

October 4, 2019

City of Coos Bay Planning Commission
c/o Public Works & Community Development Department
City of Coos Bay, Oregon
– comment via email

Public Comment: Jordan Cove Eelgrass Mitigation Application

For the record, my name is Martin Callery, and I am a resident of North Bend at 542 Lombard St. I have lived in Oregon's bay area for 30 years and retired in 2015 after a 23-year career with the local port district.

During my time with the port district I became very familiar with the federal Coos Bay Navigation Channel and the Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan (CBEMP), as well as the authorities and responsibilities of the myriad state and federal agencies involved with the use of the channel and the implementation of the CBEMP.

The task facing the City of Coos Bay Planning Commission, and ultimately the City of Coos Bay Mayor and Council, is administratively simple, and of keen interest to various constituencies within the greater bay area. Mitigation, in this case eelgrass mitigation, is an allowed activity within the CBEMP zone administered by the City of Coos Bay, which is covered by a Natural Aquatic (NA) designation. Therefore, an approval decision is the only viable response to the application.

Eelgrass is critical to a healthy estuarine environment, and eelgrass mitigation has been successful here and at other Pacific Northwest locations, including in Yaquina Bay during the development of NOAA marine infrastructure in that estuary. The site identified by Jordan Cove marine scientists and other consultants is a prime location for expanded eelgrass beds in lower Coos Bay, which will help improve the overall health of the Coos estuary. The responsibility for the long-term success of the mitigation project will remain with Jordan Cove, with significant ongoing oversight by federal and state agencies which have the expertise and personnel to fully define and monitor the required mitigation work.

It is evident that the Jordan Cove Energy Project has met all permitting requirements for the proposed mitigation and has demonstrated they have the necessary resources to successfully complete all aspects of the project. I therefore request that the City of Coos Bay Planning Commission approve the Jordan Cove application for eelgrass mitigation in the CBEMP zone administered by the City of Coos Bay.

Respectfully submitted,
Martin Callery
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