Marine Reserves Program

April 2014

Background

In 2012, Oregon completed designation of five marine reserve sites within its state waters (0-3 nautical miles offshore). Each site consists of a no take marine reserve area and most also include one or more, less restrictive marine protected area. The marine reserves prohibit all take of fish, invertebrates, wildlife and seaweeds as well as ocean development. The protected areas have varying levels of protection; allowing or prohibiting specific take and prohibiting all ocean development.

ODFW is responsible for overseeing the management and monitoring of Oregon's marine reserve sites. ODFW's marine reserves program is housed in Newport and has six staff. The program is responsible for scientific monitoring; outreach; community and public engagement; coordination on enforcement efforts with Oregon State Police; site management plans and reviews every five years; and a statutorily mandated, comprehensive evaluation and report to the Oregon Legislature in 2023.

What is a Marine Reserve?

Marine Reserve:
No take of any species. No ocean development.

Marine Protected Area (MPA):
Allows or prohibits specific take (e.g. you can take salmon by troll or, no take using nets). No ocean development.

Why Marine Reserves?

Short-term:

- Precautionary approach to resource management
- To evaluate use as a management tool
- Part of spatial management of ocean uses

Long-term:

- Conserve habitats and biodiversity
- Serve as "undisturbed" reference sites for scientific research

Regulations

Rules have been adopted by state agencies for all five marine reserve sites. However, restrictions are being phased-in to allow for the collection of two years of baseline data at each site prior to the cessation of harvest activities.

Harvest restrictions go into effect:

- Jan 1, 2012: Redfish Rocks and Otter Rock (already in effect)
- Jan 1, 2014: Cape Perpetua and Cascade Head (already in effect)
- Jan 1, 2016: Cape Falcon

Oregon's Marine Reserves

Cape Falcon

Cascade Head

Otter Rock

Cape Perpetua

Redfish Rocks

Monitoring

ODFW's scientific monitoring of marine reserves is designed to understand the effects of marine reserves (prohibition of extractive activities) over time on both the marine environment (ecological monitoring) as well as people and communities (human dimensions monitoring). This information will help us evaluate the use of marine reserves as a management tool in the future. The current monitoring efforts are also proving to be vital in enhancing our understanding of Oregon's nearshore environment as well as our coastal economy and communities.

Data collection is conducted by ODFW staff and scientific research partners. Local fishing vessels are contracted when feasible to assist with ecological monitoring efforts. Volunteers also assist with some surveys, such as hook-and-line (see side panel). Analyses and results are presented in ecological and human dimensions monitoring reports every two years. These technical monitoring reports are available on the Oregon Marine Reserves website.

Site Management

Management plans outline site-specific strategies for outreach, reporting on monitoring activities and results, ways to improve compliance and enforcement, opportunities for community and public engagement, and for addressing site specific management issues. The plans also highlight local community interests, priorities, and projects for the marine reserve site.

Site management plans have been completed and are currently being implemented for the Redfish Rocks and Otter Rock sites. Development of site management plans will begin in 2013 for the Cape Perpetua and Cascade Head sites and in 2014 for Cape Falcon, with assistance from local communities.

Outreach and Community Engagement

The ODFW marine reserves program is looking to create a variety of ways to keep you informed about Oregon's marine reserve sites, what we're learning from our monitoring efforts, and opportunities for getting involved.

In working with local communities and partners we are looking to develop different ways for people to get involved at each marine reserve site. Opportunities in the future may include research, monitoring, economic development, outreach, and education projects.

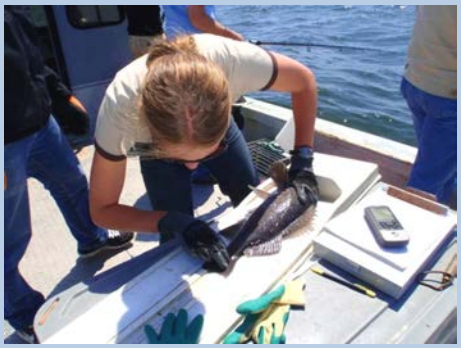
For More Information

Additional information is available by visiting the Oregon Marine Reserves website at www.oregonocean.info/marinereserves.

Watch the video "Tidepools, Rocky Reefs, Marine Reserves – It's all Connected" at www.oregonocean.info/marinereserves/gallery.

Hook-and-line Surveys Volunteers Help Collect Data

Volunteer anglers come out on chartered boats with ODFW staff during hook-and-line surveys to help collect data on fish as part of marine reserves monitoring.



Changes in fish size and weight are one of the first early signs of potential effects from marine reserve protections. Hook-and-line surveys are the best way to get fish in hand in order to take accurate length and weight measurements. Once sampled, the fish are released back into the water.

These surveys are conducted in rocky reef areas to collect data on length, weight, age, sex, and breeding condition for specific groundfish species.

By sampling over time, both inside the reserve and outside in fished areas, we can determine whether fish sizes and ages are changing inside the reserve differently than outside due to cessation of harvest.

Thanks to our 75 volunteers in 2013, we sampled 3,054 fish (27 different species) in our hook-and-line surveys