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January 22, 2009

To: Oregon AFS Awards Committee

From: Selina Heppell, OSU Fisheries and Wildlife

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Selina Heppell'.

RE: Recommendation for the **Port Orford Ocean Resource Team (POORT)** and **Leesa Cobb** to receive **Awards of Merit**

I nominate the Port Orford Ocean Resource Team (POORT) and its primary founder Leesa Cobb for Awards of Merit in 2009. POORT is a phenomenal group of commercial fishermen and community members that have been working towards ecosystem-based management of nearshore fisheries. Led by AFS member and fisherman's wife Leesa Cobb, POORT has had three major successes this year:

- Launch of the Port Orford Stewardship Plan
- Development and finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding with ODFW to work toward community-based monitoring and management, and
- Development of the most comprehensive marine reserve plan submitted to the Ocean Policy Advisory Council, which will become one of two "pilot" reserves for the Oregon coast.

POORT stands as a model for communities across the state and region by combining local knowledge, private and state resources, and good science into local planning and conservation.

The motto of POORT is, "Fish Smarter, Not Harder", which they espouse through a strong conservation ethic and integration of science into their resource use planning. Their mission is:

"to engage Port Orford fishers and other community members in developing and implementing a strategic plan and framework that ensures the long-term sustainability of the Port Orford reef ecosystem and social system dependent on it."

Leesa Cobb deserves additional credit and a separate award for her tireless efforts to promote POORT, connect with local scientists, and lobby at Council meetings and OPAC meetings. Through her tireless efforts, POORT has received funding for research and resource planning efforts through a variety of NGOs and state and federal agencies. POORT Partners include Surfrider, The Nature Conservancy, and Pacific Marine Conservation Council. Research projects in Port Orford have been funded by Sea Grant, ODFW and NMFS, and have included collaborative research with fishermen. Leesa runs the POORT office in downtown Port Orford, a gathering place for fishermen, researchers, and community members as well as a source of outreach materials on POORT's conservation efforts.

POORT's web site provides extensive information on local projects as well as a complete description and map of the Stewardship Area: <http://www.oceanresourceteam.org/>