

November 3, 2014

Admiral Paul Zukunft, Commandant
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
2100 2nd Street SW STOP 700
Washington, D. C. 20593-7000

Dear Sir,

I am very concerned about the pending movement to remove the Coast Guard helicopter station from the central Oregon coast. This decision brings a heavy cost to Oregonians and coastal visitors -- a potential loss of lives.

I'm not a commercial fisherman who puts his life on the line with every fishing trip nor am I a fisheries or university researcher working in the rough cold waters of the Pacific. I am, however, one of the many inland-residing Oregonians who enjoy Oregon's central coast and beaches on a frequent basis.

A visit to the coast is a "given" for our out-of-state visiting friends and relatives. We climb the rocks, play in the tide pools, and hike along the shores. Some of us surf, dive, and kayak the ocean waters. Others enjoy educational and whale watch trips with our visitors or go out for a day of sports fishing with one of the local businesses.

Hundreds of Willamette Valley residents frequently bring their own boats to recreationally crab, fish, and sail the waters off the coast. We have all come to appreciate the safety net provided by knowing the Coast Guard Helicopter is on hand. And, not a season goes by that we hear of a rescue off our shores that ended well because of the quick work of the local Coast Guard.

Recreational users do not have survival suits so any incident occurring in our 49-57 degree waters means certain death in a very short period of time. A helicopter an hour away is useless. As visitor numbers to our coast continue to rise, rescue needs will rise -- please help us feel safe!

Please reconsider this decision to close this station. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peggy Harris
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