

This Comment on the West Coast Governors' Agreement web site is from:

Name: Pete Stauffer

State(s): Oregon

Regarding Topic Areas:

- \* Clean coastal waters and beaches
- \* Habitat protection and restoration
- \* Ecosystem-based management
- \* Offshore development

Comment/Suggestion:

Surfrider Foundation Oregon Chapter Comments on  
West Coast Governors Agreement on Ocean Health  
Tillamook, OR July 16, 2007

The Surfrider Foundation strongly supports collaboration among the three West Coast states in protecting ocean and coastal resources. Surfrider also supports the immediate actions of the three Governors as a result of the agreement reinforcing opposition to oil and gas leasing, exploration and development off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California requesting secure federal funding to address nonpoint source pollution harming our states coastal areas development of a regional research plan and request for federal support in implementing the recommendations of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. These actions are consistent with Surfriders mission to protect and enjoy the worlds oceans, waves and beaches for all people, through conservation, activism, research and education. Our remaining comments focus on the priority areas for a Regional Action Plan.

Surfrider Priority 1 - Ensure Clean Coastal Waters and Beaches

Surfrider is encouraged to see that water quality and clean beaches are a priority in this regional agreement. Under Surfriders Blue Water Task Force program, twenty-three local chapters monitor water quality in eleven coastal states. This is a substantial volunteer effort that includes a strong focus on education and advocacy. In Oregon, Surfrider chapters maintain four water quality labs on the coast and monitor water quality at 24 different locations. This program preceded the establishment of the states monitoring program, and in numerous instances has led to the development of pollution solutions developed in partnership with local governments. As you can see, this issue is a high priority for our organization and 50,000 members nationwide.

We urge you to take the following actions to support water quality monitoring efforts and reduce nonpoint source pollution in the coastal zone

Support Reauthorization of the Federal BEACH Act (Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health) by urging all CA, OR, WA federal representatives to support legislation that reauthorizes Act at its originally identified funding level (30 million per year)

This Act provides federal funding for coastal states to monitor nearshore water quality with a focus on areas used by recreational ocean users. In Oregon this is known as the Oregon Beach Monitoring Program and is implemented through a partnership between DHS and DEQ. Water quality is a critical public health issue for millions of recreational users on the west coast, and is also integral to protecting our nearshore marine ecosystems.

Enhance implementation of the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program by a) increasing state funding b) requesting the federal government to increase EPA matching funds

Section 319 grants under this program provide crucial funds to address pollution in our watersheds. For example, Surfrider is currently partnering with the City of Newport, OR on a Section 319 grant proposal to source and address bacterial pollution in the Nye Creek watershed. Nye Beach in downtown Newport is documented as one of the most polluted beaches in the country but pollution source(s) and potential solutions remain unidentified.

Launch a regional initiative to implement EPA's Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater management

Stormwater runoff poses a serious threat to coastal water quality through transporting pollutants such as oils, chemicals, heavy metals, and debris to the ocean. EPA's menu of BMPs includes the following elements a) public education, b) public involvement, c) illicit discharge d) construction, e) post construction, and f) good housekeeping. Oregon previously had an excellent technical assistance program for municipalities that was implemented by the Oregon Coastal Program and DEQ, but this has lost its funding in recent years .

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/>

Adopt the CA Plastic Debris Rivers to Sea Action Plan as a regional initiative between all 3 states

Most marine debris comes from land-based sources and is conveyed to oceans via urban runoff through storm drains. The main sources of plastic and other anthropogenic debris include litter, industrial discharges, garbage transportation, landfills, construction debris, and commercial establishments. Such debris causes fatalities to fish, marine mammals, sea turtles, and seabirds through ingestion and entanglement, and may also serve as a transport mechanism for toxics and invasive species. The Plastic Debris Rivers to Sea Action Plan provides a roadmap for government agencies, the

plastics industry, environmental groups, and other groups to prevent introduction of marine debris in our ocean.

<http://www.plasticdebris.org/>

## Surfrider Priority 2 Protect Ocean and Coastal Habitats

The Surfrider Foundation 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. The Surfrider Foundation further recognizes while some coastal lands and beaches have been set 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, mismanaged fishing practices and coastal development impacts.

In response to these needs, Surfrider is engaged in a nationwide Special Places campaign, which is designed to identify and protect special ocean and coastal places through the establishment of marine protected areas. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are a proven management tool that can provide permanent protection for ocean habitats and marine biodiversity. Surfrider Foundation is committed to supporting MPA designation efforts that a) are based on clearly defined goals b) incorporate the best available science c) address socioeconomic considerations d) incorporate local input in the design and implementation e) balance preservation with public access for ocean users.

Surfriders Oregon chapters currently engage in this campaign through the following actions

- Support and participate in the Ocean Policy Advisory Councils (OPAC) planning efforts on MPAs and Marine Reserves

- Develop and promote a roadmap for the state to address economic and social factors in MPA establishment

- Coordinate grassroots education and advocacy in support of MPAs

- Engage in and support community-based processes that consider MPAs as a management tool

- Participate in discussions with fishermen to develop principles of agreement and build constituencies

- Advocate for marine state parks as extension of coastal parks

The West Coast Governors Agreement can support these habitat protection efforts through the following actions

Provide support for MPA planning including dedicated funds for community outreach, conflict resolution, and socioeconomic assessments

It is widely acknowledged that MPA planning must engage coastal communities early in the process to ensure constructive participation and buy-in. As Oregon moves forward with efforts to establish marine reserves in its Territorial Sea, outreach to coastal communities and meaningful consideration of socioeconomic factors is critical.

Support state and federal legislation to conduct detailed seafloor mapping of geologic and habitat features in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem

Such mapping will help inform conservation planning and tsunami disaster preparedness. Presently, less than 5 percent of Oregon Territorial Sea has been mapped. In 2006, over twenty Oregon-based marine scientists signed a Scientific Consensus Statement for Mapping the Oregon Territorial Seafloor.

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 conducted within the areas

Successful implementation of MPAs as a management tool is dependent upon adequate funding for enforcement and monitoring. To date, Oregon has not yet identified and secured such funding.

Surfrider Priority 3 Support Local Ecosystem-Based Management Efforts

The Surfrider Foundation is currently engaged in several local ecosystem-based management efforts in the Pacific Northwest. These include community-based projects in San Juan County, Washington and Port Orford, Oregon.

In Port Orford, Surfrider is partnering with commercial fishermen to establish an Ocean Stewardship Area that will protect the rich marine ecology of the region while also promoting sustainable fishing opportunities for the local fleet. The draft boundaries of the Stewardship Area encompass portions of the nearshore marine environment, as well as local watersheds. The project is being led by the Port Orford Ocean Resource Team (POORT) with support from its project partners - Surfrider Foundation, Pacific Marine Conservation Council, and Ecotrust.

The Stewardship Area provides a seascape for implementation of EBM principles at the local level. Such projects allow for the controlled development of best practices which may then be replicated in other coastal communities or implemented at larger scales where appropriate.

The West Coast Governors Agreement can support these important efforts through the following actions

Provide policy space for the local development of area-based management schemes that meet state and federal conservation mandates, and are generated through inclusive community processes that integrate best available science

While voluntary efforts to implement EBM at the local level can provide significant benefits to both the resource and community, the full benefits cannot be fully realized without formal recognition and support from government agencies. Furthermore, engagement and support at the state level can help ensure that community-based approaches to ocean management follow established standards for transparency, inclusiveness, and application of best available science.

Establish policies for state agencies to engage in collaborative science partnerships that provide spatially explicit ecological and social science data, and facilitate managing nearshore systems at finer resolutions

A significant barrier to implementation of ecosystem-based management is lack of scientific information at appropriate scales. Leveraging collaborative science opportunities may help fill these data gaps, while in the process promoting an enhanced level of stewardship among resource users.

#### Surfrider Priority 4 - Reduce Adverse Impacts of Offshore Development

Surfrider supports the actions by the West Coast Governors to reiterate their opposition to oil and gas leasing, exploration and development off the Washington, Oregon, and California coasts. More generally, Surfrider supports responsible renewable energy development in the ocean and coastal zone. Energy development projects should avoid priority habitats and popular recreational areas. In addition, the projects should go through a transparent, public process allowing adequate opportunity for public comment.

In Oregon, interest in wave energy development has generated significant interest and concern among our membership. Surfriders Oregon chapters recently ratified a position statement on wave energy development. The statement identifies the following principles to be applied when evaluating or planning for potential projects.

Protect surfing and other ocean recreation opportunities by ensuring that project sites do not impact or overlap with priority recreational areas  
Consider impacts to the environment through comprehensive assessments and application of best available science

Ensure public safety through designs standards and development of emergency response plans  
Require baseline data and frequent monitoring to quantify impacts to the environment and threats to public safety  
Evaluate the impact of EMFs (electromagnetic fields) on the behavior of fishes, sharks, and marine mammals  
Consider fishing and other existing uses of proposed project areas to assess lost opportunities and evaluate trade-offs  
Proceed incrementally and cautiously to ensure that impacts from one project are understood before proceeding with additional projects  
Initiate comprehensive planning for Oregon's ocean ecosystem to ensure an appropriate balance between emerging industrial uses and conservation  
Employ adaptive management to ensure that new information is applied to assess needs for modification, mitigation, and/or removal.

The Surfrider Foundation is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves and beaches for all people, through conservation, activism, research and education. Represented by over 50,000 members and 60 local chapters in the U.S., the Surfrider Foundation also has affiliations in Australia, Japan, France, and Brazil.