

January 2011

In this issue:

- **The Northwest Straits Initiative: Where We Are Now**
- **Island County MRC Member Removes Creosote Logs from his Beach**
- **Member Spotlight: Al Bergstein, Jefferson MRC**
- **Island MRC Kicks off SoundIQ - a Data Sharing Project**
- **Jerry Masters Appointed to Northwest Straits Commission**
- **Foundation Completes Derelict Fishing Net Removal Project**
- **Funding Opportunities**
- **Articles and Events**
- **And more...**

News

THE NORTHWEST STRAITS INITIATIVE: WHERE WE ARE NOW



Ginny Broadhurst, Director

We got very close but our reauthorization bill did not make it to a vote to pass in Congress in 2010. I greatly appreciate the help of our Congressional delegation and their staff during this process. I especially thank Congressman Rick Larsen for sponsoring the bill in the House, where it passed Committee and full House vote. Senators Murray and Cantwell were tremendously helpful, sponsoring it in the Senate and working it through committee. I will continue to work with our delegation for reauthorization in

the new Congress.

In the meantime, we are looking forward to continued excellent work by our seven Marine Resources Committees and on regional projects managed by the Commission. We will do more public outreach on ocean acidification to better understand this pressing issue. We will continue to grow our Forage Fish Program to better understand the role that these species fill in the region's marine food web. The Derelict Fishing Gear Project will continue as funding allows.

Many thanks to all who participate on our MRCs to conceive great projects, understand what it takes to get them done and then actually make things happen. It is because of you that we can exist at all.

ISLAND MRC MEMBER REMOVES CREOSOTE LOGS FROM HIS BEACH

Story and photos by Scott Chase, Shore Stewards Coordinator, Island County with editing by Peg

Urstad and Sasha Horst

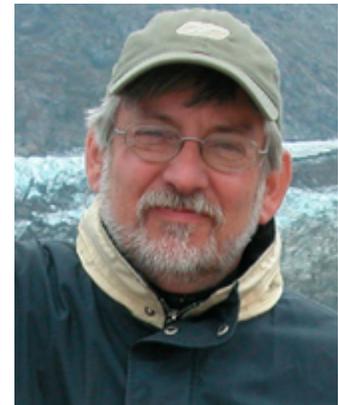
When Island MRC member Ken Urstad looked out onto his community beach near Greenbank Farm on Whidbey Island this summer, he was dismayed by all the creosote logs and treated lumber that had washed up on shore. For the past three years Ken has been in charge of helping rid Whidbey shorelines of creosote logs, working closely with WSU Beach Watcher volunteers, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Northwest Straits Commission. Ken helped in the removal of over 700 tons of this debris in the past few years, and understood that DNR was facing severe budget cuts and could probably not afford the crews and helicopters that they have used in the past. Yet he did not want to leave those highly-toxic logs on the beach, as he understood how many dangerous chemicals they contained, and how they affected the marine life around them. [Read more...](#)



MRC Happenings

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: AL BERGSTEIN, JEFFERSON MRC

Jefferson MRC member Al Bergstein's interest in environmental issues goes back to the 1970s when he volunteered as a publicity director for Seattle Audubon. His career path spanned computer sales - back when personal computing was a fledgling industry - into work on the technical side that included twelve years with Microsoft. But this self-described "geek" didn't limit himself to the technical world: he's one of those rare people who understands what's under the hood of computers while also having an artistic and social side.



Al was an actor and DJ in his early years, followed by photography, a decade of extensive sailing the Puget Sound region, filmmaking and music. A serious amateur musician ([check him out in the quartet at our 2010 MRC Conference!](#)), he enjoys playing Brazilian music and jazz, and serves on the board of [Centrum](#) in Port Townsend. He's an avid filmmaker, and has acquired the skills and equipment to create high quality projects, such as the [Voices of the Strait](#) production that documents life on the Strait of Juan de Fuca over the last 80 years.

Inspired in part by the Dalco Passage oil spill in 2005, Al looked around for ways to get involved with environmental issues again. He joined the board of [People For Puget Sound](#), where he continues to serve, and started an [environmental news web site](#) for the Olympic Peninsula. Al also participates on the board of the Puget Sound Partnership's Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network and in their Education, Communication and Outreach Network.

All this might be enough for some, but Al also joined the Jefferson MRC early last year. He appreciates the perspectives of fellow members and the opportunity to educate other audiences around important issues using tools like youtube.com, and to take on projects that wouldn't otherwise get done. And he appreciates the "intense discussions" that lead to better understanding and improved policies around marine issues. Most importantly, Al recognizes that everyone is participating because they care and want to do the right thing.

ISLAND MRC KICKS OFF SOUNDIQ – A DATA SHARING PROJECT

Island MRC has long been interested in finding a way to ensure that data collected through their projects is used to inform the work of decision-makers and others interested in the marine environment. Now they've found an ideal partner to help make it happen, the City of Bellingham. Based on the City's [award-winning CityIQ Online Map Viewer](#), Island MRC plans to launch their first version of "SoundIQ" by this June, and City GIS Program Manager Don Burdick will demonstrate the features of the CityIQ system at the January 21 Northwest Straits Commission meeting in Bellingham.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The San Juan Marine Resources Committee welcomes three new members: Gregg Dietzman, Rene Beliveau and Barbara Bentley. Thank you for joining the efforts of this dedicated group in San Juan County!

Northwest Straits Commission Happenings

JERRY MASTERS APPOINTED TO NORTHWEST STRAITS COMMISSION



The Northwest Straits Commission is pleased to welcome Jerry Masters as the newest member appointed by Governor Gregoire. Effective this month, Jerry will replace outgoing member Scott McCreery. Jerry was raised on a Skagit River delta dairy farm, attended La Conner High School and then Stanford University. He's now general manager for a building supply company and has represented economic interests on the Snohomish MRC for the past three years. He's served two terms as chair of the committee, where he enjoys working with people from many different backgrounds, organizations and agencies.

"I am so pleased to be appointed to this position and am looking forward to accomplishing great things on behalf of the marine environment as part of the Commission" responded Jerry. "When everybody contributes, there is always more than enough to get something done, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to contribute to this effort."

[Read more](#) about the Northwest Straits Commission's newest member.

Foundation Happenings

FOUNDATION COMPLETES STIMULUS-FUNDED DERELICT FISHING NET REMOVAL PROJECT



The Foundation completed its stimulus-funded derelict fishing net removal project in December, completing the last of the surveys on New Year's Eve. A total of 783.5 derelict fishing net removal days and 81.5 survey days were accomplished over the eighteen month project period by our four removal and survey vessels. The *R/V Surveyor* crew removed 342 nets over 141 work days, and conducted most of our surveys; the *F/V Twila Dawn* crew removed 433 nets over 155 days; the *F/V Tenacious* crew removed 603 nets over 172 days; the *F/V BetSea* crew removed a whopping 1,139 nets over 311 days. A total of 2,493 nets were removed. More than 140 entangled derelict pots were also removed.

Over 232 acres of critical marine habitat was restored by removing these nets. In them were more than 139,000 animals, including 12 mammals, 153 birds, 756 fish, and 138,444 invertebrates. Using a catch rate model developed by researchers at the University of California-Davis using our data, we can estimate that these nets were entangling more than 1.5 million animals every year, or 4,149 animals daily. The unseen death and destruction caused by these nets is now eliminated forever. [Click here to read the press release.](#)

Photo: Diver Kenny Woodside hauls a derelict net aboard the BetSea

2010 APPEAL RAISES \$12,325!

The Northwest Straits Foundation launched its first ever general appeal in December 2010, to kick off the Campaign for Matching Funds for the Derelict Gear Removal Project. Thanks to the generosity of many individual supporters we exceeded our goal of \$10,000. Special thanks to the Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation for its generous campaign kick-off grant, and to the Puget Sound Anglers regional and state groups for their significant contributions.

If you haven't donated yet it's not too late to demonstrate your support for the project! The

Foundation will actively solicit funds for derelict gear removal from individuals, businesses and philanthropic foundations through 2011, in order to fulfill requirements of private matching funds for federal grants. Donations can be made online at www.derelectgear.org or by mail. Together we can finish the job of ridding Puget Sound of this harmful debris, preventing unnecessary deaths of marine wildlife and allowing habitat recovery.

Donations can also be dedicated to specific Marine Resources Committee project budgets.

Information on the project is available at www.derelectgear.org.

Bulletin Board

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR TRIBAL PROJECTS

The Northwest Straits Commission has issued a request for proposals to support tribally-sponsored marine restoration projects in the Northwest Straits region that align with our benchmarks. [More information](#) and [application form available](#).

WASHINGTON SEA GRANT 2011 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Washington Sea Grant (WSG) requests proposals for one- to two-year research projects from investigators at academic and research institutions throughout the state of Washington.

Approximately \$2.4 million will be available over the next funding cycle (February 1, 2012 - January 31, 2014) to support an estimated 10-15 projects that are selected on an open, competitive, peer-reviewed basis. Preliminary proposals are due at 5:00 p.m., March 7, 2011 and the full proposal deadline is 5:00 p.m., May 23, 2011. All investigators must use eSeaGrant, the WSG online proposal submission system. The full 2011 *Request for Proposals* document, and other funding opportunities, are available from the [WSG homepage](#).

2011-2013 MRC GRANTS

Full proposals for 2011-2013 grants to the Marine Resources Committees are due by March 28, 2011. Sasha Horst and Caroline Gibson have been meeting with each MRC to discuss upcoming projects and the closeout of existing grants. All project work for current grants must be done by June 30, 2011. The new grants are expected to begin on July 1, 2011 and run through June 30, 2013. For additional information on the request for proposals and project criteria, contact [Sasha Horst](#).

REFERENCE MATERIALS AVAILABLE ON THE NORTHWEST STRAITS WEBSITE

The new *Northwest Straits Initiative - Reference Materials* Web page is designed to introduce new members to the Northwest Straits Initiative and provide important background information about the organization. Throughout you'll see hyperlinked phrases that take you to detailed information. [Click](#)

[here to go to the reference webpage.](#)

BUFFER ZONES UPHELD IN COURT

Kitsap County's Critical Areas Ordinance has been upheld by the state Court of Appeals. The Ordinance includes a requirement for 100-foot buffers along rural shorelines and can be used for shorelines until a revised Shoreline Master Program is approved next year. [Read more...](#)

Articles and Events

ARTICLES

[Thousands of old fishing nets removed from Puget Sound](#) (Three Sheets Northwest)

[More nets removed from Puget Sound](#) (KUOW)

EVENTS

January 6 – March 10, 2011 - UW Bevan Series - *Ocean Acidification: Effects on Fisheries and Oceans*. 10 lectures, Thursdays through March 10, 2011. Free to the public. [Click here for more information.](#)

January 20, 2011 - *Seabird Ecology and the COASST Program* by Dr. Julia Parish, 7:00pm in Bellingham at the [RE Sources Sustainable Living Center](#).

January 21, 2011 – *Northwest Straits Commission Meeting*, [Civic Building](#) at 322. N. Commercial Ave, Bellingham.

January 22, 2011 - *Oil Spills and Wildlife of the Olympic Peninsula*, 6:30pm-8:30pm in Port Angeles. Please call 360-417-6254 to reserve a space or [click here for information.](#)

January 29, 2011 - *HAZWOPER Training/Refresher*, 8:00am - 4:00pm in Sequim, registration is required. [Click here for registration information.](#)

February 26, 2011 - *HAZWOPER Training/Refresher*, 8:00am - 4:00pm in Everett. Contact Andy Carlson, WDFW Oiled Wildlife Rescue Coordinator at 360-902-8125 or [click here for more information.](#)

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February 2011

In this issue:

- February Message from the Director
- MRC Project Highlights
- Forage Fish Needs Assessment Workshop
- In Memoriam: Jerry Larson
- Foundation Receives Funding for Olympia Oyster Resotation
- 15th Annual Sound Waters University
- MRC Membership Changes
- Library and Events

In the News

FEBRUARY MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Northwest Straits Commission celebrates 12 years of protecting and restoring the marine resources of the Northwest Straits region. In this time, we've proven that the "experiment" of empowering local residents to tackle tough local issues is an approach worth taking. As we put together our work plan for 2011, the funding outlook is highly uncertain. We have much work yet to do to ensure that our marine waters are healthy and resilient to future threats. We are a lean organization that leverages the energy and enthusiasm of committed volunteers to accomplish significant results – the perfect fit for lean economic times. As we bring together Commissioners for our annual budget session next week, we will be looking to identify new funding opportunities and means to keep moving forward.

MRC PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



December marked the end of the third quarter of the current MRC grant cycle, and in January the reporting on all that work came rolling in. The results are impressive, and include: installation of a plant-based stormwater filtration system, protection of eelgrass in Port Townsend Bay for the seventh boating season, the documented natural recruitment of native oysters planted in Fidalgo Bay, documentation of fish use in the Elwha nearshore prior to removal of the dams, contact with thousands of residents and visitors through outreach events and workshops, planting of native vegetation to improve salmon habitat, progress on marine stewardship areas, and much more.

More than 6,000 volunteer hours were contributed by MRC members and other community volunteers in support of MRC projects in the last six months. Current projects of the MRCs and their partners have leveraged over \$2 million in other funding. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to this amazing work!

Photo: Volunteers in Island County surveying for eelgrass

FORAGE FISH NEEDS ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP



In an effort to identify major information gaps and actions needed to protect forage fish, the Northwest Straits Commission and SeaDoc Society recently brought together 25 scientists and managers working in Washington state and British Columbia to catalyze conversation in support for a transboundary collaborative effort. Discussions focused on six species: Pacific herring, sand lance, surf smelt, eulachon, Northern anchovy and Longfin

smelt. Workshop participants were asked to identify actions that would help advance conservation and recovery of these six species in three categories: science, management/policy, and education/outreach. [A full summary of the workshop is now available online.](#)

IN MEMORIAM: JERRY LARSON

The Whatcom MRC lost a dear friend on January 27 with the passing of Gerald “Jerry” Larson. Jerry served as a member of the MRC for 10 years, completing his final term in 2010. He was a gentle yet strong advocate for clams, oysters, salmon, and any critter that kept community members visiting and respecting the beach. His geographic passion was centered in Birch Bay, but he fought for clean water and access to marine resources throughout Whatcom County.

Jerry initiated the MRC’s successful clam surveys, which have introduced hundreds of residents to their backyard bivalves. He volunteered as a water quality monitor and devised and implemented a plan to install “clam tents” in Whatcom County to nourish the native clam populations. I once asked a fellow party-goer who lived in Birch Bay if she knew Jerry. Her response said it all: “I think so. Is he the white-haired gentleman who I see walking the beach picking up litter?” It’s no surprise that she would know him as a selfless community member striving to keep the beach clean and healthy.



We shared Jerry with various organizations, including the Birch Bay Watershed Aquatic Resources Management Advisory Committee, the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, the Drayton Harbor Community Oyster Farm, and the Sons of Norway. Many people will miss Jerry’s smile, demeanor, leadership, and determination. Let’s continue to fight for a healthy environment in his honor. As he always said, “The reward for clean water is a safe and healthy shellfish harvest!” And he meant it, even though he secretly didn’t like to eat the oysters he very much loved to protect.

FOUNDATION RECEIVES FUNDING FOR OLYMPIA OYSTER RESTORATION



The Foundation has been awarded funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Shell Marine Program to implement a multi-faceted project aimed at restoring Olympia Oysters in North Puget Sound. The initial project team includes members of the Skagit and Jefferson MRCs, and staff with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Puget Sound Restoration Fund. The project will include genetic analysis and

monitoring of known oyster populations, surveys for unknown remnant populations, restoration-grade seed production and out-planting of seed.

This is a two-year project with lots of opportunities for volunteers to participate. Please contact Tracie Johannessen at johannessen@nwstraits.org if you are interested in helping out.

Photo: Brady Blake, WDFW, trains volunteers on how to survey Olympia oyster populations

15TH ANNUAL SOUND WATERS UNIVERSITY



The 15th annual Sound Waters 'one day university' was held in Langley on February 5 with several hundred people in attendance, including many MRC members. A great keynote presentation was delivered by Dr. Rick Keil, professor with the University of Washington's School of Oceanography and Fleming Fellow for Ocean Education. Keil, his students, and several volunteers have embarked on a unique way to study connections between people and Puget Sound by tracking the flow of benign, everyday compounds such as spices, coffee and chocolate from supermarket shelves through our stomachs out to the marine environment.

The event hummed with activity, with 60 classes offered on topics such as marbled murrelet biology and organic gardening; and human population growth, climate change, and earthquakes. Among other interesting facts shared by Caroline Gibson, who represented the

Commission: a modest oil spill can have disproportionately greater impacts on marine life than a major one if it happens in the wrong place at the wrong time; and the Seaglider, a deep-diving rocket-shaped glider that collects oceanographic data is first tested in Port Susan Bay before being launched for exploration in the open Pacific and around the world's oceans. Sound Waters is sponsored by the WSU Beach Watchers Program in partnership with Island County MRC and several other entities.

Photo: Caroline Gibson at Sound Waters with Dr. Fritz Stahr, UW, and the Seaglider robot

MRC Happenings

MRC MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

A belated farewell to longtime Island MRC member Hi Bronson, who completed his final term in December. Hi and his wife Pat will be greatly missed at the table. Island MRC welcomes Sabrina Haswell and Chris Jerome as new members in 2011!

Snohomish MRC welcomed two new members in January: Brandon Jensen and former Commission staff member Simon Geerlofs.

Whatcom MRC welcomes a new temporary staff member, Sara Brooke Benjamin, who will fill in for Melissa Roberts while she is out on maternity leave with her new baby girl. Congratulations,

Melissa! We also wish a fond farewell to Scarlet Tang, Whatcom MRC staff. Thanks for all your great work!

Bulletin Board

USFWS NATIONAL COASTAL WETLAND CONSERVATION GRANTS REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS ANNOUNCED

The 2012 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program request for applications has released. [Click here for more information.](#)

Library and Events

NEW TO THE NORTHWEST STRAITS LIBRARY:

Clallam MRC - [2009/2010 Nearshore Monitoring of the Strait of Juan de Fuca](#) (3 MB)

Island MRC – [2010 Nearshore Report: The work of the Island County MRC](#) (4 MB)

Jefferson MRC - [Voluntary No-Anchor Eelgrass Protection Zone Summary Report, Port Townsend Bay, Washington](#) (3 MB)

San Juan MRC - [Current and Historic Coastal Geomorphic \(Feeder Bluff\) Mapping of San Juan County, Washington](#) (190 MB)

Skagit MRC - [2009/2010 Spartina Survey and Removal Final Report](#) (535 KB)

Snohomish MRC – [Port Susan Citizen Science Project - Inventory of Citizen Science Projects in Port Susan](#) (101 KB)

Whatcom MRC – [Rockfish Technical Report - A Comparison of Two Methods, Paired-Diver Surveys and Remotely Operated Vehicle Surveys, for Determining Rockfish Abundance](#) (317 KB)

EVENTS

February 19, 2011 – Annual meeting of the Port Townsend Marine Science Center, hosted by Director Anne Murphy, Member of the Jefferson MRC. Invited guest speaker Dr. Rick Jahnke will present "*The Global Ocean Links to Climate Change, Geoengineering and Pogo*". 4 pm at the Port Townsend Yacht Club.

February 26, 2011 - HAZWOPER Training/Refresher, 8:00am - 4:00pm, Everett. Contact Andy Carlson, WDFW Oiled Wildlife Rescue Coordinator at 360-902-8125 or [click here for more](#)

[information.](#)

March 22 - May 6, 2011 - Snohomish County Beach Watcher training. Tuesdays and Fridays 9:00am - 4:00pm in Marysville. Applications are required, contact Chrys Bertolotto at 425-357-6020 or Chrys@wsu.edu. [Read more...](#)

March 24, 2011 – *Secrets of the Sound*, 10:00pm on KIRO TV Channel 7.

April 2, 2011 – *Secrets of the Sound*, 10:00pm on KIRO TV Channel 7.

October 25-27, 2011 - 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference - *Many Voices, One Sea*, Vancouver, British Columbia. [Click here for more information.](#)

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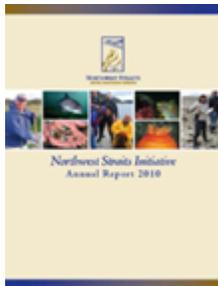
March 2011

In this issue:

- Northwest Straits Initiative 2010 Annual Report
- Secrets in the Sound
- Transboundary Derelict Gear Removal Project
- Annual Retreat Brings Commissioners Together
- San Juan MRC – 7th Annual Marine Managers' Workshop
- Jefferson MRC – Maynard Beach Restoration Project
- In Memoriam: Steve Lewis, Jefferson MRC
- People For Puget Sound Appoints New Executive Director
- Library and Events

In the News

NORTHWEST STRAITS INITIATIVE 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Hot off the press! **The Northwest Straits Initiative's 2010 Annual Report** is now available. We enjoyed an incredibly productive year in 2010 and we're excited about future projects. Highlights include the completion of our large derelict fishing net removal project, which brought us very close to our goal of removing all the derelict fishing nets (legacy nets) from Puget Sound by 2012. The Commission also expanded its work on forage fish in the region in 2010.

Every Marine Resources Committee is working on a variety of important projects that continue to create a healthier marine environment for all of us – more than 55 projects altogether. Those projects are also described in this report. [Read it online](#) or request a printed copy from [Connie Price](#).

SECRETS IN THE SOUND

Mark your calendars for the upcoming release of Florian Graner's *Secrets in the Sound*, to be broadcast on KIRO 7 TV on March 24th and April 2nd at 10:00 pm. The film is an extraordinary view of local sea life, captured using noiseless and bubble-free rebreather technology. Copies of the film (Blu-Ray or DVD) can be purchased online, with a portion of proceeds benefiting the Northwest Straits Foundation. [Read more...](#)



TRANSBOUNDARY DERELICT GEAR REMOVAL PROJECT

The crew of the F/V Bet-Sea removed a derelict purse seine and 218 derelict crab pots from Canadian waters in February, in the first-ever transboundary derelict fishing gear removal project. The purse seine was removed from waters off of Pender Island, and had been derelict for more than 20 years. Removal crews worked at depths of 80-100 feet in high currents. Rockfish and other animals were found entangled in the net, indicating that long-term impacts on priority species may be significant.



The derelict crab pots were removed from Boundary Bay, just north of the international border. More than 900 pots were found during earlier surveys, but funding allowed for just four days of removal operations. Our crews set a new removal record of 53 pots per day because the derelict pots were so densely packed on the seafloor. More than 100 Dungeness and red rock crabs were found trapped in the pots.

The Foundation worked with funding from British Columbia's Ministry of the Environment and Parks Canada. Hopefully this project will help British Columbia jump start a derelict gear removal program by demonstrating that gear impacts in Canadian waters are comparable to those in Puget Sound. [Click here to see video of the net before it was removed.](#)

Photo: Diver Kenny Woodside preparing to dive and onboard biologist Jeff June standing by during derelict crab pot removal operations at Boundary Bay, British Columbia.

Northwest Straits Commission Highlights

ANNUAL RETREAT BRINGS COMMISSIONERS TOGETHER

A testament to the dedication of its members, the Northwest Straits Commission held its annual planning retreat in Skagit County on February 24-25, at the peak of a major winter storm convergence in the region. Under a blanket of snow, the group discussed work for 2011 and beyond, noting that the Northwest Straits Initiative's ability to achieve results and leverage funding

is particularly important during these difficult economic times. Commissioners are more committed than ever to supporting the great local efforts to protect and restore marine resources.

MRC Happenings

SAN JUAN MRC – 7TH ANNUAL MARINE MANAGERS’ WORKSHOP

Mary Knackstedt

The San Juan Marine Resources Committee held its 7th annual Marine Managers’ Workshop on February 28 and March 1 at the University of Washington Friday Harbor Labs. Representatives from more than fifty federal, state, and local organizations from the US and Canada met to share information about their work in the San Juans and Gulf Islands. Presentations and discussion focused on oil spill preparedness and response, new programs to manage growth impacts in the San Juans and Gulf Islands, research on threats to southern resident killer whales, and an assessment of juvenile salmon use of nearshore habitat in the San Juan Islands. Planning ahead, the 2012 workshop will provide a more in-depth session on transboundary issues related to oil spills. The 2013 workshop will showcase programs, resources and approaches for managing growth in island communities.

JEFFERSON MRC – MAYNARD BEACH PROJECT

Gabrielle LaRoche

Jefferson MRC is expanding its work in nearshore and drift cell restoration to include Maynard Beach, at the head of Discovery Bay adjacent to the MRC’s Olympia oyster study site. The property extends to the estuary of Snow Creek. Salmon and Snow Creek enter the head of Discovery Bay within a half mile of one another and form the estuary complex that transitions to the bay at the project site.



The project area has been significantly impacted by human activities over the past 130 years, including the installation of a railroad line, now abandoned, that alters tidal hydrology and sediment transport processes in this part of Discovery Bay. The MRC is partnering with North Olympic Salmon Coalition to remove armoring along the old railroad grade, restoring the entrance to a small lagoon by removing a creosote trestle bridge and creating a pocket estuary by replacing a culvert with a larger inlet and bridge.

In Memoriam: Steve Lewis

JEFFERSON MRC LOSES A MEMBER AND A VOLUNTEER EXTRAORDINAIRE



We regret to announce the loss of Jefferson MRC member Steve Lewis, who passed away on February 11. Steve will be fondly remembered as an avid boater and member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, who sang sea shanties and told tall tales while skippering his boat through several seasons of volunteer work on various projects in the community. He was a member of the Port Townsend Yacht Club, and held a bachelor's degree in biology from Harvard College. Following six years' work in the Oceanography Department at the University of Washington, Steve taught sailing and powerboat skills, navigation and piloting to the general public for nearly three decades.

In seeking appointment to the MRC, Steve said: "I can well-represent recreational boating interests, with some understanding of the biology and physical complexity of our impact on the marine environment." What he didn't say is that he would loan his boat, the Coaster, for eelgrass marker buoy retrieval and installation, tirelessly volunteer his time and skills for annual rigging of the buoy tackle, and cheerfully staff the MRC's booth at the annual Wooden Boat Festival. Just two weeks before his death, Steve hosted a get together of MRC Eelgrass Committee members at his shop, to teach splicing, pass on his rigging skills and knowledge, and share a few songs. Steve will be sorely missed.

Bulletin Board

PEOPLE FOR PUGET SOUND APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the entire Northwest Straits Initiative, we extend a warm welcome to [Tom Bancroft](#), the new executive director of People For Puget Sound. Tom will take the helm in April, as our beloved Northwest Straits Commissioner Kathy Fletcher retires from the position she's held since founding the organization in 1991. Tom is relocating from the Washington, DC area, where he most recently served as chief scientist and vice president of the National Audubon Society. Welcome, Tom, we look forward to working with you!

PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP RELEASES TARGETED AWARENESS GRANT SOLICITATION

The Puget Sound Partnership's *Targeted Awareness* grant is available to member organizations within the 12 local ECO Networks around Puget Sound. There are \$200,000 estimated funds available for 5 to 15 projects that are 6-24 months in length. [Click here](#) for the grant guidelines and solicitation or contact [Debbie Ruggles](#) at (360)464-1224.

Library and Events

NEW TO THE LIBRARY: MRC ANNUAL REPORTS

Click on the following links to see 2010 MRC Annual Reports:

[Clallam MRC](#)

[Island MRC](#)

[Jefferson MRC](#)

[San Juan MRC](#)

[Skagit MRC](#)

[Snohomish MRC](#)

[Whatcom MRC](#)

EVENTS

March 22 - May 6, 2011 - Snohomish County Beach Watcher training. Tuesdays and Fridays 9:00am - 4:00pm in Marysville. Applications are required, contact Chrys Bertolotto at 425-357-6020 or Chrys@wsu.edu. [Read more...](#)

March 24, 2011 – [Secrets in the Sound](#), 10:00pm on KIRO TV Channel 7.

March 25, 2011 - Northwest Straits Commission meeting - 10:30am-3:00pm, [Pacific Rim Institute](#), Coupeville

April 2, 2011 – [Secrets in the Sound](#), 10:00pm on KIRO TV Channel 7.

April 6, 2011 - *New Day for Puget Sound*, Magnuson Sound Legacy Award luncheon - 12:00 pm [RSVP](#)

April 8, 2011 - *Time to Act*, Adapting to Climate Change in Whatcom County from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm. Free, registration required to ensure space. [Click here to register](#). [Agenda](#) (pdf)

October 25-27, 2011 - 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference - *Many Voices, One Sea*, Vancouver, British Columbia. [Click here for more information](#).

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April 2011

In this issue:

- **Fifth International Marine Debris Conference**
- **People For Puget Sound's New Day for Puget Sound Luncheon**
- **Spring Fundraiser: Derelict Gear T-shirt Sale**
- **Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area Workshop**
- **Snohomish Oil Spill Preparedness & Response Project**
- **Tribal Projects Funded**
- **\$4.6 Million Derelict Fishing Net Removal Project Complete**
- **Volunteer Training on Marine Monitoring Techniques**

In the News

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL MARINE DEBRIS CONFERENCE



The Northwest Straits Initiative's derelict fishing gear removal program was well represented at the recent International Marine Debris Conference in Honolulu. Presentations on the impacts of derelict fishing nets to marine species and habitats, new methods to detect derelict fishing gear and lessons learned from our program were given by Tom Good of [NOAA](#), Kyle Antonelis of Natural Resources Consultants, and Ginny Broadhurst of the Northwest Straits Commission. Organized by NOAA and the United Nations Environment Programme, the conference was truly international in scope, with 38 countries represented sharing information about marine debris issues and solutions. It was a great experience. Additional

information is at www.5IMDC.org

PEOPLE FOR PUGET SOUND'S NEW DAY FOR PUGET SOUND LUNCHEON

Ginny Broadhurst and Caroline Gibson were among the 350 supporters, volunteers, and project partners who attended People For Puget Sound's spring luncheon on April 6. Our own beloved Terry Williams joined Tacoma-based environmentalist Helen Engle and the Seattle Aquarium as winners of the 2011 Warren G. Magnuson Sound Legacy Award. A special Puget Sound Hero award was also given this year, honoring the extraordinary team of people who succeeded in protecting the marine life and shorelines of Maury Island from a massive gravel extraction and shipping operation.



From Kathy Fletcher's buoyant introduction of Tom Bancroft - who will soon take the helm of People For Puget Sound - to guest speaker Dr. Dee Boersma, great conversations and delicious food, this was truly a superb event. Big congratulations Terry, Kathy, and Tom!

SPRING FUNDRAISER: DERELICT GEAR T-SHIRT SALE

Support the Derelict Gear Removal project by purchasing a T-shirt with Ray Troll's eye-catching design. By wearing a shirt you'll be helping to build awareness of the problem and the solution. Place your order early for the best selection of styles and sizes. Also available are Northwest Straits Kleen Kanteen water bottles, hats and travel mugs. Order forms, apparel specifications, and photos can be found on our [web site](#) from April 1 – June 15, and will be available at our April 29 meeting at Padilla Bay Reserve. All proceeds benefit the Northwest Straits Foundation.

PORT SUSAN MARINE STEWARDSHIP AREA WORKSHOP



On March 30-31, a workshop of 40 invited experts was held to develop strategies around the protection of seven conservation targets (including shorebirds, Chinook salmon, and forage fish) in Port Susan. This facilitated event was significant step toward the creation of a Marine Stewardship Area encompassing the bay and surrounding waters. The Snohomish and Island MRCs, Northwest Straits Commission,

Tulalip and Stillaguamish Tribes, and The Nature Conservancy are partners in planning ecosystem protection and recovery in this beautiful and biologically-rich area. Congratulations and thank you to everyone who coordinated and participated in the workshop. For more information please contact Megan Massaua at massam@uw.edu.

Northwest Commission Highlights

SNOHOMISH OIL SPILL PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE PROJECT

Kathleen Herrmann, staff for Snohomish MRC, and Andrea Kunz, [UW Program on the Environment](#), presented to the Commission on the recently-completed Snohomish County Oil Spill Preparedness and Response project. The goal of the project was to inform Snohomish County government about the threats and potential impacts of marine oil spills on social, environmental, and economic interests in the County, and to identify and develop prevention and preparedness options for reducing the risks and consequences of marine oil spills. Commissioners agreed that the information from this project would be valuable to other MRCs and county governments. For more information contact [Kathleen Herrmann](#). [Click here to see a copy of the presentation in PDF](#). [Click here to download the final report](#) (8mb).

TRIBAL PROJECTS FUNDED

In response to the Commission request for proposals, which closed March 1, project proposals were received from the Stillaguamish Tribe, Swinomish Tribe, and Lummi Nation. After gathering additional information from the applicants and ranking the proposals, the evaluation team recommended funding the Stillaguamish Tribe for ocean acidification monitoring in Port Susan Bay; and the Lummi Nation for two beach clean-ups that will involve tribal members and local schools.

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

\$4.6 MILLION DERELICT FISHING NET REMOVAL PROJECT COMPLETE

The final report for the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#) Derelict Fishing Net Removal Project was submitted to [NOAA](#) at the end of March. The report includes new maps depicting where species impacts were greatest around Puget Sound for different animal groups. Based on our surveys, approximately 953 derelict nets remain in shallow sub-tidal high-priority areas in Puget Sound, with an estimated removal cost of \$1.8 million. [Click here to see the report](#).



FOUNDATION RECEIVES NEW FUNDING FOR DERELICT FISHING GEAR REMOVAL

The Foundation was awarded funding for derelict fishing gear removal from the US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation ConocoPhillips Spirit of Conservation Migratory Bird Fund.

MRC Happenings

VOLUNTEER TRAINING ON MARINE MONITORING TECHNIQUES

In the chilly wet of early April, Skagit MRC sponsored its second year of training sessions for volunteers on marine monitoring techniques. In partnership with WWU Shannon Point Marine Lab and coordinated by Skagit MRC's Dr. Paul Dinnel, two groups of intrepid students spent the day on board the Research Vessel Zoea learning more about Puget Sound marine waters.

To find out more about the trip and learn about marine monitoring techniques - while staying warm and dry - [watch this short video](#).

WELCOME NEW MRC MEMBER

Clallam MRC welcomes new member Andrew Stevenson, recently appointed by the County Commissioners. Andrew lives west of Port Angeles on the marine shoreline and also participates in the County's Shoreline Advisory Committee. He is very interested in sediment transport, and brings extensive knowledge of landform processes to the MRC. While he is officially retired from the United States Geological Survey, where he worked as a coastal geologist, he's occasionally drawn back in for agency projects that fit his interests and expertise. Welcome, Andrew!

Bulletin Board

OIL SPILL BILL PASSES STATE LEGISLATURE

[House Bill 1186](#), sponsored by Rep. Christine Rolfes (Bainbridge Island) and Rep. Zack Hudgins (Tukwila), will strengthen requirements for stockpiled spill-response equipment, expand the state's drill response program and increase response capacities by training and equipping commercial fishermen. The amended bill passed by the Senate this month requires the Department of Ecology to update requirements on oil companies and other vessels to stockpile state-of-the-art spill response equipment. The bill addresses key deficiencies in the state's oil spill response program detailed by the state's Oil Spill Advisory Council.

2011 SALISH SEA SCIENCE PRIZE

The SeaDoc Society is requesting nominations for the 2011 Salish Sea Science Prize, given every two years to highlight the importance of science in providing a foundation for designing a healthy Salish Sea. The nomination deadline is June 15. [Click here](#) for more information.

BE PART OF A NEW STATEWIDE SHORELINE EDUCATION, OUTREACH AND STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY!

The Washington Department of Ecology, in collaboration with local, state and federal partners, is developing a strategy to raise public awareness and increase citizen engagement in restoring and

protecting Washington's shorelines. An early part of this process is to identify successful programs and learn where gaps exist. Please take a few minutes and complete this survey before May 6: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3F2YCDW>. The results will be shared in early June. If you would like more information please contact Cedar.Bouta@ecy.wa.gov or call 360-407-6406.

Articles and Events

RECENT ARTICLES

The Northern Light, March 24, 2011 – [Northwest Straits Initiative would remove derelict pots](#)

Vancouver Sun, March 18, 2011 - [Abandoned fishing gear wreaks havoc on marine life](#)

EVENTS

April 29, 2011 - Northwest Straits Commission meeting, 10 AM- 3 PM at the Padilla Bay Reserve, Mount Vernon.

May 4, 2011 - WSU Snohomish County Beach Watchers: *Our Puget Sound In-Depth: Dungeness Crabs: The State of Harvest and Lost Gear* at 7:00 PM at Mukilteo City Hall. Contact Chrys Bertolotto for more information (425) 357-6020 or Chrys@wsu.edu.

April 30, 2011 – June 18, 2011 - *Sound Voyage 2011: People For Puget Sound's 20th Anniversary*. Celebrations at ports of call throughout Puget Sound. Visit www.onepugetsound.org for more information on dates and locations.

June 4, 2011 - *SnoCo Together: Building our Local Community*, 10 AM – 3 PM, Day of Learning and Dialogue at Everett Community College.

September 4-8, 2011 - American Fisheries Society 141st Annual Meeting, Seattle. *New Frontiers in Fisheries Management and Ecology: Leading the Way in a Changing World*. [Read more...](#)

October 25-27, 2011 - 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference - *Many Voices, One Sea*, Vancouver, British Columbia. [Click here for more information](#).

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NORTHWEST STRAITS

marine conservation initiative



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May 2010

In this issue:

- **Update: Deep Water Sand Lance Project**
- **Reauthorization Bill Introduced in Congress**
- **Port Gardner Derelict Crab Pot Removal**
- **Beach Seining at Chuckanut Marsh**
- **Commission Election of Officers**
- **Olympia Oyster Identification Training**
- **New Web Sites Launched**
- **Spring Street Rain Garden**
- **And more...**

In the News

UPDATE: DEEP WATER SAND LANCE PROJECT



On a recent calm and misty day, Caroline Gibson joined scientists Tina Wyllie-Echeverria, Dan Penttila and Anja Kleintech aboard the Friday Harbor Labs R/V Centennial, for their 9th monthly trip to sample Pacific sand lance in deep water. Using a bottom grab, the group collected a dozen sediment samples from previously mapped sand wave fields off San Juan and Lopez Islands. The contents were emptied into large tubs where they sorted through the sand, gravel and shell hash to find any living creatures. As

predicted, far fewer sand lance were caught this day than during winter months - the fish have moved up from the bottom into the water column to feed.

Sand lance spawn along our beaches, form huge schools that fuel resident and migratory wildlife, and burrow lightning-fast into the seabed. The deep water project, led by Dr. Wyllie-Echeverria and Dr. Gary Greene, with funding from the Northwest Straits Commission, is garnering attention from scientists in other regions. To date, the bulk of data on sand lance in Puget Sound - including surveys by MRCs – hails from studies in the intertidal and shallow subtidal zones. Specimens collected from 100'- 300' depths are undergoing genetic and other analyses, including friction and adhesion of the fishes' skin as related to their ability to burrow in coarse sediments. The project will be presented to the Commission and at the [141st Annual American Fisheries Society](#) meeting this September.

REAUTHORIZATION BILL INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

U.S. Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Rick Larsen teamed up to introduce legislation in the Senate and House of Representatives that reauthorizes and expands the Northwest Straits Initiative.

“The Northwest Straits Initiative is a highly successful grassroots conservation effort that has consistently produced excellent work to protect and restore the natural marine habitat of the Northwest Straits,” said Senator Murray. [Read more...](#)

PORT GARDNER DERELICT CRAB POT REMOVAL

After weeks of weather delays, crab pots were removed from the Port Gardner area in early May. Kathleen Herrmann and Jared Bond, staff and chair of the Snohomish MRC, and Ginny Broadhurst, Northwest Straits Commission director, accompanied a team from the Everett Herald out with the crew of the R/V Surveyor II to see the work. The crew targeted a high-density area of derelict crab pots and removed 143 of them for this project. Ninety-nine large, healthy crabs were found in the pots and released along with some dead ones that were returned to the water.



BEACH SEINING AT CHUCKANUT MARSH



Whatcom MRC members and other volunteers gathered early on a rainy spring morning to do some beach seining and netting of young fish at Chuckanut Bay, where a culvert was replaced with a lovely bridge to improve access for fish to the marsh.

Beach seining on May 5 found: 6 Chinook, 245 chum and 14 sculpins. In the adjacent salt marsh 62 coho and 62 sticklebacks were caught by dip net. Chris Fairbanks of the MRC said that monitoring before and after this culvert removal has shown a big increase in use of the

marsh by Chinook, coho and stickleback. More complete information will be available in the MRC's final project report due next month.

Northwest Commission Highlights

NORTHWEST STRAITS COMMISSION MEETING: MRC PROJECTS

The April 29 meeting of the Commission was dedicated to project presentations by the seven MRCs. Each was given an opportunity to present one or two projects proposed for the upcoming two-year grant cycle. [Click here to see the meeting minutes with a summary and links to presentations.](#)

COMMISSION ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In April, Jerry Masters, Governor's appointee, was elected to serve as chair of the Northwest Straits Commission. Lenny Corin, Island MRC representative, was re-elected as vice chair. We know that these thoughtful, inspiring, and tremendously knowledgeable individuals will provide excellent leadership and direction over the coming year.

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

FOUNDATION RECEIVES FUNDING

The Northwest Straits Foundation received \$13,000 from the Sea World Busch Gardens Conservation Fund and \$15,000 from the Department of Natural Resources Restoration Program to remove derelict fishing nets from Puget Sound. Removals will target high priority areas in North Puget Sound.

The Foundation also received \$86,000 from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to remove derelict crab pots from Puget Sound. This funding is made possible through fishing license crab endorsement fees. Removals will focus on areas where high rates of lost crab pots are associated with recreational crab fishing.

OLYMPIA OYSTER IDENTIFICATION TRAINING

Olympia oysters perform important ecological functions in local marine waters, including serving as a filter to improve water quality and providing habitat for local invertebrate populations. The first steps to rebuilding native oyster habitat are to find remnant populations and identify the right habitat conditions for them to thrive.

Free workshops are being offered this spring and summer to teach people how to find and identify Olympia oysters, assess habitat conditions and report these findings to the state in order to better understand the current distribution



of this important native species. Four dates and locations are scheduled, registration is required. [Click here for more information.](#)

MRC Happenings

NEW WEB SITES LAUNCHED

Congratulations to Jefferson and Snohomish MRCs on the recent launch of their completely redesigned web sites. The latest information and updates about the projects and people of each MRC is now online. Check them out at www.jeffersonmrc.org and www.snocomrc.org. Be sure to update your bookmarks and links with the new site locations.

Also new are pages on the Northwest Straits web site with useful [reference materials](#) about the Northwest Straits Initiative and the MRCs, as well as a page highlighting some of the regional [education and outreach](#) work supported by the Northwest Straits Initiative.

SPRING STREET RAIN GARDEN



Pollutants from cars and other aspects of daily life run downhill when they hit paved surfaces. In Friday Harbor on San Juan Island, much of the runoff ends up in the harbor. With grant funding, the San Juan MRC and the Town of Friday Harbor are installing a rain garden demonstration project along Spring Street. Its purpose is to act as a real-world experiment to see if larger application of this technology can filter the runoff from the mostly paved core of the town. An added benefit is that it will help make downtown Friday Harbor more attractive. This project

demonstrates how a community can experiment with a promising, affordable technology, and evaluate the results to inform future decisions. [More...](#)

FAREWELL TO MARY KNACKSTEDT

The San Juan MRC recently said a reluctant goodbye to Mary Knackstedt, who served as the lead staff for the MRC since 2007. Mary brought to the position a wealth of knowledge and experience with marine resource issues. Her new position with the Washington Department of Health Shellfish office will also focus on marine issues, with one goal being to reopen 10,000 acres of shellfish beds currently closed due to pollution. Our sincere thanks to Mary for her great work with the MRC, and best of luck for the future!

NEW MRC MEMBER

The Commission extends a warm welcome to Shelby Smith, newest member of the Jefferson MRC. Shelby is an active community member in Port Townsend, where she and her husband live aboard their boat. Having provided administrative support to the WSU Economic Development Council

/Team Jefferson, Shelby is now venturing on to Jefferson Land Trust, where she will serve as Development Director. We look forward to working with you, Shelby!

Bulletin Board

ROCKFISH CONSERVATION PLAN RELEASED

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife recently released their Puget Sound Rockfish Conservation Plan, designed to restore and maintain rockfish populations in the area. One of the key provisions of the plan is to work with the Northwest Straits Commission on reporting and removing derelict fishing gear. [Read more...](#)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS TO THE SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEM CONFERENCE

The abstract deadline is May 27 for presentations at this October 25-27 conference in Vancouver, BC. *Many Voices, One Sea* will bring together scientists, policymakers, marine educators and other interested parties from around the region. We strongly encourage MRCS to participate. [Click here for more information.](#)

Articles and Events

ARTICLES

[Journal of the San Juans – Raingarden: Real world experiment in pollution control](#)

[Everett Herald - Derelict crab pots cleaned up to make local waters safer](#)

EVENTS

Ongoing through June 18, 2011 - *Sound Voyage 2011: People For Puget Sound's 20th Anniversary*. Celebrations at ports of call throughout Puget Sound. Visit www.onepugetsound.org for more information on dates and locations.

May 20, 2011 – Northwest Straits Commission meeting, [Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe](#) Red Cedar Room in Sequim, Clallam County.

May 25, 2011 - Tour LID Research and Demonstration Site and Salmon Research Facility with Curtis Hinman, WSU Natural Resource Sciences, 10:00am-12:00pm, Puyallup Research Station, [RSVP](#) by May 13. [Click here](#) for more information.

May 31, 2011 – Olympia Oyster Identification Training, Bywater Bay Lagoon, Jefferson County 9:00am – 2:00pm. Registration required, please contact [Tracie Johannessen](#). [Click here for more information.](#)

June 2, 2011 – Olympia Oyster Identification Training, Semiahmoo Spit, Whatcom County 10:30am – 2:30pm. Registration required, please contact [Tracie Johannessen](#). [Click here for more information](#).

June 4, 2011 - *SnoCo Together: Building our Local Community*, 10:00am – 3:00pm, Day of Learning and Dialogue at Everett Community College.

June 14, 2011 – Olympia Oyster Identification Training, March's Point, Skagit County, 8:30am-12:30pm. Registration required, please contact [Tracie Johannessen](#). [Click here for more information](#).

June 28-29, 2011 – *Rockfish Recovery in the Salish Sea; Research and Management Priorities*. [Click here for more information](#). Registration required by June 13, please contact [Paul Hoobyar](#).

July 13, 2011 – Olympia Oyster Identification Training, Seal Rock Campground, Jefferson County, 8:30am – 11:30am. Registration required, please contact [Tracie Johannessen](#). [Click here for more information](#).

September 4-8, 2011 - *New Frontiers in Fisheries Management and Ecology: Leading the Way in a Changing World*, American Fisheries Society 141st Annual Meeting, Seattle. [Read more...](#)

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June 2011

In this issue:

- **The Northwest Straits Commission 2011 Budget Update**
- **Congressman Rick Larsen Joins Derelict Gear Removal Crew**
- **Welcome Gerry O’Keefe!**
- **Climate Change and Fisheries**
- **Shellfish Water Quality Sampling - A Day on the Water in Jefferson County**
- **Friday Harbor Rain Garden**
- **Commission Highlights: Elwha Dam Removal, Northwest Maritime Center, Coastal MRCs**
- **Training Workshops on Identifying Olympia Oysters**
- **And more...**

News

THE NWSC 2011 BUDGET: UPDATE FROM GINNY BROADHURST, NWSC DIRECTOR

This week we heard the news that we didn’t want to hear about our budget: there’s no federal funding coming to the Northwest Straits Commission for our upcoming fiscal year that starts in July. Hope for the best but prepare for the worst has been our strategy. We’ve got contingency plans in place that allow some unspent funds from 2010 to be used to maintain staffing at the Commission and our 7 MRCs. We also just got the good news that we will receive \$400,000 in EPA funding to help. We’re still at less than half of our usual \$1.6 million budget, but this allows us to keep base operations going and leverage other funds. Thanks to everyone for your show of support and your commitment to keep us moving forward. We have a lot of strong partners, including support from Senator Murray who provided the statement below. Many thanks, Ginny

Statement from Senator Patty Murray:

I was proud to work with Congressman Jack Metcalf in 1998 to help create the Northwest Straits Commission in order to make sure that community input and grassroots participation helped shape efforts to conserve our marine ecosystems in the Northwest Straits. And thirteen years later, we can say with certainty that it has been a tremendous success, it is a worthwhile investment—and that it needs to continue.

The work conducted by the Commission, not only with projects on the ground, but also through advocacy, has made an extraordinary positive impact throughout Washington state. So I was extremely disappointed when the Department of Commerce did not include funding for the Northwest Straits Commission in their fiscal year 2011 spend plan. I have worked for years, with Administrations of both political parties, to secure funding for this vital organization. Budgets are extraordinarily tough

in both Washingtons, but we owe it to our state and to our country to continue investing in projects that work.

While I am deeply disappointed about this funding shortfall, I would like to work with the Northwest Straits Commission, the Administration, the State of Washington and other leaders on marine policy in Washington state to find a path forward for the Northwest Straits Commission. It's time for us all to come together and redouble our efforts to make sure this great work continues into the future.

In 2004, an independent national evaluation panel led by Bill Ruckelshaus confirmed that the mission of the Northwest Straits Commission was worthwhile and encouraged continued support. And I will be working to bring together another panel of experts in Washington state to discuss options moving forward. Because I know that the work of the Northwest Straits Commission is important to our economic and environmental future in Washington state, and that by working together, I am certain we can find a successful path forward.

- *United States Senator Patty Murray*

More in the News

CONGRESSMAN RICK LARSEN JOINS DERELICT GEAR REMOVAL CREW



Congressman Rick Larsen boarded the F/V Bet Sea on June 9 to observe a derelict net removal operation at Alden Bank. Accompanying Larsen were Ginny Broadhurst, Director of the Northwest Straits Foundation and the Commission, KPLU reporter Bellamy Pailthorp, Jeff Callender of ConocoPhillips, and Don Waage of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The field trip demonstrated the importance of a \$100,000 grant to the Northwest Straits Foundation, awarded to remove 90 derelict gillnets from Whatcom County marine waters. This funding was awarded by the ConocoPhillips' SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program, a partnership between ConocoPhillips and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

More than 500 derelict gillnets remain in Whatcom County waters, entangling and killing thousands of marine animals and destroying underwater habitat. The Northwest Straits Foundation has removed over 3,900 derelict nets from Puget Sound, including hundreds from Whatcom County. [Read more...](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FISHERIES

On May 25-26, the University of [Washington Climate Impacts Group](#) and West Coast Sea Grant agencies held a climate change/fisheries workshop in Seattle, convening 60 invited scientists,

managers and practitioners. Caroline Gibson attended on behalf of the Northwest Straits Commission. Using a framework that is being tested elsewhere, including Australia, participants were charged with assessing the vulnerability of ecologically and economically important marine species to a changing climate. [Read more...](#)

WELCOME GERRY O'KEEFE!

On June 8, Governor Gregoire appointed [Gerry O'Keefe](#) to the Northwest Straits Commission. Gerry is the Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership, effective December 2010, having previously served as the agency's Deputy Director. We look forward to working with you, Gerry.



MRC Happenings

SHELLFISH WATER QUALITY SAMPLING - A DAY ON THE WATER IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson MRC, in cooperation with the state Department of Health, monitors water quality at stations along the shoreline of eastern Jefferson County, checking for fecal coliform as an indicator of pathogens that could harm humans. MRC member and filmmaker Al Bergstein recently accompanied MRC chair Michael Adams to create a short video. Watch it here: <http://vimeo.com/24452967>

FRIDAY HARBOR RAIN GARDEN



Last month we reported on a demonstration project along the main route through Friday Harbor on San Juan Island. The rain garden is now planted, creating a lovely space and capturing polluted runoff at the same time. Like any garden, it will take time and care for the plants to grow and fill in. Safety concerns are being addressed with a new handrail or safety barrier, and an interpretive sign will be added soon. The rain garden will also be monitored to accurately understand the water treatment that it does provide and whether, on a larger scale, this could be a

viable way to provide cleaner freshwater to Friday Harbor.

Northwest Commission Meeting Highlights

ELWHA RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE

Dean Butterworth of the National Park Service gave a presentation on the Elwha Restoration Project. The agency is working closely with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and other partners to restore the

Elwha River and its ecosystem, with removal of the Glines Canyon and the Elwha dams slated to begin in September 2011. These actions will benefit salmon and trout that have been physically blocked from historic spawning grounds. [Click here for the website with more information on the project.](#)

NORTHWEST MARITIME CENTER: BOATER EDUCATION AND THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Jake Beattie, Director of the Northwest Maritime Center, presented the organization's boater education programs, and a plan to support the marine trades industry in efforts to phase out copper-based bottom paints. One goal of the Northwest Maritime Center is to encourage more boaters to become reverent about the environment, based on the theory that "if people love it, they will protect it." [Click here for a copy of the presentation.](#)

NORTH PACIFIC COAST MRC

Rich Osborne gave an update on the North Pacific Coast MRC, one of four coastal MRCs created through a state program modeled after the Northwest Straits Initiative's MRCs. The four are: North Pacific Coast MRC (a partnership between Jefferson and Clallam counties); Grays Harbor MRC; Pacific County MRC; and Wahkiakum MRC. They have a newsletter, [web site](#) and are discussing the potential for creating an affiliated non-profit foundation to supplement funding.

[Click here to download full version of Commission meeting minutes.](#)

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON IDENTIFYING OLYMPIA OYSTERS

Seven participants attended the Olympia oyster training workshop held at Semiahmoo Spit on June 2, 2011. After an orientation on the habitat requirements, identification and extent of historic distribution in Puget Sound, participants conducted a beach survey in search of Olympia oysters. "The thrill of discovery still exists in the world!" said participant Tracie Johannessen after identifying her first Olympia oyster. Workshops offered this spring and summer also teach people how to report their findings to the State to provide more accurate information on current distribution of native oysters. One result will be a cadre of citizens who can conduct presence/absence surveys in specific North Sound embayments. [Read more...](#)



Bulletin Board

SAVE THE DATE!

The 13th Northwest Straits MRC Conference will be held on December 2-3, 2011, at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. This annual event is a unique and fun opportunity for MRC members and Commissioners to meet, share information and ideas, and learn about issues of common interest from invited experts. Planning has begun! As always, we intend to make the most of this gathering of extraordinary people. What would you most like to learn about, see, or do?! The Commission seeks your input in coming weeks -- please send thoughts and suggestions to Caroline at gibson@nwstraits.org.

FREE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Port Susan Bay Marine Stewardship Area Initiative: The Snohomish and Island County MRCs will co-sponsor two evening workshops for members of the public to learn about, and comment on, the ongoing efforts to protect Port Susan. Please join us on July 11, Kayak Point Park, 5:30-7:30 PM; or July 12, Camano Senior and Community Center, 5:30-7:30 PM. [Click here](#) for more information or contact Kathleen Herrmann, 425-388-6414, or Kathleen.herrmann@snoco.org

Articles and Events

ARTICLES

[The Northern Light – Program removes derelict gear from local waters](#)

EVENTS

July 13, 2011 – Olympia Oyster Identification Training, Seal Rock Campground, Jefferson County, 8:30am – 11:30am. Registration required, please contact [Tracie Johannessen](#). [Click here](#) for more information.

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NORTHWEST STRAITS marine conservation initiative



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July 2011

In this issue:

- National Ocean Policy Listening Session
- Reauthorization Bill Passes Senate Committee
- Thank You Kathy Fletcher
- Island County SoundIQ System Launched
- Skagit Funding Opportunity
- Farewell to MRC members
- Foundation Receives Funding from NOAA Marine Debris Program
- And more...

In the News

NATIONAL OCEAN POLICY LISTENING SESSION



Caroline Gibson, Jody Kennedy and Sybil Ackerman attending the Listening Session in Ocean Shores.

On June 27, Caroline Gibson attended the National Ocean Council 'listening session' in Ocean Shores. One of 12 National Ocean Council 'listening sessions' took place in Ocean Shores. Locally hosted by the Quinault Indian Nation and neighboring coastal tribes, the event drew more than 100 people from state and federal agencies, tribes, businesses and organizations to comment on draft plans for [ocean policy-related actions](#) over the next two years. Many remarked that

Washington state is leading some of the most progressive ocean policy efforts in the country, including recent legislation to better respond to oil spills.

Senator Kevin Ranker and Makah Tribal Chair Micah McCarty, who serve as federally-appointed advisors to the National Ocean Council, were among the invited experts who highlighted the Northwest Straits Commission as a model for ecosystem restoration and stewardship. Clallam County Commissioner Mike Doherty presented thoughtful public comment on the value of Northwest Straits and Coastal MRCs to their counties and communities; Terry Williams, Tulalip Tribes, stressed the need to include Puget Sound when carrying out national policy objectives. An impressive array of participants also included Representative Norm Dicks, Senators Hatfield and Hargrove, Eric Schwaab, John Stein and Will Stelle from NOAA, and Fawn Sharp, Quinault Indian Nation.

REAUTHORIZATION BILL PASSES SENATE COMMITTEE

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell helped secure committee approval for the Northwest Straits Initiative's reauthorization bill (S962). The legislation was recommended out of committee and now heads to the full Senate for consideration.

The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act, introduced by [Senator Patty Murray](#) in May and cosponsored by Senator Cantwell, builds upon 14 years of successful marine restoration and protection efforts by reauthorizing and expanding the Northwest Straits Commission. [Read more...](#)

THANK YOU KATHY FLETCHER



Commissioner Terry Williams presenting Kathy Fletcher with a blanket in honor of her departure.

Our June Commission meeting was the last one for Kathy Fletcher, as she retires from her work with [People For Puget Sound](#) and eases away from the array of organizational commitments made during her tenure.

Kathy Fletcher was one of the visionaries called upon to consider the creation of the Northwest Straits Initiative. She was one of the first Governor-appointed Commissioners and served three terms on the Northwest Straits Commission, chairing in 2004/05 and faithfully serving on the executive committee for 12 years. Kathy provides expertise and advice on everything from regional and national environmental issues, political happenings, education strategies and the workings of a non-profit organization.

“Kathy was a member and driving force of the blue-ribbon panel that designed the Northwest Straits Initiative. She helped to ensure that the Initiative was accountable and focused from the beginning. Kathy continuously guided the protection and restoration of the marine waters of the

Northwest Straits. Her leadership and contribution of countless hours is remarkable.” stated Tom Cowan, former Northwest Straits Commission Director.

Ginny Broadhurst says “I will miss Kathy most at our annual conference. She was always willing to moderate a discussion, be a speaker, greet special guests and do whatever was needed - including shucking oysters. Her advice, perspective and participation in our work have been invaluable. We are going to sorely miss her.”

MRC Happenings

ISLAND COUNTY SOUNDIQ SYSTEM LAUNCHED

Island County SoundIQ is a pilot project of the Island MRC, to collect, map and present nearshore data online, using an easy-to-access, Internet-based platform. The MRC collaborated with the City of Bellingham and GIS analyst Suzanne Shull, Padilla Bay NERR, modeling the system after the City's award-winning CityIQ map viewer.



Sound IQ presents nearshore data in "composite" maps that combine multiple data layers such as forage fish spawning beaches, eelgrass beds and shoreline hardening features. The system will be showcased at the 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference in a Data Fair on Web-based Ecosystem Tools.

View the new system at <http://www.iqmap.org/icSoundIQ>.

SKAGIT MRC FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Northwest Straits Foundation and the Skagit Marine Resources Committee are soliciting Letters of Intent for restoration projects or land acquisition that will benefit marine and/or nearshore habitats and species in Fidalgo and Padilla Bays, as part of the Skagit Restoration Initiative. Letters should be submitted to SkagitRFP@nwstraits.org by August 30, 2011. Selected applicants will be invited to submit a full project proposal or land acquisition plan. [Read more...](#)

FAREWELL TO MRC MEMBERS

Darcy McNamara



We regretfully say goodbye to Darcy McNamara, who for the past two years has served as Vice Chair and represented WSU Beach Watchers on the Jefferson MRC. Darcy has been a fabulous volunteer and environmental advocate, presenting information on marine plastics, stormwater and other issues at a variety of community events. An avid beachcomber, she is looking forward to focusing on her other calling as a woodcarver, knowing that with a studio in Port Townsend she'll not really be

leaving friends and colleagues behind. Good luck Darcy, we'll miss you!

Brandon Jensen



Snohomish MRC also has a member moving on. Biologist Brandon Jensen and his growing family recently moved inland, to Denver, Colorado, where he'll work for an ecological consulting firm. An active scuba diver, Brandon is sure to miss Puget Sound and the Pacific Northwest, but will return this September to co-host the Forage Fish Symposium at the AFS 2011 meeting in Seattle (see Events). Best of luck, Brandon!

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

FOUNDATION RECEIVES FUNDING FROM NOAA MARINE DEBRIS PROGRAM

The Foundation received a \$215,000 grant from the NOAA Marine Debris Program to remove derelict fishing nets from high priority areas of Puget Sound, and to educate recreational crabbers about ways to prevent loss of their crab pots and the importance of using escape cord.

Bulletin Board

WASHINGTON COASTAL ATLAS

The Department of Ecology has added new features to its [Washington Coastal Atlas](#), including public beach access information to marine shorelines, beach monitoring information, and an improved user interface. Coming soon are an upgraded interactive map, an improved shoreline photo viewer and access to FEMA flood maps.

Articles and Events

ARTICLES

[Group works to keep Port Susan scenic, healthy – The Herald Net](#)

EVENTS

July 25-31, 2011 - [Paddle to Swinomish 2011](#), Salish Sea Canoe Journey to the Swinomish Tribal Community. [Click here for landing dates and events.](#)

July 27, 2011 - [In Search of Poo, Spew, and Goo - Determining the diet of Southern Resident orcas using molecular genetics](#). 7:00 pm at the Bellingham Public Library Lecture room, 210 Central Ave., Bellingham. For more information, contact Nancy Olsen at neolsen@wavecable.com or Sue Blake, WSU Extension, 360-676-6736.



NORTHWEST STRAITS

marine conservation initiative



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August 2011

In this issue:

- **Senator Murray Calls Together Leaders for NWS Initiative**
- **2011 MRC Conference**
- **Forage Fish: Symposium and Sand Lance Project Update**
- **Beach Seining in Skagit County**
- **MRC Project Highlights**
- **MRC Updates**
- **Jefferson MRC's Soft Shore Stabilization Project**
- **And more...**

In the News

SENATOR MURRAY CALLS TOGETHER LEADERS FOR NWS INITIATIVE



Thank you to Senator Murray and those who participated in the meeting August 18 on the future of the Northwest Straits Initiative. We had a productive meeting with the Senator, Washington state Senator Kevin Ranker, local elected officials, and agency, tribal and Northwest Straits Commission leaders on the need to secure stable funding for the Northwest Straits Initiative. Bill Ruckelshaus reminded the group of the unanimous support for continuing the work of the Initiative from the national panel who conducted a form review a few years ago. Bill said, "Bear in mind the assets of the people who are engaged. If we allow that infrastructure to float away it would be a terrible tragedy."

Jerry Masters, NWSC Chair, praised Senator Murray for "her continuing commitment to stewardship of our environmental resources and her demonstrated leadership by directly engaging citizens for solutions at the local level. Senator Murray inspired others in the room to do the same within their respective agency, and tribal or local government."

We will continue to discuss possible funding solutions in the coming week with members of the group, and expect to reconvene by early October.

2011 MRC CONFERENCE

The 13th Annual Northwest Straits MRC Conference will be held December 2-3, 2011, at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. This year will feature guest speakers Milton Love and Florian Graner, as well as a silent auction. Topics will include ocean energy, small-scale restoration projects, climate change, forage fish and more! We're hoping to see all MRC members. [Click here for more information](#)

AFS FORAGE FISH SYMPOSIUM

The 141st annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society will be held September 4-8 in Seattle. Included in the program is the symposium [Global Conservation, Trophic Relationships and Ecology of Forage Fish in Marine Ecosystems](#), organized by Caroline Gibson and researchers with the U.S. Geological Survey and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. [Read more...](#)

MORE ON FORAGE FISH...

Many of the birds, seals, porpoises and other marine wildlife that we are seeing close to shore this month are gorging on schools of Pacific sand lance, and an exciting project to obtain new information about this important prey species is wrapping up. With funding from the Northwest Straits Commission, a team of researchers from across the region, led by geologist Dr. Gary Greene and biologist Dr. Tina Wyllie-Echeverria, have been studying sand lance in deep waters of the San Juan Archipelago. Extensive data are now being analyzed, and results will be presented to the Northwest Straits Commission in September and at upcoming conferences.

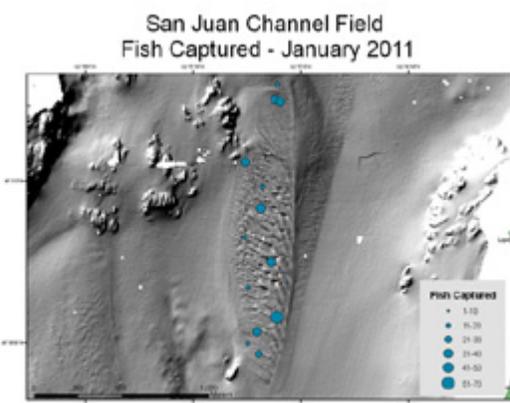


Photo: Sampling indicated a large number of sand lance in the bedform during winter months. (Click on photo to enlarge)

Over the past year, the project team conducted 12 research cruises, sampled 38 sand wave fields and other bedforms, analyzed 1,027 fish, and studied the burrowing behavior of sand lance in aquaria. Among innovative technologies used in this project were an acoustic multibeam echosounder and a

U.S. Geological Survey eyeball sediment camera, which produced high resolution images of seafloor sediments that harbor sand lance when they are not swimming.

MRC Happenings

BEACH SEINING IN SKAGIT COUNTY

More than 25 enthusiastic volunteers participated in a community beach seine survey at Ship Harbor, near the Anacortes ferry terminal, on August 8. The event, sponsored by Western Washington University/Shannon Point Marine Center, the Skagit MRC and Skagit County Beach Watchers, proved a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to spend an afternoon in the sunshine mucking about in the shallows. Hosted by MRC and Shannon Point faculty member Paul Dinnel, this survey is the first in a series to be conducted during the 2011-2013 field seasons.



Dr. Jude Apple and student interns from Shannon Point helped ensure that everyone had a turn measuring and counting the tiny starry flounder, English sole, surf smelt, sculpins, and salmon smolts (one Chinook and two coho) that were caught. Beach seining is fun, and it's also a useful means of documenting nearshore marine life during a given time of year. As with other surveys carried out by MRC members and project partners, all fish were released unharmed.

MRC PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The end of June marked the close of a two-year grant period for MRCs, and Commission staff have been reading all of the final reports on projects. We already know that MRCs do great work, but at the end of each grant cycle it's easy to be blown away by the accomplishments.

A few recent highlights:

- Clallam MRC has trained 134 volunteers in oil spill response.
- Island MRC has completed an aerial and videographic eelgrass survey in collaboration with a local pilot.
- Jefferson MRC produced eye-catching new outreach materials on soft shore armoring.
- San Juan MRC installed a new rain garden and conducted community outreach on the project.
- Skagit MRC documented an increase in native Olympia oysters at their restoration sites.
- Snohomish and Island MRCs advanced the Conservation Action Planning process for a Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area.
- Whatcom MRC documented hundreds of juvenile salmonids at Chuckanut Village Marsh, site of a restoration project completed last year.

Take a moment to explore some of the latest work posted on our [web site library](#), and thank you to the MRC volunteers and staff who make it all happen!

SNOHOMISH MRC'S EMILY WHITNEY HONORED BY WCC

Congratulations to Emily Whitney, selected by the Washington Conservation Corps as Individual Placement of the Quarter. Her sponsor, Kathleen Herrmann, had this to say about her incredible work: "Emily has been a great addition to the Snohomish County Marine Resources Program. Her initiative and enthusiasm have shined since her first day on the job. Emily has taken a leadership role in all her projects, and consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of her".

SAN JUAN MRC NEW LEAD STAFF

Jeff Hanson has served as the lead staff for San Juan MRC, following Mary Knackstedt's departure earlier this year. Jeff was able to jump in during a critical time, and we appreciate his dedication and ability to step up when needed. His familiarity with the MRC and its projects meant he could ease the transition and keep everything on track, as well as take on a redesign of the MRC web site that added to the already busy workload. This month, Jeff passes the reins to Janice Biletnikoff, a planner with the county Community Development and Planning Department. A sincere thank you to Jeff, and welcome Janice!

WELCOME NEW MRC MEMBERS

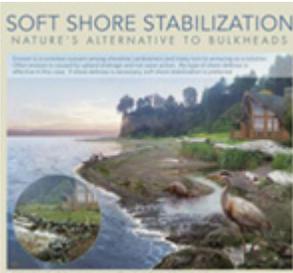
The Commission is pleased to welcome new members to two of the MRCs. In Snohomish County, the Stillaguamish Tribe has appointed Outreach Biologist Franchesca Perez to serve on the MRC. Also in Snohomish County, Shellfish Biologist Cathy Stanley has been appointed by the Tulalip Tribes.

In Whatcom County, the newly-created ex officio seat for the WSU Extension office will be filled by Sue Blake, Water Resource Educator for WSU Extension/Washington Sea Grant. Sue has been involved with the MRC for some time, and the ex officio seat is a great partnership for the MRC.

We look forward to working with all of you, and thank you for volunteering!

Northwest Commission Highlights

JEFFERSON MRC'S SOFT SHORE STABILIZATION PROJECT



At the July Commission meeting, Shannon Davis shared Jefferson MRC's new [poster](#) on soft shore stabilization. The poster, which includes beautiful images by local artists, is on display at the Port Townsend Watershed Stewardship Resource Center and will be part of Jefferson MRC's education and outreach booth, along with an eelgrass poster that will be ready soon. Contact [Sasha Horst](#) for more information about these materials if your MRC is doing outreach on shoreline armoring.

(Click on photo to enlarge)

Northwest Straits Foundation

BECOME A SPONSOR OF THE 2011 MRC CONFERENCE!

The Northwest Straits Foundation is currently soliciting agencies, business and individuals to sponsor the 2011 MRC conference. The conference provides an important opportunity for regional networking, training and project sharing for MRC and agency representatives and project partners. Sponsors will be listed in program handouts and display materials at the conference. If your business or agency is interested, please contact Tracie Johannessen at 360-756-5024 or johannessen@nwstraits.org to receive more information.

Articles and Events

ARTICLES

[WSU Whatcom County Shore Stewards Newsletter](#)

[Car wash kits offer cleaner option for environment – goskagit.com](#)

[Birch Bay resident recognized for lifelong efforts for marine health – The Northern Light](#)

EVENTS

August 26, 2011 – Northwest Straits Commission Meeting, [Pacific Rim Institute](#). 10:15am -3:00pm.

September 4-8, 2011 - American Fisheries Society 141st Annual Meeting, Seattle. *New Frontiers in Fisheries Management and Ecology: Leading the Way in a Changing World*. [Read more...](#)

September 13, 14, 15 (Tacoma) and October 12, 13 (Renton) – [Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda Workshops](#). Contact Kathleen Igros, kathleen.igros@psp.wa.gov by August 31 to register. [Click here for more information](#).

September 17-24, 2011 - *Whatcom Water Week*, Water themed events throughout Whatcom County. [Read recent press release](#). [Click here for more information](#).

September 18-23, 2011 - Kelp Workshop, Friday Harbor Labs, led by Dr. Tom Mumford and Dr. Bob Waaland. [Click here for registration information](#).

September 30, 2011 - *Whidbey Basin Science Symposium*, a workshop co-sponsored by NOAA Restoration Center and the Puget Sound Partnership. For information contact Tristan Peter-Contesse, Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator, Puget Sound Partnership at tristan.peter-contesse@psp.wa.gov or

360-464-2002.

October 25-27, 2011 - 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference - *Many Voices, One Sea*, Vancouver, British Columbia. [Click here for more information.](#)

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September 2011

In this issue:

- **Clallam MRC Ready for Elwha Dam Removals**
- **A Great Forage Fish Symposium!**
- **Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference**
- **Outreach by Jefferson MRC Reels in Boaters**
- **Special Guest at MRC Conference**
- **Visit to Island MRC Project Site**
- **Comments on Finfish Aquaculture**
- **Surveying for Invasive Spartina**
- **And more...**

In the News

CLALLAM MRC READY FOR ELWHA DAM REMOVALS

Last week, dam removal operations started on the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams on the Elwha River. Clallam MRC recognized some years ago that the removal of the two Elwha River dams would likely benefit wildlife in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Moreover, they knew that the removals would provide a unique opportunity to study the habitat effects in detail. They have been collecting information about eelgrass, macro-algae, sediments, and fish populations for at least five years in partnership with contractors, volunteers, the local community college, and a nonprofit organization.

The Clallam MRC gathered information near the Elwha River, where they suspect sediments released will begin to restore habitats, and from parts of the Strait not expected to receive sediment from the Elwha River. "With all our work in the marine nearshore, the MRC has been preparing for these dam removals for a long time", said Andrew Shogren, chair of the Clallam MRC. "We're interested to see how the habitat changes and finally put all this data we have collected to use. It's

an exciting time to be in Clallam County.”

[Check out this new video on Vimeo by John Gussman who has been documenting the Elwha project for the last few years.](#)



Symposium Organizers Dayv Lowry, Caroline Gibson, Mayumi Arimitsu and John Platt

A GREAT FORAGE FISH SYMPOSIUM!

Commission staffer Caroline Gibson participated in an historic gathering of over 4,200 fisheries experts from around North America, as one of four organizers of the highly-successful symposium on forage fish at AFS 2011 (<http://afs2011.org/>) in Seattle. Approximately 80 people turned out to hear the impressive lineup of 27 presentations showcasing research and policy efforts here and around the globe, including a keynote address by Dr. Ellen Pikitch, professor at Stony Brook University and Chair of the national [Forage Fish Task Force](#). Presentations included those by MRC member and project partners Tina Whitman, Gary Greene and Jamey Selleck. Great work is happening in this region; on seabirds stuffing their bills with sand lance at Protection Island, NOAA trawl surveys of all Puget Sound basins, genetic analyses of surf smelt, effects of hypoxia on the vertical movement of forage fish in Hood Canal, protecting intertidal habitats here and in British Columbia, and much more. Dr. Adam Summers of Friday Harbor Labs gave an award-worthy comic demonstration of burrowing sand lance, part of the recent deepwater sand lance project funded by the Northwest Straits Commission. [Click here to check out the complete list of Symposium speakers and presentations.](#)

SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEM CONFERENCE

The Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference is October 25-27 in Vancouver, BC. The Northwest Straits Initiative will be well represented at the conference with MRC members and Commission, Foundation, and MRC staff attending. Many projects of the Initiative will be featured in sessions, posters and the data fair. Northwest Straits Commissioner Joe Gaydos is master of ceremonies at this event! For complete listing of the sessions, go to <http://www.salishseaconference.org/index.php>

OUTREACH BY JEFFERSON MRC REELS IN BOATERS

Per tradition, Jefferson MRC hosted a colorful booth at the 35th annual Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend. We don't know just how many of 30,000+ festival-goers stopped by during three days of record-breaking heat and sunshine, but plenty of curious visitors learned about eelgrass protection, softshore armoring, and responsible crab fishing. MRC volunteers dispensed smiles and handouts to people of all ages, happily sharing tent space with the Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Health. Live geoducks and other squirting creatures are always a popular draw!



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NORTHWEST STRAITS marine conservation initiative



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October 2011

In this issue:

- **West Coast Governors' Agreement - Marine Debris Workshop**
- **Dissolving Before Our Eyes: The Acidification of Our Oceans**
- **Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference**
- **Island MRC: Phytoremediation update**
- **Environmental Stewardship at the Port of Friday Harbor**
- **San Juan County: A Local Integrating Organization Success Story**
- **Derelict Gear Removal in the Chehalis River**
- **And More...**

In the News

WEST COAST GOVERNORS' AGREEMENT MARINE DEBRIS WORKSHOP



Northwest Straits Commission Director Ginny Broadhurst participated in a three-day final workshop of the Marine Debris Workgroup, created under the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health. The Marine Debris group, with representatives from California, Oregon and Washington, completed a final strategy document and discussed options for creating an ongoing coalition to carry out the actions needed to address marine debris threats

and impacts all along the Pacific coast. [Click here for group members.](#)

DISSOLVING BEFORE OUR EYES: THE ACIDIFICATION OF OUR OCEANS

Roughly one-third of the 70 million tons of CO₂ we release into the atmosphere every day is absorbed by the oceans, where it reacts with seawater to form carbonic acid. As a result, our oceans are becoming literally corrosive. At that current rate of emissions, ocean acidity will more than double by 2100, enough to dissolve the shells and skeletons of key marine organisms such as corals, oysters, and pteropods (an important source of food for young salmon). Marine ecosystems are already suffering, and some of the most drastic changes are happening right here in our local waters, affecting iconic Northwest fisheries and marine life. Our conversation will explain the science, the environmental and economic consequences, and the political opportunities and challenges of ocean acidification. Brian Baird, former United States Representative from Washington's Third Congressional District, and Dr. Richard Feely, Senior Scientist, NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, will join us as we explore this important issue. [Click here for more information on this event.](#)

SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEM CONFERENCE

For those attending the October 25-27 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, be sure to check out the many posters, oral presentations and data fair exhibits by Northwest Straits and MRC presenters, as well as a short film featured in the Tuesday night film festival by Whatcom MRC member Ken Carrasco about *Honeysuckle*, a rescued and rehabilitated harbor seal pup.

MRC Happenings

ISLAND MRC: PHYTOREMEDIATION UPDATE

As a follow on to the Island County MRC phytoremediation project in Coupeville we mentioned last month, Island MRC has recently planted trees in test boxes at two locations in town to measure the effectiveness of different combinations of soil and tree roots in removing contaminants such as copper, phosphorous and nitrates from the water before it is released into Puget Sound. The trees will be watered with outflow from the Coupeville treatment plant, and water from the drain tubes from the test boxes will be monitored for contaminants. [Read more...](#)



FAREWELL TO DAWN LAWRENCE, SNOHOMISH MRC MEMBER

The Snohomish MRC recently thanked departing member Dawn Lawrence for her time serving on the committee. Dawn officially represented recreational interests on the MRC, but as an educator with a degree in biology, she brought an incredible set of skills to the table and served as chair of the group. Thank you, Dawn, we wish you all the best for the future!

Northwest Commission Meeting Highlights

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AT THE PORT OF FRIDAY HARBOR

Barbara Marrett, Port Commissioner, welcomed the Northwest Straits Commission to Friday Harbor on September 30. [The Port of Friday Harbor](#) has made education and environmental stewardship a priority, and Barbara shared many examples of how they accomplish this. [Read more...](#)

SAN JUAN COUNTY: A LOCAL INTEGRATING ORGANIZATION SUCCESS STORY

Stephanie Buffum, Executive Director of FRIENDS of the San Juans, reviewed the origin of the San Juan County Local Integrating Organization (LIO) to the Commission. In October of 2009 a Steering Committee was established to develop a recommendation for the San Juan County LIO. The Steering Committee [submitted a proposal to the San Juan County Council](#) on the LIO process. The San Juan County Council formally adopted the LIO process in May 2010 and formed an Accountability Oversight Committee and an Implementation Committee. [Read more...](#)

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

DERELICT GEAR REMOVAL IN THE CHEHALIS RIVER



The Northwest Straits Foundation and its derelict gear team provided technical assistance and database support to the Quinault Tribe and The Nature Conservancy on a recent derelict gear removal project in the Chehalis River. The tribe involved its own fishermen in locating and removing derelict nets from the river. We were able to help with data collection and protocol development.

Photo: Eric Delvin of The Nature Conservancy shows the remains of a sturgeon found in a derelict net removed from the Chehalis River.

Bulletin Board

JAPANESE TSUNAMI MARINE DEBRIS

NOAA has new information out about the marine debris generated by the March 2011 tsunami in Japan. Check out their [web page](#) for answers to frequently asked questions and a map showing the likely drift of debris over the next several years. [Read more...](#)

Upcoming Events

October 25-27, 2011 - 2011 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference - *Many Voices, One Sea*, Vancouver, British Columbia. [Click here for more information.](#)

November 4, 2011 – Northwest Straits Commission meeting, 10:00AM – 3:00 PM, Tulalip Administration Building, Snohomish County.

November 5, 2011 - Sound Living: A One-Day “Communiversy” *Exploring the Connections Between Water, Land and People*. 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM at Everett Community College. Register at <http://www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/snohomish/>.

November 8, 2011 – *Dissolving Before our Eyes: The acidification of our oceans, and why it Matters to all of us*. 5:30-9:00 PM at Town Hall, Seattle, WA. [Click here for more information.](#)

December 2-3, 2011 - Northwest Straits Initiative 13th Annual MRC Conference for MRC members and invited guests. [Click here for more information.](#)

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NORTHWEST STRAITS marine conservation initiative



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November 2011

- **Year End Donations to the Northwest Straits Foundation**
- **Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference**
- **Dissolving Before Our Eyes: Ocean Acidification Symposium**
- **Salmon: A Keystone Species**
- **Snohomish MRC Nearshore Sediment Study**
- **13th Annual MRC Conference Update**
- **And more...**

In the News

YEAR END DONATIONS TO THE NORTHWEST STRAITS FOUNDATION



Now is a great time to make a donation to the Northwest Straits Foundation. Our small Foundation staff is working diligently on grant proposals to support MRC projects. Your donation will go straight to build increased capacity at the Foundation. You may also target a donation directly to a Marine Resources Committee. Mailing address for Northwest Straits Foundation and on-line payment options are [here](#). Be one of the first 20 people to donate \$150 or more, and we'll send you a Northwest Straits Initiative hat!

SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEM CONFERENCE

The Northwest Straits Initiative was well represented at last month's gathering in Vancouver, BC, as part of an interested crowd of more than 900 scientists, managers, teachers, students, and other people working around the Salish Sea. Members of all seven Northwest Straits MRCs attended, as did Commission and Foundation staff. Commissioner Joe Gaydos did a super job as conference emcee, and many of our (collective) restoration, research, and outreach projects were presented in sessions showcasing work on both sides of the US/Canada border. Several longtime conference

goers remarked on the truly transboundary nature of this year's gathering. With a backdrop of First Nations' drummers and great local food, ideas were shared, next season's projects were planned and new partnerships formed.

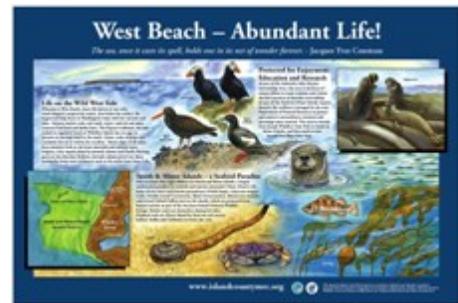
DISSOLVING BEFORE OUR EYES: OCEAN ACIDIFICATION SYMPOSIUM

On November 9, Northwest Straits Commissioner Terrie Klinger served on a panel of experts at the Washington Sea Grant Symposium on ocean acidification. As evidenced by the remarkable turnout of nearly 200 people, this complex issue is garnering major attention. The symposium featured a variety of discussions with scientists, resource managers, shellfish growers and others around possible impacts of ocean acidification on Puget Sound and the Washington coast. Attendees included Representative Norm Dicks; Ron Sims, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and lead staff from several state and federal agencies and tribes. Snohomish MRC and the Northwest Straits Commission were collaborators in the event.

MRC Happenings

MARINE INTERPRETIVE SIGN AT WEST BEACH VISTA

Island County MRC's newest marine interpretive sign was installed last week at West Beach Vista, near Swantown Lake, west of Oak Harbor. The sign faces the waters of Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve, managed by the WA Department of Natural Resources. [Click here](#) to view a printable, full-page PDF of the sign.



13TH ANNUAL MRC CONFERENCE UPDATE

Registration is now closed and we are looking forward to this awesome event. Get your autographed copy of rockfish guru Milton Love's latest book, *Certainly More Than You Want to Know About The Fishes of The Pacific Coast*, at the conference. For those able to stay in Port Townsend beyond the conference end time on Saturday, December,3, you'll be treated to the annual holiday treelighting and gallery walk that begins at 4:00pm. [Click here](#) for more information on this event.

SNOHOMISH MRC MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Snohomish County MRC is seeking up to three new members. Interested parties need not be experts in marine management issues, but are expected to have a willingness to learn about marine conservation, participate in research founded on sound science and contribute opinions on marine issues over a three-year term that runs 2012-2014. For more information, visit www.snocomrc.org or call (425) 388-6414. The application deadline is December 2, 2011.

Northwest Straits Commission Highlights

SALMON: A KEYSTONE SPECIES



Barbara Rosenkotter, WRIA 2 lead Entity Coordinator in San Juan County, presented on salmon recovery and the Lead Entity program in the San Juan Islands at the Commission's meeting on November 4. Barbara explained that the goal of the work is to recover salmon to harvestable levels so that we can once again enjoy the resource. In

San Juan County the MRC is the citizen's advisory group and has an important role in the local salmon recovery plan. [Click here for a copy of the presentation.](#)

SNOHOMISH MRC NEARSHORE SEDIMENT STUDY

Kathleen Herrmann, Snohomish Marine Resources Steward, presented Snohomish MRC's nearshore sediment assessment project to the Commission. Kathleen explained that the project was developed with the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Plan in mind and is a good example of a linkage between salmon recovery groups and MRCs. [Click here for a copy of the presentation.](#)
[Click here for more information online.](#)

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

OLYMPIA OYSTER REBUILDING

The Northwest Straits Initiative has taken a bigger plunge into native oyster rebuilding in partnership with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, [Puget Sound Restoration Fund](#), the Swinomish, Samish and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes and several Marine Resources Committees. Several training workshops were organized this past summer to train MRC members and others to identify Olympia oysters in the field and engage the powers of the MRCs in identifying suitable habitat. This is not quite as easy as it sounds, as Olympia oysters are cryptic in appearance and with regard to their habitat requirements, and not nearly as showy as their cousin the Pacific oyster.



Other items on the 2011 native oyster agenda included genetic analysis of potential broodstock locations, the development of a preliminary enhancement plan for several North Sound locations, and, broodstock collection and seed production for 2012 enhancement. Particular care is being taken with seed production to ensure genetic diversity. To this end, Puget Sound Restoration Fund is using conservation protocols co-developed with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and University of Washington.

THANK YOU, PUGET SOUND ANGLERS!



A big thank you to the Snohomish-King Chapter of Puget Sound Anglers for their financial contributions to our derelict fishing gear removal program. Ron Garner, chapter President, presented a \$3,000 check to Ginny Broadhurst and Jerry Masters at a banquet on November 10 in Edmonds. Several chapter members also made personal contributions to supplement the gift. These funds will go straight to our removal project and will help us leverage additional grant funds. This makes a total of

\$4,120 that we've received from Sno-King PSA Chapter this year!

Photo: Ginny Broadhurst, Director Northwest Straits Commission receives a check from Jeremy Winters of Snohomish-King Puget Sound Anglers

Bulletin Board

REPORT ON FORAGE FISH RELEASED BY OCEANA



A new report by Oceana, *Forage Fish: Feeding the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem*, describes the current state of West Coast forage species' management, and what should be done to sustain both a healthy food web and strong economy. Susan Murray, Oceana's Senior Director of the Pacific, stated that "The availability of forage can literally mean life or death for many of our iconic Pacific fish, marine mammals, and seabirds; as well as our vibrant coastal economies. [The full report is available online.](#)

A WIKI FOR THE NEARSHORE CROWD

Nearshore Wiki, a new user-created web site for people in the Salish Sea restoration community, is ready for your information and ideas. Hosted by Western Washington University, Nearshore Wiki is designed to connect people who are working on nearshore systems: River Deltas, Beaches, Embayments, and Rocky Shorelines. The site provides free document storage, publication, and opportunities for collaboration that complement other online resources. Check it out at http://estuary.cs.wvu.edu/index.php/Main_Page.

WHAT'S CHANGED SINCE 1850?

The Change Analysis Report, which describes a remarkably detailed analysis of what's changed along Puget Sound's shorelines over the past 150 years, is now available online. This impressive body of work is already being used to inform many restoration projects, and is a foundational element of work by the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP). One major finding is the dramatic simplification of our shorelines due to human alterations, including a 41 percent decrease in total delta length, and disappearance of many embayments Sound-wide.

http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical_reports.htm

OCEAN FRONTIERS: NOW AVAILABLE FOR MRCs

Green Fire Productions, an Oregon-based organization that promotes environmental stewardship, has released a new film that features inspiring stories from the frontiers of ocean conservation. Ocean Frontiers makes ecosystem-based management and ocean planning come to life through a broad array of unlikely allies. Read more at <http://ocean-frontiers.org>. The Commission has two copies for loan to MRCs and project partners. Please contact [Caroline Gibson](#) for a DVD to screen in your community.

Events

December 2-3, 2011 - Northwest Straits Initiative 13th Annual MRC Conference, *Moving Forward in a Sea of Uncertainty*. [Click here for more information](#).

December 3, 2011 - People For Puget Sound, Union Slough Planting Work Party, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM in Everett. [Click here for more information](#).

December 5, 2011 - Seal Sitter Training, 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM at [McCollum Park in Everett](#). Contact Chrys Bertolotto (chrys@wsu.edu) for more information.

December 10, 2011 – Shoreline Landowners Workshop, 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM at Seafarers' Memorial Park Building in Anacortes. [Click here for more information](#).

January 4, 2012 - Our Puget Sound In-Depth: Salmon and Toxics in the Marine Environment presented by Nathaniel Scholz of NOAA, 7:00 PM at the Mukilteo City Council Chambers.

January 20, 2012 - Starlight Beach Walk, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at [Edmonds Olympic Beach](#). Contact Chrys Bertolotto (chrys@wsu.edu) for more information.

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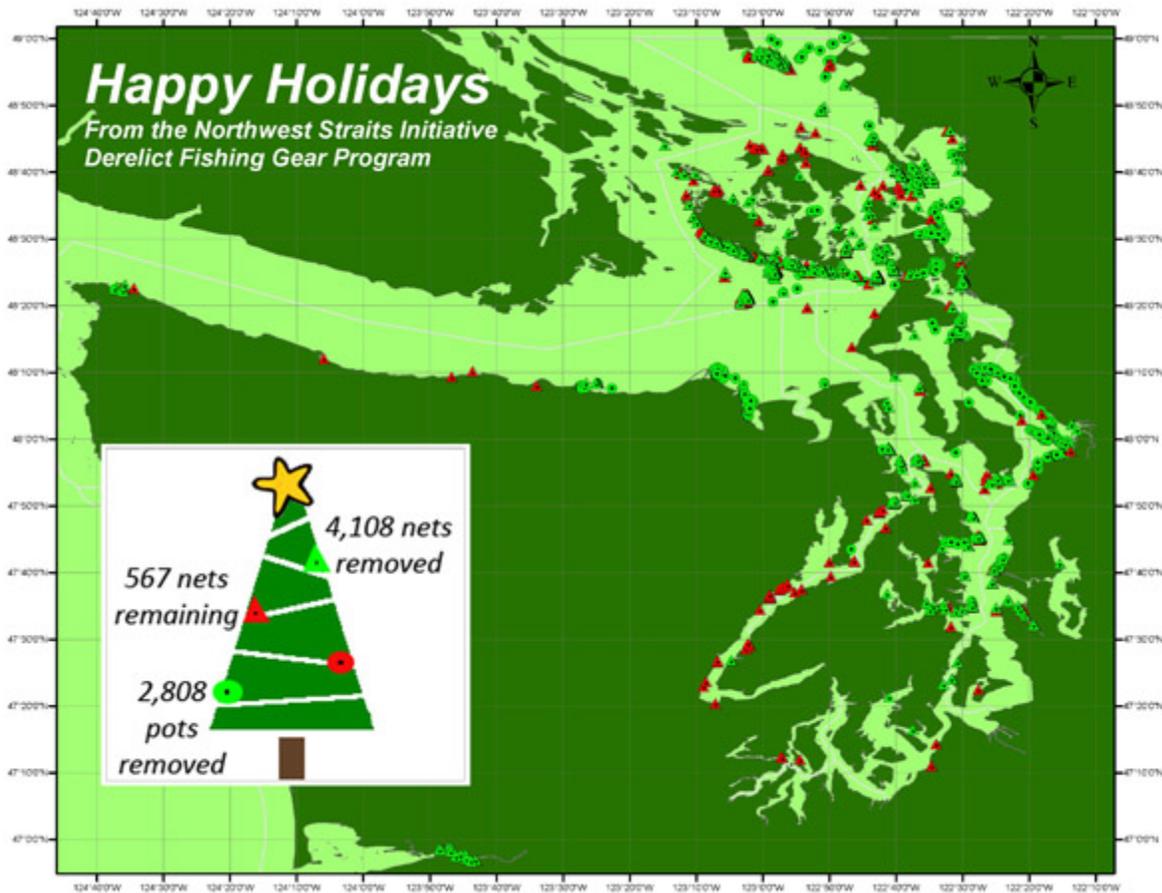
NORTHWEST STRAITS

marine conservation initiative



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December 2011



In the News

NW STRAITS COMMISSION RECEIVES NATIONAL SHELLFISH INITIATIVE

FUNDING

At an event hosted by Taylor Shellfish last week, Dr. Jane Lubchenco announced \$200,000 in funding for the Northwest Straits Commission to pursue Olympia oyster restoration. The Commission will work in partnership with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Puget Sound Restoration Fund, the Swinomish, Samish and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribes and several Marine Resources Committees. [Click here to learn more about the Washington Shellfish Initiative.](#)



Photo: Terry Williams, Jane Lubchenco, Ginny Broadhurst, Jerry Masters

MRC Conference Highlights

Our 13th Annual MRC Conference was a huge success! Thanks to our speakers and everyone who attended. A huge thank you to our many sponsors who made this conference possible, particularly to EPA, BP Cherry Point, Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation and Valley Supply Company.

[Click here for presentations of most sessions from our conference webpage.](#)

Sessions on Friday, December 2:

FIELD TRIP TO MAYNARD BEACH



Michael Adams, chair of the host county Jefferson MRC, led a field trip to the Maynard Beach Restoration Project site at the head of Discovery Bay. When complete, 1,800 feet of marine nearshore will be restored, including beach areas, the riparian zone and a 2-acre pocket estuary.

Photo: Field trip participants; Bert Rubash, Barbara Marrett, Bob Cecile, Kathleen Herrmann, Marshall Bronson, Atina Casas, Linda Anderson-Carnahan, Betty Bookheim, Ken Urstad, Dennis Clark, Neil Borman, Michael Adams, Shannon Davis (photo by Elizabeth Kilanowski)

ENGAGING WITH COUNTY GOVERNMENTS & THE ACTION AGENDA

Our first panel was comprised of Lovel Pratt, Chair of the San Juan County Council; Mike Doherty,

Clallam County Commissioner; Angie Homola, Island County Commissioner; Phil Johnson, Jefferson County Commissioner and Gerry O’Keefe, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership. The panel discussed the value of MRCs and the role of each in its county and regionally.

RESTORATION SAMPLER: SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

Restoration projects come in all shapes and sizes, and small-scale projects can contribute to the overarching goal of increasing habitat by restoring ecological processes. Small projects can also build toward cumulative benefits over a large area. This session highlighted three of the ongoing and recent nearshore restoration projects involving MRCs. Gabrielle LaRoche presented the Maynard Beach project in Jefferson County, Lenny Corin described the Cornet Bay project in Island County, and Chris Fairbanks shared results from fish-use monitoring following Chuckanut Marsh restoration in Whatcom County.



Photo: Gabrielle LaRoche, Lenny Corin and Chris Fairbanks talk about restoration projects

SUSTAINABILITY IN MARINE RENEWABLE ENERGY

Simon Geerlofs, Snohomish MRC member, did a great job of introducing the complex topic of marine renewable energy in this last session of the day. Jeff Ward, who serves on the Clallam MRC, described studies at Battelle to document effects of electromagnetic fields on Dungeness crabs and other local marine species. Dr. Brian Polagye, a faculty member at UW College of Engineering, presented current research on the environmental effects of tidal energy systems. Brian noted that tidal energy projects are still in the experimental stages here and around the world.

POSTER SESSION AND SILENT AUCTION



The MRCs and conference sponsors hosted an evening poster session to share information about their work through a variety of displays. This was a great opportunity to meet fellow MRC members and talk about efforts around the region.

For the first time this year, the Northwest Straits Foundation hosted a silent auction alongside the poster session. Fantastic contributions came in from MRCs, individuals and partner organizations: many thanks to those who contributed items and placed bids! The auction raised just over \$5,000 for the Foundation.

Photo: Kit Rawson and Norm Baker chat during the poster session

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

Jefferson County Commissioner and MRC member Phil Johnson was recognized with an Environmental Leadership Award from the Commission, presented by Jefferson MRC member Shannon Davis. In awarding a paddle carved by Swinomish master carver Kevin Paul, Shannon noted that Phil has set the bar high through his commitment to the MRC and Hood Canal Coordinating Council, his advocacy for wild salmon, and many other endeavors in his community.



Photo: Jerry Masters congratulates Phil Johnson, recipient of the Environmental Leadership Award

SUPER COOL FISHES OF THE PACIFIC COAST



Our evening keynote speaker Dr. Milton Love held everyone's attention with his skillful delivery of underwater photos and humorous fish facts. With white shark smiles, aerial shots of herring spawn, hagfish, anglerfish, basking sharks and rockfish, this was a presentation that we will long remember. His latest book *Certainly More Than You Want To Know About The Fishes of the Pacific Coast* sold out quickly, but is available for purchase at <http://reallybigpress.com>.

Photo: Copper and Quillback Rockfish, by Tom Sheldon

Sessions on Saturday December 3:

GIS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A trio of GIS experts demonstrated local, regional, and national web-based applications that are a great resource for MRCs and others doing nearshore projects. Tom Carlson, GIS Liaison with USGS, was a newcomer to our crowd, presenting US Topo for Washington and the recent incorporation of scanned historic quadrangles. Kathy Taylor of the Department of Ecology presented the Washington Coastal Atlas, and Suzanne Shull from Padilla Bay demonstrated the Island County SoundIQ system. This dynamic and informative session generated good questions, ideas and discussion.

DESIGNING EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

This session, led by Northwest Straits Foundation staff member Tracie Johannessen, provided

context for MRC members involved in education and outreach by reviewing methods used by educators to design effective programs. Examples included a recent outreach effort focused on coastal landowners in Whatcom County presented by Stephanie Williams, an outreach proposal submitted by the Foundation and the Snohomish/Island MRCs for the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area, and a new tool available from WSU Beach Watchers for community groups to engage in learning about and discussing water issues presented by Pat Pearson.

MRC INVOLVEMENT IN SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAMS

Cathy Lear, Clallam MRC staff, and Michael Adams, Jefferson MRC chair are in the thick of their county SMP updates. In this session they explained how and why MRC members should engage locally, and deftly walked session participants through real life experiences and examples of information/expertise that's needed and how local knowledge gets used. Although the process can seem overwhelming, SMPs provide a necessary framework for county policies around human uses of our shorelines.



Photo: Cathy Lear from Clallam MRC

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Ian Jefferds, chair of the Island MRC, Jerry Masters, former chair of Snohomish MRC and Kit Rawson, former chair of San Juan MRC hosted a session on MRC Leadership. This was an opportunity to discuss challenges in leading an MRC, the importance of recruiting new members, the benefits and downsides of term limits and many of the other “nuts and bolts” issues that are part of MRC operations.

HOW TO FUND YOUR MRC

In this session, Ginny Broadhurst described previous and possible future funding structures for the MRCs, emphasizing greater reliance on local support for basic MRC work coupled with assistance from the Foundation for project funding. Joan Drinkwin provided a template for each MRC to develop a ‘case statement,’ which is a general overview of the mission, work and structure of an organization. Case statements are designed as tools to galvanize support and funding for the work of each MRC, and participants started draft case statements to take back to their respective MRCs to complete with assistance from Foundation staff as needed.

FORAGE FISH: NOW SURFACING

Caroline Gibson gave an overview of our Forage Fish Program, founded on 13 years of data gathering, mapping and more by the Commission, MRCs and project partners. Beginning with intertidal surveys, and continuing through workshops, symposia, and research on Pacific sand lance in deep water, the Commission and MRCs are expanding the knowledge base around forage

fishes and their role in Salish Sea ecosystems. One next step is the international Research Symposium on the Ecology of Forage Fishes to be hosted by the Commission at Friday Harbor Labs in 2012.

SECRETS IN THE SOUND

Dr. Florian Graner inspired us with a new version of his documentary film *Secrets in the Sound*, reminding everyone to share the positive aspects of Puget Sound and its beauty with others. Get your copy of the video at [Sealife Production's website](#).



Photo: Harbor Porpoise, by Florian Graner

THE ELWHA: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON RIVER RESTORATION

Robert Elofson delivered an eloquent synopsis of the historical undertaking to restore the Elwha River by removing its two hydropower dams. Rob pointed out that the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe never wanted dams or to see salmon runs disappear. Restoration has been decades in the making, involving legislation and extensive economic analyses. To follow removal of the dams see <http://www.nps.gov/olym/photosmultimedia/elwha-river-webcams.htm>

EATING GODZILLA: HOW THE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY IS CONFRONTING OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

Brad Warren, our final speaker, described his experiences communicating with the shellfish industry about ocean acidification. Brad acknowledged the challenges associated with this issue and yet showed no fear in tackling it, the Godzilla of environmental issues. His story offered inspiration to all of us.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

If you attended the conference, you should have received an email with link to a short online survey. If you haven't yet completed the survey, we encourage you to do so. Contact [Sasha Horst](#) if you need the link. Your feedback helps us plan future events. Results so far have been overwhelmingly positive, and we're working to post more conference materials to the web site.



Photo: Bob 'Mad Dog' Vreeland, Jeff Ward, Ed Bowlby and Michael Blanton

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

This event would not be as successful without our dedicated and talented volunteers. We extend a big thank you to Emily Whitney, Andrea Hennings, Amy Grondin, and Joyce Gustafson.

ONCE AGAIN, A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

- **BP Cherry Point**
- **Washington Sea Grant**
- **Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation**
- **Valley Supply Company**
- **Natural Resources Consultants, Inc.**
- **Coastal Geologic Services**
- **Salish Coast Sciences**
- **SeaDoc Society**
- **People For Puget Sound**
- **Marine Resources Consultants**
- **Penn Cove Shellfish**
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