

Submitter: Bruce Williams

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 Oregon coast resident living in Bandon, I am writing to express my strong support for the Rocky Habitat Stewardship Bill (HB 3587) and the Eelgrass Action Bill (HB 3580). These vital pieces of legislation will foster stewardship, collaboration, and improved management of Oregon's essential coastal habitats.

Oregon's eelgrass meadows and rocky habitats are foundational to marine biodiversity and the resilience of coastal communities. Eelgrass meadows serve as crucial nursery grounds for fish and shellfish, support carbon sequestration efforts, and mitigate coastal erosion. Similarly, rocky habitats provide shelter and sustenance for a diverse array of marine species, including invertebrates, seabirds, and fish. Unfortunately, these critical ecosystems face increasing threats from climate change, habitat degradation, and human activity.

HB 3587 and HB 3580 provide a proactive, science-based approach to conservation and sustainable management. By promoting stewardship initiatives, encouraging collaboration between state agencies, coastal stakeholders, and Tribal communities, and leveraging funding for habitat protection, these bills represent a forward-thinking investment in Oregon's marine ecosystems.

Ensuring the long-term health of our coastal habitats is not just an environmental imperative but also an economic and cultural necessity. Fishing, tourism, and other marine-based industries rely on healthy ecosystems. Protecting these habitats will safeguard livelihoods, preserve Oregon's rich marine heritage, and enhance our ability to adapt to a changing climate.

I urge you to support and advocate for the passage of HB 3587 and HB 3580. These bills will provide the necessary tools to enhance coastal habitat resilience and ensure that future generations can continue to benefit from Oregon's extraordinary marine environments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Bruce Williams