

Senator Betsy Johnson  
P.O. Box R  
Scappoose, Oregon 97056

Lower Columbia Alliance for Sustainable Fisheries  
Bernie Bjork, Grassroots Organizer  
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503-791-0014

RE: Voting No On More Closed to Fishing Marine Reserves.

January 27, 2012

Dear Senator Johnson;

Hope you are well, and that you are rested up for the upcoming February Legislative Session. I am writing to ask you once again to support your local small family ocean going fishing businesses. A full 85% of our local trawl fishermen's traditional fishing grounds have been closed over the last 12 years, and we have two new no-fishing marine reserves at Port Orford and near Depoe Bay. It is premature to suggest evicting fishing from additional areas, whether they are marine reserves or test sites for renewable energy devices, before we know the results from the two new marine reserves. The state has not adopted a long-term budget yet to do even minimal research of the two new reserves to learn if they have any effect at all. Marine reserve advocates are not promoting marine reserves to save any particular species, or conduct any science, because they believe the science is already settled based on marine reserves partial outcomes in other areas, with little relevance to circumstances on the Oregon coast. Any initiative placed before the voters by out of state environmental foundations wanting to close Oregon's ocean would be defeated if coastal legislators would take a high-profile public stand with the majority of their constituents and raise the same points that their constituents have been raising for years and that is; That marine reserves are an inappropriate management tool here and science bears that out, that our fisheries that would be affected by a marine reserve are in good condition, that no problem has been found for marine reserves to correct, and that we cannot afford to lose jobs or finance an unnecessary program of regulation at this time.

I will go through a short list of concerns our local fishermen are dealing with, but first a reminder of who we are and who supports our cause. The Lower Columbia Alliance for Sustainable Fisheries is a grassroots coalition, formed in 2003 to stop the closure of any MORE fishing grounds to our local commercial and sport fishermen. Our membership of over 100 entities is made up of mostly lower Columbia River ocean going commercial and sport fishermen from both sides of the River, and the businesses that cater to the industry. Through the years we have gained the support of all the lower Columbia port districts, and obtained letters of support from the cities of Warrenton and Astoria, and several previous Clatsop County Commissions. Our stance has gained the support of most local and coast wide commercial fishing associations like the Columbia River Crab Fishermens' Association, Fisherman's Marketing Association, Salmon for All, the Western Fishboat Owners Association, and the largest sports fishermen's group in the state, Oregon Anglers, a subsidiary of the national Recreational Fishing Alliance.

These are our concerns:

1. The continual push by environmental foundations and groups to close MORE fishing grounds causes our fishermen to lose confidence in the system. They see the state of Oregon having no money to maintain what they have already, but somehow coming up with the money it takes to

implement and enforce these unnecessary closed fishing areas. They wonder where the money is coming from, and worry that if the state takes environmental foundation money, CONTROL of the state waters will ultimately end up in the hands of these foundations, regardless of Oregon's attempt to keep an arm's length distance between foundation money and actual research. That alone is a very scary thing to our ocean fishermen.

2. They see the Department of Land Conservation and Development showing up in town, less than a year after a very poorly run Cape Falcon Marine Reserve Process, wanting to close more fishing grounds for test sites for renewable energy devices.
3. We saw the Port of Coos Bay run a much cleaner marine reserve process than the Cape Falcon process, and coming up with exactly what would have happened up on the North Coast. That result being, "No marine reserve" at Cape Falcon, just like Coos Bay did for Cape Arago.
4. 'Mitigation' has to be an integral part of allowing any new closed to fishing area. This could be in the form of cash to our displaced fishermen, previously closed areas reopening, more money for fish hatcheries, placement in the ocean of artificial reefs, etc.
5. 'Sunset Clauses' have to be part of any new closed to fishing area. Preferably 4 to 6 years. If it is shown that the closed to fishing area is doing more good for the community than the displaced fishermen, then they may continue.
6. We are very fortunate on the coast to have fishing families that will take a chance, go out to sea, and bring back fresh seafood for our restaurants, and fish markets. Our local tourist businesses thrive due to it. Inland counties would love to have this opportunity.
7. When I was growing up in Astoria, we had a thriving salmon gillnet and troll fleet, and almost the entire Astoria waterfront was working. What was the straw that broke the camel's back, and made up Bumble Bee Seafood's mind that it needed to leave Astoria? Was it the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act, or maybe the 1974 Boldt Decision, or their loss of clout with the Oregon state legislature? The same can happen to our trawl and crab fleets.
8. The huge expense of these new marine reserves, and the jobs lost to them, in a time of real economic turmoil. The researchers who would be working out there already have jobs, financed by taxpayers, so no new jobs would be added. But private sector workers would be left with less opportunity to earn an income to pay the researcher's salaries. More closed fishing areas just cannot be justified.

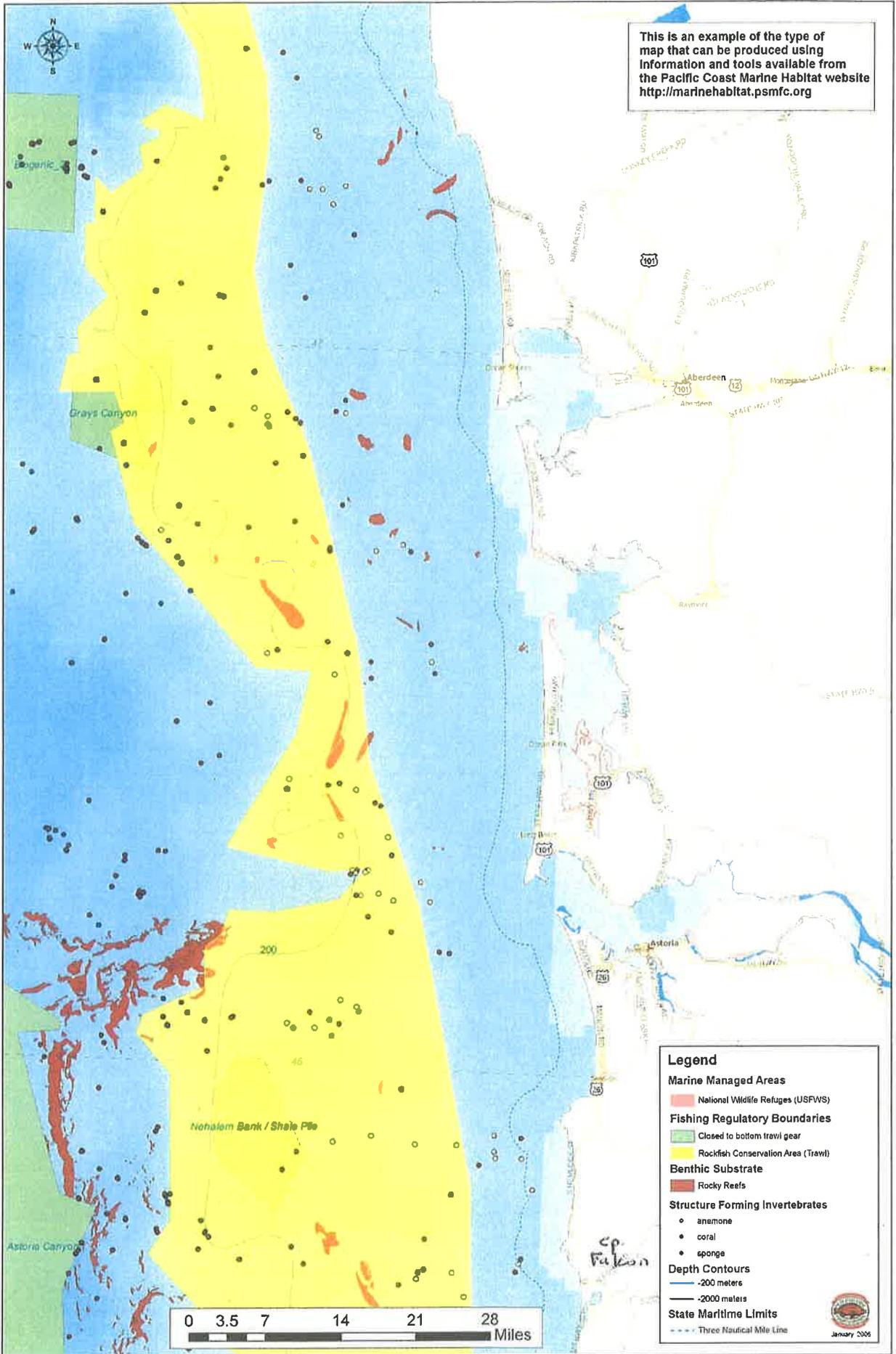
Senator, our LCAFSF wishes that you would support your local fishing families, in this extremely import issue. We also wish the best for you personally.

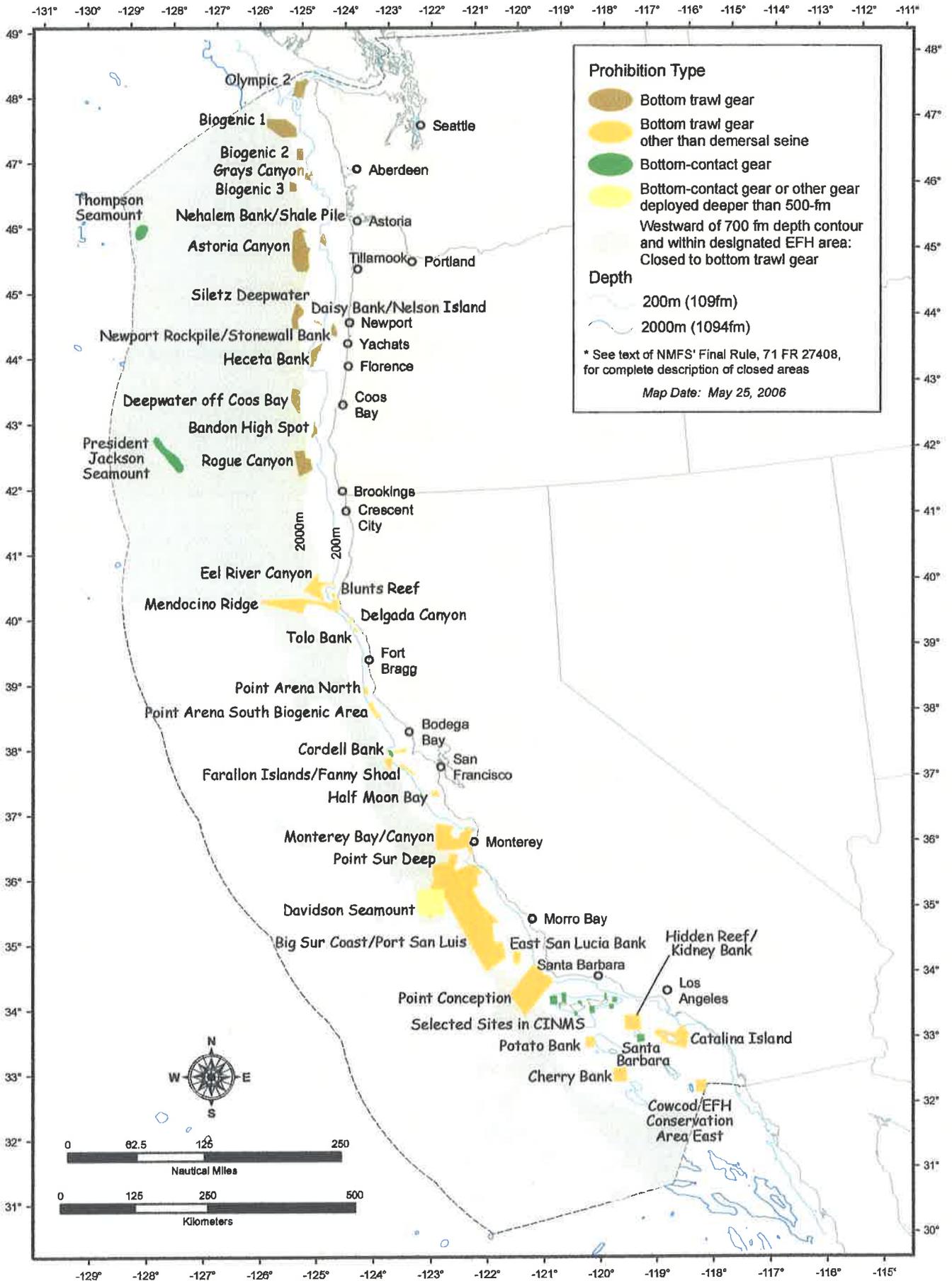
Truly;

Bernie Bjork  
Grassroots Coordinator, Lower Columbia  
Alliance for Sustainable Fisheries

cc. Gov. Kitzhaber, The Coastal Caucus, Oregon State Legislators, Mayor Mark Kujala of Warrenton, Clatsop County Com. Chair Dirk Rohne, Tim Josi, Port of Garibaldi, Port of Astoria, Port of Ilwaco, Port of Chinook, Port of Newport, Port of Coos Bay, Steve Bodnar, John Griffith, F.A.C.T, Com. Kelly Barnett, Linda Buell, Nils Stolpe, John Holloway, Michael Desmond.

This is an example of the type of map that can be produced using information and tools available from the Pacific Coast Marine Habitat website <http://marinehabitat.psmfc.org>





EFH area closures to protect Pacific Coast groundfish habitat - Coastwide.