oregon's ocean.

The Audubon Society of Portland's mission is to promote the enjoyment, understanding and protection of native birds, other wildlife and their habitats. We focus on our local community and Oregon as a whole. Much of Portland Audubon's conservation program is dedicated to proactive efforts to protect habitats to ensure that our wildlife populations remain healthy without need for endangered species protections.

Our Ocean Campaign, which builds upon an Audubon legacy that began at the turn of the last century with the establishment of Malheur and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuges, is a vital part of that effort. A system of protected marine areas, including marine reserves, is the next frontier for wildlife conservation encompassing a vast number of imperiled seabird, fish, and marine mammal species. We believe that when people look back a century from now, protection of marine habitats will likely be viewed as this generation's most profound contribution.

The Audubon Society of Portland strongly supports collaboration among the three West Coast states in protecting ocean and coastal resources. We also support the immediate actions of the three Governors as a result of the agreement: (1) reinforcing opposition to oil and gas leasing, exploration and development off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California; (2) requesting secure federal funding to address non-point source pollution; (3) development of a regional research plan; and (4) request for federal support in implementing the recommendations of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan.

While we support all seven of the priority areas, we have a special interest in the protection of ocean and coastal habitats, Priority #2; in the implementation of ecosystem-based management, Priority #3; and in the expansion of ocean and coastal scientific information,

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5151 NW Cornell Road  
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Tel 503.292.6855  
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research and monitoring, Priority 6.

The West Coast Governor's Agreement can support these priorities through the following actions:

- Support funding for detailed seafloor mapping of geologic and habitat features in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem;
- Provide support for marine protected areas planning, including funds for community outreach, conflict resolution, and socioeconomic assessments;
- Identify sources of funding, including public and private, that may be used to pay for the management of marine protected areas, including funding for enforcement and monitoring;
- Establish policies and opportunities for state agencies to engage in collaborative science partnerships that provide spatially explicit ecological and social science data, and facilitate managing nearshore systems.

The Audubon Society of Portland recognizes that protection of the coastal environment requires protection of an interconnected coastal zone that includes the open ocean, near shore water, beaches, estuaries and coastal watersheds. While some coastal lands and beaches have been set aside for permanent protection as wilderness areas, parks, reserves, preserves, conservation areas, and sanctuaries, less than one percent of our marine environment has any protected status. Many of our most valued marine areas have already suffered significant damage from pollution, coastal development impacts, global climate change and historic fishing practices.

Portland Audubon supports identification of ecologically significant areas, as well as of threats to biodiversity and habitat health. We support identification of approaches, from monitoring to reserves, for these significant areas, including a program of monitoring and evaluation on an ongoing basis. Our commitment to these goals leads us to participate in the OPAC process as well as in a Portland Audubon-hosted series of meetings with fishermen, environmental groups and marine scientists to achieve a common understanding on issues related to the health of Oregon's ocean.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Meryl Redisch, Executive Director  
Cheryl Coon, Conservation Programs Manager  
Audubon Society of Portland  
5151 NW Cornell Road  
Portland, OR 97210