

OREGON INTERNATIONAL PORT OF COOS BAY

Marine Reserves Recommendation Committee

Thursday, June 25, 2009

5:30 p.m.

North Bend City/Coos Curry Housing Authority
1700 Monroe St., North Bend OR 97459

ATTENDANCE

Staff: Mike Gaul, Deputy Executive Director; Kathy Wall, Management Analyst; Aaron Simons, Marine Facilities Manager; Andrea Wall, Executive Assistant

Committee Members: Mike Lane, City of Bandon; Mike Boehme, #6 Public at Large; Don Peabody, #4 Public at Large; Steve Bodnar, Commercial Trawl Fishing; Wayne Butler, Charter Fishing; Matt LeDoux, Bay Area Chamber; Dave Lacey, Our Ocean; Devin Hockema, Commercial Crab Fishing; Mike Helfrich, Port's Charleston Advisory Committee; Alan Shanks, OIMB; Gus Gates, Surfrider; Valerie Pena, #2 Public at Large; John Schaefer, Tribes; James Moore, Commercial Salmon Fishing; Steven Shimotakahara, Port of Coos Bay; Jamie Doyle, Sea Grant Extension Faculty; Bart Stein, Bandon Chamber; John Griffith, #1 Public at Large; Jan Hodder, Rep. 7 Devils; Jim Pex Sr., Recreational Fishing; Bill Russell, #3 Public at Large; Chuck Freeman, City of Coos Bay; Bob Main, Coos County.

Guests: Cristen Don, ODFW staff to committee; Jeff Griffin, Governor's Office,.

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Upon a motion from John Griffith, second by Alan Shanks, the minutes were approved with the correction on the last page regarding the request for maps which was requested by Rick Goche and not John Griffith.

Mr. Gaul then briefly reviewed the ground rules of this committee:

The proposals for Cape Arago and Seven Devils are off the table and we are starting from scratch.

We agreed to treat each other with respect

We are not taking any public comments during the committee meetings. The public will have a chance to make comments through their representative to this committee or the Town Hall meetings at a later date.

He then asked that the people who were not at the first meeting introduce themselves and share some of their background and feelings about the Marine Reserves.

Bob Main - He wants to be informed by this committee of the science of Marine Reserves. Do we need Marine Reserves? We already have a lot of constraints to the fishing industry; we will probably have more with the Wave Energy. He said that the permits were already granted for wave energy and they didn't have any way of transmitting the energy. He thought issuing the permits was premature and he feels maybe it is the same situation with Marine Reserves without knowing more about it.

Check Freeman: He is here and wants to know if we need Marine Reserves. He also mentioned the constraints on fishing now. He wants to learn more about it.

Jan Hodder: She is a representative from the Seven Devils group who put a proposal together before. She feels there is a need to discuss Marine Reserves and would like to see if there is a possibility to have a positive impact on the community.

Jim Pex Sr.: Mr. Pex is a recreational fisherman. He was on OPAC for a long time and considers himself a resource on the history of OPAC.

Bill Russell: Mr. Russell spent 8 years as a member of OPAC; he was on the original OPAC. He is also a resource for history. The Territorial Sea Plan was a big step forward in managing our ocean resources. On the subject of Marine Reserves, we know that they work; we know that the fish stock off the Oregon coast needs to have some protected area where the female fish can hide.

Mr. Gaul continued and said that HB3013 has been signed by the Governor and it puts out some guidelines for future Marine Reserves discussion.

One of the questions that Mr. Gaul was asked last meeting was “is no an option?” He has done some homework with the Coastal Caucus and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife as far as our recommendation on this committee. Under 3013 “No” is an option. It does not require you to identify a Marine Reserve unless that is your recommendation.

Copies of the Executive Order and the OPAC definitions and guidelines went out to the committee by email and they are on the agenda tonight in case anyone wanted to have any discussion before we move to the topics on Marine Reserves in this area. Mr. Gaul said that both of these documents had been discussed at great lengths in the past but they are here tonight if anyone wants to go over them. No one had further questions or a wish for discussion on the Executive Order or the Policy recommendations. Kathy Wall spoke up and said that at the last meeting the main questions were on definitions of a Marine Reserve.

Mr. Gaul said that he felt we should start talking about goals rather than sites and science. He asked that representatives from Cape Arago and Seven Devils elaborate some more on their goals they had for their previous projects.

Mr. Shanks spoke up and said that he represented Seven Devils. He said that they felt that there was going to be a reserve nominated somewhere between Port Orford and north of Florence. There would be a very large area of coast line where there would be no Marine Reserve. One of the purposes of Marine Reserves is to produce larvae; they will disperse around and grow to become adults. If there is a large gap in the system then there is potentially a zone where the Marine Reserves won't produce larvae. It is beneficial to have a string of Marine Reserves along the coastline. So the question was where we could place it between Port Orford and Florence. There are not a lot of choices. Jan Hodder added that she had discussions with Paul Hikela who was a Sea Grant agent about areas of less impact. There is a very long stretch of coastline with sandy bottom and is not in extreme need of protection. Then there is a series of rocky shoreline most of which are too close to harbors. So this committee tried to find a rocky bottom that was as far away from harbors as possible so there would be a minimum impact on the fishermen. It looked to them that a good selection was south of Cape Arago which would have adequate resources for the fish as well as a minimum impact on the economy. That was the criteria for their selection. Jan Hodder knew that people were coming up with very large areas and she felt they could come up with an alternative with less impact. Cape Arago from OIMB's perspective was not good. The community uses Cape Arago constantly and OIMB uses it for some of their research and having a “no take” area would be very detrimental for their research programs. Bill Russell added that they were criticized in their proposal for being too small.

Mr. Stein made a comment about where was the science to show we even need a Marine Reserve. This is a lot of effort and money to put into something that there is not a need for.

Gus Gates said that ODF & W has a very good presentation that reviews the status of near shore fisheries, what we know and what we don't. It would be beneficial for this group so there is an understanding.

Mr. Russell had some brochures on the "Science of Marine Reserves" which he was willing to distribute.

The discussion then went back and forth among several committee members about if there was a need for Marine Reserves and there were a lot of opinions. Mr. Pex suggested that there was a push to create Marine Reserves in Oregon and the committee was tasked with the recommendation of whether or not there should be one here in Coos County.

As the conversation continued, it was brought out that there are two test areas which have been approved in Port Orford and Depoe Bay and maybe we should just wait and see what the results of those test sites are. Maybe what Oregon needs is a Marine Protective area where you could still fish but you couldn't put in oil drilling or something similar to that. Marine Reserves according to the definitions are completely closed to any fishing.

Some of the other things that were constantly brought out were about baseline studies and how the Marine Reserves would be administered, financed, and staffed.

Cristen from ODF & W said that HB 3013 was signed and that meant that there would be 2 years of staff dedicated to the Marine Reserves process. There would be workshops involving the community.

There was quite a bit of discussion about an EIS in the Marine Reserve and if one would be completed or if there was a requirement for one.

Mike Lane said we were all working toward sustainable fisheries and all fisheries in Oregon are under a watch. He is concerned that a Marine Reserve may have a displacement effect and while we protect one area, the balance would be upset on another. He suggested studying the existing fish and not restricting the fishing until a problem is found. Then the discussion went back and forth again on the baseline studies. How can you fix something if you don't know what the problem is?

Mr. Butler said that fisheries were already managed on a baseline. There are a lot of knowns and lots of unknowns. It was pointed out that the state set harvest caps at low levels as a precautionary approach.

Cristen was asked to define the problems here that would call for a Marine Reserve.

Mr. Pex reminded everyone that the Governor sent the request regarding Marine Reserves and we need to get a consensus as far as the choices we have. Mr. Peabody commented that OPAC never came to a solid decision before and we need to look at the economic impact to this region. Mr. Lane wanted to know how ODF&W would use Marine Reserves to set fisheries levels. Study the changes and the population and how fishing changes that. Does ODF&W set season structure based on

presumed biomass? Dr. Shimotakahara suggested if a Marine Reserve was used for research, combine the Marine Reserves and the wave energy project. Questions and comments continued to come from all areas of the room.

Jeff Griffin took time to thank the Port from the Governor for taking on this project. This is a project that you need to take time on to get it right and to do a meaningful evaluation. Do you need to have a reserve here? He also said that the State supported a small wave energy park which was experimental. FERC said to wait until the Territorial Sea Plan is completed to go further.

Discussion continued with a lot of opinions being put out. Near the end, there were eight potential recommendations to be considered:

- No Marine Reserves in the area from Reedsport to Bandon.

- Have a marine protected area with less stringent rules.

- Have a Marine Reserves area where all fishing and recreational activities would be banned.

- Do a baseline study where fishing is not closed.

- Defer any decisions until the two pilot projects studies have been completed.

- Develop and Marine Reserves area with a wave energy park.

- Develop a non-reserve control area for study on the health of the sea in this area.

- Create a Marine State Park with limited use – create our own definition

Mr. Gaul asked for thumbs up or down on the above. All were up except for Mr. Russell.

Mr. Frank Warrens will be at the next meeting.

The consensus was that the third Wednesday was the best night for meetings.

7. ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.