



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative
Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Fort Casey Inn, Garrison Hall
Coupeville, Island County
January 18, 2006, 12:30pm-2:00pm

Members attending: Kathy Fletcher, Anne Murphy, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Susan Bauer, Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Buck Meloy, Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Jody Kennedy, Joe Gaydos
Members absent: Joe Schmitt, Daryl Williams, Terry Williams
Alternates: Paul Sund
Staff: Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst
Support: Joan Drinkwin

The meeting was started at 12:20pm. Anne Murphy, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. There were no changes to the agenda.

The meeting minutes from the December 2, 2005 meeting were approved as written.

There was no public comment.

The Commission discussed the draft Fiscal Year 2006 (Year 8) Workplan and Budget. It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the budget and workplan with the following conditions: 1) the budget is subject to final adjustments, which are currently unknown, including rescission and indirect rates and 2) projects for the MRC Regional Project (Objective A4) will be determined at a later time. Terry Stevens was asked to make the adjustments and forward the workplan to NOAA.

During administrative matters, it was announced that a meeting of the MRC Chairs and Lead Staff will be scheduled in March. MRCs should be tracking their budgets to ensure that funds required to be spent by June 30, 2006 will be fully expended.

MRC representatives provided summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** did not hold a December meeting; have officially hired David Freed as a part time coordinator; is working on web site hosting and the shellfish garden feasibility. **Island MRC** lost a dear member of their MRC, Dr. Sayed El-Sayed in December and remembered him with a memorial at their January 4 meeting; had a presentation from Jim Ramaglia on the Keystone Underwater Park; now have 181 Shore Stewards and a full-time staff person for the program who will focus on Whidbey Island; have decided to include a fold-out LIDAR map in their *Getting to the Water's Edge* publication; had a presentation on non-point pollution issues. **Jefferson MRC** has

scheduled a planning session for February 22; had a presentation from a shellfish farmer on Olympia Oysters; submitted a QA/QC plan for the Olympia oyster project; are discussing potential expansion of the eelgrass protection project into new areas; is looking into partnering with PSAT and WSU to hold Shoreline Landowner Workshops; is collaborating with the County to prepare GIS maps for the shoreline armoring project. **San Juan MRC** is busy planning their anniversary event scheduled for January 28; have collected a lot of information from local families on traditional harvest areas, including some geographic data; will also be collecting tribal knowledge as a separate component of the project. **Skagit MRC** had an update on the Shore Stewards program and provided a letter of support; had a presentation on the SRSC studies of March Point; discussed current projects including the creosote removal project; will hold a meeting of the March Point Projects subcommittee in January. **Snohomish MRC** is working on reappointments for 6 members; is working on establishing partnerships to help with outreach and education on the rot cord project; are planning for their eelgrass mapping project for this summer; continue to work on creosote log removal; will partner with PSAT to give a landowner workshop on BMPs to bluff landowners in March; several members attended an oil spill awareness course to identify issues and learn how the MRC can be involved. **Whatcom MRC** welcomed new member Mark Herrenkohl as an economic interest; elected new co-chairs Chris Fairbanks and Bob Cecile; finalized the 2006 Work Plan; are selecting a facilitator to help develop a strategic plan; continue to monitor waterfront development in Bellingham at the former GP site; continue to move forward with the clam and bottomfish projects.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 1:20pm. The next regular meeting will be on February 24 at the Audubon River Center in Clallam County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission
Audubon River Center, Sequim, Clallam County
February 24, 2006 – 10:00am-1:55pm**

Attending: Kent Scudder, Polly Fischer, Duane Fagergren, Anne Murphy, Andrea Copping, Kathy Fletcher, Buck Meloy, Phyllis Kind, Susan Bauer, Joe Schmitt, Jody Kennedy

Absent: Joe Gaydos, Terry Williams

Alternates attending: Paul Sund, Jonathan White, Stef Frenzl

Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Support: Terry Stevens, Joan Drinkwin

Anne Murphy, chair, opened the meeting at 10:10am with a welcome and introductions. No changes were made to the agenda.

Bob Bokelheide, director of the River Center, welcomed the group. He described the work of the center and the three partners involved - Jamestown S'Klallam, Audubon Society and the River Center Foundation.

January meeting minutes

Motion: It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the minutes of the January 18 Northwest Straits Commission meeting as written.

Director recruitment

Tom explained the difficulty of deciding to step down as Director. The accomplishments and successes of the Initiative are very important to him but more important have been the personalities and people involved. He thanked the staff, Commissioners, MRCs and Padilla Bay. He is flexible about his ending date in order to make it a smooth transition. A standing ovation followed for Tom's work on behalf of the Initiative.

Terry Stevens described what has been done so far to recruit a new director. A committee of past chairs of the Commission and Terry Williams held a conference call to discuss a process. This group was called because of their institutional knowledge, with no intent to exclude anyone from participating in the process. Other Commissioners were invited to participate in the process, but all declined. A draft position description was distributed and a final is expected to be posted with a job announcement in the next week. The objective is to have someone on board by the end of April. This is an Ecology position but Terry will try to keep the decision in the hands of the Commission as much as possible. He will send the description to MRC chairs and Commission representatives. Any comments should be sent by March 2.

Concerns were raised about the speed of the process, who would do initial review of the applications and how the position would be advertised. It is expected that the position will be sent out on as many listservs as possible, posted on the Commission web site and advertised in appropriate journals and newsletters. Commissioners and others should forward additional avenues for advertising the position to Terry Stevens. If a good pool of applicants is not generated, the closing date for the position may be extended. The ad hoc committee called together by Terry will do initial review of the applications, and will provide recommendations to the full Commission. It is the responsibility of Commissioners to voice concerns and ask questions about the process, and do so in a timely manner. Terry can be reached by phone at 360-428-1045 or by email at tstevens@padillabay.gov.

Elwha Nearshore

Anne Shaffer gave a presentation on restoration planning for the removal of both dams on the Elwha river. She began with an overview of the Elwha nearshore, including information about the habitats, resources and processes in the central Strait. She also described the impact of the dam on these processes and habitats. A multi-agency consortium was formed in 2004. It is an informal workgroup of scientists and managers dedicated to understanding and promoting restoration response following the dam removal. A quarterly newsletter, *Elwha Nearshore Update*, is available on the Clallam MRC web site at www.clallammrc.org/MRC. Ms. Shaffer also provided some examples of work that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies and organizations are doing to prepare for restoration projects following the dam removal. (The full powerpoint of Anne's presentation is available through Sasha Horst)

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

Carol Bernthal, Superintendent of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS) gave a presentation on the current NOAA sanctuary program, identified some common issues, and opened up a discussion about potential areas for future collaboration. A strategic plan for the OCNMS is now available (Carol provided this to Sasha in electronic format). She noted that there are similar elements in the goals of the OCNMS and the Northwest Straits Commission, and that there are opportunities to learn and build upon each other's successes. Some joint efforts exist already, including derelict fishing gear removal and citizen participation of OCNMS staff on local MRCs. She described a successful education program the OCNMS has implemented called the Area to Be Avoided which encourages ships transporting petroleum products to travel outside the Sanctuary. The program has a 98% compliance rate. Potential areas she noted for collaboration between the Commission and the OCNMS include developing effective evaluation methods for outreach and restoration projects; sharing of volunteer monitoring programs and technical expertise; and research projects extended for adjoining areas. (The full powerpoint of this presentation is available through Sasha Horst).

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Committee reports

Duane Fagergren, chair of the Executive Committee, provided a report of the February meeting. A second Marine Managers Work Session will be held on March 13-14 for managers of sites in San Juan County. A workshop on human stressors in the marine environment was held in October and a report is now available. An intern, Katrina Lassiter, has been hired and is starting shortly to lead the data coordination project and assist with planning for the June Science Gaps

workshop. A summary of the January Commission Planning Retreat was distributed and Commissioners and MRCs should plan to follow up on the Action Items on page one.

The Education Committee met in February. Chair Kathy Fletcher explained that the committee is recommending a communications audit of Commission and MRC outreach materials. It is expected that the results of this audit will be available this summer and the committee will meet again to determine next steps. MRCs should be aware that the audit will be happening, and that we will be interested in including MRC materials in the audit. The expectation is to look at materials currently in use.

Jody Kennedy reported as the chair of the Growth and Development Committee. This committee has met several times recently and Joan has done a lot of work to get started, which will be discussed during the Foundation meeting later today.

Andrea Copping, chair of the Technical Committee explained that there were a lot of action items assigned to her committee at the January planning retreat. She will work on putting those ideas into a unified plan in the next few months and report back to the Commission.

Fiscal Year 2006 Workplan and Budget

Tom provided an update on the federal funding package. Last week, staff learned that the rescissions on the \$1,400,000 appropriation total nearly 6% (\$83,053). At the same time, staff was made aware of an earlier deadline for submitting the NOAA grant application. Because of the very short notice, it was necessary to submit a revised workplan and budget without consulting the Commission.

A budget and workplan were adopted at the January planning retreat. Due to the rescissions, the following changes were made in the budget submitted to NOAA.

Objective A:

- 1) Reduced MRC Category C (Action) funding from \$55,000 to \$54,000
- 2) Reduced training budget from \$20,000 to \$10,000 (restored to FY05 level)
- 3) Reduced MRC Regional project budget from \$30,000 to \$20,000 based on recommendations at January retreat.

Objective B:

- 1) Reduced tribal participation budget to \$40,000 (restored to FY05 level)
- 2) Reduced web site budget by \$2,000
- 3) Reduced retreat budget by \$1,000
- 4) Reduced intern budget to \$15,000 (restored to FY05 level)
- 5) Reduced transborder project fund to \$10,000

Tom explained that these reductions would have the least impact on planned projects and priorities in the coming year. Particular thanks went to Terry and others at the Department of Ecology for enabling the Commission to get the application submitted on time.

Motion: It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the revised workplan and budget as written.

Administrative Matters

MRC Grant Process

Tom reviewed the 2006 MRC Grants Process memo. He discussed this process with all lead staff except Clallam. The process was also discussed at the December Commission meeting, and referred to at the January retreat. All staff is in favor of the process. The four options for FY2006 MRC grant funds are:

- 1) Supplement ongoing projects
- 2) Identify new projects
- 3) Contribute to derelict fishing gear or creosote removal
- 4) Contribute to a regional project account

MRCs must make decisions by no later than September 30, 2006 and funds must be spent by June 30, 2007.

Motion: It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the outlined MRC grant process for FY2006.

Officer nomination committee

Election of officers is held in April, new officers are to begin in May. A committee is organized annually to make nominations for a new chair and vice chair of the commission. Terry Stevens is seeking committee members to serve on a subcommittee. Kathy Fletcher, Phyllis Kind, Susan Bauer and Kent Scudder volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. A conference call will be arranged soon to discuss process.

Other news

Tom and Terry will be heading to Washington DC in early March. Tom spent much of this week in Olympia working to get an amendment in the state supplemental budget for funding derelict fishing gear removal. However, the amendment may not be included due to the short session. Kathy Fletcher is involved in the Puget Sound Partnership, which has the goal of a healthy Puget Sound by 2020. The group's five key charges are:

- An action plan to achieve it
- How to pay for it
- Public education/awareness building campaign
- How science should factor in
- How government and public/private partnerships should be structured

The next meeting of this group is February 25 at King Street Center in Seattle. There will be opportunities for checking in with process. See their web site at www.pugetsoundpartnership.org

MRC Reports

Clallam MRC: had a presentation from Don Rothaus of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife about abalone, followed by good discussion about what the MRC can do. The MRC display is complete and was on display at the Commission meeting thanks to David Freed, MRC staff.

Island MRC: had a presentation from the Shore Stewards Coordinator on the status of the program. Joe Burcar, a shoreline planner for the County, gave a presentation on the Island County Draft Water Quality Monitoring Plan. There is a comment period open on this report until March 18. Derelict fishing gear removal work was done in Island County at Keystone in February and an article published in the Whidbey News-Times.

Jefferson MRC: held their MRC retreat and employed the logic model training from the MRC conference in November. Recognized many opportunities to talk about alternatives to bulkheads following the recent storm event. Some of the Olympia oysters planted by the MRC may need to be relocated due to potential impact from an old lumber mill collapsing. The eelgrass protection project is discussing phasing in an expansion of the project in other areas.

San Juan MRC: held a successful anniversary event on January 28 with approximately 60 people attending. The MRC is very busy working on the Marine Stewardship Area, including recent progress on viability analysis and threat assessment for selected focal targets. The MRC approved a workplan and budget for 2006 and will present it to the County Council in late February.

Skagit MRC: had a short presentation from Rick Haley on water quality activities in the Samish Bay watershed. A lot of new ideas for projects are circulating within the MRC for FY2006 funding. The Guemes Rapid Shoreline Inventory is complete and a report now available. In addition, an updated Blueprint was done incorporating Guemes information. The MRC will again co-sponsor a *Spartina* Dig Day on June 10.

Snohomish MRC: had six members reappointed and have found great success with project focus groups. The MRC recently met with their County Council, and were asked to bring back a proposal to increase their budget. The MRC appreciates the support of the Council. The MRC continues to work on Dungeness Crab projects, and are planning landowner workshops in March for bluff landowners.

Whatcom MRC: had two presentations on waterfront development and a water quality discussion. The Waterfront Futures group presented the Port/City plans for developing the former Georgia-Pacific site in Bellingham, and Wendy Steffensen led a discussion on the Environmental Impact Statement. An updated MRC Process and Procedural Agreement was adopted.

Adjourn

The Commission meeting adjourned at 1:55pm.

The next meeting will be on March 31 at the Water Resources Building in Bellingham, Whatcom County.

Action Items

- Any comments on the director job description and any ideas for advertising the position should be sent to Terry Stevens by March 2.
- MRCs and Committees should review the action items from the January planning retreat.
- An audit of Commission and MRC outreach materials is expected in late spring and MRCs should be prepared to participate in this process.
- MRCs should begin discussing FY2006 grant projects for decisions by no later than September 30.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Squalicum Boathouse
Bellingham, Whatcom County
March 31, 2006, 10:00pm-2:30pm**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Susan Bauer, Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Buck Meloy, Jonathan White (alt.), Duane Fagergren, Harlan James (alt.)

Members absent: Kathy Fletcher, Joe Schmitt, Terry Williams Andrea Copping Joe Gaydos Jody Kennedy

Alternates attending: Amy Kraham, Scott McCreery

Staff: Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst

Support Terry Stevens, Joan Drinkwin

The meeting was started at 10:00am. Anne Murphy, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. There were no changes to the agenda. Mike Stoner, environmental director for the Port of Bellingham and former Northwest Straits commissioner, welcomed the group to the Port property. He described the current redevelopment work being done now on the waterfront and a charrette related to a possible marina as part of the redesigned area. More information can be found at <http://www.newwhatcom.org>.

Amy Kraham of the Whatcom MRC gave an overview of the comment letter prepared by the MRC to the City of Bellingham and Port of Bellingham on the waterfront redevelopment. The effort took about a month by a technical group from the MRC. The MRC made recommendations including habitat to preserve and specific potential restoration projects. The MRC was able to gather expertise within the committee. They are planning to have two speaker events and some additional outreach surrounding these recommendations. There were many different points of view within the group, but they were able to make recommendations by focusing recommendations to the Initiative's benchmarks.

The minutes of the February 24 meeting were approved as written.

Harlan James of the Lummi Nation introduced Tom Edwards from the Lummi Schelangen Department. Tom welcomed everyone and opened with a traditional prayer, and talked about some of the important elements of the Lummi culture. Lummi Nation has a Cultural Department, which includes four areas:

- The Schelangen department looks at traditional cultural properties such as culturally modified trees (CMT), gear storage areas, middens and reef net areas.
- The Language department, which has a goal that all tribal members will speak their language.
- Semiahmah department, which works to reinter remains found (such as at Semiahmoo).
- Tribal Historic Preservation Office

The Schelangen department looks at sensitive areas. He is working with Whatcom County to include cultural resources in their Shoreline Master Program, and hopes to do the same in San Juan County. He explained that creosote is a significant safety concern, since Lummi fishermen camp on beaches, and it impacts fish. However, they also are concerned with how it is removed so that beaches and sensitive tribal areas are not disturbed.

Terry Stevens provided an update on the process for hiring a director for the Commission. A handout was provided outlining estimates for key dates in the process. The opening was posted for almost one month, closing on March 31. Terry asked the Commission to make several decisions related to the process including:

- Budget for travel and relocation expenses: the Commission felt that travel expenses should be covered within reason and relocation expenses should be a fixed amount if they are necessary.
- Who should make decisions about which applicants to interview: The Commission confirmed that the ad hoc hiring committee made up of past and current chairs should make these decisions.
- Commissioners serving as references or providing letters of recommendation: Since there are some commissioners or alternates who are listed as a reference or provided a letter of recommendation for some candidates, it was felt that those who are listed only as a reference may still participate in the decision-making process, but that anyone providing a letter of recommendation should recuse themselves from the process.
- Reference checking: reference checks will be done by phone using a standardized list of questions.
- Final decisions: It is expected that interviews will be held on April 27, followed by presentations by the finalists at the April 28 Commission meeting [*Note: This date has been changed. The April 28 meeting was rescheduled to May 19 at Padilla Bay NERR.*], The Commission will then hold an executive session to discuss the decision, then make the final decision during public meeting.

There was an opportunity to ask any final questions or raise concerns. Anne noted that unless additional concerns or questions were raised at this time, the completion of this discussion indicates approval of the process as outlined. MRCs should be sure that an official representative is able to attend the April 28 meeting in order to participate in the final decision. For some MRCs, this may require officially appointing a second alternate at their April meeting, since an unofficial alternate will not be able to participate in the final decision.

During administrative matters, Sasha described the duties of a new Washington Conservation Corps administrative assistant. Caitlin McDermott will be attending Commission meetings, helping with meeting and other event logistics, as well as other administrative tasks. She will be spending from 10-20 hours per week on Northwest Straits Commission work.

The June 30 meeting date was discussed, with a question about whether to hold the meeting or cancel it due to the close proximity to the Independence Day holiday. A decision will be made at the April meeting. Ginny announced that, Kathleen Drew from the Governor's office has agreed to attend the June 2 Commission meeting to discuss the work of the Ocean Policy Work Group.

Ginny discussed the strategic planning matrix document which MRC representatives decided should be revisited in March. It was meant as a discussion tool, not as a specific assignment. Not all MRCs addressed this, but those who did felt it was a good process to go through.

It was announced that the creosote removal proposal to NOAA's Marine Debris program was the top ranking proposal. There has not been a final decision, but it is expected to be recommended for full funding. This proposal for \$111,500 is to remove rogue logs only.

During public comment Gerald Larson asked if the Commission would be interested in participating in writing a letter to support a state shellfish hatchery. Tom recommended that the MRC address this and then ask the Commission for support of their letter. This phased process ensures that the Commission doesn't get ahead of the MRC.

Scott McCreery noted that there may be an opportunity to tour a new oil tanker in Port Angeles in the coming months. The tour could be combined with a presentation on oil spill response efforts in Puget Sound and possibly ballast water. He is not sure yet how many people can be accommodated or what the date would be, but will work through the Commission staff to coordinate.

David Roberts provided an overview of some of the work that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is doing in the region. DNR is working with Whatcom County regarding some changes to the Cherry Point aquatic reserve. DNR is working with the San Juan MRC and USFWS regarding some new protective measures for tidelands around refuge sites. A restoration process is being developed with Sound transit in Snohomish County.

Lisa Kaufman of the Department of Natural Resources made a presentation on the regional creosote removal project. To date, several smaller projects have been done and there is now a larger infusion of funds from the Puget Sound Partnership. Removals have been done in Whatcom, Skagit and Island Counties. To date, over 460 tons have been removed. For the work to be done in the next three years, there will be many partners involved, and there will be an emphasis on piling removal. The overall goals are:

- Remove 2,500 tons of pilings and 800 tons of beach debris
- Completion of an inventory of all structures before removal
- GIS tools and database for removal prioritizations and phase 2-3 sites
- Leverage funds for additional removal

The Department of Natural Resources has already completed the programmatic SEPA process for the beach removals and is working on another programmatic SEPA for piling removal. Protocols for removal of pilings are being developed now in coordination with permitting agencies. Full extraction of pilings is the preferred option.

There are several early action sites, including Spencer Spit and American Camp. Additional sites that have already been surveyed are also targeted for early removals, such as Jetty Island, Admiralty bay, Lake Hancock, Blake Island, etc.

The Department of Natural Resources is interested in MRC assistance with outreach efforts, to recruit volunteers for inventories, and to report local densities of pilings. Some inventory work must be completed by June 15, 2006.

Committee Reports

Duane Fagergren reported on the meeting of the **Executive Committee**. This included a briefing from Tom on his recent trip to Washington DC and an update on Katrina Lassiter's progress on the data coordination project and other tasks. The recent Marine Managers Work Session was debriefed, and Ginny will provide an overview and lessons learned at the next Commission meeting. The Committee also talked about the planned Science Gaps workshop and recommends that the Commission find ways to participate in the Puget Sound Partnership's science forums rather than duplicate efforts.

Phyllis Kind reported on behalf of the **Growth and Development Committee** that Joan is doing a great job working on funding opportunities and planning. The Foundation has recently been notified of two awards, including funding from the Puget Sound Action Team's PIE program for Shore Stewards expansion and from the Charlotte Martin Foundation for work on the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area.

Sasha Horst reported on behalf of the **Education Committee** that a communications audit is currently being contracted and some significant web updates will be coming soon.

Tom Cowan reported on behalf of the **Tribal Committee**. The Committee plans to meet on April 20 at Padilla Bay, and will provide a report at the next meeting.

MRC Reports

Clallam MRC has now officially contracted with WSU for project coordination and minor staff support; is seeking three new members; had a presentation from WDFW on Biological Management of the Geoduck Clam; will contribute some funding for Marine Shoreline Landowner workshops coordinated by the Puget Sound Action Team in the county next year. **Island County** had a presentation on the regional creosote removal project from DNR; had a presentation from WA State Ferries on the 5 options currently being considered for the Keystone terminal project; discussed restoration sites identified in a recent shoreline study by Jim Johannesen; is working with graphic designers to do shoreline signage; have a draft of the *Getting to the Water's Edge* book now available. **Jefferson MRC** has a new member, Jim

Donaldson, Molluscan shellfish hatchery and nursery consultant; relocated approximately 4,000 Olympia oysters from near a collapsing structure; is considering a phased expansion of the eelgrass protection zones; is proposing an expansion of their shoreline armoring project to include conceptual design of armoring removal projects in 3-5 locations; are working on decisions for using FY2006 funds. **San Juan MRC** recently presented to the County Council; drafted a letter to the San Juan County Council in regard to CAO updates; participated in coordinating the Marine Managers Work Session, which brought together over 40 individuals from a variety of agencies and organizations; is working with the Lummi Nation to hire summer interns to investigate the status of San Juan County's marine resources through time according to personal accounts from individuals and report on historic cultural sites along San Juan County's shorelines and how they relate to marine resources; had a presentation on the HPA approval process from WDFW. **Skagit MRC** worked on discussing and making decisions about how to spend FY 2006 funding, which will likely include some funding for continued creosote removal; prepared a report to the community brochure, developed by MRC members that is now available. **Snohomish MRC** partnered with PSAT, People for Puget Sound and others on our shoreline landowner workshops, which were successful and attended by over 150 people; is coordinating a rot cord education program to improve harvesting practices of Dungeness Crab and decrease the impact of derelict fishing gear; are preparing for this year's juvenile Dungeness crab habitat survey program, which will include surveying twice a month at low tides at 5 sites along Snohomish County. **Whatcom MRC** had a well-attended presentation from NMFS on Cherry Point herring, including how the agency arrived at its conclusion that it was not a distinct population; prepared and sent a letter to community leaders on the Bellingham waterfront redevelopment; discussed strategic planning to find areas that may need additional focus, and found that limited staff time is a major hurdle to overcome.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Padilla Bay NERR, Mount Vernon
Skagit County
May 19, 2006, 10:00pm-3:45pm**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Susan Bauer, Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Jim Slocomb (alt.), Duane Fagergren, Joe Schmitt, Terry Williams, Andrea Copping, Joe Gaydos, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Amy Kraham (alt.)
Members absent: Buck Meloy, Kathy Fletcher, Jody Kennedy, Kent Scudder
Alternates attending: Scott McCreery, Paul Sund
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst
Support Terry Stevens, Caitlin McDermott, Sally Hintz

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am. Anne Murphy, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. There were no changes to the agenda.

Terry Stevens provided an overview of the Northwest Straits Commission Director hiring process leading up to today's interviews and the process for the day. Each Commissioner received a folder with all hiring documents, resumes and cover letters/references. Tom Cowan outlined what he believes are the key attributes for the director.

Applicant Lew Moore was interviewed from 10:15 to 11:00 AM

The minutes of the March 31 meeting were approved as written.

During administrative matters, the June 30 meeting date was discussed and a decision was made to change the date and location to June 29 (Thursday) in Snohomish County. Also during administrative matters, a decision was made to hold the November 3-4 MRC Conference at Rosario Resort on Orcas in San Juan County.

Officer elections were held, with the nomination committee recommending Duane Fagergren as chair and Phyllis Kind as vice chair. No other nominations were brought forward. It was moved and approved by consensus to elect Duane Fagergren as chair and Phyllis Kind as vice chair starting at the June 2 meeting.

The Commission thanked Anne Murphy for serving as vice chair and then chair of the Commission. Anne worked very hard on behalf of the Commission, and has provided great leadership. She was given a plaque and a gift certificate as a thank you for all her extra work.

Committee Reports were provided in written format only, with the exception of the Tribal Committee. The tribal committee recommended that the \$40,000 from FY2006 be used to augment the *Shadow of the Salmon* video production. The additional funds will provide a curriculum to go with the production, and allow for broad distribution in schools and elsewhere in the state. The additional funds make a total of \$80,000 in tribal project funds over two years for this project. It was moved and approved by consensus to use the \$40,000 tribal project funds from FY2006 to augment the Shadow of the Salmon project.

MRC reports were provided in written format only.

Applicant Gabrielle LaRoche was interviewed from 11:30am-12:15pm.

During public comment, Scott McCreery reminded the Commission that he is still working on scheduling a tour of the oil tanker ship and will contact staff once he has more information. The ship has been delayed due to maintenance in Alaska.

A poster from the California derelict fishing gear removal project was shown, as this project is now underway, based on the Northwest Straits Commission project model.

Applicant David Roberts was interviewed from 1:30pm-2:15pm.

The Commission convened an Executive Session at 2:20pm, according to Rule 7c of the Rules of Procedure, which allows for an Executive Session “to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for employment or to review the performance of an employee”.

The Commission reconvened as a public meeting at 3:45pm. Terry Stevens was asked to follow up on some procedural issues and report back to the Executive Committee by May 26 if possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on June 2 at Fort Worden in Port Townsend, Jefferson County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Fort Worden State Park, Port Townsend
Jefferson County
June 2, 2006, 10:00pm-3:00pm**

Members attending: Kent Scudder, Kathy Fletcher, Susan Bauer, Phyllis Kind, Ivar Dolph (alt.), Duane Fagergren, Chris Fairbanks (alt.), Terry Williams, Andrea Copping, Joe Gaydos, Tod Wakefield (alt.)
Members absent: Buck Meloy, Jody Kennedy, Anne Murphy, Polly Fischer, Joe Schmitt
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst
Support Terry Stevens, Caitlin McDermott

Duane Fagergren, chair, opened the meeting started at 10:00am with introductions. Michelle Sandoval, deputy mayor of Port Townsend welcomed the group and described the importance of the marine waters and shorelines to Port Townsend and Jefferson County residents.

The minutes of the May 19 meeting were approved as written.

Joe Gaydos gave a short presentation on marine birds and some of the factors that complicate the data about them. There are over 100 species with different life strategies, different issues are associated with the declines of bird species, and some factors are outside the Puget Sound region. Both funding for research and education are difficult. A workshop was held last year to identify gaps in science, management and educational effort and it was quickly realized that there are a lot of gaps and there is a need to expand the circle of people working on bird issues. One key connection is the decline of forage fish as it relates to the decline of certain bird species.

Hilary Culverwell explained her role at the Puget Sound Action Team working on bird issues. The draft Puget Sound Conservation/Recovery plan identifies birds as a concern for the first time. Hilary is currently working to identify PSAT's role with regards to marine birds which includes coordinating workshops to bring together federal, state and local partners; data coordination; and including marine birds in the conservation/recovery plan. Hilary also talked about ways that the Commission and MRCs might get involved. This included participating as citizen volunteers for ongoing studies (such as ferry surveys), and outreach/education of communities and boaters.

Discussion followed about potential indicator species for marine birds, and whether there is enough interest to follow up with this as a track for the November conference. John Piatt, who works for the US Geological Survey doing seabird and marine ecosystem research at the Alaska Biological

Science Center, stressed the importance of understanding natural changes and the link between bird populations and their food source. Species declining the most are those that depend on forage fish. He recommends doing boat surveys to collect data on all species throughout all habitat types rather than one indicator species. Judy D'Amore talked about the work that the Port Townsend Marine Science Center done on marine bird education.

Kathleen Drew, the Governor's Executive Policy Advisor, provided background information about the Ocean Policy Work Group (OPWG), and updated the Commission on its work to date. She serves as chair with members representing state agencies, legislative members, tribes, local government and port associations, and other contributions from public and private experts. The OPWG has five policy focus areas, including marine resource stewardship, sustainable and resilient communities, coastal vulnerabilities from marine sources, ocean observation/research/education, and governance.

The OPWG has a series of public meetings underway and is working to produce a summary report on the conditions of the state's ocean resources and recommendations for policy, legislative and coordination improvements. Kathleen requested feedback from MRCs and the Commission on governance models. The Commission discussed the different models of governance and the potential for new MRCs in coastal counties. Several mentioned how different the outer coast is from Puget Sound, and that county divisions may not be the best if an MRC type model is used. Communities along the outer coast are remote and need ways to connect to resources. It was noted that a bottom-up approach such as the MRC model cannot be forced on a community, as it will only succeed if it is driven by local priorities.

Administrative matters included:

- Creosote removal at Keystone: Ginny gave an update of the creosote removal operations that have taken place so far. In Island County, removal operations were done at Keystone, removing approximately 40.5 tons of material. The amount of plastic found on the beach was incredible, as well. Additional creosote removal operations are scheduled throughout the summer. The Foundation's creosote removal proposal also ranked number one for the NOAA Marine Debris funding for this year, so additional funding is expected in the next year.
- Lew Moore was introduced as the Commission's recommendation for the position of director, and Terry Stevens explained that the offer has not officially been made by the Department of Ecology at this point.
- MRC Representatives were encouraged to remind the members of their MRC to put the November 3-4 training conference on their calendars. It will be held at Rosario Resort in San Juan County. Suggestions for sessions and format should also be forwarded as soon as possible.
- A retirement party is planned for Tom Cowan on July 13 at Padilla Bay. Sasha will be sending invitations to MRC and Commission members soon. Commissioners should send any additional names for the invitation list right away.
- Sasha provided a brief update on the derelict gear project, noting that an amendment was done to the Natural Resources Consultants contract to include some tunicate removal work at Blaine Harbor. A report of this work is expected soon. A small contract is being written to do bone identification of remains collected during derelict fishing gear removal operations.

This will identify species and hopefully allow us the possibility of seeking ESA funding for gear removal in the future.

- Terry Stevens proposed that a Request for Qualifications be issued in the next month for assistance with the non-technical coordination of the derelict fishing gear project. This would be funded with part of the NOAA Marine Debris money, and was anticipated as part of that proposal. The contract resulting from the RFQ is expected to be approximately \$90,000-100,000. The Commission approved moving forward with the RFQ.
- Scott McCreery was unable to attend but suggested dates for a tour of the Alaska Defender oil tanker. Those interested in participating should contact Sasha. (*Note: Due to logistical difficulties, the tour has been postponed*).

Katrina Lassiter, intern for the Commission, gave an overview of her work on the Data Coordination project. Her work has focused on metadata, which is data that describes other data. She has collected information from the Commission and MRCs about projects done in which data was collected. The next step is to build a database. The Commission has funding for this in the ecosystem budget, and it was agreed that the project should move forward. In addition to collecting metadata, Katrina has taken some initial steps to put together a map with icons showing projects done in several counties. She will continue to refine this and bring it back to the Commission at a later date.

Pat Pearson, lead staff for Jefferson MRC, gave an update on projects that the MRC is doing. The MRC coordinator and chair (Gabrielle LaRoche and Judy Surber) are attending a Shoreline Master Program (SMP) planning meeting, which is one of the new projects the MRC is participating in. Their Voluntary Eelgrass Protection Zones are again marked with buoys for the season, with no boats anchoring inside the eelgrass zone. Pat unveiled two sample maps produced that show a variety of layers such as slope stability, eelgrass, structures and ownership. These are ready to tie in with the SMP process, and workshops are planned as well as a charrette. Pat noted that the recent storms were excellent examples of what armoring does, and the timing is good to do more public outreach about alternatives.

MRC representatives provided updates on their recent activities.

Clallam: Revised their bylaws and elected new officers, with Doug Morrill now serving as MRC chair. A new member joined the MRC – Gordon Zumach. Have been doing PSP monitoring this spring, with levels still non-detectable. Clallam and Jefferson MRCs will hold a joint meeting on June 19.

Island: Island MRC has not met since the May 19 meeting, but Phyllis mentioned that they now have a water quality monitoring buoy in the water in Coupeville.

Jefferson: Another Beach Watcher class has graduated in Jefferson County and they are now surveying the whole county for creosote.

San Juan: the San Juan MRC has not met since the May 19 meeting, so there is no additional report.

Skagit: Ivar reported on the Olympia oyster project, and said that one area of plantings failed due to silt. Oyster shells have recently been placed on the beach as cultch.

Snohomish: The MRC has not met since the May 19 meeting, but Kent mentioned that several MRC members recently attended a watershed forum meeting to discuss shared priorities and funding.

Whatcom: Recently held a community outreach meeting on habitat restoration led by Brian Williams of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Hilary Culverwell of PSAT. The

MRC has also met recently to discuss the upcoming proposal for their action grant funding. Two projects were recommended, including a Squalicum waterway restoration and a wood waste removal project in Bellingham Bay.

Kathy Fletcher summarized the recent activities of the Puget Sound Partnership. The Governor has charged the Partnership with finding out what needs to be done, how science should be involved, what the governance scheme should be, how to fund it and how to engage the public. A preliminary report will be presented after the start of July. So far some initial surveys have been done, as well as public forums. Joe Gaydos and Andrea have been involved on the science side of the partnership. A major science workshop was held in May, and there is ongoing discussion about how to engage the scientific community. Terry Williams is also participating, and is focused on how to incorporate the message of cultural sustainability. An effort was made to identify how much State funding is used for restoration and protection in Puget Sound. The next step are determining whether it is being spent on the highest priorities

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting will be on Thursday, June 29 at the Inn at Port Gardner in Everett, Snohomish County.



**Northwest Straits Commission
Inn at Port Gardner, Everett
Snohomish County
June 29, 2006 10:00am-3:00pm**

Decisions and Future Agenda Topics

Members attending: Susan Bauer, Andrea Copping, Anne Murphy, Polly Fischer, Phyllis Kind, Duane Fagergren, Jody Kennedy, Joe Gaydos, Kent Scudder, Amy Kraham
Members absent: Joe Schmitt, Terry Williams
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Lew Moore
Support: Terry Stevens, Caitlin McDermott, Joan Drinkwin

Duane Fagergren, chair, opened the meeting starting at 10:00am with a welcome and introductions.

Kirke Sievers, chair of the Snohomish County Council, welcomed the group and described his interest in the marine environment as someone who fishes and crabs recreationally.

Dawn Lawrence, chair of the Snohomish MRC, gave a short presentation on the Snohomish MRC's current projects, including education of recreational crabbers on use of escape cord, upcoming community beach expos, targeted shoreline landowner workshops, juvenile Dungeness Crab habitat survey, derelict gear survey below 100 ft., mapping intertidal and subtidal eelgrass, creosote log survey and removal, water quality monitoring and assessment, and oil spill response plan updates. Dawn also highlighted the MRC's previous accomplishments and talked about how the MRC plans to build its program and the MRC's current strengths and challenges.

Chrys Bertolotto, WSU Beach Watcher coordinator for Skagit/Snohomish counties gave a short presentation on the expansion of the Shore Stewards program to Whatcom, Clallam, Skagit and Snohomish counties. Chrys explained that Shore Stewards are shoreline property owners and residents of waterfront communities with shared beach access who voluntarily participate in the program. Participants must agree to follow at least three of ten "Guidelines for Shoreline Living". These guidelines help create and preserve a healthy shoreline environment for fish, wildlife, and birds. Chrys reviewed the ten guidelines, and she conveyed the Shore Stewards' goals and role of the WSU Beach

Watchers in the Shore Stewards program. This year there are twelve shoreline landowner workshops planned in the region, to be held in coordination with other partners.

During Committee Reports, the Executive Committee, chair Phyllis Kind, reported on progress for the upcoming MRC Training Conference November 3-4. The Committee is looking for input on themes for the conference. Ideas should be sent in the next month. Discussion at the meeting brought out the idea of a science track that would engage the local science community and provide more in-depth information for MRCs about how to choose good projects based on science. The Executive Committee also discussed ecosystem/transboundary projects and noted that there is not currently a process for making decisions about the projects to be undertaken. It was recommended that the technical committee spend some time identifying potential projects from the Science Gaps report and previous Commission discussions, and then lead a discussion at a future Commission meeting. The Committee also reviewed the status of the upcoming MRC grant amendments. It was recommended that a team of non-MRC Commissioners do initial review based on internal, non-technical criteria for the proposals. The Tribal Committee reported that Northwest Indian News is producing a show on derelict fishing gear removal that will be shown on KVOS (Channel 12 in Bellingham) and possibly elsewhere. The Growth and Development Committee highlighted that Joan Drinkwin has been able to complete and submit some proposals, and that they have been invited to submit the full proposal for Marine Debris due in July. The committee talked about other strategies for fundraising and will meet again in early July. The Committee will bring changes to the implementation plan to the Foundation Board in July.

The minutes of the June 2 meeting were approved as written. It was agreed that detailed minutes would be continued to be produced as they have been for the past few months.

During administrative matters, the status of MRC amendments was reviewed. To date, Island and San Juan have submitted their grant amendment proposals. The deadline for submitting proposals is September 30, though MRCs are encouraged to submit as soon as possible. The November 3-4 MRC Training Conference was mentioned, and MRC representatives are encouraged to remind their MRC members to mark the date on their calendars. Sasha updated the Commission on the status of the RFQQ (Request for Qualifications and Quotations) for a non-technical liaison for the derelict fishing gear removal project. It is expected to be advertised soon, and a contract developed in the next few months. A West Coast Native Oyster Restoration Workshop is being held by NOAA September 6-8 in San Rafael, CA. There may be opportunities to attend, so anyone interested should contact Ginny for more information.

During public comment, Sally Hintz from Senator Cantwell's office said the energy and water bill is going through appropriation committee. This affects areas where the Commission works. Tom asked Sally if the Coast Guard bill passed and whether there is a marine debris component to it. Sally said she would check, since there was a press release about it the day before, but noted that the ballast water component is not part of it. There was no other public comment.

Lew Moore gave a short talk on the linkage between Northwest Straits Commission and the Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership). He has been meeting with some key individuals, including Billy Frank, Brad Ack and Jay Manning, and feels that the Commission is not as involved as it should be and that the Commission needs to be proactive in becoming familiar to the Partnership. Staff has been given the task of drafting a letter to the Partnership, and a brief presentation is planned during public comment at the July 22nd meeting. Lew stressed that everyone involved in the Initiative needs to communicate with people in and outside the process. This is all related to a larger discussion about how and where the Commission is telling its story. Discussion followed about the role the Commission wants to play in the Partnership. Andrea said that the Commission needs to call attention to its model and talk about what the MRCs do already. It was noted that, if there is one, there should be Commission representation on a governance subcommittee.

MRC Representatives were asked in advance to come to the meeting prepared to discuss their planning process and the overall status of their work.

Clallam: There was no representative from Clallam MRC present to participate in the discussion.

Island: The MRC's main projects right now are Shore Stewards, Marine Stewardship Areas, and Getting to the Water's Edge. Other projects include Pigeon Guillemots survey, a water quality project, and juvenile estuary seining in four areas. They have a retreat every year as part of their planning process.

Jefferson: The MRC expects to expand three current projects (Olympia oysters, eelgrass, and shoreline armoring) in the next year to make them more significant projects. The MRC is involved with various partners and is always doing outreach. They learned that the No Anchor Zone is a great project that they want to hand over to someone.

San Juan: Their biggest project is Marine Stewardship Area. The MRC is coming up with new strategic management recommendations. They use a planning tool called the Five S Process, developed by The Nature Conservancy. This approach has electronic workbook that looks at marine system through a relational database. This process is also producing data gaps. This has been a good tool for San Juan, since they are focused on protection rather than restoration. It has also been a good way to engage the community.

Skagit: The MRC has several new members. They have recently done a spartina pull, and have some restoration projects coming up. They have been working on planning for the next year of projects.

Snohomish: Expects to do continuation and completion of current projects in the next year, with a few new projects. These projects were originally designed larger than they were proposed last year, so they will be easy to scale up. They hope to receive additional funding from the county for staffing, which is what limits their ability to undertake new projects. They will hold a strategic planning retreat this fall to devise a five-year plan

Whatcom: Whatcom is now planning a retreat. They have recently done a lot of work on clams, and are performing mostly volunteer oriented projects right now and outreach is a big part of the work they do. They are interested in using additional funding for staff.

There was a discussion about the value of having a five-year plan, and whether potential projects are being approached strategically, based on sound science, and addressing benchmarks. One key issue identified was the limited staff time available both at the MRC and Commission level. Lew raised the topic of adding another staff person at the Commission level to assist with MRC and tribal participation.

This was Tom's last meeting as Director of the Commission, and he thanked everyone and said he appreciated the opportunity to work for the Commission, and felt that the most important aspect was the valuable relationships that were made as part of this job. The Commission thanked Tom for his work on behalf of the Initiative. A retirement event will be held on July 13 at Padilla Bay.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm. The next meeting will be on Friday, July 28 at the Best Western Tulalip Inn in Marysville.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission
Tulalip Inn, Marysville
July 28, 2006, 10:45am-3:00pm**

Decisions and Future Agenda Topics

Attending: Jody Kennedy, Polly Fischer, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Kathy Fletcher, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Anne Murphy, Susan Bauer, Amy Kraham, (alt.), Terry Williams, Kirby Johnson (alt.)
Not attending: Joe Schmitt, Buck Meloy, Kent Scudder, Joe Gaydos
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Lew Moore
Support: Terry Stevens, Sally Hintz, Christy Gullion

Duane Fagergren, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. Terry Williams provided a brief welcome on behalf of the Tulalip Tribes.

Additions to the agenda included a discussion of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration program and the status of the work of the Puget Sound Partnership.

Ginny Broadhurst provided a summary of the work done to date on the derelict fishing gear removal project, including budget status, current and future projects. She noted that approximately \$1.2 million has been received since the start of the project in 2002. The current goal for the derelict gear project is to remove 80-90% of gear in high priority areas in the Northwest Straits and she is working closely with our Foundation to develop new funding sources. Removal of gear is still the primary goal of the project, but other components have become increasingly important. Education, prevention strategies, identifying research needs, undertaking a cost-benefit analysis and identification of species are all components of the project that have developed over time. Jeff June, project manager, gave a presentation describing the work done to develop and improve the database of gear locations, survey to locate and verify gear locations, and remove gear in high priority areas. To date, 77 acres of habitat have been restored to their natural habitat function.

The Commission discussed the future of the derelict fishing gear project and long-term strategies for continuing the project. It was recognized that prevention and education are important to reducing gear loss in the future, and that it is important to build capacity to manage the project over time. In addition to project expansion in other areas of the country, other organizations and tribes are participating in derelict fishing gear removal

projects in Puget Sound. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife houses the reporting database, but is in need of funding for a staff person to approve removal plans and manage the database.

Jeff June thanked the Tulalip Tribes for their efforts to collect information about tribal gear loss and reduce the impact of derelict fishing gear.

During public comment, Christy Gullion mentioned that Senator Murray has succeeded in getting \$1.6 million for the Northwest Straits Commission in the Senate bill. It is not known at this time what the final budget will look like for Fiscal Year 2007.

Kurt Nelson and Maria Calvi of the Tulalip Tribes presented information about the Qwuloolt Estuary Restoration Project. The goal of the project is to restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the habitat and functions lost at the nearby Tulalip landfill superfund site so that a functioning estuary marsh system can redevelop and ultimately provide benefits salmon and other fish and wildlife. The project will restore 360 acres of this critical estuary habitat and improve fish passage to 16 miles of spawning and rearing habitat in Allen and Jones Creeks. Historically, the Qwuloolt site was influenced daily by tides and river flows and composed of tidal marsh, forest and scrub-shrub habitats, interlaced by tidal channels and mudflats. Today the project area is cut-off from tides and river flows by levees and tide gates, which also impair fish passage to Allen and Jones Creeks. The site conditions provide minimal habitat for wildlife. However, because the site is located almost entirely within the floodplain and is undeveloped it provides an excellent opportunity for restoration. The overall approach of the project is to create a cost effective, self-sustaining estuary system on the site that requires minimal construction and maintenance and allows natural processes to occur and critical functions to evolve and improve. They are now working on data collection, environmental compliance, permitting and design, and monitoring. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2007.

Committee reports

Executive Committee, Phyllis Kind, reported on agenda development for the November MRC training conference, and noted that the retirement party held for Tom Cowan was a successful event. Many thanks to everyone who participated, contributed or attended.

Kathy Fletcher gave a status report on the work of the Puget Sound Partnership. A preliminary report was released on July 11 and is available on their web site at www.pugetsoundpartnership.org. Three subcommittees have been appointed to provide recommendations for the action agenda.

A discussion of governance was an important part of the July meeting, and much of the discussion was focused on accountability. Lew Moore attended the Partnership meeting on July 22, and provided a short public comment about the Northwest Straits Initiative. He has met with a number of the partners and staff as well as other interested people, and will continue to communicate with the Partnership about what our role could be in the

process. It was recognized that the Initiative should discuss and be clear internally what the best outcome would be.

Education Committee, Kathy Fletcher: Kathy provided a summary of the recent work done by Resource Media to audit our communications program. They provided some good recommendations and priorities. The Education Committee has discussed their role and expects to be more of a catalyst. Having each MRC represented on the committee is important to ensure MRCs are being served well by the work being done. Sasha will send the Resource Media report to the Commission next week. The first action to be taken is to develop an internal communications product, which is envisioned as an email bulletin to be sent to all MRC and Commission members on a regular basis. In the past, the procedure for communication has been to send information only to MRC chairs, lead staff and Commission representatives, so this will be a change from that approach. MRC representatives should notify their MRC members about this change and provide feedback if there are concerns or questions.

Science/Technical Committee, Andrea Copping reported on projects recently funded by the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP), including five in the Northwest Straits region. Future funding through PSNERP is expected to be \$2 million per year, and projects must be part of a salmon recovery plan. The Technical Committee met to discuss ecosystem projects and have narrowed down the list developed at the previous Commission retreat to a list of four projects. No scoping or cost estimates have been done for these projects, the committee is looking to the Commission for direction on which rise to the top of the list. Commissioners should expect to bring input from their MRCs at the August meeting. In addition to the list of four projects, Lew would like to add the modeling project as a project to consider. Sasha will send the list of projects to Commissioners by Tuesday, August 1. The technical committee is also planning a Science Gaps workshop, and is targeting early November as a potential time frame. This is an opportunity to look for hallmark projects

Tribal Committee, Terry Williams. No meeting of the committee was held, but Terry reported that the *Shadow of the Salmon* film script is now complete, and actors have been hired. The next few months will see significant work done on this project,

The Growth and Development Committee, Jody Kennedy, reported on recent proposals submitted. This included two for derelict gear removal (NOAA Marine Debris and Ferguson Foundation) and a letter of inquiry to The Russell Family Foundation to provide funding to develop a five-year strategy to address derelict gear. The Committee also recommended changes to the Fundraising Implementation Plan. Those changes have been addressed during a separate meeting of the Northwest Straits Foundation board.

During administrative matters, the role of the MRCs in the November training conference was discussed, and there was general agreement that a poster session such as last year's would be a good opportunity for MRCs to share information and the focus of sessions should be on outside speakers of interest to MRCs. Climate change is a key topic that was suggested. This was envisioned as a follow up to the introduction last year, at a smaller

scale than the global picture. Also during administrative matters, contact information for Lew Moore was given. He can be reached at the same phone numbers previously used by Tom Cowan (360-428-1085 office or 360-708-2555 cell) and by email at moore@nwstraits.org. Four of the seven MRC proposals for FY2006 grant funding have been received and are at various stages of review. The deadline for these is September 30, 2006. Lew is now preparing a proposal for additional Commission staff and expects to present ideas to the Executive Committee in September.

The minutes of the June 29 meeting were approved as written.

MRC representatives provided summary reports of recent activities:

Clallam MRC: has discussed projects to be proposed for FY2006 funding, but has not yet prioritized and prepared the full proposal. The MRC has two new members: Dr. Ron Thom, from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Aleta Erickson, shellfish biologist for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. The MRC also discussed how to involve the local business community at their recent meeting.

Island MRC: Had a presentation from Katrina Lassiter, NWSC intern and graduate student at the UW School of Marine Affairs. She is developing evaluation methods for interpretive signage using Island and Jefferson as case studies; 60 new Shore Stewards have been enrolled on Whidbey Island this year; expect to print the book "Getting to the Water's Edge" in September; have completed estuary seining and are preparing final reports; are now monitoring pigeon guillemots by camera using volunteers and a special camera.

Jefferson MRC: is interested in hosting a forum on geoduck aquaculture and is seeking suggestions for non-industry representatives. The MRC issued a press release seeking information regarding the loss of the eelgrass protection zone buoy which resulted in the return of the buoy, and are researching floating key chains for the eelgrass protection project. The MRC is developing plans for their spring 2007 oyster planting. They are working with partners to schedule two Shoreline Landowner workshops this fall.

San Juan MRC: is seeking information about tidal energy projects and plans to submit comments on the projects recently proposed in San Juan County. The MRC drafted a proposed County Council resolution to update our charter to be consistent with the new council-administrator structure of county government. The Committee sent the first completed draft of the MSA plan's viability analysis to a select group of scientific reviewers with expertise in San Juan County's marine resources. Contracted Friends of the San Juans to map eelgrass beds in select shallow bays and completed the fieldwork phase in July.

Skagit MRC: made significant progress in developing their proposal for FY2006 funding and will submit their proposal shortly. Received an application for membership and two letters of resignation from Russel Barsh and Bob Knowles. The MRC had a presentation on native oyster genetics.

Snohomish MRC: Has completed deepwater surveys for derelict fishing gear and found that there are a lot of pots in the deeper areas. The MRC has most recently been working on a proposal for the FY2006 funding, and are planning a joint meeting with Skagit MRC in August.

Whatcom MRC: The MRC has completed two of three clam surveys and have had enthusiastic volunteers and successful survey work done. It is expected that this data will enable the MRC to find appropriate sites for future enhancement. Water quality monitoring is also happening along with the survey work. The MRC will team with Nooksack Recovery Team to provide community outreach on water quality issues. The MRC is interested in a facilitated long-range planning retreat, and are seeking graduate students to do rockfish dive surveys.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be held at the Friday Harbor Yacht Club on August 25.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission
Friday Harbor Yacht Club
Friday Harbor, San Juan County
August 25, 10:20am-3:00pm**

Decisions and Future Agenda Topics

DRAFT

Attending: Jody Kennedy, Polly Fischer, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Kathy Fletcher, David Freed (alt.), Gabrielle LaRoche (alt.), Susan Bauer, Amy Kraham (alt.), Joe Gaydos, Kent Scudder, Johnny Palka (alt.)
Not attending: Joe Schmitt, Buck Meloy, Phyllis Kind, Terry Williams
Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Lew Moore
Alternates: Paul Sund

Duane Fagergren, chair, opened the meeting with introductions.

Mike Ahrenius of the Port of Friday Harbor welcomed the group to Friday Harbor and the San Juan Islands. The Port works to maintain public access to the water and provide public outreach and education. The Port hopes that the Commission can use its broader influence in the region to provide additional education on marine issues.

Additions to the agenda included an update on the status of the work of the Puget Sound Partnership.

The minutes of the July 28 meeting were approved as written.

A handout was provided listing the four ecosystem projects recommended by the Technical Committee, along with one project proposed by Lew Moore. Andrea Copping gave an overview of the Puget Sound Modeling project proposed by Lew. This project is a numerical, hydrodynamic model with an unstructured grid that allows viewing at a larger or smaller scale within the project target areas. This type of modeling has been used to forecast the impacts of restoration projects. Examples of projects were shown, including animations of water circulation data in Port Susan and Everett Bay. The Commission discussed the potential applications for MRCs. To date, model applications have been at a fairly large scale. Pacific Northwest National Labs has been working on this and the area covered by the model so far includes Skagit Bay to Swinomish Channel;

Leque Island Restoration/West Pass between Port Susan and Skagit Bay; and the Padilla Bay/Skagit Bay systems in the next 6-12 months. These projects will complete all of Whidbey basin, though additional validation data can always be added. PNNL is already planning to create the grid for Puget Sound. Funding is needed for calibration data. Each mooring location is approximately \$30,000-\$50,000 and 5-7 stations are needed in the Northwest Straits region. Another demonstration of the model will be given on September 6 at the Jamestown S'Klallam facility in Sequim at 6pm.

Andrea briefly reviewed the other four ecosystem projects. Several people mentioned that it would be worthwhile to hold another meeting about the forage fish project to find out the status of data use and what has happened since the last meeting.

Several MRCs discussed the list of projects at their recent meetings. Jefferson MRC voiced an interest in a blueprint style project or assistance with participation in shoreline master program updating; Island MRC put forage fish and drift cell projects as the top priority; San Juan MRC is interested in the impact of shoreline armoring.

The ecosystem fund must be spent in the next two years. Commission staff will provide an update on the ecosystem budget totals for FY05 and FY06 at the next meeting. At that time, the Commission will make a decision as to which projects should be pursued and whether the ecosystem budget will be used or outside funding sought.

Kevin Ranker of the San Juan County Council welcomed the group to Friday Harbor and provided an overview of the San Juan Initiative. This is an ecosystem-based management project that considers habitat and species management needs from the uplands to the marine waters. Many organizations are recognizing the need to approach management this way, including many significant funding sources. This project is a public-private partnership. The first piece of this effort is to work with a policy group to see what educational, incentive based, voluntary and regulatory policies already exist. There is also a full technical committee that serves as an advisory group. Initial goals include having comprehensive data sets available to local planners and coordination of communication through various levels of government. This is a community effort, and Kevin believes that the San Juan County ecosystem project could be a significant model to be replicated elsewhere.

There was no public comment.

Committee reports

Executive Committee, Phyllis Kind, was not present but a written report noted the highlights of the recent meeting. This included a discussion of the November 3-4 MRC Conference. Invitations have been sent, and Commissioners are encouraged to discuss this at upcoming MRC meetings. The Committee worked on finalizing session topics and overall theme and made assignments to put sessions together. Additional information about logistics and a draft agenda has been sent to MRC Chairs and Lead Staff. The committee met at Pacific Northwest National Labs in August to see a presentation on a Puget Sound modeling project, which is a separate item on the agenda.

Education Committee, Kathy Fletcher. There was no meeting of the Education Committee but it was announced that Resource Media has proposed a project that will assist the Commission in our communications effort by building a network of spokespeople connected to the organization and providing training and assistance with messaging. More information will be provided directly to MRCs in the near future.

Science/Technical Committee, Andrea Copping. Discussed ecosystem projects, but this is a separate item on the agenda. Planning is proceeding on the Science Gaps event, which is anticipated to occur this fall.

Tribal Committee, Terry Williams. No meeting of the committee was held.

Growth and Development Committee, Jody Kennedy. A written report was provided by Joan Drinkwin noting that a letter of inquiry was submitted to the Burning Foundation for derelict gear removal in Snohomish County and a full proposal was submitted to the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation for derelict gear removal in San Juan County. Final copies of the fundraising implementation plan, approved at the last Foundation board meeting, were distributed to the committee by email. Joan has also been soliciting sponsors for the fall MRC conference.

During administrative matters, Ginny reported on the status of the contract for a derelict fishing gear removal project liaison. There was one response to the Request for Qualifications and Quotations, which was advertised on the Department of Ecology web site, the Northwest Straits Commission web site and in the Daily Journal of Commerce. Tom Cowan submitted a bid and was interviewed and selected as the contractor for this project. The contract paperwork is in progress and it is expected that he will begin work in the next month. Five of the seven MRCs have submitted proposals for the FY06 amendment to their grants. Staff is working on processing these, with Whatcom and San Juan now at Ecology. Closing out the fiscal year as of June 30 delayed some of the progress on this, but it is expected these will be moving along shortly. Staff is developing a job description for a fourth position and determining where the budget would come from to fund the position. By the September meeting it is expected that a proposal will be put forward for the Commission to review.

Don Gunderson gave a presentation on Stock Assessment and Fishery Management: Getting the Spatial Scales Right. Don's background is as a fisheries biologist and he has been at the University of Washington for 28 years. He is interested in temperate reefs as an ecosystem. Historically, species management systems were developed based on big stocks with a large range. Many species such as rockfish and greenling do not move much, larval dispersal is minimal, and they mature later in their life cycle. This can create a fundamental problem with management plans developed on a large scale, since distinct populations can easily be overfished. The new goals are to preserve species richness, recognize the importance of age structure, metapopulation structure, and to preserve overall ecosystem structure. This will help to maintain ecosystem function and sustainable fisheries.

There are small reserves in Puget Sound that help show what reserves can do for the fish population. In other areas, gear, season, size and bag limit are the management tools in use. He explained that one approach is to take advantage of the sessile nature of many of these species and our knowledge of habitat to decrease survey and monitoring costs over time and create experimental no fish zones to quantify the effects of fishing and ecosystem processes.

Don is now working to set up a symposium on nearshore reef management. He is looking to the Commission for help with who to include as participants and how to structure it to be most effective. A preliminary white paper is expected by winter 2007 to outline the challenge.

MRC representatives provided summary reports of recent activities:

Clallam MRC worked on their FY06 proposal but did not have a quorum to approve it for submission; will have a booth at the Dungeness River Festival in September with a focus on Marine Debris; completed their deepwater derelict gear project; measured the Sequim Bay Olympia oysters, which have shown good growth and approximately 63% survival.

Island MRC recommended further investigations of forage fish and their trophic interactions, and multidisciplinary study on a single drift cell to look at effects of oceanographic processes, freshwater input, sedimentation, and contaminants on habitat processes and biota as ecosystem projects of the Commission; plan to install signage by year end at Coupeville Wharf; wrote and sent a letter to the Puget Sound Partnership encouraging the replication of the Commission/MRC model in south Puget Sound; have a good contractor working on the water quality data compilation project with results expected in late September, and will be seeking a new Executive Director.

Jefferson MRC had for display a prototype floating keychain for the Eelgrass Protection Zones; had an opportunity to talk about the Commission model to a group of NOAA Sea Grant fellows.

San Juan MRC submitted a 2007 budget proposal to San Juan County for increased funding to enable the Committee's two contracted staff positions to become full-time county employees; Jody Kennedy has resigned as the MRC coordinator but will continue to be involved as a contractor on the MSA project, replacing the existing contractor (Kirsten Evans) who is leaving; a contractor began overflight surveys of the County to record vessel traffic which will continue through September; reviewed and ranked proposals for SRFB; submitted comments to NOAA on the proposed critical area for the Southern Resident Orca; encouraged the County Council to formally intervene in the tidal energy projects proposed for San Juan and Speiden Channels.

Skagit MRC had a presentation from a Shannon Point Marine Center student (Linda Rossell) on Temperature and Shading Effects on Surf Smelt Survival; held a potluck meeting with Snohomish MRC; signed a contract with Jim Johannessen to begin Cell

Drift Analysis for March Point; Margaret Schwertner's last meeting will be in September, so a new MRC chair will be elected earlier than expected.

Snohomish MRC held a joint meeting of the Snohomish and Skagit MRCs at Kayak Point to discuss projects and potential partnering; will participate in hosting shoreline landowner workshops, including one on Hat Island; have tallied over 1700 volunteer hours on sampling juvenile Dungeness crab at five sites, with data analysis this fall.

Whatcom MRC did not provide a written report as Amy was preparing comments for the shoreline master program update deadline August 30. The MRC effort on this was significant, as anything nearshore, marine or otherwise connected to Northwest Straits' benchmarks was considered and commented on. The MRC was able to take advantage of a lot of good technical expertise within the MRC, and the County Council looks carefully at comments provided by the MRC. A copy of the final letter will be forwarded to the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be held on Friday, September 29 at Garrison Hall at Fort Casey Inn, Coupeville.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
September 29 2006 – 10:00am-3:00PM**

Decisions and future agenda items

Present: Phyllis Kind, Kathy Fletcher, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Amy Kraham (alt.), Polly Fischer, Joe Schmitt, Anne Murphy, Jonathan White, Susan Bauer
Absent: Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Terry Williams, Joe Gaydos, Kent Scudder, Buck Meloy
Staff: Lew Moore, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst
Support: Caitlin McDermott

Phyllis Kind opened the meeting at 10:15am. Due to a ferry delay from Port Townsend, a quorum was not yet present in order to take care of agenda business items. The agenda was rearranged in order to accommodate the delayed Commissioners and presenter.

Benye Weber from the Port of Coupeville welcomed the group to Island County and gave a brief overview of the area around Coupeville. She invited everyone to stay for an extended visit in the area, or contact her when visiting the area in the future.

Administrative matters

Lew reported that he is still reviewing the Pacific Northwest National Lab's modeling project and will have an update at the next meeting.

Sasha reported on the status of the FY2005 ecosystem budget. Of the \$86,000, approximately \$53,000 has been committed or spent. A decision was made last year to dedicate some of those funds to the data coordination project, but to date there are no specific commitments for that project. The FY2006 ecosystem budget is \$87,000 of which none has been committed or spent.

Ginny mentioned that the deadline for submitting abstracts for the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference is November 1. MRCs are encouraged to submit papers or posters. If MRCs do not have an adequate travel budget for interested MRC members to attend this conference, please contact Commission staff. Several MRCs noted that they are working on abstracts, including one from Snohomish County on Dungeness crab work and one from Island County on the Pigeon Guillemot study. The Executive Committee is discussing the possibility of a panel session to look at the Northwest Straits model as a cost-efficient approach to marine resource restoration and protection.

A schedule for 2007 Northwest Straits Commission meetings was proposed. One change was made to move the meeting at the end of June to a Thursday rather than a Friday to avoid the Independence Day holiday weekend traffic. The final schedule will be sent out to all Commissioners and alternates with the minutes from this meeting.

Sasha thanked Caitlin McDermott for her work as an Americorps member. Caitlin has worked for a six month term doing administrative support for the Commission. This is her last day and she has already started her new Americorps position with the Anacortes School District.

Lew is working with Terry Stevens and has determined that we have the resources available to add a staff position. A preliminary classification has been determined, and next steps involve working with Ecology to create the new position.

Project Updates

Data coordination: Ginny reported that a new area for this is now on the Commission web site under the “projects” section. Included is a map and spreadsheet of the data collected by Katrina Lassiter. Each MRC contributed to this, and you are encouraged to review your MRC section. The next step will be to link the actual data in to the web site and create a searchable database. Ginny will continue to work towards this and potentially work with an intern on this project.

Creosote: Ginny reported that there is a huge project happening right now at Dungeness Spit, with WCC crews and others tagging logs over the entire eight mile spit. Monday, October 2 will be a big removal event with media, Doug Sutherland, a representative from the Governor’s office and others. Several other removal operations are scheduled over the next months, including Blake Island, Jetty Island and American Camp. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is also planning significant piling removals. This project developed from MRC projects into a Commission project, and then into a much bigger project with DNR. DNR has been able to dedicate a lot of staff time to moving the project forward. There has been a formal notice that the Northwest Straits Foundation will receive NOAA funding in the amount of \$111,500 for removal operations. Discussion followed about the ongoing problem of creosote (particularly in high re-accretion areas), policies about its use, and documenting the problem through research.

Derelict fishing gear: Ginny reported that there has been work in the past year to export the project to new areas, including the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Removal operations took place this past week at Neah Bay of an extremely dangerous net that had quickly accumulated many marine species in the short time it was out. A lot has been learned about when gear does the most damage and there is still work being done to document the impacts. Northwest Indian News is filming a segment on the project that will air on many stations in the region and beyond.

Committee Reports

Technical Committee chair, Andrea Copping, was not present. Ginny reported that there is a conference call of the committee scheduled for next week to discuss next steps on the modeling project. The committee will also revisit the other project ideas based on the input received from MRCs.

Education Committee, chair, Kathy Fletcher. The Education Committee did not meet, but Lew reported that he is working to tune up the web site and tapping people to participate as spokespeople for the Initiative. Once a new staff person is hired it is expected that there will be more time to implement the recommendations of the recent communications audit.

Executive Committee, chair Phyllis Kind. Most of the topics on the Executive Committee report appear elsewhere in the agenda. The fall conference agenda is nearly final and will be sent out, along with additional logistical information, in the next week. Registration is still open for this event, and MRC members are encouraged to attend.

Growth and Development Committee. Jody Kennedy, chair, was not present. Joan Drinkwin reported that a full proposal was invited and submitted to the Russell Family Foundation for funding to rank priority derelict gear removal areas throughout Puget Sound; to develop a strategy and cost estimates to remove 80-90% of gear from priority areas by 2012; and to develop recommendations for ongoing, periodic surveys and removals of future gear accumulations. Several other proposals were submitted during the month. Joan is also developing a project tracking system and has been developing other administrative mechanisms for project and budget tracking.

Tribal Committee. Chair Terry Williams was not present. There was no meeting of the committee but Lew reported that the *Shadow of the Salmon* project has a new production crew and is scheduled to be complete by June, 2007.

There was no public comment.

Carol Piening from the Washington Department of Natural Resources gave a presentation on their Endangered Species Act (ESA) Compliance Project. They are currently working on a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the state. This project was started in 2002 and they are currently holding public meetings for input. Carol welcomed the input from Commissioners and encouraged MRC members to attend the upcoming public meetings. It is anticipated that the HCP will be completed in 2009.

This HCP will apply to habitat that DNR controls, which includes approximately 70% of shorelands associated with rivers and lakes, 30% of tidelands, and 100% of the bedlands. The goal of the Habitat Conservation Plan is both to reduce the agency's liability for impacting ESA listed species and to assist in species recovery. Amy Kraham noted that if the main goal was to reduce the agency's liability the list would probably be made up of species frequently in the area. If the overall goal is to determine what species are impacted by activities on lands managed by DNR, the list might be more inclusive.

They began by looking at just over 100 species, with no plants, invertebrates or insects in their current list of approximately 20 species to be covered by the HCP. This list was developed by looking at what species use the aquatic lands that DNR manages. They then checked the ESA listing status of each species and how they would be impacted by activities on lands managed by DNR. In their current list, 20 species are listed as Endangered Species. They are still working on this list and trying to determine if other species should be included, such as transient orcas or rockfish.

A significant part of the work on this project has been to develop a database that includes layers for the habitat and the activities/leases/encumbrances that DNR manages. This in itself has been an important tool that will be useful outside of the HCP project. Carol explained that ESA listed species are most likely to be impacted by habitat change rather than specific activities. Their next steps include continued stakeholder outreach, National Environmental Policy Act and State Environmental Policy Act processes begin in October 2006, followed by a draft HCP and Environmental Impact Statement in fall 2007.

Ken Urstad and Bob Buck gave a presentation on the Whidbey Basin Estuary Seining Project. They are currently sampling in three watersheds with teams of 2-3 people. The goal of the project is to understand estuaries and determine patterns of fish use in order to determine protection and restoration priorities. This work continues the project that Eric Beamer of the Skagit River Systems Cooperative began in 2002, which was partially funded by the Commission.

This is a volunteer effort that uses the protocols developed by SRSC. In each of the monitoring locations there are sampling sites inside and outside the lagoons. At each location a seine net is set and pulled in. A sample of each species is measured to determine growth patterns. All species are then released. There is also some water quality sampling done. Sampling is done twice each month from February through June. The results are available online at <http://www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/whidbey/seining/>. Beach Watchers are now anticipating that this project will continue for 5-10 years in order to gather data over time.

The Commission discussed the sampling method and survival rates of fish collected. Anne Murphy recommended a “wet seining” method she has used to improve survival rates. There was interest in continuing the discussion about protocols and use of the data with Eric Beamer.

The minutes from the August 25 meeting were approved as written.

MRC Representatives reported on current activities.

Clallam: There was no written report of the Clallam MRC. Joe Schmitt reported that Doug Morrill is the new chair of the MRC. Much of their last meeting was dedicated to a presentation from Ron Thom on the modeling project. The recent Dungeness River Festival was a huge success and very well-attended. They are also revisiting their Olympia oyster monitoring to make sure that the work is being done as expected.

Island MRC: reported that their book “Getting to the Water’s Edge” is in final editing stages; field work is complete for their bluff bird study and they plan to prepare a poster on this project; draft signage has been prepared for their Coupeville Wharf installation; noted that the new Shore Stewards web site is online at www.shorestewards.org.

Jefferson MRC: hosted its annual display booth at the Wooden Boat Festival, where visitors were invited to sign the Eelgrass Protection pledge and in return received a floating waterproof keychain/container in the likeness of the Eelgrass Protection Zone Buoy; Katrina Lassiter also participated in the Festival to interview people about the interpretive signage; the MRC is adapting their Olympia oyster project based on new research and information from the recent West Coast Native Oyster Conference; the MRC is looking at opportunities to engage landowners and find those interested in participating in a demonstration project for shoreline armoring alternatives.

San Juan: reported that lead staff and Commission representative Jody Kennedy is leaving the MRC. They are in the midst of many changes because of that. **The MRC** now has their 2006 amendment in place; completed a draft list of measurable benchmarks/objectives for the MSA plan; completed over-flight surveys of the County to record vessel traffic with a contractor who is now compiling the data and digitizing it to be put into GIS and analyzed as part of the Marine Stewardship Area planning process. Dive surveys in selected bottomfish recovery zones and reference sites were completed this month and the Contractor, Eric Eisenhardt is now working on the analysis. The MRC selected Russel Barsh and Tina Wyllie-Echeverria to analyze tissue samples collected from juvenile Chinook salmon to determine the stock origin.

Skagit MRC: had a presentation from Nancy Rosenbower from the Samish Tribe on fecal coliform results in Fidalgo Bay; said farewell to Margaret Schwertner and elected Jim Ramaglia as the new chair; will participate in Fidalgo Bay Day on September 30 and circulated the Marine Life Trading Cards created by Paul Sund and Jim Ramaglia; held a discussion on the role of the MRC in advocacy. A brief discussion among Commissioners followed, and it was recognized that this should be revisited for more clarity.

Snohomish MRC: Participated in the United Way Day of Caring on September 15 at Jetty Island, which was a huge success and involved over 240 volunteers in a variety of ways. Stef noted this event was particularly good at bringing together volunteers from a variety of backgrounds. The MRC is also assisting with planning for the Shoreline Landowner Workshops in October. A Dungeness Crab

Harvest report is also expected soon from WDFW that will aid in developing potential stewardship and education projects in partnership with WDFW.

Whatcom MRC: continues to be active in commenting on the Whatcom County Shoreline Master Program Update and hopes to continue to keep up the momentum on this work through participation at meetings; have completed survey work for the Clam Restoration project and expect a final report soon; will have a presentation on the regional modeling project at their next meeting; have been asked for assistance in prioritizing marine nearshore projects by the City of Bellingham.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be a brief business meeting on November 3, prior to the start of the annual MRC Training Conference at Rosario Resort in San Juan County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
November 3, 2006 – 1:45pm-4:00PM
Rosario Resort, Orcas Island**

Decisions and future agenda items

Present: Phyllis Kind, Kathy Fletcher, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Buck Meloy, Polly Fischer, Anne Murphy, Jonathan White, Joe Gaydos, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Terry Williams, Scott McCreery (alt.), David Freed (alt.)
Absent: Kent Scudder, Joe Schmitt
Alternates attending: Amy Kraham
Staff: Lew Moore, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst

Duane opened the meeting at 2:00pm with introductions. An update on the Puget Sound Partnership was added to the agenda. Kevin Ranker, San Juan County Commissioner, welcomed the group to San Juan County.

The minutes from the September 29 meeting were approved as written.

During administrative matters, Ginny reported on the progress and planning for the upcoming Research Needs workshop. This workshop will focus on water quality, specifically pathogens and biotoxins. MRC members have been invited to attend. The format of this workshop will help guide the next two workshops in January and February. Sasha clarified the shift in staff roles at the Commission related to MRC grant management. Sasha will now serve as the main point of contact for these grants, and Sharon Riggs will work on contracts for the Commission. Sasha also mentioned that the next MRC Chair/Lead Staff meeting is on December 7. Recommended agenda topics should be passed on to Commission staff in the next week or two. The annual Commission planning retreat will be held on January 17-18, 2007 at the Fort Casey Inn near Keystone on Whidbey Island. MRCs should be sure to inform any incoming Commissioners or Alternates of the dates. Lew reported that he is hoping that a job announcement will be posted for the new staff position in the next several weeks.

Lew provided an introduction to the current work of the Puget Sound Partnership. There has been some discussion of creating MRCs in other counties by the Ocean Policy Work Group. Kathy noted that the Partnership has looked at a structure in which the watershed entities are the lead organization. Discussion followed about what that model would look like and the challenges of such a model outside San Juan County, where the lead entity and the MRC are one body. Amy asked what seemed like the best alternative to watersheds as the lead. Kathy's recommendation is to encourage, empower and fund local groups that are already working well and provide better synchronization and accountability.

Committee Reports

There was no report of the Technical Committee. The committee did hold a conference call to discuss the ecosystem project list.

There was no report of the Education Committee.

Executive Committee, chair Phyllis Kind. The Committee discussed many of the topics that appear elsewhere on the agenda, including the GB/PS Research Conference, the upcoming research needs workshop, the MRC conference and ecosystem projects.

Growth and Development Committee. The committee currently lacks a chair, with the departure of Jody Kennedy. A written report by Joan Drinkwin was discussed. Lew and Terry Williams provided answers to Buck Meloy's questions about the Port Susan project. A proposal for \$5,000 from the Ferguson foundation was funded for derelict gear removal. A proposal for funding was submitted to NOAA Marine Debris Program to fund removal of derelict gear and a proposal was sent to the Bullitt Foundation to fund the initiation of an ecosystem-based management project in Port Susan Bay. The committee held a conference call on October 13 and discussed the current fundraising implementation plan. Anne and Stef explained that the committee would like to add more members, and intends to propose a revised implementation plan in early 2007.

There was no report of the Tribal Committee.

During the ecosystem projects discussion, Lew led a discussion on the proposal to spend \$50,000 on the Puget Sound modeling project to be done with Pacific Northwest National Laboratories. These funds would be used to calibrate the model. Committing these funds would leave approximately \$68,000 in the ecosystem fund from FY05 and FY06. He expects that there will still be some ongoing discussion about this and the four ecosystem projects proposed by the Technical Committee. Lew has talked to both the executive committee and technical committee about this project. Duane asked whether all MRCs had discussed the project, and if there has been follow up with discussion about how the project will benefit MRCs. Lew said that he has talked with many MRC members and Commissioners.

MRCs reported on their discussions of the project. Buck reported that Whatcom MRC had a robust discussion about the project and that it was strongly supported by science-oriented members. Amy noted that there were concerns about how it would benefit the local MRCs and the route that this project took, which appeared to be outside the list proposed by the technical committee. Phyllis reported that Island MRC supported the project and recommends that someone present the project to each MRC. Aundrea McBride from Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC) and the Skagit MRC explained how important the project is for the work of SRSC and expressed support. Snohomish MRC did not discuss the project and did not have any comments. Anne Murphy reported that she was not able to track the project adequately to provide a clear explanation to the Jefferson MRC. She would like to get more clear information to take back to the MRC. David Freed reported that Clallam had some concerns and questions that were not initially answered. Some members of the MRC still do not support the project. The MRC overall was willing to support the project with the general condition that each MRC gets something from it and have an opportunity to direct where it is deployed. Jonathan White reported for San Juan MRC, noting that the discussion happened over a month ago. Similar to some of the other MRCs, there was general support but some had concerns.

Scott McCreery asked whether there is an aspect to the project in terms of the Commission presence in a larger arena, particularly compared to the other projects on the list. Lew responded that this is an opportunity to take a role in an ecosystem-wide project that will be of tremendous significance to the Puget Sound Partnership. Lew also mentioned that he feels all the projects have value and should be funded.

Kathy moved that the Commission approve using \$50,000 of the FY05 ecosystem project funds to apply to the Puget Sound modeling project. The motion was seconded by Phyllis. Motion carried with Andrea Copping abstaining.

MRC Representatives reported on current activities.

Clallam: Participated in the Dungeness River Festival in September and targeted their booth towards elementary age children; had a presentation from the Department of Ecology on updating Geographic Response Plans for oil spills; the MRC is working on reconvening authors of the Marine Ecosystems Analysis Program (MESA) to define top priority items for analysis; the MRC discussed the role of the Marine Life Center on the Port Angeles waterfront and its potential closure.

Island MRC: Will initiate a contract with a new executive director, Rex Porter. Had a presentation from Scott Harbour about existing water quality data in Island County; are now having their “Getting to the Water’s Edge” book printed and it will be available shortly with existing orders already totaling 700 books; the MRC is organizing a series of workshops to educate the public about salmon and non-point pollution as part of the Shore Stewards program; have now compiled a map of pigeon guillemot survey data which can overlay other shoreline data.

Jefferson MRC: co-hosted two Shoreline Landowners Workshops, inviting all landowners within the Shoreline Master Plan jurisdiction, with over 100 participants attending. The MRC display featured their Armoring Alternatives project. This project committee continues to review the Shoreline Master Plan Inventory and Characterization Report as a tool to identify potential demonstration project sites, and identified potential shoreline landowners for a demonstration project. Work on the Eelgrass Protection project focused on coordinating volunteers and professional divers to schedule removal of the buoys, and an additional 48 signatures were added to the Eelgrass protection pledge.

San Juan: Jonathan White reported that he is now the lead representative from San Juan MRC since Jody Kennedy is leaving as coordinator. The MRC held a strategies workshop for the Marine Stewardship Area to build on previous efforts determining biological benchmarks and threats. The MRC had a presentation about certifying marinas in the San Juan Islands as “Clean Marinas”. More information about this is available online at www.cleanmarinawashington.org. The MRC is working with partners to draft an abstract on the 5-S process to be submitted to the GB/PS Research Conference. Friends of the San Juans presented a report on their nearshore habitat project, which is meant to inform and improve project management and planning efforts by county departments and to identify opportunities for public protection and restoration projects.

Skagit MRC: The MRC elected Jim Ramaglia to replace a departing Margaret Schwertner as MRC Chair; has awarded a contract to continue their creosote removal project this winter; the MRC co-hosted the annual Fidalgo Bay Day on September 30, which attracted several hundred people; will give a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners in February; members attended a blessing ceremony by the Swinomish Tribe at the Lone Tree Restoration Project.

Snohomish MRC: The MRC participated in the Jetty Island creosote removal in October, which removed over 70 tons/600 pieces of creosote debris; co-hosted a successful workshop for shoreline landowners in southern Port Susan; developed and submitted comments to the Puget Sound Partnership; submitted an abstract for the GB/PS Research Conference on Dungeness Crab habitat study; has developed t-shirts for volunteers to wear as a component of their outreach strategy.

Whatcom MRC: Reported that Scott McCreery and Amy Kraham have reached the end of their terms on the MRC. Members are limited to two four-year terms on any County commission. The MRC had a presentation on the Puget Sound Modeling project and a presentation on the Whatcom Waterway cleanup by Mike Stoner; has three components left to their Clam Restoration Project including a seeding of the Cottonwood beach area in Birch Bay, publication of a “State of the Birch Bay Watershed” report and publication of final data from the project; have an event scheduled for November 9 at 7pm – Ian Lockwood will discuss community benefits of habitat restoration and open spaces.

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on December 1 at the Civic Center Building in Bellingham, Whatcom County. Following that, Commissioners and Alternates should plan to attend the January 17-18, 2007 retreat in Coupeville.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Civic Center Building, 2nd Floor
Bellingham, Whatcom County
December 1, 2006 – 10:00am-2:45PM**

Decisions and future agenda items

Present: Phyllis Kind, Kathy Fletcher, Polly Fischer, Jonathan White, Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Buck Meloy, Scott McCreery
Absent: Terry Williams, Joe Gaydos, Kent Scudder, Joe Schmitt, Anne Murphy
Staff: Lew Moore, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst
Support: Terry Stevens

Duane Fagergren opened the meeting at 10:00am with introductions.

Tim Douglas, Mayor of Bellingham, welcomed the group and noted that he has worked with many of the people in the room over the years. He recognized derelict fishing gear removal and creosote log removal as important projects of the Commission, and expressed appreciation for the work of participants from other counties. He hopes that the Commission will call upon the City of Bellingham if they can provide assistance.

The agenda was rearranged due to scheduling conflicts, with Clare Fogelsong presenting later in the morning.

The minutes from the November 3 meeting were approved with one revision to clarify the role of the MRC and Lead Entity in San Juan County.

Committee Reports

Technical Committee chair, Andrea Copping, mentioned that the committee will meet over lunch to discuss the ecosystem projects. Ginny and Andrea also reported on the November 15 research needs workshop. A summary report from this workshop is in progress and will first be circulated to participants. The workshop focus was narrowed to address topics most likely to emerge in MRC or Commission projects. It was also noted that this was a good opportunity to establish some linkages between scientists and MRC volunteers, with several MRC representatives attending.

Education Committee, chair, Kathy Fletcher reported that the Education Committee will become more active again once there is an additional staff person on board to free more of Sasha's time to support the work of the committee.

Executive Committee, chair Phyllis Kind. The Committee reviewed evaluations from the MRC training conference, and a summary of the evaluations was provided to the Commission. Other topics

on the Executive Committee agenda can be found elsewhere on the agenda. The committee is now developing an agenda for the January planning retreat.

Growth and Development Committee. This committee is in need of a chair, which also includes membership on the Executive Committee, which is made up of all committee chairs and the Commission officers. The committee is also in need of members. The next meeting is on December 8.

Tribal Committee. Chair Terry Williams was not present. Lew reported that he is planning to schedule a meeting of the Tribal Committee before the January retreat to discuss the *Shadow of the Salmon* video project and derelict fishing gear removal operations by tribal dive teams. Discussion followed about the Commission's ongoing role in the derelict gear removal project and whether continuing to serve as the lead organization is worth the opportunity cost, particularly since it includes work done outside the Northwest Straits region. This topic was noted as an important one for follow up at the January retreat.

MRC Representatives reported on current activities.

Clallam: Clallam MRC joined Jefferson MRC for the strategic planning exercise at the recent MRC conference and found that long term goals are nearly identical, though some of the objectives differed slightly. The MRC has voted to add a voting seat on the MRC for the development community, to be filled by a builder or a realtor. The MRC discussed citizen monitoring projects and agreed that data should only be gathered if there is a clear end use or client for the data, the data is properly analyzed by qualified persons, and published or put to use. The MRC website is a topic of discussion and they are hoping to establish a workable long-term contractual arrangement for hosting and maintenance of the site.

Island MRC: has an annual retreat scheduled for Dec. 6; has completed their *Getting to the Water's Edge* book which has been well received by bookstores and has received media coverage; has installed signage describing the Saratoga Passage Stewardship area at the Clinton Beach Park next to the ferry dock; submitted an abstract on the *Pigeon Guillemot Survey* to the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research conference.

Jefferson MRC: did not have a representative at the meeting and did not provide a written report. Anne Murphy sent her regrets as inclement weather caused schedule conflicts. It was to be her last meeting as the representative from Jefferson MRC.

San Juan: The MRC is in the process of interviewing for a coordinator to take Jody Kennedy's place. Eric Eisenhardt gave a presentation on his surveys of the Bottomfish Recovery Zones. The MRC held their yearly retreat on November 16-17, with the structure initiated by an interview project conducted by Jonathan White in which most members and several past members were interviewed. (Per request, the interview results will be sent to Commissioners with the Commission minutes.) The San Juan County Council accepted the MRC's offer to recommend for its review revisions to the 1998 Transborder Cooperation Agreement and the 2000 Transborder Marine Protection Protocol Agreement. The MRC drafted a letter to the County Council requesting action to address the experimental moorage/float policy being piloted by the WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife.

Skagit MRC: The MRC had a presentation from WA Department of Fish and Wildlife staff on Marine Invertebrates; will elect a new alternate or alternates to the Commission in December, a position that is expected to be shared by Erica Pickett and Christine Woodward. The MRC will begin working another creosote removal project along Skagit County Beaches starting in late November. The Skagit MRC has contracted Dunlap Towing to remove the material and WA DNR has agreed to coordinate the disposal.

Snohomish MRC: did not have a representative at the meeting and did not provide a written report.

Whatcom MRC: Has not held a meeting of the MRC since the last Commission meeting. At the upcoming meeting, the MRC will elect officers and representatives to the Commission. Both Amy Kraham and Scott McCreery have come to the end of their terms as members and will be missed.

Addressing Climate Change in the City of Bellingham

Clare Fogelson and Alex Ramel of the City of Bellingham described their work with the City of Bellingham to address climate change issues. The City's initial response to climate change predictions was to model temperature change effects on a glacier that supplies part of the municipal water supply. From tracking changes to the glacier over the past ten years and from our model scenarios, the City determined that, like most communities that rely on snow pack and glacial melt as a source of municipal water supply, Bellingham will be impacted by the changes in water availability attributed to climate change. However, for Bellingham the impacts will be lessened because of the significant storage capacity of the Lake Whatcom reservoir and because of our ability to adjust our water management protocols for the Middle Fork Nooksack diversion system which augments the reservoir.

Another issue the City is studying is the effect of sea level rise on nearshore restoration projects. Given the topography of our nearshore uplands in Bellingham Bay, the City is developing maps of the nearshore that will depict the inundation of nearshore uplands resulting from increments of sea level rise. Without that information there is no assurance that restoration projects in the nearshore would function as designed as sea level rise occurs and changes the nearshore habitat dynamics.

The City of Bellingham's mayor joined the Mayor's Climate Protection Initiative, a coalition of mayors convened by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, for the purpose of sharing information and support for programs that cities can undertake to address climate change locally. The Initiative also sends a message to the federal government that climate protection is an important issue and declares to the world community that U.S. cities are ready to join in the global effort to meet the intent of the Kyoto Accord.

The City of Bellingham is working in partnership with over 600 other cities worldwide through the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection program, an international membership association of local governments committed to improving global environmental conditions through local actions. The ICLEI program shares best practices and looks for ways to have a cumulative impact. The program has five milestones that each local government works towards achieving. These include: 1) conduct a baseline emissions inventory and forecast; 2) adopt an emissions reduction target for the forecast year; 3) develop a Local Action Plan; 4) implement policies and measures; 5) monitor and verify results. Bellingham is currently in between steps 1 and 3 having completed the inventory and drafting an Action Plan that proposes goals and actions to both reduce green house gas emissions (prevention) and to plan for the predicted changes that are very likely to occur (adaptation).

Among the early actions the City has undertaken to reduce green house gas emissions is a resolution supported by the Mayor and passed by the City Council to purchase 100% green tag power (from renewable sources) for the City's municipal operations. The purchase will be made as part of the City's partnership with the Puget Sound Energy Greenpower Community Challenge, a program that is being promoted community-wide to encourage residential and business participation. This will eliminate 65% of the greenhouse gas pollution by the city. The city is also investing in infrastructure that will help reduce usage, such as installing LED traffic signals. This program has a cost associated, but those costs are offset by savings due to other conservation efforts. Discussion followed about how to measure effectiveness of such a program and whether there is enough energy available from renewable sources to meet the demand.

Public Comment

During public comment, Doug Dobyns, a Whatcom County resident who is a member of the Planet Drum organization and has lived off the power grid for 25 years. He described the work that has been done on the farm where he lives, including salmon restoration projects and appropriate energy workshops. Mr. Dobyns said that there was an opportunity to comment on the Ocean Policy Work Group's final report and six tribes provided comments, including the Lummi Nation. Those comments have gone nowhere, and he sees an opportunity to look at those comments to see what could be done.

Administrative matters

Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference: Ginny noted that several MRCs will be represented with a presentation or a poster at this event. The Commission may be able to provide some assistance if MRC travel budgets are not adequate for interested members to attend. Please contact Commission staff to make arrangements. Ginny will also find out if there is an exhibition area for displays that are not part of the poster session.

Commission Staff Update: Lew and Terry Stevens reported that a position announcement is expected in the next week to hire an Office Assistant 3 position. The announcement will be forwarded to Commissioners and posted on the Commission web site.

Ecosystem fund update: Lew is now working with Sharon Riggs to set up an interagency agreement between the Department of Energy and the WA Department of Ecology for the Puget Sound modeling project.

Derelict Gear export progress: Ginny reported on the progress Tom Cowan has made to export the derelict fishing gear removal project. He is already working on leads in several states. Ginny explained that it has helped to invest in some sidescan sonar surveys to illustrate the problem in other areas. Discussions are now happening in Alaska, South Carolina, Chesapeake Bay and several other states. A presentation to the Fish and Wildlife Commission is expected in January. Ginny, Tom and Jeff June have also been in discussion with NOAA to hold a national symposium on derelict fishing gear. Discussion followed about how to secure funding and undertake the planning for a symposium. Sea Grant may be a good partner for such an event.

Puget Sound Partnership Update

Kathy Fletcher reported that the Partnership held its last meeting several weeks ago. The final report is now in progress and is expected to be printed shortly. An event is scheduled for December 13 at which the Governor will announce her initial actions. Kathy briefly summarized the recommendations of the Partnership in each of the five areas charged by the Governor (2020 action agenda, governance, public engagement/ communications, funding and science). This discussion led into the next agenda topic.

The Future of the Initiative in Changing Times

Lew started off this discussion by noting that everything is now viewed through the lens of the Puget Sound Partnership and that the Northwest Straits Initiative must discuss where we fit in this scheme. It is expected that a bill of some sort will pass the legislature and there will be some budget for this work. He sees this as an opportunity to discuss the goals of the Initiative. One key question relates to the lack of MRCs in all Puget Sound counties. The panel that evaluated the work of the Initiative in 2004 charged the Commission with helping to replicate the model of MRCs in other Puget Sound counties. He feels it is important to discuss this again and be clear about what role there is for the Commission in replicating MRCs.

Lew also described his discussion with state legislators to authorize the Initiative at the State level, and would like to ensure that Commission members are prepared to support that concept. He is interested in seeking State funding to support the work of MRCs and the Commission.

The topic was opened up for discussion. Andrea noted that it is important to be decisive, and be aware of the benefits and drawbacks to becoming authorized by the State. Duane mentioned there are other examples of State/Federal programs such as the National Estuarine Program. Scott said that while that the environmental goals of the Initiative may be similar to work of the Partnership, the Initiative's bottom up model is different and that it is important to be protective of how the Initiative works as well as ensure that we achieve our environmental goals. Several Commissioners recalled the first steps to establishing MRCs and the bottom up nature of each. Kathy feels that we are moving into a period of great opportunity and that the Initiative must decide what is most critical to us and focus on demonstrating progress.

The discussion flowed into the difficulties of measuring results. Terry Stevens gave the example of the 2004 evaluation in which performance measures were critical and there was a period in which much of the work of the MRCs and the Commission was reviewed. Duane said that it is important to show progress and be accountable, but that to some degree progress can be slowed down by too much emphasis on measurement. Andrea suggested reframing the question of measurement to ask MRCs what results are expected before projects are undertaken. Ginny raised the question of where the priorities will be in the future for MRC projects, whether on the ground restoration projects or less measurable projects. Kathy noted that measuring public awareness is extremely difficult, but that the Initiative is well-positioned to accomplish public involvement and outreach work. The key factor may be in the priority setting and making decisions based on those priorities despite the difficulties and challenges of measuring results. Phyllis said that many of the Island MRC projects are aimed at behavior modification and they are very interested in learning more about how to measure results.

Several MRC representatives mentioned that capacity to undertake projects is a problem and that the Initiative and each MRC must have realistic expectations. Buck emphasized the point that the bottom up approach is very important, and care should be taken not to damage that structure. Ginny prepared a matrix of what has been accomplished on the Initiative's strategic plan for last year's retreat, and will do that again for the retreat scheduled for January. The question followed as to what MRCs might be expected to prepare for the retreat. Lew would like MRC representatives to discuss the strategic plan and what they have done to date on implementing the plan. He will be attending several of the MRC meetings in the next month.

David Roberts of the Department of Natural Resources gave a brief update on the creosote removal project. He described several removal projects that have happened recently and gave an overview of locations where removals are scheduled. Lisa Kaufman now has an assistant to take over beach operations. They are now working on getting more information on their web site about the project.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be a brief business meeting on January 18, following the annual strategic planning retreat at the Fort Casey Inn in Coupeville, Island County.