

Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission

April 23, 2025

Agenda Item: 9b

Action

Public Comment Allowed: No

Topic: Request to adopt rule changes –736-024-0015 Ocean shore vehicle access
Manzanita

Presented by: Katie Gauthier, Government Relations Manager

Background:

Under current ocean shore vehicle restrictions in Tillamook County ([OAR 736-024-0015](#)), the portion of the beach adjacent to Manzanita permits limited vehicle access—between October 1 and April 30, from 7 AM to noon, and at any time for boat launching. These provisions originated from balancing traditional uses, such as morning fishing and boat launches, with the need to protect public safety and the beach environment. This rule has been in place since at least 1992.

Manzanita’s City Council passed Resolution No. 25-01, formally requesting that the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission open rulemaking to prohibit vehicle use on this section of the beach altogether. The council feels driving on the ocean shore at any time during the year is no longer compatible with growing beach recreation, ecosystem preservation, and public safety.

Public Comments

Public comment opened March 3 and will be open until April 7. A virtual public hearing was held on March 24.

So far, over fifty comments have been received. A full summary of the comments and staff response will be provided following closure of the comment period.

Many of the comments are supportive of closing the area to vehicles and express concern over safety and conflict with pedestrian use. Closure of the beach for boat launching has received a number of comments in objection. Commenters express concern over potential to limit dory boat launching.

In response to comments, staff recommend changing proposed rules to allow boat launching by permit. OPRD would work with the city of Manzanita to develop a permit that could be issued by the city, similar to one issued in Cannon Beach.

Prior Action by Commission: Approved opening rulemaking in February 2025.

Action Requested: Adopt amendments to OAR 736-024-0015 to close section of ocean shore near Manzanita to vehicles, with boat launching allowed by permit.

Attachments:

Attachment A –proposed amendments- marked copy

Attachment B- proposed amendments-clean copy

Attachment C-Summary of comments and staff response (to be sent after close of comments)

Attachment D- maps of proposed rule change

Prepared by: Katie Gauthier

9b Attachment A: Marked Copy

736-024-0015

Tillamook County: Restrictions

(1) There shall be no landing of any aircraft on the ocean shore in Tillamook County, except for an emergency.

(2) Except for an emergency or as provided in section (3) of this rule, there shall be no travel by motor vehicles on the ocean shore in Tillamook County in the areas and during the periods of time hereinafter designated by the Oregon coordinate latitude survey lines, north zone, consisting of "Y" numbers as shown on "Exhibit 2" available from the agency and by this reference made a part hereof. The areas where motor vehicle travel is allowed, the periods of time for such use, and the areas on the ocean shore where travel by motor vehicles is prohibited, are further described as follows:

(a) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from the Clatsop County-Tillamook County line, Y 790, 613, southerly to the south line of Oswald West State Park, Y 774, 737;

(b) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from the south line of Oswald West State Park, Y 774, 737, southerly to the north boundary of Nehalem Bay State Park, Y 761, 335, except as follows:

~~(A) Between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon, October 1 through April 30;~~

~~(B)~~ Motor vehicles essential to and engaged in boat launchings will be allowed, by permit, any time during the year.

(c) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from the north boundary of Nehalem Bay State Park, Y 761, 335, southerly to the south boundary of the Boy Scout property north of Sand Lake, Y 618, 468, except as follows: Motor vehicles essential to and engaged in boat launchings will be allowed any time during the year for a distance of 300 feet northwest from point Y 665, 466; XI, 113, 850, near Happy Camp;

(d) Motor vehicle travel is allowed at any time from the south boundary of Boy Scout property north of Sand Lake, Y 618, 468 southerly to the Galloway Road beach access Y 610, 120;

(e) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from the Galloway Road beach access Y 610, 120 southerly to the north boundary of Cape Kiwanda State Park property, Y 595, 111;

(f) Motor vehicle travel is allowed from the north boundary of Cape Kiwanda State Park property, Y 595, 111 to the base of headland north of Cape Kiwanda, Y 586, 275.

(g) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from the base of the headland north of Cape Kiwanda, Y 586, 275, southerly to a point north of the beach ramp near Cape Kiwanda, Y 584, 097, except as follows:

(A) From the base of the headland south of Cape Kiwanda, Y 584, 879, southerly approximately 400 feet to Y 584, 688, motor vehicles essential to and engaged in boat, as defined in ORS 830.005(2), launchings, boat recoveries, transferring equipment or supplies onto boats, unloading equipment or catches from boats, or emergency repairs of other vehicles or boats will be allowed at any time during the year;

(B) From Y 584, 688, southerly approximately 700 feet to a line located north of and parallel to the beach ramp near Cape Kiwanda, the point of intersection of said line and the line of vegetation being at Y 584, 097, operation or parking of motor vehicles used for towing boat trailers or essential to boat launchings will be allowed.

(h) Motor vehicle travel and parking is prohibited at any time from the line described in subsection (2)(g) of this rule, north of the beach ramp near Cape Kiwanda, southerly approximately 1,300 feet to Y 582, 843, except for boat launching or boat recoveries when access north of the ramp is unsafe due to ocean or beach conditions.

(i) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from Y 582, 843 southerly to near Pacific Avenue at Pacific City, Y 579, 329;

(j) Motor vehicle travel is allowed at any time from near Pacific Avenue at Pacific City, Y 579, 329, southerly to Porter Point, Y 563, 121;

(k) Motor vehicle travel is prohibited from Porter Point, Y 563, 121, southerly to the Tillamook County/Lincoln County line, Y 521, 960.

(3) The State Parks Director or the authorized representative may issue special permits for motor vehicles to travel on the ocean shore within the areas or at times where such travel is otherwise prohibited by this resolution. No charge for such permits will be made. Any special permit or permit identification card shall be in the immediate possession of the operator of the vehicle at all times when driving on that portion of the ocean shore otherwise closed to travel by motor vehicles. The operator shall display the same upon the demand of any peace officer.

(4) The State Parks and Recreation Department is directed to erect conspicuous signs and markers designating the above areas on the ocean shore of Tillamook County, with reference to the Oregon coordinate survey system, as areas where travel by motor vehicles is prohibited, areas where travel by motor vehicles is partially restricted, and areas where travel by motor vehicles is allowed, as herein provided.

9b Attachment B: Clean Copy

736-024-0015

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Summary of Comments, Response and Staff Recommendations

Number of Comments Received

Support proposed rule change: 43

Oppose proposed rule change: 26*

Unclear (included comments on another rule): 3

*In addition to individual comments opposed to the proposed rules, the department received a petition with 102 signatures asking for the rules to stay as they are and to continue to allow vehicle access to the ocean shore.

A copy of all comments, the petition and recording of the public hearing is available on the agency rulemaking website at <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-Rule-2023-Manzanita%20Ocean%20Shore%20Vehicle%20Restrictions.aspx>

Summary of Comments

Reasons shared in comments supportive of proposed rule change

1. Safety for Families, Pets, and Pedestrians
 - a. Approx. 40 comments**
 - b. Commenters shared concerns around safety, risks and dangers, provided examples of experiences and fears about accidents, collisions, reckless driving. One of the primary concerns shared were risks to children and pets.
2. Environmental & Wildlife Preservation
 - a. Approx. 35 comments
 - b. Commenters shared concerns for wildlife, particularly shorebirds and plovers. Comments expressing environmental concerns highlighted ecosystem concerns, worries around erosion, risks of increased pollution, exposure for oil leaks, tire chemicals, and general habitat destruction.
3. Noise, Pollution, and the Desire for a Quiet ‘Natural Experience’
 - a. Approx. 25 comments
 - b. Commenters shared the desire for peace, quiet, and serenity when walking along the ocean shore. They were concerned with engine noise and exhaust being intrusive and impacting the natural beauty of the area.
4. Year-Round Crowds / Growth in Beach Usage
 - a. Approx. 20 comments

- b. Commenters shared that Manzanita beach is busy all year now and there is not an off-season, as winter tourism has grown in popularity and the population has increased. Commenters expressed the ocean shore is crowded even in shoulder months.
- 5. Alternative Accessibility Methods
 - a. Approx. 15 comments
 - b. Commenters shared that the area has worked to provide options to allow for accessibility of the ocean shore which includes beach wheelchairs available to borrow and MOBI mats laid out. Commenters expressed that lending David's Chairs, or allowing for ADA drive on-beach permits are a solution to keep vehicles off the beach while ensuring disability access.
- 6. Local Support & Oregon's 'Public Beach' Ethos
 - a. Approx. 10 comments
 - b. Some commenters specifically cite the City of Manzanita's resolution, or mention "Oregon's legacy of publicly owned beaches" as reason to keep them car-free.
 - c. Many supporters do mention local preference or "the community wants this," but only about 10 explicitly highlight it as a main rationale (e.g., "Our council asked for it," "fits Oregon's tradition of protecting beaches," etc.).

Reasons shared in comments opposed to proposed rule change

- 1. Traditional Uses & Heritage (Especially Dory Fishing, Wood Gathering)
 - a. Approx. 20 comments
 - b. Commenters expressed concerns regarding changes to the proposed rules impacted ability for dory boat launching. Commenters wanted to preserve access to this historical Oregon tradition that families have done for generations.
 - c. Some commenters were also concerned about impacts on their ability to gather wood.
- 2. Public Rights & Fear of Privatization
 - a. Approx. 10 comments
 - b. Commenters expressed a concern that banning vehicles is a step toward private beaches. Many of these commenters expressed a belief that the public has a right to drive here and the beach belongs to all, not just wealthy homeowners.
- 3. Lack of Data or Proven Need
 - a. Approx. 15 comments
 - b. Some commenters questioned the evidence or proof of accidents. They expressed that there are not statistics or information about real incidents shared, but rather emotional arguments.
- 4. Accessibility / Equity Concerns
 - a. Approx. 10 comments

- b. Commenters argue that older adults, disabled veterans, or lower-income folks rely on driving onto the beach to fish or gather wood and can't manage otherwise. Some mention that beach wheelchairs aren't enough.
- 5. Preference for additional enforcement or permits, instead of ban
 - a. Approx. 15 comments
 - b. Commenters expressed a preference enforce the current rules and ticket reckless drivers, instead of an outright prohibition on driving. Other suggestions included limited local permits or boat-launch only.
- 6. Economic & Cultural Factors
 - a. Approx. 15 comments
 - b. Commenters expressed concerns about the impact on tourism, local businesses, or preserving dory culture as important to the local/regional economy.

Item of note for comments in opposition: 15 of the 25 comments labeled “opposed,” specifically focus on preserving dory/boat launching or driftwood collection. They either propose restricting “joyriding” or suggest a similar restriction to vehicle traffic, while favoring keeping boat launching and wood collecting uses legal.

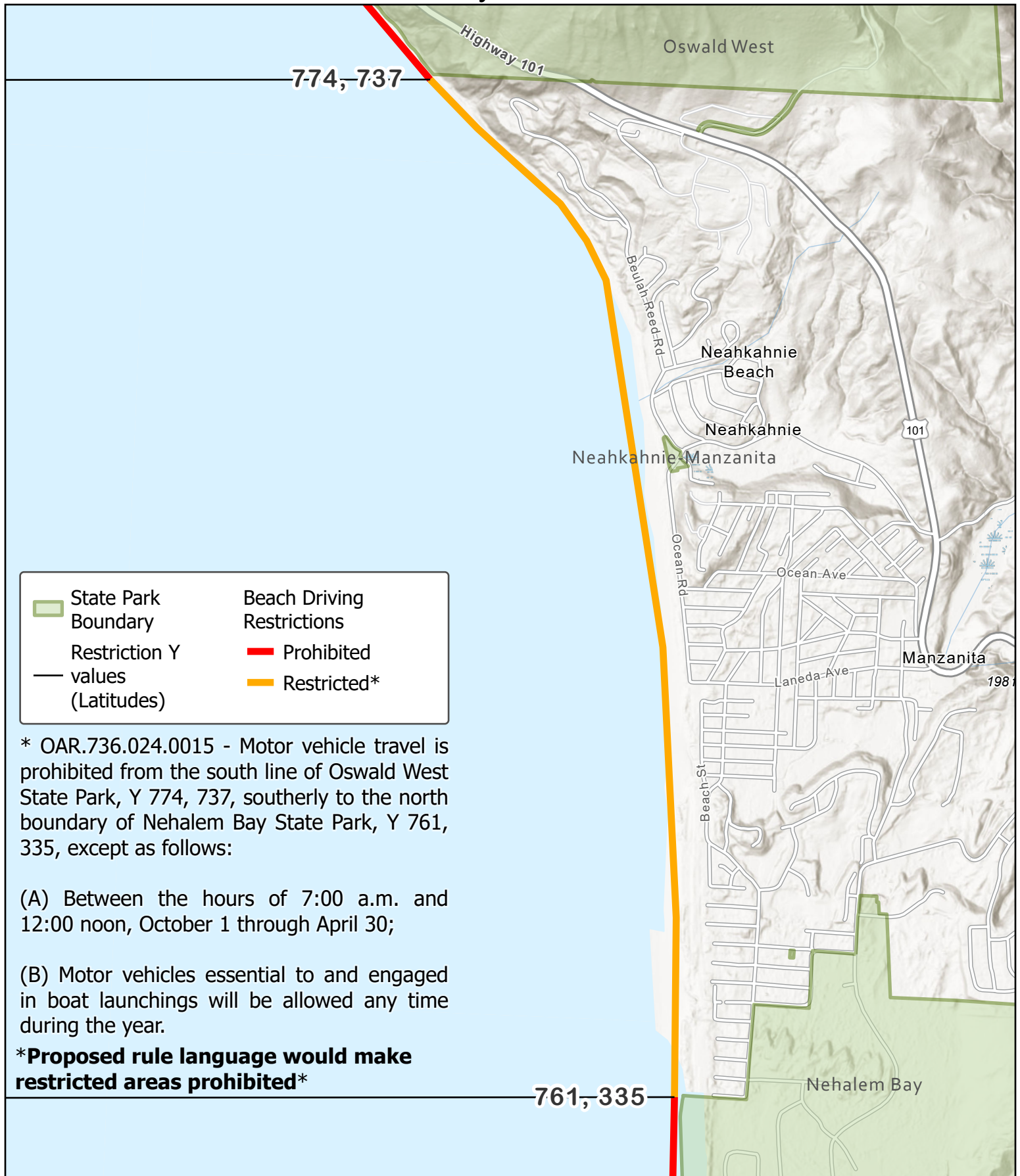
Response to Comments and Staff Recommendation

In response to comments received, staff recommend continuing to allow boat launching along the ocean shore near Manzanita but add a permit requirement. This will allow for a gate to be placed to prevent additional vehicles on the ocean shore and through the permit process access for boat launching can be facilitated. Currently, permits for boat launching are required on Cannon Beach and administered by the City of Cannon Beach.

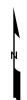
Wood gathering can be accommodated through the drive on beach permit process administered by OPRD. This will allow for wood gathering in some circumstances but would be more limited.

Ocean Shore Vehicle Restrictions: Oswald West to Nehalem Bay

Oregon Parks and Recreation Dept.
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C
Salem OR, 97301



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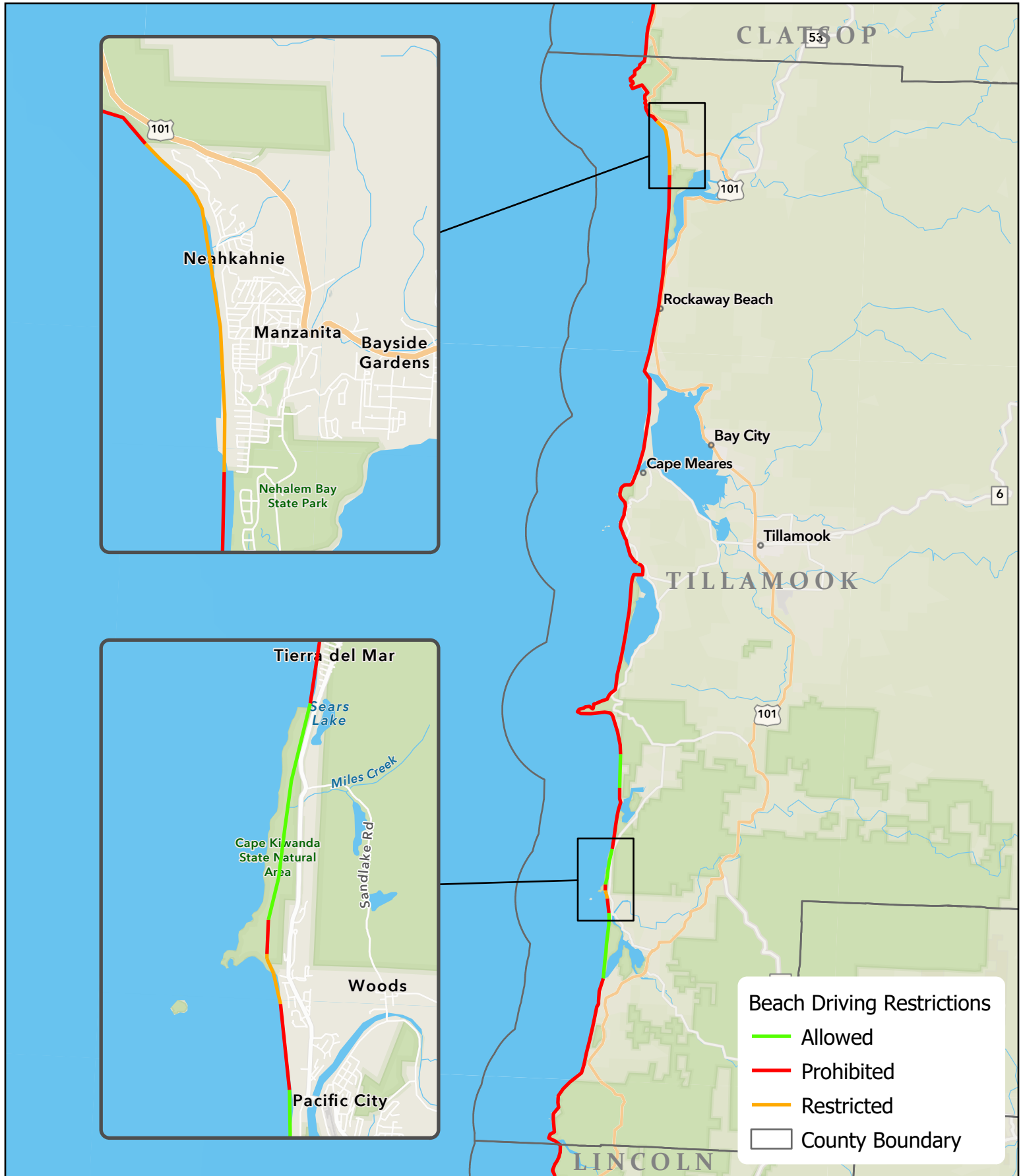
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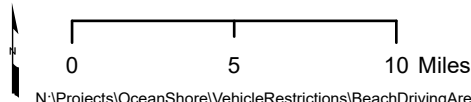
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Ocean Shore Vehicle Restrictions: Tillamook County

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