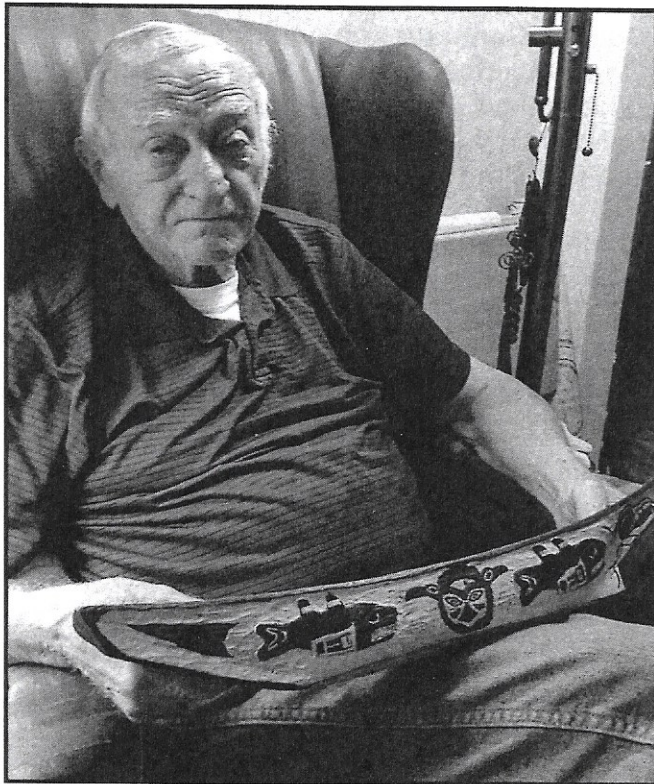


FOUNDING FATHER OF COASTAL PLANNING DIES AT 92

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Wilbur Ternyik 2017 (photo courtesy Kathy Bridges)

On April 2, 2018, at the age of 92, Wilbur Ternyik, one of Oregon's most influential citizens, died in Florence, Oregon.

Twelve years ago, on May 27, 2006, in Seaside, Oregon, a ceremony was held to honor Wilbur Ternyik. The event included the unveiling of a bronze statue of Wilbur commemorating his pivotal role in preserving the natural world (the statue is in the Florence Pioneer Museum).

At the ceremony Wilbur gave credit to many people -- some famous, some less famous -- who helped him on his journey. He then said, "Many of you know I love plants. What's the most important thing about plants? Their roots! Plants are a lot like people. When they've got good roots, they have a good chance of making it in life."

Nobody's roots grew deeper and stronger into the soil of Oregon than Wilbur Terynik's. Wilbur was a descendant of Chief Coboway, the Clatsop Indian Chief who hosted the Lewis and Clark Expedition during the winter of 1805/1806. His mother was a full-blooded member of the Clatsop Tribe. Throughout his life Wilbur proudly identified with his Native American heritage.

The signature accomplishment of Wilbur's life was the key role he played as the Chairman of the Oregon Coastal Conservation and Development Commission (OCC&DC). Wilbur, working closely with Governor Tom McCall, took the lead persuading his fellow coastal leaders to undertake "coastal planning." By all accounts, Terynik was the driving force behind that historic effort. Alas, today, too few Oregonians know that the groundbreaking work of the OCC&DC -- starting in 1970 -- set the stage to establish Oregon's statewide land use planning system (SB 100, enacted in 1973).



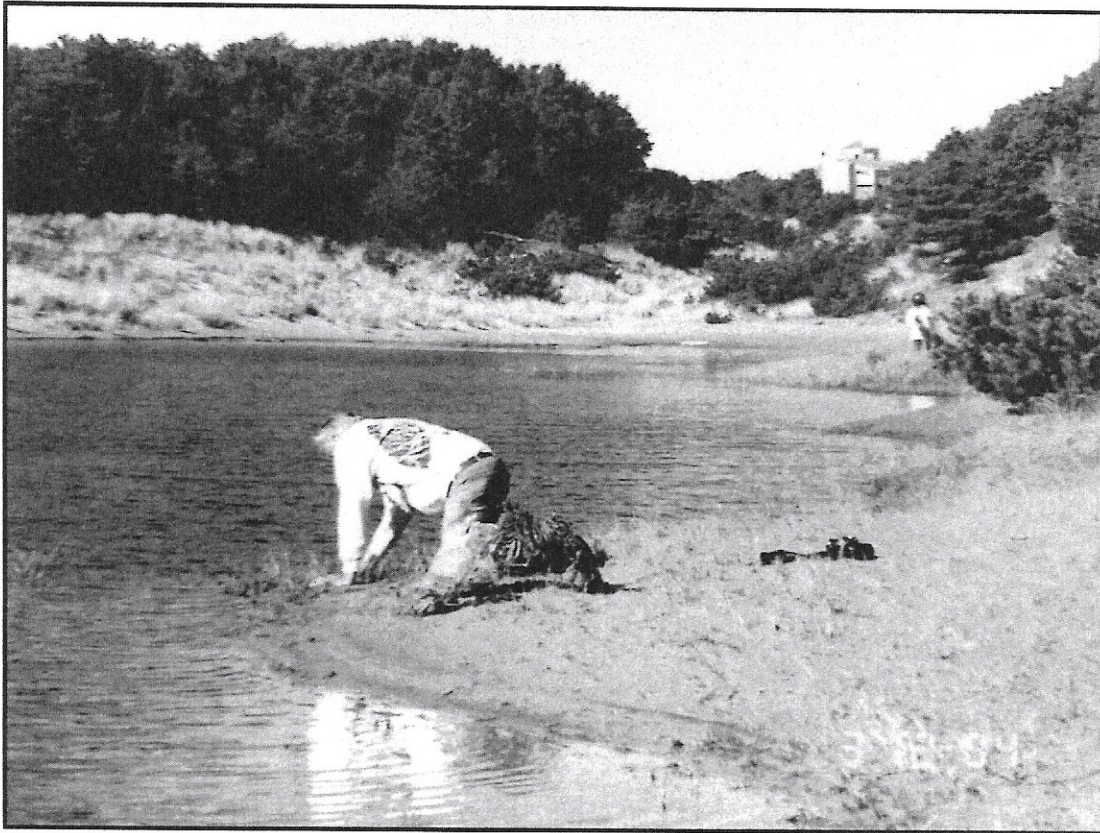
Wilbur Terynik, Tom McCall, Al Flagel, signing OCC&DC Legislation

The work of OCC&DC also had a national impact. Senator Mark Hatfield and Senator Bob Packwood could tell their colleagues that Oregonians were already making coastal management a reality. It wasn't a theory. As such, Oregon's successful experience birthing coastal planning played a vital

role in the passage of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) in 1972.

It is a cliché to observe that Wilbur Ternyik, as a World War 2 veteran, was a member of the Greatest Generation. But, it's true. As a young Marine, Wilbur experienced 40 days and 40 nights of hell at Okinawa. That experience strengthened and prepared Wilbur for the decades ahead.

Wilbur Ternyik's legacy, properly understood, should embolden all Oregonians, as we face our own sets of challenges, to recognize we have a grave responsibility, as members of this great democracy, to do our part. Wilbur, better than anybody, understood citizenship is not a spectator sport.



Wilbur Ternyik examining a coastal marsh (1994)