

**Siuslaw News**  
P.O. Box 10  
Florence, OR 97439

# Opinion

## Time for Oregon to take lead on ocean health

Oregon is an ocean state, next to one of the world's most productive oceans. From spring Chinook salmon to the fresh Dungeness crab and oysters in our markets and restaurants, we benefit immensely from our fishing industries' economic productivity. Unfortunately, global changes in ocean chemistry are posing new challenges for how we will sustain our coastal ecosystems and fisheries. Informed Oregonians are aware of the damage being done to our atmosphere by global change and other sources of atmospheric pollution. However, most people are unaware of the damage being done to our oceans and our state's coastal resources by those same sources. If we fail to take action to address

these dangers, many of our state's industries, particularly the fishing and seafood industries that rely on a healthy coastal environment, will be put in jeopardy.

The ocean absorbs 1 in 4 molecules of CO<sub>2</sub> that are emitted into the atmosphere. As a consequence, the chemistry of our oceans has begun to change, becoming more acidic. This quickly increasing ocean acidification has wide-ranging effects on marine life, from inhibiting the growth of oysters to altering the behavior of fish. The fact that the ocean in many of our coastal areas is also subject to low oxygen (hypoxia) must also be a call to action.

### GUEST VIEWPOINT

By ARNIE ROBLAN  
STATE SENATOR, DISTRICT 5



All of our policies on ocean management were developed before the threat of ocean acidification was recognized. The realities of a changing ocean will require us to change how we manage ocean resources. Failure to take seriously the damage to our ocean ecosystem invites disastrous consequences for our ocean-based and coastal industries.

We are fortunate that many scientists are aware of these distressing developments. This week, a panel of 20 scientists from across the West

Coast, including five from Oregon, released a report on recommended actions on ocean acidification. They are all worthy of our most serious consideration. With respect

to immediate action, among other things, the report calls for the following actions:

- Intensifying effort to identify areas that are most susceptible to changing ocean chemistry;
- Exploring sea grass restoration to enhance water quality; and
- Fostering genetic diversity that supports resilient fish and shellfish populations.

To help implement these recom-

mendations, we call for the state and its partners to form a center of excellence focused on ocean acidification and hypoxia, to be hosted by the new Marine Studies Initiative based out of Oregon State University

Oregon has led on issues like sustainable forestry, recycling and the passage of the nation's first bottle bill, as well as comprehensive land-use planning and using and maintaining a healthy coastal ocean. Again, we must demonstrate our leadership in addressing this new challenge to our all-important ocean resources.

*Sen. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay) represents Oregon Senate District 5, which stretches along the central Oregon coast.*

### LETTERS

#### What a splash

We thoroughly enjoyed the Splash Off! event for the Dancing with Sea Lions project at the Florence Events Center. It truly was a one-of-a-kind event to experience the beauty and spirit of the project, to meet the artists and see the lions all together, up close.

The only part I didn't like was choosing a favorite.

Looking forward to visiting them in their new homes along the coast.

Kathy Blok  
Florence

#### A summer hit

What a thrill it is to be a part of the 20th celebration of the Florence Events Center. Jennifer Conner's vision to bring sea lions to Florence is going to be a hit all summer long.

The community's reaction at Saturday's Dancing with Sea Lions Splash Off! event was incredible.

I've never seen so many bodies, young and old, contorting and bending to find celebratory years on each sea lion. People were engaged and enamored by the art on each fiberglass creation and fascinated on how the same sea lion could look so different.

The 2016 summer season will be one to remember when each of the sea lions graces the streets of our coast. Thank you, Friends of Florence Events Center and Sea Lion Caves for letting me play a part.

My creation, "Wish You Were Here," is eager to see the world while sitting outside the Chamber of Commerce. Honk if you love Florence!

Marsha Horner  
Florence

#### Honoring our son

A warm thank you to our Florence community for supporting our taco feed fundraiser for the Jose Dela Mora Scholarship. We raised over \$4,200 and couldn't be more grateful. We appreciated your patience and understanding at the event as the response was amazing, and it was difficult to keep up — a wonderful problem.

A special thank you to the Siuslaw High School students and others who helped us prepare the food and serve. Also thank you to our home church, Cross Road Church, and Pastor Dale Edwards for hosting the event.

The Jose Dela Mora Scholarship is being established this spring in 2016, the year our son, Jose Dela Mora, was to have graduated from Siuslaw High School.



The scholarship was established to honor Jose's life and to memorialize the lives that he touched.

Jose was tragically taken from this earth in a drowning accident. He was a gifted wrestler and a talented artist. However, he was most known for his fun-loving character and kindness. Everyone considered Jose their friend.

Two \$500 scholarships will be offered annually to students who have a passion for art or for wrestling and who need support to pursue enrichment opportunities, college or vocational training. Interested students can get the scholarship information in the counseling office at Siuslaw High School.

Thank you again for your support in this important endeavor as we seek to honor our son's memory in a positive way.

Rosa and Jose Dela Mora  
Florence

#### Vote 'yes' on school bond

We can be very proud of Oregon where voting has been made easier. Compare that to several states that are putting up roadblocks to make it more difficult for citizens to vote.

In a recent election in a southern state, citizens stood in line up to five hours to cast their votes. Would you do that? All we have to do is turn in our ballots by mail or the box near the Florence Justice Center.

I'm asking you to do just that — turn in your ballot. I'm also asking you to vote "Yes" on the Siuslaw School District bond measure for a new high school. Groups that I've been a part of are

working to make Florence a better place, with more job opportunities and making it more enticing for new doctors who come with their families who want excellent schools that are safe. We would like for these doctors to stay and feel that this is the community where they and their families could thrive.

There is information about the condition on the current high school. Check out the listening times that are being offered by our current superintendent. Also, ask the students. I've learned that there are eight classrooms in the upstairs part of the mall that were not intended for classes, each having about 30 students. There are no windows in these classrooms because their walls are part of the roof. These rooms are often at 90 degrees.

Should there ever be a disaster, these students could be trapped. The building was not built for earthquakes. The current building was meant to house about 270 students and we currently have over 400.

Ask to take a tour of the building. It was modeled after California schools and has been most difficult to keep warm in winter. Systems are failing and a serious problem is the many doors that make it very difficult to close down should someone come in with a gun as happened at the Umpqua Community College near Roseburg a few months ago.

Florence has risen to the task many times since 1978 by building a new hospital, new library, the events center, two new school buildings, the senior center, adding to LCC, the new justice center and perhaps others. These additions have made Florence the city we love.

Remember that even if you don't have children in school, someone long ago built the schools that we went to.

Nancy Rickard  
Former 97J School Board Member, 1980-1994  
Florence

#### Save Mapleton schools

Voters who live in the Mapleton School District will have an opportunity this month to make a real contribution to the future of their community. By voting "yes" on the school bond measure, they will provide \$8 million — half in a small tax assessment, half in state matching funds — toward repairs and updating of the Mapleton schools.

After about 65 years, the school buildings badly need plumbing, electrical, safety and roof work, projects not supported by current state allotments.

Mapleton's middle and high schools serve vital district needs. Mapleton High's graduation rate, 91 percent, was the second best in Lane County. Its small class size ensures that students receive individual attention, particularly for students who fall behind or are prepared for advanced studies.

The schools offer an extensive athletics program, without imposing a "pay to play" fee common in other schools.

Career counseling and college preparation are important services. Mapleton School District provides a crucial health service as well, since about 80 percent of its students rely on subsidized meals (breakfast, lunch and a snack). In short, Mapleton is a full-service school that well prepares students to be valuable community members.

Many people mistakenly believe that a good deal of money will be saved if the school bond measure fails and Mapleton School District must close. To the contrary, district residents would be subject to current Siuslaw school taxes, which may include a new \$36.9 million bond measure on the May ballot to construct a new Siuslaw High School.

Mapleton district's \$4 million in school taxes will be lost, the district's property values will go down and business in the district will be adversely affected.

The average assessment for property owners in the Mapleton School District will be about \$15 a month. That is a tiny amount when we consider the value of education to the young people in our district and to the long-term well-being of the entire community.

Saving Mapleton School District really amounts to a huge public service.

Mel Gurtov  
Deadwood

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County. Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed.

All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity.

Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published. All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

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