

Safeguard fisheries & coastal communities



Support the Eelgrass Action Bill (HB 3580)

What?

What does the Eelgrass Action Bill do?

- Funds the Department of Land Conservation and Development to convene an Eelgrass Task Force of agencies, scientists, Tribes, and stakeholders (\$400K)

What will the Task Force do?

- Assess the status of eelgrass in Oregon's estuaries and recommend conservation and restoration targets for the state to meet by 2040
- Evaluate policy barriers and environmental challenges to effective eelgrass management and conservation
- Assess state monitoring and mapping programs and recommend improvements
- Identify research needs and information gaps
- Identify funding needs and sources to improve eelgrass management
- Make recommendations to the legislature

Why?

Why does eelgrass matter?

- **It supports fisheries**, worth over \$178 million per year, by providing nursery habitat for juvenile fish
- **It increases resilience**, by sequestering carbon (35x the rate of rainforests), dampening storm surges, and buffering ocean acidification
- **It improves ecosystem health**, by supporting biodiversity and improving water quality

Why this bill?

- **Eelgrass is disappearing** globally and there are signs that its declining in Coos Bay and Yaquina Bay
- **We don't know the status** of eelgrass meadows in Oregon due to infrequent monitoring
- **Threats to eelgrass are increasing**, including pollution, development, warming waters, and invasive species
- **We need coordinated action**, targets, and a plan to protect this resource *before it's too late!*

Pew Charitable Trusts



The Eelgrass Action Bill is the first step for Oregon to develop a meaningful strategy for eelgrass conservation



Want to learn more or take action?

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Visit: www.oregonoceanalliance.org