

A Resolution Endorsing Marine Reserves

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Washington County recognizes that marine reserves are a proven management tool that can help ensure the health of Oregon's ocean for current and future generations; and the need for a system of marine reserves and protected areas in Oregon's Territorial Sea; and

WHEREAS, Article 5: Ecology and Natural Resources and Article 3: Forest, Field, Range, and Fisheries of the Democratic Party of Oregon Legislative Agenda – 2008 declare that we create, fund, and enforce protection of a network of marine protected areas and marine reserves in Oregon's coastal waters; and

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Washington County believes that state marine reserves, if appropriately planned, contribute to the overall health of the ocean and to increased and more viable fish stocks; and

WHEREAS, the quality of life and economy of Washington County are tied to the health of the Pacific Ocean; and

WHEREAS, Governor Kulongoski's Executive Order 08-07 specified a state process where his advisory committee Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC) reviewed 20 site nominations for marine reserves and protected areas. The 20 proposals were clustered around 9 ecologically important areas. OPAC recommended 6 areas for further evaluation with two sites deemed ready for initial implementation; and

WHEREAS after nearly two years of discussion and evaluation, the Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC) finds that sufficient evidence exists to recommend that:

1. Oregon establish a system of marine reserves in order to test and evaluate their effectiveness in meeting marine resource conservation objectives; and
2. Oregon must continue to study, analyze, and deliberate on proposed reserves; and

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Washington County supports the state's honorable and historical fishing heritage that can sustainably provide economic benefits to our coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, marine reserves are able to accomplish two things that conventional management cannot do, namely:

1. marine reserves protect habitat by protecting an area from gear impact
2. marine reserves maintain the mature age structure for the plants and animals that produce more high-quality young than younger females; and

WHEREAS a plan for creating marine protected areas and reserves is most effective when it considers the needs of the whole state—the ocean users, the businesses and organizations that depend on a healthy ocean, and the plants and animals that live in and around our waters.

Therefore be it resolved that the Democratic Party of Washington County shall:

- endorse the process and funding to build a system of marine reserves and protected areas through endorsement of OPAC's November 2008 recommendation that includes initial implementation of Otter Rock and Redfish Rocks and
- further evaluation, collaboration and designation of the additional four sites including Cape Foulweather, Cascade Head, Cape Perpetua and the region around Cape Arago; and be it further resolved
- that Washington County Democrats are directed to forward this resolution to their county and state elected officials from Washington County in pursuit of formal support from their county and legislative representation