



Date: March 22, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Co-Chair Senator Dembrow, Co-Chair Rep. Pham and members of the committee:

For the record my name is Charlie Plybon, I'm the Oregon Policy Manager for Surfrider Foundation, and I live in South Beach, Oregon. I'm furnishing these comments on behalf of the Oregon Marine Reserves Partnership, a coalition of groups that includes Surfrider, The Nature Conservancy, Oceana, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, Coast Range Association, Portland Audubon and about half dozen local coastal community groups engaged in marine reserves. Our coalition was created just over 10 years ago now to support scientific research, community engagement, effective communications and advocacy to advance understanding and protection of Oregon's Marine Reserves and Marine Protected Areas.

We have two significant ODFW budget notes that we'd like to bring forward to this committee involving the Marine Reserve Program that we believe are paramount to act on for the success of Oregon's investment in these special areas:

- 1) We urge this committee to reinstate the Outreach and Community Engagement Project Leader - Position number: 1315029, 1.0 FTE, Classification type of job = C8503 (Natural Resource Scientist 3)**

The position is critical to coastal communities and engaging ocean users in the science, research and monitoring that is fundamental to marine reserve success. We made a commitment to these communities ten years ago when these marine reserves and protected areas were designated and we urge the committee to ensure the position is reinstated.

- 2) Invest in HB 2903, which are key recommendations for additional investments in the Marine Reserve Program that came about from a statutorily mandated Decadal Assessment. This includes 2 staff and approx. fiscal of \$800K/biennium to meet new mandates.**

The 2012 legislation that created marine reserves mandated this 10-year program check in which calls on the legislature to act. The assessment, performed by Oregon State University and a team of scientists, makes recommendations for additional processes and positions (at about \$800K) to help strengthen the resilience, adaptive management and community engagement of marine reserves. The recommendations received broad support and endorsement by Oregon's Ocean Policy Advisory Council and were taken up

by our coastal legislators in the creation of HB2903. The bill comes to this committee broadly supported in bipartisan, bicameral fashion with a unanimous vote from the policy committee and we urge this committee's consideration of these investments in the 10 year reflection of this program.

Our marine reserves and protected areas are a treasure that many in my communities have sacrificed for, building on the decadal recommendations and making marine reserve science work for our ocean communities is paramount to managing our ocean resources with resilience in the face of climate change and maintaining the economic health of our coast

Sincerely on behalf of the Oregon Marine Reserves Partnership,

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