

Submitter: DIANE COLCORD

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3580

Dear Co-chair Helm, Co-chair Owens and members of the committee,

As an Oregonian who loves her state from the high deserts to the rocky shores, I am writing to ask that you please support HB 3580 and HB 3587, and our invaluable rocky habitats and eelgrass meadows. These bills offer a great opportunity to support biodiversity, coastal economies, and increase resilience to a changing climate.

There are signs eelgrass meadows are in decline. Their health is vital for sustaining our fisheries, maintaining water quality and mitigating climate impacts. HB 3580 would set up a Taskforce to set conservation targets with the help of tribes, scientists, agencies and local communities. This is a necessary first step to pro-actively prevent habitat loss before it's too late.

Oregon's rocky habitats, like Haystack Rock and Coquille Point, are more than tourist destinations. They are also incredibly important for millions of nesting birds, marine mammals, fish and invertebrates. They are threatened by increasing climate impacts and human disturbance. HB 3587 would provide needed agency coordination to better protect these sites. It also would set up a grant fund for local communities to engage the public on best practices to enjoy these places while minimizing disturbance to sensitive wildlife and habitats.

Now is the time to act to protect our coastal ecosystems. For a modest investment we can ensure both eelgrass meadows and rocky habitats can be conserved for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Diane Colcord
Tillamook