

Opposition to SB1510 and Marine Reserves.

February 16th, 2012

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Dear Legislators,

I am opposed to this bill because it bothers me for several reasons:

1. It bothers me because it is not for job creation, just the opposite. This bill will kill fishing jobs for our coastal families, without any mitigation such as artificial reefs or opening up other areas.
2. It bothers me because it is not for fish enhancement. At several of the Marine Reserves stake holders meetings ODFW said that this is not for fish enhancement but just to set aside areas. Ed Bowles of ODFW can confirm that this is what was said at the meetings. There are currently multiple layers of ODFW and Federal regulations that are for fishing regulation and enhancement. Now others may claim that marine reserves have enhanced fish elsewhere, but those are in places of the world with little to no fishing regulations.
3. It bothers me that we already have two test pilot reserves that are suppose to be being studied to see if they are any benefits, yet instead of waiting for results we are jumping ahead.
4. It bothers me that we are doing this because those in the coastal caucus are convinced that if we don't do this an outside of state entity will try to pass a ballot measure locking up even more of the coast, and the costal caucus is afraid that Portland will vote for it.
5. And that's what bothers me most, the division of our state. To think that our state is so divided that a job killing idea, enacted for no real good reason other than it feels good, says volumes on the divisions we have. The people of our rural areas are actually afraid of what our cities will do to them. This also says volume on how our politicians are also divided, for if they stood together as all the Oregon counties did in 2007 and opposed Marine Reserves there is no way that this would be enacted by the voters.

Something like this would have never gotten this far years ago. I'm sure that Governor Tom McCall would have told the outside groups thanks for visiting, but don't stay.

Sincerely,
Bob Horning

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Dear Legislators,

What is the purpose of this law? The arguments I have heard from the proponents is that it is for fish preservation and that Marine Reserves have worked very well in other areas. Trouble is these same folks fail to tell you that these areas are in countries that have no fishing regulations, so of course the Marine Reserves are needed there.

Proponents also say that this is to protect all species and not single species regulations like Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Yet contrary to proponents arguments, during multiple Marine Reserves meetings ODFW stated that Oregon Marine Reserves were not for fish enhancement, not to preserve any species, but simply to set aside areas just to leave them natural.

Also contrary to proponents arguments ODFW also stated at the Marine Reserves meeting it does protect all species and enhances them through multiple layers of regulations and closed areas. To enhance fish species, most of the 200 mile U.S. controlled waters is already closed for bottom trawling through fishing regulation. 97% of this zone is closed to sport and commercial bottom fishing most of the year, and there are multiple layers of regulation for other types of fishing. These regulations are based on scientific reasons.

So if the Marine Reserves are not for saving or enhancing any species, why are we going to place these areas off limits to us and our fishermen? The simple and truthful answer is one word: Politics. This has been a politically driven process that has little or nothing to do with need or science. There are two political factors; one, the last two governors have wanted this for their own political reasons, and two, the threat from the PEW Foundation, or Oceana, to lock up even more ocean through a ballot measure. The PEW Foundation is an out of state environmental special interest group that wants at least a total of 31 sites to be off limits besides any established Marine Reserves. This was acknowledged by them in their magazine which was published in August of 2010. SB1510 is simply a camel nose under the tent for Oceana, for they themselves say they want much more of our Oregon coast line locked up. Last year during a hearing on HB2009 Representative Boone asked if they passed it would these groups still sue for more sites and the representative refused to give an answer, even though asked twice by Representative Boone.

These politics have been driving the entire Marine Reserves process. In 2009 legislators authorized stakeholder groups and the study of Marine Reserves through HB3013. These stakeholder groups were weighed heavily against the working class, the fishermen, both commercial and recreational. The working class stakeholders, who will bear 100% of the cost of this action, had only 25% of the representation in these discussions and heavily oppose Marine Reserves but were out voted.

A prime example of the discrepancy of the make up of stake holders is one of the

stake holders who represented a water district who is also a surfer from California. He told me that he was someone who pushed hard for Cape Falcon to be considered for Marine Reserves because while surfing he did not want to see any boats on HIS ocean. Another disturbing trend observed during the Marine Reserves meetings was the way that ODFW and the facilitator of the meetings nudged the discussion along in a way that the outcome was inevitable. Promising a full array of options to vote on at the end of the meetings including the option of voting for no Marine Reserves, the only options actually presented was either the original design or one that was slightly smaller. The promised option of No Marine Reserves did not happen even though there was a call for such a vote.

All of this brings us back to what is the purpose of this law. A question that each of you should ask: Will this law help our local communities and the enhancement of fish species? In the fall of 2007 the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) unanimously said this about Marine Reserves:

Whereas, there are few scientific data that could lead to a conclusion that Marine Reserves are desirable or necessary for protecting sea life off the Oregon coast, even if it were concluded that marine reserves might be a worthwhile experimental management enhancement; and

Whereas, designation of Marine Reserves, will reduce fishing and the harvest of ocean products, which will inevitably result in reductions in employment and the social and economic well-being of Oregon and which, following losses brought by the continuing political and judicial controversy of forest management, would become another major loss to our citizens' well-being.

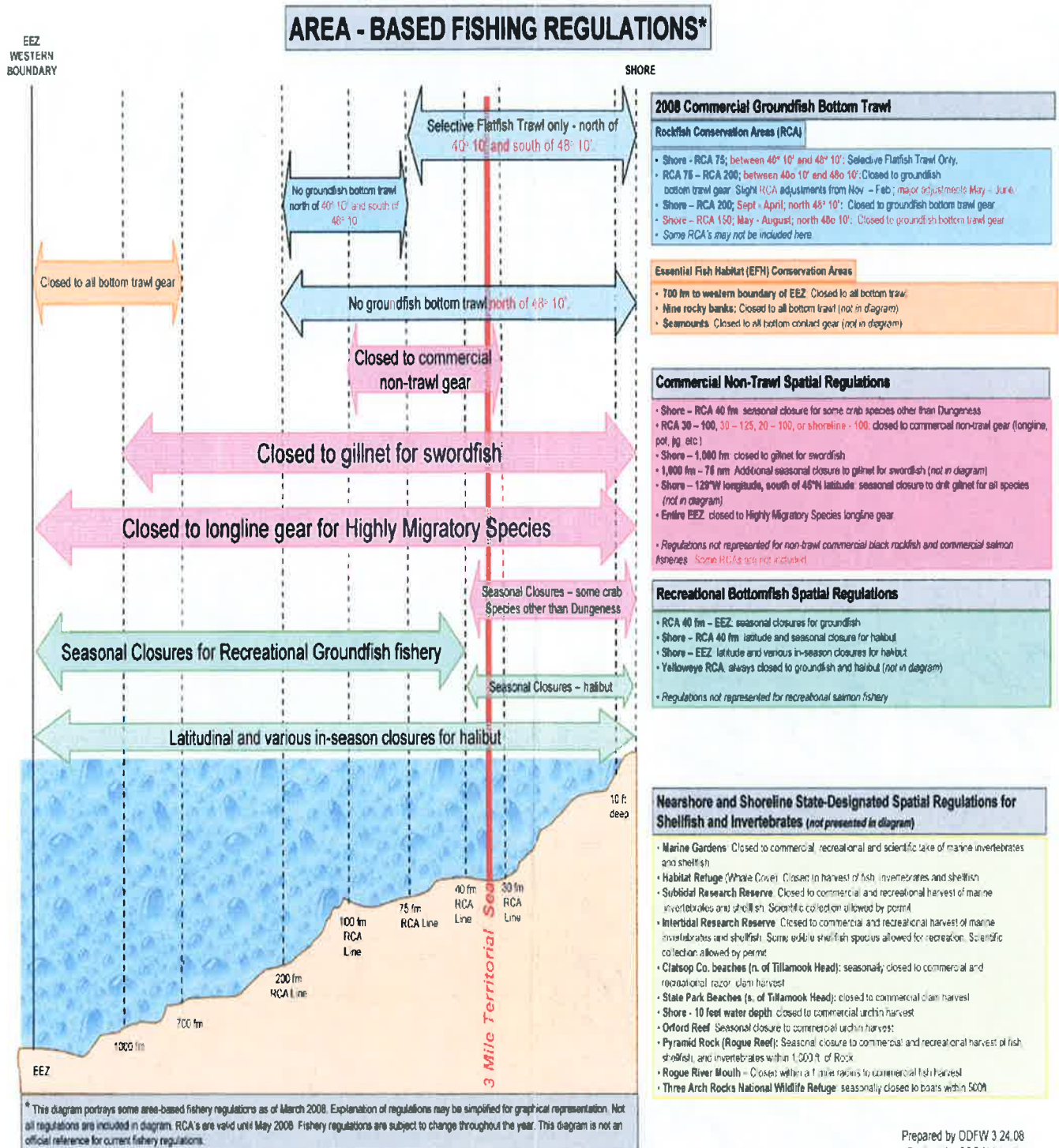
While the supposal PEW Foundation ballot threat is of concern, I believe that if the legislators acted as the Association of Oregon Counties did in November 2007 and unanimously opposed Marine Reserves, the PEW Foundation would not stand a chance with Oregon voters.

To be sure, this in time is a jobs killing bill, a bill that will have repercussions through our economy, affecting everything on our coastal communities, including how much money our schools get through the jobs that our fishermen may or may not have. Something this drastic, locking up large parts of the ocean from harvest and killing many family wage jobs, needs to be for a very good reason, not just politics. There is nothing in here that protects our hard working families, there is no mitigation, no new areas open to fish, no compensation, no sunset clause if this is all for not. Once informed, I can not believe that people will not be outraged at this atrocity, especially in these hard economic times. Everyone should demand that Oregon stick to science, stick to the regulations that are there to protect species and that also allow reasonable, responsible harvest.

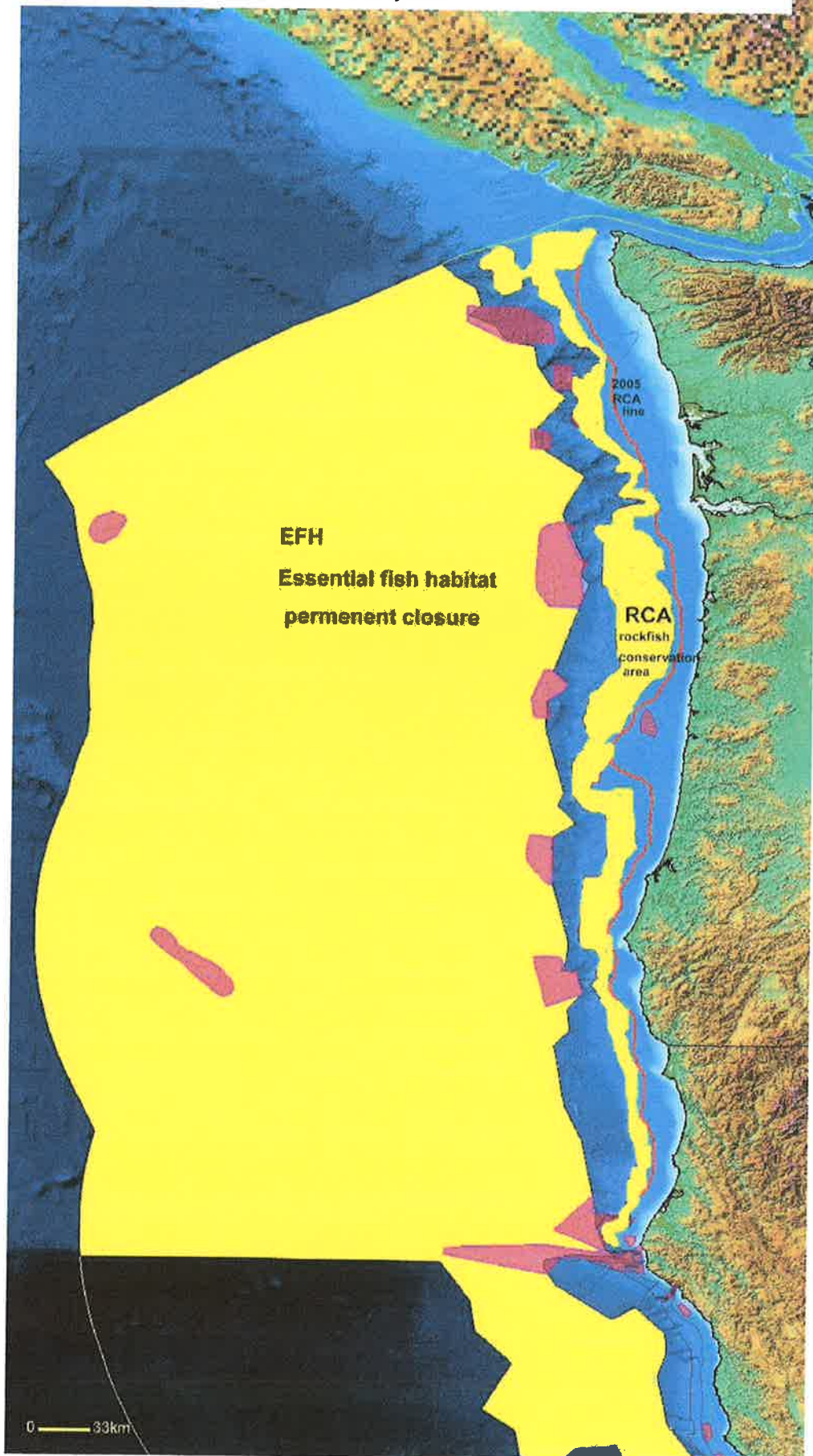
In conclusion I ask the legislators to say no to the politics, no to outside of State special interests, no to Marine Reserves, no to making life harder for our middle class workers. And if this bill does go forward, I ask for mitigation and the best representation you can give to our hard working families that are putting food on our table.

Sincerely,
Bob Horning

Multiple layers of ODFW and Federal regulation for fish enhancement



Areas in yellow and red are Federal closures, closed to all trawling through out the year.



Map from Oceana magazine showing 31 sites they want to have set aside.

