State launches marine reserve public proposal process

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

NEWPORT, Ore. â€“ The State of Oregon is inviting the public to propose sites for further evaluation and possible designation as marine reserves.

To kick off the public proposal process, Oregon Sea Grant and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will host five informational meetings on the coast and in Salem. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an update on changes to the marine reserves development process that have been made in response to public input earlier this year, and to introduce the process by which the public can propose sites for further evaluation as potential marine reserves.

The marine reserves would be areas within Oregon's coastal waters, or adjacent rocky intertidal areas, protected from all extractive and development activities, including fishing, except as necessary for monitoring or research. The reserves would aid in the research and management of ocean habitats, and marine plants and animals.

Proposals from the public may be submitted until Sept. 30. Proposal packets and additional information will be available on the Oregon marine reserves website, www.oregonmarinereserves.net, and from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon Sea Grant.

The proposal packets contain a form outlining what to include with each proposal, and a description of the proposal evaluation criteria. The informational meetings will cover the packet materials, as well as information on where to find assistance or resources necessary to develop a successful proposal.

All of the meetings will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Dates and locations are:

Monday, June 23 â€“ Newport, Best Western Agate Beach Inn, 3019 North Coast Highway.
Tuesday, June 24 â€“ Tillamook, Oregon Department of Forestry, Tillamook District Conference Room, 5005 Third Street.
Wednesday, June 25 â€“ Salem, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Headquarters, Commission Room, 3406 Cherry Avenue NE.
Thursday, June 26 â€“ North Bend, North Bend Public Library, 1800 Sherman Ave.
Friday, June 27 â€“ Gold Beach, Gold Beach Resort Conference Center, 29232 Ellensburg on Highway 101.

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