



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: Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Buck Meloy, Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Daryl Williams (alt.), Scott McCreery

Members absent: Kathy Fletcher Joe Schmitt, Joe Gaydos, Jonathan White, Judy Surber

Alternates attending: Dick Toft

Staff: Lew Moore, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst

Support: Terry Stevens

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

The meeting minutes from the December 1, 2006 meeting were approved with one change to correct the reference from “National Estuarine Research Reserve System” to “National Estuarine Program” in the second paragraph on page five.

There was no public comment.

The Commission briefly discussed the draft Fiscal Year 2007 (Year 9) Workplan and Budget. It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the budget and workplan, allowing staff the flexibility to make minor adjustments as needed with recommendations from the NOAA grants office.

During administrative matters, it was announced that the Office Assistant 3 position opening has been posted. Information and application materials will be available on the Commission web site. The closing date for the position is February 1.

Terry Williams provided a summary of the presentation on recommendations of the Puget Sound Partnership to the Select Committee on Puget Sound in Olympia on January 17. Terry noted that the Committee had many questions, including some about the governance structure proposed by the Partnership and how the Commission relates to that structure.

MRC representatives provided summaries of their current MRC activities.

Clallam MRC was not represented at the meeting and did not provide a written report.

Island MRC held a retreat on December 6 and highlighted some of their conclusions in their full written report. Officers for the MRC were elected, with Dick Toft taking over as chair and alternate to the Commission. Ian Jefferds now serves as vice chair. In 2006, there were 141 new Shore Stewards added, for a total enrollment of 322. About half of the shoreline resource book *Getting to the Water's Edge* have been sold since late November. The MRC will present results from their Pigeon Guillemot survey work at the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference in March.

Jefferson MRC was not represented at the meeting and did not provide a written report.

San Juan MRC did not have a representative present, but provided a written report. The MRC had a meeting on December 6 at which nine students from FHL presented on a variety of topics. Their December 20 meeting highlighted Russel Barsh's work on heavy metals. The County Council forwarded a letter drafted by the MRC to WDFW Director, Jeff Koenings recommending an end to the experimental docks program, within the HPA process, in the San Juans. The MRC also had a presentation of the preliminary findings from the marine vessel pressure pilot study, with boat counts done from August 9-September 10 using a helicopter and ground observers. Mary Knackstedt has been hired as the new MRC coordinator. The MRC also had project updates from partners on their eelgrass mapping and Soundwatch boater education projects.

Skagit MRC had a presentation from Molly Doran, Director of the Skagit Land Trust, which included an overview of the organization and the opportunities for partnership with the MRC. The MRC elected Jim Ramaglia to continue as chair, with Charlie OHara serving as vice-chair. Christine Woodward and Erica Pickett will serve as alternates to the Commission when Polly cannot attend. Skagit MRC has been removing creosote debris from Skagit County Beaches since late November. During that time, over 20 tons of creosote material and several truck loads of miscellaneous garbage have been removed.

Snohomish MRC met on January 17. The MRC elected Mary Cunningham from the City of Everett as the new chair. Kent Scudder, former Commission chair, stepped down from the MRC at the end of his term in December.

Whatcom MRC welcomed Ken Carrasco as a new Conservation Interest representative, with four MRC seats remaining to be filled. The MRC recently discussed their work plan from 2006 and evaluated whether they were achieving their goals. The MRC has had some staffing adjustments, with Erika Stroebel back from family leave and Atina Casas spending nearly all of her time on MRC work. The MRC is tentatively planning a volunteer recognition event in June for their shellfish restoration projects.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm. The next regular meeting will be on February 23 at the Battelle Lab in Sequim.

**Northwest Straits Commission
Pacific Northwest National Labs (PNNL)
Sequim, Clallam County
February 23, 2007, 10:00am-3:00pm**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Buck Meloy, Judy Surber, Kirby Johnson, Andrea Copping, Kathy Fletcher, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Scott McCreery, Terry Williams
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Duane Fagergren, chair, opened the meeting at 10:00am with introductions. Additions to the agenda included a request for a short discussion on tidal energy projects and additional administrative matters.

Dick Ecker, Manager of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's Marine Science Laboratory, welcomed the group and told the Commission a little about the history of the site on Sequim Bay. He explained the role of the US Dept of Energy's national laboratories, that Sequim is the only marine lab in the Department of Energy's system. The lab houses several marine research and coastal security units. The major marine research thrusts are coastal assessment and restoration, ecotoxicology and marine biotechnology, marine chemistry, and (housed in Seattle) coastal and watershed modeling.

The minutes from the January 18 Commission meeting were approved as written.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee, chair Phyllis Kind noted that the main topics discussed by the committee will be addressed elsewhere on the Commission agenda. The legislative update provided in written form by Lew Moore was discussed. He will have a much clearer picture of legislative progress in the next month. Several Commissioners mentioned a need to have a process in place to make decisions quickly once the funding is known, both at the Commission and the MRC level.

Technical Committee, chair Andrea Copping. The committee hasn't met recently but expects to have increased activity as the new MRC proposals are submitted.

Tribal Committee, chair Terry Williams was not yet present. It was requested that Steve Robinson be asked to join us for a meeting to provide an update on the Shadow of the Salmon project, and that a full accounting of the project be provided so that the Commission can accurately represent its contribution.

Strategic Planning Template

Ginny walked through the template that was provided as a handout. It is based on the template that Dan Evans used at the November MRC conference at Rosario. She explained that the goal was to provide something that is useful for MRCs, and that while some sense of uniformity is good this isn't a required format. Discussion followed and MRCs indicated whether they are working on a plan and if so what the status is:

Clallam: Ed noted that there are a lot of new members on the MRC and that they are at a good point for developing a strategic plan, though no formal steps have been taken.

Island: Phyllis said that the MRC is planning a facilitated retreat to get a solid start on a strategic plan.

Jefferson: Judy said that the Executive Committee was charged with developing a draft plan once the template was received from the Commission.

San Juan: The MRC has had a retreat and developed ideas for a lot of projects to create a work plan, but there is not a separate planning document.

Skagit: The MRC plans a facilitated meeting in the near future and expect to develop a five year plan.

Snohomish: Kirby reported that the MRC has been working on planning some elements such as their Dungeness crab stewardship plan but hasn't developed a strategic plan.

Whatcom: The Executive Committee is tasked with addressing strategic and project planning. The first meeting of that committee is next week.

Facility Tour

Jeff Ward, Rhonda Karis and Mark Jones of PNNL provided a facility tour, including the wet lab and an optical fiber light experiment.

Administrative Matters

During administrative matters, Sasha gave an update on the hiring process for the Office Assistant III position that will augment the Commission staff. Approximately 35 applications were received, which was narrowed to just over 20 people to review more closely. Interviews are expected in the next month.

Lew was not present but provided a memo on the legislative and funding issues. This handout provides information on federal funding status, state funding/legislation and foundation funding proposals. This information is expected to be updated at the next Commission meeting.

The Commission approved Susan Bauer to serve as an alternate for Scott McCreery. Sasha confirmed that the by-laws allow the alternate to vote.

The upcoming MRC grant cycle was discussed. Ginny described the process, starting with consultations with each MRC that are replacing the letter of intent from previous years. Full proposals are due on April 6, and a fully revised application form will be sent to MRCs shortly. While it was recognized that it will be difficult to develop proposals without a known budget amount, there is not enough time to delay the process and still have a July 1 start date for new grant agreements. MRCs should plan to have a process in place for budget/project decisions to be made quickly after proposals are submitted. The review process for proposals has been challenging, and to address that issue the Executive Committee proposed holding a work session in lieu of the regular monthly meeting in April. The work session would allow each MRC to present their key projects to the full Commission, with the purpose of completing some level of technical review as well as sharing information between MRCs. There was support for this idea, and the March/April meeting locations were switched in order to accommodate the work session.

A summary from the January planning retreat was distributed. The first page includes many action items to be addressed, either by Commission staff or the Commission.

MRC participation in the upcoming GB/PS Research Conference was discussed and the Commission agreed to contribute \$700 per MRC for registration and/or travel expenses.

Selection of MRC Representative to Executive Committee

The Commission discussed the challenges of getting MRC representation on the Executive Committee. Several people noted that members have very little time available and that their commitment is to the MRC first. This topic will be revisited at the next Commission meeting.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS)

George Galasso from the OCNMS presented information on current work at the Sanctuary, and noted that the OCNMS is interested in finding ways to collaborate with the Commission on projects or issues of common interest. The OCNMS is planning a management plan review in 2007 and is seeking input on how the Commission might be involved, either through input from individual members or collective comments on scoping activities. The Commission supported the director's continued participation on the Advisory Council as an important way to connect the two organizations. George explained that their first step in the process of developing a management plan is scoping and deciding what should be reviewed. They are seeking input on this, and will likely develop a draft list of what they believe is important to evaluate.

MRC Reports

Clallam MRC will have the results of their eelgrass surveys presented at the GB/PS Research Conference by their contractor, Jim Norris. The MRC is seeking four new members, including one recently added position for District 1. A workshop to reconvene some of the original authors of the Marine Ecosystems Analysis (MESA) studies is planned and expected to be held March 2. Two shoreline landowner workshops are planned this spring, in partnership with the Puget Sound Action Team. Cam Fields and Chuck Faires, the MRC members who had been collecting PSP samples, have resigned from the MRC and they are now looking for new volunteers to continue this work.

Island County will hold a strategic planning session in place of an upcoming meeting. Projects currently underway include a partnership with State Parks at Cornet Bay focused on eelgrass and forage fish; a shoreline signage project at Coupeville; Shore Stewards enrollment on both Whidbey and Camano Islands; analysis of historical water quality data; and creosote removal projects at Ebey's Landing, Fort Casey and Double Bluff.

Jefferson MRC has proposed some membership changes and is waiting for the County Council to adopt those changes, including changing the Port representative to a voting member rather than ex officio. They have also added a seat for Beach Watchers. The MRC now has a contractor doing an analysis of potential sites for a shoreline armoring alternatives project.

San Juan MRC now has their MRC coordinator, Mary Knackstedt, on board full time. MRC members Terrie Klinger, Mike Mike Ahrenius and Howie Rosenfeld have resigned and recommendations for replacement are now being put forward. The MRC had a presentation on the Proposed Recovery Plan for Southern Resident Killer Whales. The MRC has an opportunity to participate in the Joint Effort to Monitor the Strait (JEMS) program, which does water column sampling. The County Council approved the MRC's 2007 work plan.

Skagit MRC recently held elections with Jim Ramaglia remaining as chair and Polly Fischer continuing as Commission representative. Charlie O'Hara is vice chair, and Christine Woodward and Erica Pickett will serve as co-alternates to the Commission. The MRC held a work session to begin discussions on developing a five year plan for the MRC. Several members are planning to attend the upcoming Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference. Keeley O'Connell of People For Puget Sound presented information about a hydrodynamic model they are working on with Battelle.

Snohomish MRC is working with an Americorps team to continue restoration efforts at Picnic Point and Kayak Point, and partnering with People For Puget Sound and the County to establish a long-term stewardship program. The MRC is also continuing the Escape Cord Education project, and is working with WDFW to write a Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) document for Dungeness Crab. Other Dungeness crab work includes completion of a scientific report on their assessment of juvenile crab abundance and development of a contract to complete a gravid female habitat study this spring. Eelgrass mapping work is also coming up this spring, and an assessment of existing marine water quality data.

Whatcom MRC held a very successful speaker program with Tim Wahl of the Bellingham Parks & Recreation department. He gave a talk on the historic courses of the Nooksack River, particularly a large flood event in 1856 which opened a channel to Bellingham Bay. The MRC has created two new subcommittees: a nearshore projects subcommittee to oversee three current projects and an executive committee to develop a list of project proposals for the next grant cycle.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on Friday, March 23 in the Spruce Room at the WSU Extension office in Port Hadlock, Jefferson County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
WSU Extension, Port Hadlock, Jefferson County
March 23, 2007, 10:00am-2:45pm

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Buck Meloy, Judy Surber, Kirby Johnson, Kathy Fletcher, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Scott McCreery, Joe Gaydos
Alternates attending: Mark Herrenkohl
Absent: Andrea Copping, Terry Williams
Staff: Lew Moore, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Chair, Duane Fagergren, opened the meeting at 10:00 with a welcome and introductions. The passing of former Congressman Jack Metcalf was acknowledged and the Commission recognized his contribution to establishing the Initiative. Condolences were sent to Mrs. Norma Metcalf on behalf of the Commission.

The minutes from the February 23 meeting in Sequim were approved as written.

Lew Moore provided information about his work in the past month on legislative and budget issues. There are three Federal budgets he is focusing on: the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 budget is not yet known, which is presenting a challenge to MRCs as they prepare grant proposals. The FY2008 funding request has been submitted, but the process for those funds has not yet been determined by Congress. Lew has also discussed the FY2009 budget and reauthorization bill with NOAA staff and Senator Murray. There are some programmatic changes expected in how Federal funding is awarded, so there is not yet any information about the Commission's funding.

Lew also reported on the current legislative work in Olympia for state authorization of the Initiative through a House Joint Memorial, which has a lot of support but he noted that Memorials are not currently being put forward (HJM4002). Lew and Kathy Fletcher reported on the Puget Sound Partnership bill that references the work of MRCs and the Commission. The House and Senate versions of the Partnership bill are now being reconciled (SB5372, HB1374), with a new version expected on March 27. Lew described the funding currently in the state budget, which includes \$200,000 for derelict fishing gear removal on the House side and \$1 million in funding on the Senate side. It is not yet known what level of support the state will provide once the budget is passed.

Commissioners discussed whether it would be appropriate to send email or make calls to state representatives or senators to support the work in Olympia. Lew and several others recommended that anything sent should be support and thanks for their work. After further discussion, the Commission drafted a brief letter that was then sent by email to Representatives Upthegrove and Rockefeller to offer assistance and support and encourage mention of the Initiative in the revised Partnership bill.

The Commission discussed the need to recognize the efforts of volunteers participating in the Initiative, either on the Commission or on an MRC. The concept was broadened somewhat to developing a stewardship award, and solicit nominations from the region. Several members volunteered to help develop that idea and bring it back to the Commission at the next meeting. (Ginny, Joe, Buck, Duane)

The Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference was discussed and each MRC has at least two participants. It was also noted that there are several posters, presentations and panel discussions by MRC members and Commissioners representing the work of the Initiative and partners.

The Commission discussed inviting a speaker to provide an update on the status of invasive tunicates in the region.

The Commission discussed the funding issues for FY2007 and recognized that some process should be in place in the event that a grant application must be submitted to NOAA before the next Commission meeting. There was some general discussion about the categories of funding that might be reduced if necessary, but many felt that the core staffing of the Commission and MRCs should be maintained in order to keep the organization stable. In such a situation it was recognized as critical that the organization focus on capacity building, volunteer efforts and education/outreach projects so that it is not just an administrative organization. Ideas for seeking funding from other sources were also discussed. As an interim process, the Commission agreed that a special meeting would be called to adopt a revised budget if needed. The meeting would be available as a public meeting to be held at Padilla Bay, or open by conference call to those unable to attend in person.

Ginny described the format of the April 27 Commission meeting, which will be a work session for MRC grant proposals rather than a regular business meeting. Each MRC has approximately 40 minutes to present information and get input from Commissioners and other work session participants. The goal of this work session is to facilitate sharing of projects between MRCs and to provide some level of technical review of proposals. MRCs will need to think about this event as they prepare their grant proposals, and forward to Commission staff some information as soon as possible, including:

- Who will attend
- Who will present
- What projects will be presented

Commission staff will work directly with MRCs to prepare information in advance. Projects selected should be those that can be explained in this format, and that MRCs would benefit from hearing about. Strict timekeeping is essential, so each MRC should plan on no more than 20 minutes of presentation time to allow for questions and discussion. Additional information will be sent to MRCs in the next week.

There were no verbal committee reports. A written report of the Growth and Development Committee was provided as a handout.

There was no public comment.

Ginny Broadhurst provided an update on marine program projects. A summary of the work done to date on the derelict fishing gear removal project was handed out. Tom Cowan will attend the August Commission meeting to provide a final report on exporting the derelict gear program to other coastal states. Commission staff is working with the Snohomish MRC to place an advertisement in the WDFW sportsfishing guidebook to encourage the use of escape cord. Ginny reported that there was an emergency net removal in January at Possession Point and removal

operations are underway at Pt Roberts, an area of very high accumulations. The creosote removal project has been delayed for many months by a requirement to undergo species by species formal ESA consultations. This process is still not completed.

Kyle Murphy from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) gave an update on the Aquatic Reserves Program. He explained the process for submitting letters of intent to nominate sites that would be removed from leasing by the Department. This is then followed by a full proposal, review, public outreach, scientific review and then a recommendation to the Commissioner of Public Lands. Management plans are then developed and a SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) review completed, which includes additional public outreach. The process is estimated to take two years, and the number of sites will depend on how much data is available on each site and the level of staff available to develop the proposals and manage the sites. Kyle explained that the Commission and MRCs are encouraged to submit proposals and serve as partners.

A question and answer period followed the presentation.

Q: Is there a mitigation process?

A: Yes, management plans will do more than remove sites from leasing. There are opportunities for restoration to mitigate lease impacts and monitoring plans are a component.

Q: Are freshwater reserves anticipated?

A: Yes, they are interested in proposals for freshwater sites.

Q: Does the size of the site factor in to the decision?

A: There is no specific size, but it is important that the site support diversity and connectivity to other habitats. Sites are generally larger with more species to protect.

Further discussion followed about the need for a more holistic management tool to ensure that it is more strategic and protecting key habitats/species.

During administrative matters, Duane Fagergren agreed to convene a nominating committee for the election of officers to be held at the April meeting. He will call upon Terry Stevens and several past Commission chairs to serve on the committee. Staff reported on the hiring process for an Office Assistant. Brief interviews have been held, but the process is somewhat on hold until the budget is known for FY2007. MRC representation on the Executive Committee was discussed. Judy Surber of Jefferson MRC is willing and interested but not able to commit additional time. She agreed to participate on the committee if her alternate is willing to take on more of the regular Commission meeting participation.

MRC representatives reported on their recent activities:

Clallam MRC has two new members, Todd Ritchie of the Port of Port Angeles and Roy Morris of Sekiu. On March 2 the MRC convened several authors of the Marine Ecosystems Analysis (MESA) project from the late 1970s at a workshop to share information and recommendations for follow up studies the MRC should undertake. Key recommendations were to scan, digitize and reanalyze the original data and identify goals for pilot projects that could collect data comparable and compatible with the original data. The MRC will cosponsor two shoreline landowner workshops this spring; are seeking new volunteers to undertake their Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning project; will sponsor Earth Day cleanup activities at Ediz Hook.

Island MRC recently held a strategic planning meeting for the MRC facilitated by Duane Fagergren; had a presentation from Eric Beamer of Skagit River System Cooperative on the juvenile salmonid use of Island County shorelines; reported that approximately 3,000 copies of their Getting to the Water's Edge book have been distributed; have done estuary seining at Ala Spit and

found Chinook in the lagoon; is working with the Port of Coupeville and the Port of South Whidbey to complete and install interpretive signage; is working with State Parks on a restoration project at Cornet Bay.

Jefferson MRC prepared three pre-applications for Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program funding, including a restoration project at the Maynard sawmill site, effectiveness monitoring and adaptive management planning for the eelgrass protection zone and restoration at Fairmount saltmarsh/beach/spit; a site visit was conducted at Fairmount Marsh to prepare a site feasibility and analysis to do a soft shore demonstration project. The MRC has added 18 names to the Eelgrass Protection Pledge.

San Juan MRC has contracted to develop and implement public meetings on their Marine Stewardship Area draft plan, with four meetings planned this spring; had a presentation from Christine Woodward from the Samish Nation on the Fidalgo Bay Water Quality Project; submitted eight pages of comments on the draft orca recovery plan; has an MRC member participating in the Critical Areas Ordinate update process; has intervened in the Snohomish Public Utility District's preliminary permit applications for two tidal energy projects in the County; will meet with WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife to discuss the experimental dock program and illegal mooring buoys.

Skagit MRC is working on their two year workplan and project proposals; has scheduled a Spartina dig day for June 16; is pursuing Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funding for several restoration projects on March Point; had an update from their budget subcommittee and have reviewed current projects and estimated budgets for the upcoming grant cycle.

Snohomish MRC is partnering to host a shoreline landowner workshop on May 5; are working on their two-year workplan; will present their Juvenile Dungeness Crab Habitat Study at the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference; have hired an intern, Wendy Fisher, to help develop a Priority Habitat and Priority Species Management Recommendations document in coordination with WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife. Kirby also reported that there are several vacant seats, including Kent Scudder and Charlie La Nasa, two long time members.

Whatcom MRC discussed upcoming projects for their two year workplan; will resume their public outreach speaker's program in April with a presentation on tunicates by WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife Pam Meacham; are doing pre-seeding surveys for their clam project in Birch Bay and will seed in May; is contracting for a Remote Operated Vessel survey that will provide data on rockfish populations; will purchase rockfish identification cards for distribution to fishermen and divers. Buck also noted that the MRC has scheduled a flight to view the Nooksack River estuary with Lighthawk, a volunteer aviation organization that does flights for environmental purposes.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm. The next meeting will be a work session held on April 27 at Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Mount Vernon. The next regular meeting will be on June 1 in Whatcom County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Padilla Bay NERR, Mount Vernon, Skagit County
April 27, 2007 - 9:00am-3:15pm**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Kirby Johnson, Buck Meloy, Judy Surber, Kathy Fletcher, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Phyllis Kind, Mary Knackstedt (alt.), Polly Fischer, Scott McCreery, Joe Gaydos, Andrea Copping, Terry Williams
Alternates attending: Mark Herrenkohl, Susan Bauer, Stef Frenzl, Erica Pickett
Absent: Joe Schmitt, Jonathan White
Staff: Lew Moore, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Chair, Duane Fagergren, opened the meeting at 9:00 with a welcome and introductions.

Ginny Broadhurst gave an overview of the process for the meeting, which was designed to provide time for each Marine Resources Committee to present key projects from their grant proposal to the Northwest Straits Commission. The goal of the work session was to facilitate sharing of projects between MRCs and to provide some level of technical review of proposals. PowerPoint presentations given are available upon request.

A summary of the Question and Answer period for each MRC follows at the end of this document.

Whatcom MRC: Mark Herrenkohl presented information about the Cliffside Beach and Chuckanut Bay Restoration projects.

Island MRC: Rex Porter presented information about the Shore Stewards program, a Marine Stewardship Area Signage project, and a Cornet Bay Restoration project.

Clallam MRC: Doug Morrill and Cathy Lear presented information about an Eelgrass Mapping project and a Red Hen Mapping Project.

Jefferson MRC: Gabrielle LaRoche and Pat Pearson presented their Shoreline Armoring Alternatives and Olympia Oyster projects.

San Juan MRC: Mary Knackstedt presented their Marine Stewardship Area Outreach and Monitoring Plan.

Snohomish MRC: Stef Frenzl presented information on their Gravid Female Crab Habitat Mapping, Kayak Point County Park Beach Enhancement and the Mussel Watch program.

Skagit MRC: Jim Ramaglia, Nancy Rosenbower and Paul Dinnel presented information on their North Fidalgo Drift Cell Analysis, Low Impact Development/Stormwater and Fidalgo Bay Water Quality Sampling projects.

Business items

The minutes from the March 23 meeting in Port Hadlock were approved as written.

Rosario Resort was selected as the location for the November 2-3 MRC Training Conference.

The Fiscal Year 2007 budget has been determined, with federal funding to the Initiative at \$1,004,984. The budget and workplan originally proposed at the January retreat was revised by staff. The Commission moved and approved by consensus to adopt the budget as proposed. Additional discussion of the budget and workplan will be done at the June 1 meeting, including some revisions to the language proposed by Buck Meloy.

Election of Officers

Officer elections were held, with the nomination committee recommending Phyllis Kind as chair and Scott McCreery as vice chair. No other nominations were brought forward. It was moved and approved by consensus to elect Phyllis Kind as chair and Scott McCreery as vice chair starting at the June 1 meeting.

Duane Fagergren was most sincerely thanked by the Commission for his service as vice chair and as chair. This was his second term as chair since the Initiative's inception.

Public Comment

During public comment, Mike Sato representing the Alliance for Puget Sound Shorelines described their new public outreach campaign, MUD UP! The campaign will ask people how dirty they are willing to get for Puget Sound, with the goal of getting people doing things. Keeley O'Connell of People For Puget Sound thanked the MRCs for distributing *Spartina* identification cards, and noted that they are looking for funding to reproduce these this year.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50pm. The next meeting will be on **Friday, June 1** at the Port of Everett in Snohomish County. The monthly meeting at the end of June will be held on **Thursday, June 28** in Whatcom County.

Whatcom:

Q: What habitat/species is the restoration project targeting?

A: Hoping for eelgrass in Chuckanut Bay, and any species associated with eelgrass beds (crab, clam, etc.). Still investigating this. Cliffside beach has sandy beach underneath the wood waste. Adjacent beaches have forage fish.

Q: Is it a given that the small debris is detrimental and that there is a time when it wasn't there? Are there surveys before/after?

A: Monitoring is part of the project, but the primary biological zone is not functioning now. Project should help restore benthic community.

Q: Unclear about shorter term goals? What is funding for?

A: Feasibility study. If results show that next steps aren't warranted, the project won't continue. If removal indicated, then the project moves forward with permitting, etc.

Q: When the wood waste is removed, would anything else be added?

A: Below the wood waste is sand, so additional substrate is not likely needed. Intertidal areas might need some material. It could end up being more feasible to put material over the top of the debris.

Q: Is there a lead organization for Chuckanut Bay? The funding seems small.

A: The City of Bellingham is the lead for the Chuckanut Bay project.

Q: At the Woodstock Farm project, are the tribes involved?

A: Three tribes historically, Noocksack, Samish and Nuwahah (sp?)

Q: Is Chuckanut Creek a fish bearing creek?

A: Creek was rerouted, but previously went through the Woodstock Farm site at a steep grade.

Q: Is the City/MRC partnering with the railroad?

A: City has been working closely with the railroad, and there has been a good dialog. Permitting takes a long time, but if communication begins early enough they are willing.

Island:

Q: What sort of new organizations is the MRC looking to partner with on the Shore Stewards Program?

A: A bigger organization like a homeowner's association with members.

Q: Is the MRC using the NWSC logo on the Marine Stewardship Area signage?

A: There was a lot of sensitivity to commercialism, and it had to get by the historical review board. There is a logo for the MSA.

Q: When is Katrina Lassiter's work on evaluating signage coming out?

A: Within the week.

Clallam:

Q: Is there native or non-native eelgrass included in the eelgrass survey work?

A: Unknown.

Q: Has the MRC met with County staff to prepare for data from the Red Hen project?

A: They are now finishing the SMP update grant application, and they will coordinate with the GIS person and others.

Q: It appears that the Red Hen project does not have a biological focus.

A: The project is more physical process based, such as beach hardening, over-water structures, riparian characteristics, substrate and habitat conditions.

Jefferson:

Q: What tidal elevation is oyster cultch going in at?

A:

Q: Is there an Olympia oyster workshop planned, or is the Shelton meeting adequate for discussing MRC projects?

A: Gabrielle suggested an informal meeting attached to the Shelton meeting.

Q: Is a genetic profile of oysters being done?

A:

San Juan:

Q: Not clear what the MRC plans for outreach?

A: The MRC has determined it is out ahead of the community on the MSA. Needs to put time into outreach now.

Q: What will the deliverables be after two years? How will the MRC know when they are met?

A: Overall understanding by community members of what is a Marine Stewardship Area. Deliverables would be report on collaboration done, an inventory of community groups and a stewardship guide.

Q: What is the relationship with the San Juan Initiative?

A: As Mary understands, the SJI will do an analysis of how programs are working. They recognize that there are similarities and that the public may be confused. The MRC is committed to working together with the SJI, and outreach can help both to coordinate actions and common messages.

Q: Is there an emphasis on reaching visitors vs. residents?

A: Not ready to determine audience yet. Notes that there is a captive audience on the ferry.

Q: Is the MRC using scientific information from other projects as a basis for natural resource education?

A: Human uses are in the MSA plan, and traditional knowledge. One goal will be to help newcomers value traditional knowledge – there is a 40% turnover in residents annually.

Comments: Several comments recommending education but looking for more information about audience, vehicles, messages and ways to measure results. Be able to show what the difference is after two years. Don't forget about schools and real estate agents.

Snohomish:

Q: What is the scenario for the Mussel Watch program long-term?

A: The MRC isn't interested in funding the project forever, but sees value in doing so now.

Skagit:

Q: Will ongoing funding allow water quality sampling to continue for the next few years?

A: Yes, previously they were able to do only a limited snapshot. This will be a year-round look and after rain events.

Q: Are there results already, or any emerging results in water quality sampling?

A:

Q: Is wastewater treatment doing the testing of water samples?

A: They have a good relationship with Edge Analytical for discounted services.

Q: What about sampling surface water?

A: There is surface water, stormwater and creeks that are culverted.

Q: Are there any industrial sources?

A: The only industry in the area contains and treats their water.

Q: Have they analyzed samples after spills?

A: Hasn't seen anything on any of the outfalls.

Q: Unclear what the LID project is?

A: MRC is providing just the materials for the project. Partners are doing the installation and maintenance.

Q: If City is installing baysavers anyway, why is the MRC taking it on?

A: The MRC may not do a baysaver in the end. Might work out better to do pervious pavers.

Q: Has the MRC been communicating with public works?

A: City is just finishing stormwater plan. Now noting that one gap is signage.

Q: Given that Anacortes already has several LID projects, how about a different location?

A: That is a possibility, such as La Conner.

Comments: Would like to see strategic plans and projects like the LID work to follow the water quality monitoring. Some funding is out there for raingarden type projects.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Port of Everett, Snohomish County
June 1, 2007, 10:00am-2:40PM**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Judy Surber, Kathy Fletcher, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Scott McCreery, Joe Gaydos, Mark Herrenkohl (alt.), Terry Williams, Stef Frenzl (alt.)
Absent: Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price
Support: Ardis Dumett, Sally Hintz

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with a welcome and introductions. Phyllis welcomed Ginny Broadhurst as the Commission's interim director. County Executive Aaron Reardon sent his regrets that he was unable to attend. Stef Frenzl provided a welcome to the Commission on behalf of the County and said that there is strong support for the local Marine Resources Committee as evidenced by the significant increase in funding from the County for staff support.

Stef Frenzl gave a presentation on the Juvenile Dungeness Crab Habitat study undertaken by the MRC in partnership with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Tulalip Tribes, Beach Watchers and Edmonds Community College. The MRC was interested in what habitat type is preferred, when juvenile Dungeness crab are using that habitat, and at what point they move to a different habitat type. Stef described the study design and protocols and provided information on the results. Mixed sand/coarse material or sand/vegetation habitats were most attractive to juvenile crab. The full PowerPoint presentation with additional findings/results is available upon request. Stef also described the Center for Whole Communities and their Measures of Health process (www.measuresofhealth.net) and how it might help in assessing the work of the Initiative and support the strategic planning process. This was noted as a possible session to be considered for the November MRC conference.

Coastal Zone Management Act Reauthorization

Brian Lynn of the Department of Ecology described the current work happening on the reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA). Currently, Washington's work under this Act is fairly limited and nationally the program has had difficulty putting all of the efforts together into a cohesive package that tells the full story. There is now an effort to develop a new vision for the CZMA. There are stakeholder meetings planned for California and Hawaii, but comments can be sent directly to NOAA by July 13.

(<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/czm/media/VisioningInput.pdf>). Brian is interested in receiving comments as well, and will work to set up meetings with groups that want to discuss CZMA.

West Coast Governor's Agreement on Ocean Health

Kathleen Drew from the Governor's Office described the work of the West Coast Governor's Agreement on Ocean Health (<http://westcoastoceans.gov/>). Initial actions included a letter to the President and Congress opposing oil drilling off the coast; a letter to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to request direction on how to approach the federal government as a three state group; and a letter to the President and Congress requesting more resources to address significant issues that impact marine areas. The next action item is to work together on a regional research plan with Sea Grant. Kathleen asked the Commission for specific issues that the three state group can focus on. Several suggestions were made, including developing a way to share data and maps; water quality issues; species in decline. A draft Discussion Paper Regarding the Seven Priority Areas and Assessment of Possible Actions was provided in electronic format.

Committee Reports

Scott McCreery provided a brief written report of the Executive Committee meeting. The main topic of that meeting was a discussion on the process for hiring a new Director, which is a separate item on the agenda.

Terry Williams gave a verbal report on the most recent Tribal Committee meeting. The *Shadow of the Salmon* video project was discussed, noting that there have been some challenges with weather and production staff. A draft version is still expected by October. The committee also discussed several other projects such as the hydrodynamic model, a common data platform that all tribes could use, and a project in Port Susan to use the guidelines adopted by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission on establishing a marine stewardship area.

Public Comment

During public comment, Sally Hintz of Senator Cantwell's office said that the Senator is hoping to introduce a reauthorization bill for the CZMA. Ardis Dumett of Senator Murray's office said that their staff in DC will contact Ginny to discuss reauthorization of the Northwest Straits Initiative, noting that funding is not guaranteed with reauthorization.

Minutes

The minutes from the April 27 Commission meeting and work session were approved with one correction. Jonathan White was absent from that meeting. The Commission discussed the work session and the overall feedback was very positive. Several suggestions were made as to how to continue refining the format and follow up actions to take.

Administrative matters

Connie Price was welcomed as the new Commission staff member. Connie is taking on

many of the administrative tasks and has already become a valuable member of the team. Sasha reminded all Commissioners to submit travel expenses for reimbursement by the end of the month, either through the County (for MRC representatives) or to Commission staff (for Governor appointees). Ginny provided an update on programs and current administrative tasks as a handout. Of particular note is the wrapping up of a grant from the NOAA Marine Debris program for derelict fishing gear removal and export of the program. A final project report will be provided to the Commission in August.

MRC Reports

MRC representatives reported on their current work.

Clallam MRC had a presentation on the County Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning monitoring program and a presentation on the status of eelgrass in Puget Sound. Election of officers was held, with Doug Morrill remaining as chair and Ed Bowlby as vice chair. The MRC and Beach Watchers planted their shellfish garden at Dungeness Bay on May 18 and 19. The MRC also partnered with the Port Angeles Education Foundation to support sending local fourth and fifth graders to the marine life center.

Island County MRC had a presentation from Jim Johannessen on shoreform issues and sea level rise. Shoreline workshops were held at Harrington and Race lagoons and Elger Bay. The Design Review Board of Coupeville approved the application by the MRC and Port of Coupeville for interpretive signage on Coupeville Wharf. An excellent, laudatory review of the Getting to the Water's Edge book was recently published in the Seattle Post Intelligencer. Pigeon Guillemot survey season is now underway, as well as seining at several estuaries. The MRC is making progress with their work in creating a strategic plan.

Jefferson MRC has appointed Hyatt Barnes as a new member representing recreational interests. About 25 people signed the Eelgrass Protection Pledge at Earth Day celebrations and received the logo floating keychains. The eelgrass zone buoys were installed in May, and the Dept of Natural Resources approved a conservation lease for ongoing seasonal placement of the buoys. Olympia oyster bi-weekly sampling started in April and continued through May. The project consultant conducted several site assessments for the shoreline armoring alternatives project, and conceptual design is underway for the County Park site at Oak Bay II (east).

San Juan MRC had a presentation on Critical Areas Ordinance Updates from Tim Gates of CTED, and will have an MRC member tracking the process in San Juan County. The MRC conducted Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) workshops on the four ferry-served islands to review and receive public input on the proposed strategies. A third annual Marine Managers Work Session was held in May, with 30 managers and other representatives attending. Salmon Recovery Funding Board funding has increased for this round with an allocation of \$1.6 million for San Juan County. Following the MRC's recommendation, the County Council voted unanimously to move forward with a local interim regulation to protect the orcas.

Skagit MRC was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for participation in the 2007 Swinomish Earth Enhancement Celebration. The MRC held a Work Session on May 16th to develop an updated 5 year plan. The MRC had a presentation on the Aquatic Reserve Program from Kyle Murphy of the Department of Natural Resources. Beach monitoring on March Point is now underway.

Snohomish MRC is on track to complete their eelgrass mapping and gravid female Dungeness crab habitat map projects by the end of June. The MRC is partnering with People For Puget Sound to develop volunteer stewardship programs at Picnic Point and Kayak Point, and have submitted an ESRP grant application for restoration project at Kayak Point. A new class of Beach Watchers has graduated in Snohomish County, and the MRC is partnering with them on a number of projects. The MRC is also starting their strategic planning process.

Whatcom MRC had a well-attended presentation on sea level rise from Doug Canning of the University of Washington, followed by a panel discussion. Jim Hanson of Lummi Nation described a restoration project to restore 246 acres of wetlands in the Nooksack River estuary. Gordon Scott of Whatcom Land Trust requested MRC support for a project to acquire and protect Lily Point, an important undeveloped shoreline property on Point Roberts.

Northwest Straits Commission Director – hiring process

Terry Stevens, Director of Padilla Bay NERR, gave a short description of the previous hiring processes for Northwest Straits Commission Director. The process for hiring is somewhat different this time due to changes in classification of the NWS director position. Ginny Broadhurst has agreed to serve as Interim Director until a new director is appointed.

Terry had requested input in advance from Commissioners, alternates and staff about important characteristics of a new director. This was provided as a handout, and the Commission briefly reviewed the document. Discussion followed, and Terry asked that each Commissioner highlight the characteristics they feel are most important and submit them to him. The next step is for Terry to compile this input and to create a new job description and position announcement and send it to the Commission and staff for comment, probably during the week of June 11-15. The Commission and staff should also consider current workloads and determine what is needed during the interim period. At or before the next meeting of the Commission, it is expected that a hiring process and schedule will be laid out.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on **Thursday**, June 28 at the Whatcom County Civic Center Building.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Civic Center Building, Bellingham, Whatcom County
June 28 2007, 10:00am-3:00PM**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Scott McCreery, Terry Williams, Sally Van Niel (alt.) Joe Schmitt, Andrea Copping
Absent: Judy Surber, Kathy Fletcher, Buck Meloy, Joe Gaydos, Kirby Johnson
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with a welcome and introductions. Barbara Ryan of the Bellingham City Council and member of the Whatcom MRC, welcomed the group to Bellingham. Barbara talked about the many water issues that the City deals with, including development, protecting stream corridors, stormwater and drinking water. She appreciates the work that the Whatcom MRC and the Northwest Straits Commission do that is focused on marine waters.

Minutes

The minutes from the June 1 Commission meeting and work session were approved as written.

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's High Resolution 3-D Unstructured Circulation and Transport Model of Puget Sound

Andrea Copping gave a brief background description of this project, which is funded in part by the Commission as an ecosystem project. PNNL is creating a circulation model of marine waters that shows how water moves when it is very close to shore. It is designed to assist with planning for local restoration projects. Tarang Khangaonkar of Pacific Northwest National Labs described the evolution of the project and said that the funding from the Commission came at a critical point in moving the project forward.

Tarang noted the technical challenges (oceanographic conditions, complex shorelines, etc.) and showed examples of recent accomplishments including maps of tidal boundaries, tidal elevations, tidal currents and magnitude, and river inflows. It is hoped that this model can be used on a much broader scale to help in planning and more specific projects.

A question and answer period followed the presentation:

Q: Can this model the removal of a large/solid structure?

A: Yes, the model can scale down to as small as a tide gate.

Q: Is water temperature considered in the model?

A: Yes, water and air temperature data are part of the model calibration. These data have not yet been added.

Q: Can the model also be applied to sedimentation changes?

A: Yes, there is work being done, but the first priority is to get the tidal currents and circulation right.

There has been communication with Canada for comparison of this project with some of the recent data they have collected. Ginny Broadhurst requested a summary of the Commission's role and contribution to the project.

Recent Nearshore Assessment and Restoration Prioritization Projects in the Northwest Straits

Jim Johannessen of Coastal Geologic Services presented information about three projects related to his work on nearshore assessment in Puget Sound. He provided a brief primer on coastal processes, followed by a summary of his work mapping feeder bluffs/accretion shoreforms in Island, Snohomish, King, Jefferson and Mason counties.

Mapping was completed on 121 miles of shoreline using current and historic data. This mapping provides process-based physical information that is useful for: furthering GIS-based salmon and nearshore science; shoreline management (immediate and long-term) and; restoration/conservation.

The March's Point Geomorphic Assessment and Restoration Prioritization project was also described. This work was completed for the Skagit Marine Resources Committee. This project mapped current coastal processes, determined historic conditions, prioritized restoration opportunities and provided initial cost estimates for recommended restoration projects.

Public Comment

During public comment, Doug Dobyns, Whatcom County resident and former tribal liaison for the Commission, described a problem with the process for approving a project to use a barge instead of a road to remove ore from the Tulsequah mine. The barge would use the Taku River in northern British Columbia and end up in Juneau. This river has an important glacier and has very good salmon production that would be endangered if the plan moves forward. He is concerned that the review process for such projects is broken, and that the Commission should be aware of this as similar issues may emerge elsewhere.

Committee Reports

The Executive Committee, chaired by Scott McCreery, met on June 13. The committee discussed preparing a planning document that will help incorporate the work of the Initiative with the efforts of the Puget Sound Partnership. The result is a simple project matrix that incorporates the projects in the new MRC grant agreements. The fall MRC

conference was also on the agenda. Suggestions for the agenda should be forwarded to the Committee right away. The Commission has been asked to help support formation of new Marine Resources Committees in south Puget Sound and the outer coast.

There is currently no chair of the Growth and Development Committee. However, Joan Drinkwin, development director, provided a written report that will be sent by email to Commission members.

Administrative matters

The MRC Conference was discussed, and Commissioners are reminded to save the date and encourage MRC members to do the same (November 2-3 at Rosario Resort). The new cycle of MRC grants are completed and out to all seven counties for signature. At the March meeting, the Commission discussed development of a recognition program for the Initiative. There is still work to be done in developing that program. In the meantime, Commission staff prepared a letter recognizing the work of Bruce Higgins for his work at the Edmonds Underwater Park. A full budget update is expected for the September meeting, once the final fiscal year invoicing is complete. Terry Stevens was unable to attend, but a handout was provided on the proposed hiring process and job description for the position of Commission Director. Any comments should be forwarded to Terry directly. Ginny provided a brief update on the activities of the Puget Sound Partnership. Appointments to the leadership council have recently been made, and Ron Shultz is serving as the acting director. Ginny provided a written program update, including and update on the derelict fishing gear removal project. An updated derelict gear video is now available upon request, and a new project with the Nisqually dive team is underway to do derelict gear survey work in south Puget Sound. An addition to the agenda was Ginny's update on the formation of new MRCs on the outer coast and south Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Partnership is responsible in the south Puget Sound Area, and WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife is on the outer coast. There is a tentative plan to hold a workshop with those organizers of new MRCs to share information about Northwest Straits MRCs. Discussion included the need to recognize that the Initiative is bigger than individual MRCs.

Whatcom MRC

Erika Stroebel, lead staff for the Whatcom MRC gave an overview on the committee's history. Whatcom MRC consists of 19 members representing a diverse group. Early on the committee focused on understanding their niche, which led to projects related to shellfish and nearshore habitat. Their many small projects have grown into larger projects, such as the Clam Survey Project that evolved into a project that includes surveys, pilot seeding, education, volunteer participation, and enhancement of existing beds. The MRC's projects are growing and they are seeing more community involvement and volunteers. The MRC also serves an important advisory role to the County council. Projects progress from feasibility through implementation. The MRC has been approached by other marine groups to coordinate projects. Chris Fairbanks, co-chair of the Whatcom MRC, provided an update on the Squalicum Creek Estuary Restoration project being done in partnership with a group of organizations. The project is organized

into four phases with the first being a clean up of materials left there. Piling removal has already been accomplished by the Department of Natural Resources.

MRC Reports

MRC representatives reported on their current work.

Clallam MRC – had a presentation from Jim Haugen, Response Supervisor for the Marine Spill Response Corporation about oil spill response capacity in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. MRC members are excited about visiting the site and seeing some of the drills as part of their July meeting. Many Marine Ecosystems Analysis (MESA) documents have been uploaded to the Clallam MRC website. WSU Beach Watcher Volunteers have been doing an outreach and education program and giving presentations every other weekend at Salt Creek Recreation Area. The seining project has nearly wrapped up and has proved to be successful in forming positive relationships with local shoreline landowners.

Island MRC– Phil Bakke, Directory of Island County Planning and Development, gave us an update on the Critical Areas Ordinance. Shore Stewards coordinator Scott Chase shared a written draft of the evaluation of the regional Shore Stewards program, noting that comments indicated the program is changing behavior. Estuary seining for fish use at Race Lagoon and Harrington Lagoon is complete for the season. A proposal was submitted to the University of Washington and accepted to support a team of student interns to create an adaptive management plan for the Island County areas' salmon recovery plan.

Jefferson MRC did not provide a written report and did not have a representative present.

San Juan MRC - The MRC voted and passed unanimously the final draft of the Marine Stewardship Area for presentation to the county Council on July 17th. Jeff Desmukes gave a presentation on marine vessel traffic pressures in the San Juan Islands. Ecological impacts from boats include operational hazards, sewage, pollutant from maintenance, petroleum products use. Students of Western Washington gave a presentation on policy recommendations for upland water management and herring restoration.

Skagit MRC – Henry Valz, a Western Washington University grad student, gave a presentation on his Bottomfish thesis. Deception Pass State Park Ranger Adam gave a short report on the current season's update and rules changes and answered questions. He noted that there is a problem with the public removing creatures from the beaches and the public destruction of the tide pools. The members agreed it is a problem on many of the public beaches and a suggestion was made to run beach etiquette programs on some of the more popular beaches.

Snohomish MRC – The MRC partnered with People For Puget Sound and the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force on Saturday June 23rd for a weed out event at Picnic Point County Park. The first of the 2007 MRC/WSU Beach Watchers expos was on June 3rd at Howarth Park. Work has begun on developing a 5-year strategic

plan. The MRC and Beach Watchers held an orientation for volunteers to distribute the revised escape cord cards at public boat launches on July 4th weekend. Eelgrass mapping surveys are complete, and gravid female Dungeness crab habitat preliminary maps of potential habitat are complete and protocols for field verification of habitat will be completed by the end of June.

Whatcom MRC did not provide a written report. The MRC provided a separate project summary earlier on the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on July 27 at the Stillaguamish Tribe administration building in Arlington.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Stillaguamish Tribe – Administration Building
July 27, 2007, 10:00am-3:00PM**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Terry Williams, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Andrea Copping, Judy Surber, Kathy Fletcher, Joe Gaydos, Mark Herrenkohl (alt.)
Absent: Buck Meloy, Kirby Johnson, Joe Schmitt, Scott McCreery
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price, Simon Geerlofs
Support: Terry Stevens, Sally Hintz, Amrita Beal

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with a welcome and introductions. Shawn Yanity, Stillaguamish Tribal chair and fisheries manager, described the Tribe's efforts to create a land base since there are no reservation lands. He also explained the important role of natural resources in the Tribe's culture, and that their goal in collecting good scientific information and developing relationships with tribal and non-tribal partners is to protect those resources.

June 28 Meeting Minutes

The spelling of Ron Shultz' name was corrected and a clarification made on Doug Dobyns' public comment to note that his purpose was to bring the issue in Alaska to the attention of the Commission as there may be similar issues arising elsewhere. The minutes were adopted with those two changes.

Stillaguamish Tribe's Derelict Fishing Gear and Mussel Watch Programs

Jen Sevigny, wildlife biologist for the Stillaguamish Tribe, described the work they have done in Port Susan since 2004. Three years of surveys have been conducted, with over 600 crab pots found. They are now seeking grant funding for removal operations. The survey work has included efforts to estimate the re-accumulation rate, with about 42 new pots estimated lost annually. Survey work has been done in nearshore waters (to 100' depth) and in deeper water. They are hoping to use a remote operated vessel (ROV) to investigate and remove pots from the deeper waters. A crab mortality study is planned, with 12 pots placed and monitored every two weeks.

Jen also described the mussel watch monitoring program, which the Tribe has started at a Kayak Point site. This is a program created by NOAA that is the longest continuous contaminant monitoring program in U.S. coastal waters. Tribal staff and/or volunteers collect mussels and send them to labs for chemical and biological contaminants. Additional

discussion followed about the program, and information about it can be found online at http://www8.nos.noaa.gov/cit/nsandt/download/mw_monitoring.aspx.

The Stillaguamish Tribe is also a partner in an ecosystem based project in Port Susan that includes development of a marine stewardship area and is partnering with both Island and Snohomish MRCs as well as the Tulalip tribes and the Northwest Straits Commission.

Tidal Energy: Overview of Issues

Daryl Williams, environmental liaison for the Tulalip Tribes, gave an overview of the proposed projects in Puget Sound, the various types of tidal energy systems and the benefits and potential impacts of each. There are eight proposed projects in Puget Sound, with five located in the Northwest Straits region. Information about each project is available on the web site Daryl developed at www.pstidalenergy.org.

A brief question and answer period following the presentation.

Q- What type of equipment would be best for our waters?

A- Both the Snohomish PUD and Tacoma Power are looking for something that will work best and are leaning toward something totally underwater with propellers showing. They are easier to work on if partly above the surface. UEK Corp is the only ones designing fish screens to go around the turbine. Not a lot of studies done on the different turbine designs. 17 companies are building these. Most are working with smaller pilot size project, but there are two that are developing larger quantity turbines. Places like Deception Pass they will have to use the smaller turbines with the different flows of the current. Admiralty Inlet they are looking at the larger turbines.

Q-How much power can they produce?

A- Not known, but it would take a lot of them or something much bigger to really significantly impact our power supply.

Q- What is the diameter of the foundation?

A- No real dimensions yet.

Q- What is the impact on the environment?

A- There are some studies that are beginning but no real studies to know what the impacts are. There is more sediment below them, there may be a potential impact to fish migration/feeding/resting. Could be an impact to current velocities.

Q- Could timing of tides be changed?

A- Not the timing, but the apparent timing because the volume of water moved would be different.

Q- Are state agencies in the permitting line for these projects?

A- Yes, and they will be providing comments. The Department of Ecology is trying to be proactive about it by looking to identify potential impacts to see what research is needed. The preliminary permits do not allow any construction.

Q- For wind turbines there has been some modeling done. Is anyone doing this for tidal energy?

A- Yes, the University of Washington is doing that now, contracted by Snohomish PUD

Q- Does anyone have a successful tidal energy project at this time?

A- Not yet – the technology is too new.

Public Comment

During public comment, Amrita Beal introduced herself as the new regional staff member for Senator Patty Murray's office. Sally Hintz of Senator Cantwell's office had a copy of the Coast Guard bill (S 1892) that includes a section on oil spill prevention.

Director Hiring Process

Terry Stevens handed out a packet of draft materials related to the hiring process. This included the position description, announcement and estimated timeline. He described some differences in the hiring process since this position was last hired. The position description has been sent to all Commissioners and Alternates for review and input, which has now been incorporated.

The announcement is expected to be posted within the next week, with an application period of at least three weeks. The announcement will be forwarded to all Commissioners with a link to the Ecology posting. Following the closing date, the Ecology human resources office will do an initial sorting based on the basic requirements of the position. Once that is complete, a hiring committee will be able to review applications and conduct interviews. Terry will solicit members for the hiring committee in the next week from the full Commission. Depending on the timing of the process, it is possible that a special meeting will be called in October for final interviews with the full Commission.

Business Items

Simon Geerlofs, former staff intern at Senator Cantwell's office in Washington, DC, was welcomed as the temporary Marine Program Coordinator while Ginny serves as Interim Director. Commission staff described their current responsibilities now that all existing positions are filled. A list of proposed meeting dates for 2008 was distributed. Due to summer travel delays, the Commission considered the possibility of holding summer meetings on Thursdays. There was no decision on this, but it will be revisited at a future meeting. The August 24, 2007 meeting was changed to Island County, in recognition of the difficulties associated with traveling to San Juan County in the peak summer season. The location of the September meeting will be confirmed in August. The next MRC Training Conference will be held on November 2-3 at Rosario Resort. Several session ideas were proposed, and the Executive Committee will take them into consideration at their August 1 meeting to discuss the agenda for this event. Hold the Date cards were distributed to each MRC representative for distribution to all MRC members.

There were no committee meetings since the last Commission meeting, but a brief written report was provided by Joan Drinkwin for the Growth and Development Committee.

Ginny gave an update on the derelict fishing gear project. A team of Army divers is now in training to do survey work. Additional survey work has been completed by the Nisqually Tribe in South Puget Sound. A full report on the derelict fishing gear project will be presented at the August meeting of the Commission.

Impact of Hunting on Scoter Populations

Joe Gaydos gave a briefing on an upcoming Fish and Wildlife Commission decision to be made on hunting scoters in Washington. The scoter population has declined 70% in the last 25 years, and is not yet listed as threatened or endangered. Joe noted that it is still legal to hunt them. Joe's concern is that scoters do not reproduce quickly, they have lower reproductive rates, and are slower to mature than the harlequin ducks that the hunting regulations are based on. Data indicate that approximately 2,000 of an estimated 82,000 are harvested annually, but the percentage varies greatly depending on the location. He would like to encourage the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt a more precautionary approach. Following discussion, the Commission supported sending a letter stating our interest in the species and requesting that the Fish and Wildlife Commission look closely at the available data when making their decision.

Puget Sound Partnership

Kathy Fletcher described the next steps for the Partnership's Leadership Council, which requires them to prepare an action agenda and funding plan by September of 2008. The Governor is expected to appoint an Executive Director for the Puget Sound Partnership very soon, from a list of three finalists. Following that appointment, the next appointments will be to an Ecosystem Coordinating Board made up of specific positions, including one from each of the action areas. A Science Panel of nine members will also be appointed.

The next decision point is on defining the action area boundaries, and there is an opportunity to provide input by August 3. The Commission reviewed the sample maps sent out by Partnership staff and discussed concerns, benefits and limitations. The Commission as a whole did not support the recommendation of any specific boundaries, but agreed that a letter should be sent to the Partnership to suggest that they allow time for thorough discussion on the action area boundaries and offer the Commission's assistance in coordinating north Puget Sound areas, however they are defined geographically.

MRC Reports

MRC representatives reported on their current work.

Clallam MRC – Did not provide a written report. Their July meeting was cancelled.

Island MRC – Had an update by Lynda Lyshall on the Puget Sound Partnership. Beach Watcher volunteers distributed 830 crab escape cord cards. Signage panels will be installed on Whidbey and Camano Islands this summer at several locations. The art work for two local panels to be installed at Clinton Beach has been completed. The Department of Health has sent a letter notifying our MRC that Island County is threatened with a downgrade in classification for one of its shellfish areas off the northeast shore of Camano Island. Creosote surveys are complete at Camano Island and Deceptions Pass.

Jefferson MRC - Marine Shoreline Landowner Workshops were held on June 26th. Flyers were mailed to 3,000 Jefferson County shoreline landowners. Eighteen owners signed up to be Shore Stewards and received their signs. Roll up banners were designed for the Olympia Oyster Project, Eelgrass Project and for general education. The MRC is working with Jefferson county GIS staff to develop eelgrass maps for signage in new locations. Replacement signs were purchased for the deteriorating eelgrass signs. Jim Johannessen conducted site assessments of Fairmont Marsh, Oak Bay I and II, and a location on Tarboo Bay. The Armoring Project Coordinator made an initial site visit to the location of the potential soft shore restoration project at Tukey Point.

San Juan MRC – Richard Civile with the emergency management program at Western Washington University gave a presentation on “San Juan Economic Development”. The Marine Stewardship Area Plan was approved and presented to the County Council on July 17th for adoption. The MRC drafted a letter to the NW Regional Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service commenting on NOAA’s Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to reduce impact of vessels to the southern resident orca whale population.

Skagit MRC – Tom Slocum, an engineer from the Washington Conservation Districts Northern Region, gave a presentation to the MRC on the Fidalgo Cove Shoreline Stabilization Project. Betsy Stevenson from Skagit County Planning and Development Services will be representing the County Planning position vacated by Ann Bylin. Michael See, staff for the MRC, has been promoted will be leaving for a new position within Skagit County.

Snohomish MRC – A group including NWSC, Island County MRC, Tulalip Tribes, Stillaguamish Tribes, WSU Beach Watchers, The Nature Conservancy and others is working to form the initial framework for the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area and will present initial mission statement drafts to Snohomish and Island County MRC’s at the joint potluck in mid-August. WSU Beach Watchers and the MRC hosted an expo and naturalist event on July 26th in Mukilteo at the Native American Canoe Journey Expo.

Whatcom MRC (report for June) – The Whatcom County MRC has offered to partner and coordination with Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) and others in providing necessary funding and staff resources for the three restoration projects for Chuckanut Bay, Birch Bay/Terrell Creek and Drayton Harbor. The Clam Enhancement committee recently completed the seeding of clams in Birch Bay. David Shull of WWU completed another rockfish survey in June and reef cards for identification of rockfish were distributed to local dive shops by the rockfish committee. A draft assessment and feasibility report for the Cliffside Beach restoration project was completed by our consultants Anchor Environmental and Coastal Geologic. The final report was completed at the end of June. Several volunteers were present and given recognition and thanked for their contributions. Refreshments and a slide show were given as part of their recognition.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on August 24 at the Service Alternatives Building in Coupeville, Island County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Island County – Service Alternatives, Coupeville
August 24, 2007 10:00am-3:00pm**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Phyllis Kind, Jonathan White, Polly Fischer, Terry Williams, Kirby Johnson, Judy Surber, Mark Herrenkohl (alt.), Scott McCreery, Ed Bowlby (alt.)
Absent: Buck Meloy, Kathy Fletcher, Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Joe Gaydos
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price, Simon Geerlofs

DRAFT

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with a welcome and introductions. Don Meehan, lead staff for the Island MRC, introduced the newest Island County Commissioner, John Dean. Commissioner Dean welcomed the group to Coupeville and mentioned that he has been watching the organization since the early public hearings held by Congressman Jack Metcalf. He expressed an interest being part of the solution to protect marine issues in our region.

July 27 Meeting Minutes: Prior to the meeting, one date correction was made to the July 27 meeting minutes, which were then approved as written.

Committee Reports: Scott McCreery gave a brief report on the executive committee meeting from August 1. The MRC conference planning is underway and the Keynote Speaker Randy Shuman has been confirmed. The tentative session topics were described, with a draft agenda to be distributed in late September.

Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Project: Ginny Broadhurst handed out an informal report on the derelict gear project and its various components. She explained that Tom Cowan, former director of the Commission, got the program up and running in 2002. The current derelict gear team was introduced and the role of each of its members described. As the project grows, so does the number of members working on the project.

Discussion followed on the practical aspects of the derelict net removal program. Ginny stated that 95% of the nets being pulled are gill nets, with some purse seine nets present. Nets may be fully intact, or only in pieces, but in all cases the nets are cut into pieces by the divers doing the removal work. Combining the pieces of net, it was determined that 550 full size derelict gill nets have been removed as of July 2007. The area of habitat restored is estimated based on the actual area covered, not on the total area of the nets. The quality of habitat restored is very high, as the

natural habitat returns quickly to its previous state. Derelict nets are usually removed when encountered, regardless of whether they are fishing or not, but crab pots can be dismantled and left in place when they are no longer fishing. Balancing surveys and the gear removal is one challenge of the project.

Ginny Broadhurst and Tom Cowan also discussed the Northwest Straits' efforts to train military divers to remove derelict gear. Army dive teams spent three weeks on Smith Island, Lummi Island and in the south sound. The Army paid for all of the expenses.

Tom Cowan discussed the derelict gear prioritization project funded by The Russell Family Foundation, Puget Sound Action Team, and Northwest Straits Foundation. The prioritization project established a strategy and an overall cost estimate for Puget Sound gear removal by 2012. The costs are estimated at approximately \$5 million over the next 5 years and \$80-100 thousand a year for ongoing removal. The Northwest Straits has a large role in this project although other organizations are beginning to participate.

Ginny explained that prevention is another component of the derelict gear project. There are opportunities for education and outreach by MRC's to manufacturers and retailers of crab pots and pot pullers, sports fishing shows and fish and wildlife organizations. Snohomish, Island, and Whatcom County MRCs each did local outreach projects on escape cord this year.

The removal of shrimp pots is more challenging because they are deeper. It is confirmed that there is gear deeper, but the amount is unknown. Some testing is being done on the use of remotely operated vessel (ROV) equipment to remove deeper pots but the cost is higher and less can be accomplished in deeper water.

Underwater video was shown of a recently removed net. A question answer period followed the video.

Q - What about areas where there might be recurring gear loss?

A - There has been more focus on totally clearing areas rather than returning to places where gear easily re-accumulates. Commercial fishermen are now reporting when they lose a net so that removal can be done quickly.

Q - Have the manufacturers of pots been contacted?

A- A presentation was made to the Fish and Wildlife Commission about the program. The Commission was interested, but a regulatory fix is a challenge. The Department of Fish and Wildlife did not get funding for this project and do not have the staff needed.

Q - How many of the crab pots pulled have escape cord?

A -30% do not have the escape cord. It is agreed that there are still some problems with design and escape cord. Design changes have been submitted to Department of Fish and Wildlife but they have not been adopted.

Tom Cowan gave an update on his efforts to export the program, noting that the Northwest Straits program is the largest comprehensive derelict fishing gear removal program in the

continental United States. Exporting the program may include; a workshop with managers, educational materials, the transfer and modification of protocols, providing a database, identifying a funding source, diver training, and conducting a pilot survey and pilot removal project. A workshop was conducted for all the Caribbean countries in addition to 11 possible program transfers in the United States. There has been initial contact made with many organizations and over 70 of those have called back with interest. Three programs that stand out are the Sea Doc Society in California, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve. In some cases the export project found that organizations lacked the staffing to take on a new program. A copy of the final report for the export component program is available from Connie at price@nwstraits.org.

Ginny Broadhurst reviewed the list of all grants received for the derelict gear program, with a total of \$1.5 million raised to date from state, federal and private funds. Most of the funding has gone to survey and removal. New funding sources are continually being considered and pursued. The Commission will be making a request to the Washington State Legislature for funding to remove 90% of the derelict gear in Puget Sound by 2012. The Commission will provide ongoing updates on the progress of this request. New funding is expected from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to assess the impact of derelict crab pots and get a better understanding of how many animals are taken by them. Two sites are being looked at in Port Gardner (Snohomish County) and Clallam. Jen Sevigny of the Stillaguamish Tribe is working on a similar project and communicating with us.

Administrative Matters: A meeting of MRC chairs and lead staff is scheduled for September 11. Please forward any suggestions or ideas to Commission staff. The federal grant that ended in June 2007 has been reconciled to a zero balance. Sasha will have a breakdown and full report at the next meeting. The September 28 Commission meeting will be held in Jefferson County. Meeting dates in June, July and August of 2008 were moved to Thursdays instead of Fridays due to travel difficulties during the busy summer season. The Salmon Homecoming is September 7-9 in Seattle. Terry Williams showed a two-minute trailer for *Shadow of the Salmon*, the film was funded in part by the Commission.

Public Comment: Don Meehan handed out information on the Whidbey Island Farm Tour in October and noted it is a good opportunity to connect with land managers.

Island MRC – Marine Stewardship Area Signage

Commissioners took a field trip to the wharf in Coupeville to view signage developed and installed by the MRC. The trip included a brief presentation by Dan Pedersen, Kristin Cooley, and Benye Weber. Commissioners viewed the remotely operated underwater camera beneath the Coupeville pier and Dan Pedersen described plans to convert the entire wharf to a marine educational facility. The current exhibit features stories and lessons learned from Penn Cove's earlier history as the infamous site of orca round-ups. Captured orcas were brought to Penn Cove and held before being shipped off to marine mammal aquaria nation-wide. This tragic history is in stark contrast to the region's current feelings about orcas and marine mammals. Along with the full sized skeleton of a grey whale and Dall's porpoise, the exhibit conveys messages of the importance and need to protect whales in Puget Sound.

Integrating with the Puget Sound Partnership

Ginny led a discussion on the Commissions involvement with the Partnership. The Commission sent a letter in July to the Puget Sound Partnership about the proposed action areas, and several MRC's sent letters as well. MRCs should provide a copy of any formal correspondence to the Partnership to the commission staff. Discussion followed regarding concerns about the proposed action areas, including representation from large geographic regions; division of counties and other organizations into several pieces; understanding the role of the Initiative and the Ecosystem Coordination Board; and the different issues in each area. Members agreed that choosing and administering the actions areas will be difficult no matter how they are delineated, and that future adjustments may be needed.

The Ecosystem Coordination Board is planned to be in place October 1. A Science Panel is also being formed and commissioners noted there are several good candidates within the Initiative who should be encouraged to apply. Ginny will be attending the Leadership Council meeting next week and will report back at the next meeting. The Commission discussed messages Ginny should convey to the Leadership Council during the public comment period, including the unique model of the Northwest Straits Initiative, the diverse representation on the Commission and MRCs, and the proven success of the bottom-up approach in accomplishing results and getting citizens involved. This makes the Northwest Straits Commission a desirable partner to the Puget Sound Partnership.

MRC Reports

MRC representative reported on their current work

Skagit MRC- Rick Haley has agreed to fill in following Mike See's promotion. Ivar Dolph gave a presentation on the Pigeon Guillemot census. The annual MRC event, Fidalgo Bay Day, is scheduled for September 15 at Seafarers' Memorial Park in Anacortes. Numerous activities will be held to educate the public on marine issues.

Island MRC- This month's meeting was a joint picnic with Snohomish MRC in Mukilteo where they discussed the potential Port Susan Stewardship area. The MRC website has been completely revamped. The Whidbey New-Times and the South Whidbey Record published an article on the Pigeon Guillemot project with a combined circulation of 13,400 to cover all of Whidbey Island. Intern Houston Flores has been researching the Pigeon Guillemot and got some exciting footage of adult birds feeding the chicks. Island and Skagit MRCs handed out 850 crab escape cord cards at local boat launches. Wearing a crab costume was a good icebreaker and get people interested.

Snohomish MRC – A picnic with Island County was their meeting this month. The MRC held 3 Beach Expos and had booths at several other events. The last one will be on August 25th in Mukilteo. This year the MRC will have a Washington Conservation Corps Individual Placement position to support the MRC's work program. The MRC is partnering with the Department of Natural Resources, Pilchuck Audubon Society and Tulalip Tribes to locate creosote pilings in the Snohomish River estuary, prioritize the pilings for removal, and replace pilings with osprey nests with concrete pilings. The MRC is moving forward with implementing the feasibility study and

design of the Kayak Point Beach Restoration. Preparations have begun for a one-day, state-wide public workshop on the Ph: arm take back program.

Whatcom MRC – The nearshore subcommittee is in the process of selecting another habitat restoration project and will have a recommendation to the MRC for discussion by next month. The MRC will be sponsoring a nearshore working group meeting on September 21. The Cliffside Beach and Restoration Project Phase I (the assessment and feasibility report) has been reviewed and the results are currently being discussed in the MRC's nearshore subcommittee.

Clallam MRC – Lisa Kaufman of WA Department of Natural Resources gave a status update on the creosote piling removals in the Port Angeles area. Rein Attemann of People For Puget Sound gave a presentation on the Mud-Up campaign and asked for relevant Clallam MRC events to be posted on their website. Ed Bowlby gave an overview of the Symposium for Managing Temperate Reefs hosted by the UW. John Cambalik of Puget Sound Partnership gave a quick update of the new organization including action items that the MRC or individual members might want to respond to. An executive session was held to review and comment on the three new candidates for vacant positions on the MRC including a new seat to represent the builders and contractors. The MRC is planning a joint meeting with Jefferson MRC in September.

San Juan MRC – The MRC is the advisory group to the Salmon Recovery Board. They reviewed and ranked 12 proposals and with \$1.8 million in available funding they hope to be able to fund 10. Jonathan White attended a Low Impact Development (LID) workshop in Everett and is recommending the MRC support LID and other green building practices for San Juan County. The county does not have incentives and/or disincentives in place at this time. The presentation by Eric Eisenhart to the MRC of his research concluded that voluntary closures may not be working to protect rockfish. A discussion took place of the possible modification of the bottomfish recovery program.

Jefferson MRC – The MRC will co-host a presentation by Snohomish Public Utility District on their tidal energy proposal for Admiralty Inlet on November 6 at 6pm. The MRC will have a booth at the Wooden Boat Festival September 7-9. Weekly sampling for larval recruitment and annual sampling continues for the Olympia Oyster project. The Eelgrass Protection Project committee met August 9 to review data, review new grant deliverables, discuss maps for signage locations, and prepare for the replacement of aluminum signs for the deteriorating steel signs. The armoring project committee met and reviewed the report prepared by Jim Johannessen and new grant deliverables, critiqued interpretive artwork being designed, and discussed possible next steps for a potential soft shore restoration project at Tukey Point. Tony Petrillo has updated Nobeltec's popular electronic chart software to show the location of eelgrass beds offshore of Port Townsend. These charts link to a boat's GPS system and are in wide use in the recreational boating community.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on Friday, September 28 at the Port Hadlock Marina in Jefferson County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Jefferson County – Point Hudson Marina Building, Port Townsend
September 28, 2007 10:00am-3:00pm

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Kathy Fletcher, Buck Meloy, Kirby Johnson, Aleta Erikson (alt.), Scott McCreery, Joe Gaydos
Absent: Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Jonathan White, Judy Surber, Terry Williams
Alternates: Susan Bauer
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price, Simon Geerlofs
Support: Joan Drinkwin

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with introductions. Michelle Sandoval, Deputy Mayor of Port Townsend welcomed the group and thanked the Commission for their work. The city of Port Townsend is proud that the historic commercial area downtown is now protected from commercial chain stores. Michelle introduced Phil Johnson of the Jefferson County Commission who talked about a recent public meeting on the Environmental Impact Statement of the Fred Hill Pit to Pier project proposal, a controversial proposal to expand the Fred Hill gravel mine just south of the Hood Canal Bridge and add a deepwater pier to allow loading of gravel to large oceangoing vessels and barges.

August 24 Meeting Minutes: Approved as written.

Committee Reports: Scott McCreery gave a brief report on the executive committee meeting on September 12. The main topic was the MRC conference, and a draft agenda is now available. The Tidal Energy session was expanded to be a plenary session. Also at this committee meeting, a decision was made to send a letter to the Puget Sound Partnership requesting a seat for the Northwest Straits on their Ecosystem Coordination Board. The letter was drafted and mailed this week.

Joan Drinkwin provided a written report on the Growth and Development Committee, which includes information about funding and project management Joan is writing successful proposals and the Foundation is doing well, but as a result, more of her time is spent managing current contracts. Joan and others would like to see the Foundation get more corporate and individual donors. A suggestion was made that the Commission needs to have a conversation on how to best expand the staffing of the Foundation.

Puget Sound Partnership

Ginny explained that she has worked with the Partnership to get the Northwest Straits 45 minutes on the Leadership Council agenda for the meeting on Monday, October 1. Ginny discussed her ideas for the presentation which will cover the Initiative's history, structure, MRCs and the Northwest Straits regional work such as the derelict gear project. Phyllis and Mike Doherty will participate in the presentation and share their view of what is important about the Initiative and the role of the MRCs.

Discussion followed about the Initiative's role in Puget Sound and where there is overlap or connection to the work of the Partnership. There were several recommendations for key points to make to the Leadership Council, including:

- our citizen involvement and network of local partners,
- our ability to be a role model for new MRCs in other counties,
- our nine year track record of success,
- the technical merit of our projects (such as eelgrass and forage fish habitat surveys),
- the strategic approach of our work (based on our performance benchmarks) and our ability to select projects based on community priorities,
- our ability to easily expand and export projects regionally,
- our diverse membership/representation.

Ginny noted that appointments to the Ecosystem Coordination Board will also be done on Monday, and possibly appointments to the Science Panel. The Northwest Straits Commission sent letters of support for Joe Gaydos and Andrea Copping for appointments to the Science Panel.

Administrative Matters

January Retreat. Sasha said that the NWSC strategic planning retreat will be in La Conner this year on January 23-24. Commissioners and Alternates should put the date on their calendars and start thinking about topics. The budget will be one topic on the agenda.

MRC Chair/Lead Staff meeting was held on September 11. MRC Strategic Planning was discussed, and a few MRCs have them done. Others will be circulated as they are completed. A discussion about joint meetings answered some questions about how to make them happen and be more successful. Grant agreements were discussed and MRCs will make sure their members have access to them. It was recommended that MRC Chair/Lead Staff meetings be held at least twice a year, as they are valuable and encourage communications between MRCs and Commission staff.

Initiative Reauthorization: Ginny explained that the Initiative's original authorization expired in 2004 and over the last few years we've tried without success to get a reauthorization process underway. Senator Murray's staff has responded favorably to working with us on reauthorization so we are making that a high priority. Even though we have been receiving funds through an annual earmark, we are operating without authorization. Authorization provides congressional justification for continued funding, which is important in an increasingly tight federal budget climate. Ginny and Simon have been working on a draft bill which was submitted to Jamie Shimek in Sen Murray's office. Support from Maria Cantwell, Norm Dicks, Rick Larsen, and

Jay Inslee will also be valuable. There was some discussion about ensuring that we have adequate staff resources to continue with this effort.

Derelict Gear Update: Ginny explained that there is a derelict fishing net in Edmonds that we plan to remove next week. Kathleen Drew from Governor Gregoire's staff is expected to attend and observe the removal operations.

Sea Grant Workshop handout. There will be a meeting on October 24 in Bellingham discussing Sea Grant's regional ocean information program project. Michelle Wainstein is the coordinator and can be contacted for more information.

Public Comment: Joan Drinkwin stated that since Ginny has stepped in as Interim Director the Commission staff has been making huge strides and is working well as a team. She believes Ginny works well with the Commission's state and federal contacts as well, and continues to build on excellent existing projects. Joan encouraged the Commission to be engaged and get involved in the director hiring process.

Director Hiring Process: Phyllis Kind reported on the director hiring process. There are 14 applicants but Ecology has not been able to get all the information forwarded from their online system. The hiring process will be similar to last time. The first screening group has been convened by Terry and the applicants will be evaluated by this group. Based on the evaluations, interviews will be scheduled in late October. It is expected that the process will wrap up in November. Commissioners are welcome to participate in the hiring process. To do so, contact Terry Stevens (tstevens@padillabay.gov). MRC involvement is encouraged. Kirby Johnson stated his intent to send a letter to Terry and participate.

Field Trip: Dave Robison, former city planner for Port Townsend and current Project Manager for the Northwest Maritime Center, led Commissioners on a tour of Point Hudson and the site of the soon to be built Northwest Maritime Center. Dave described the importance of the working waterfront to the culture and economy of Port Townsend and the particular impact of Point Hudson to the city's world renowned wooden boat building industry. Dave discussed the Northwest Maritime Center's on-the-water education activities, its eelgrass friendly pier, and the programs that will be housed there when the center is complete. Commissioners had the opportunity to view and learn about Jefferson MRC's voluntary no anchor eelgrass protection zone. Buoys delineating the zone are located just offshore the Maritime Center's dock. At this year's wooden boat festival no boats were anchored within the protection zone.

Budget Update: The approved Commission budget from FY2007 was distributed. A final breakdown of the budget is not yet complete, but it is known that all tasks can be funded as planned. The Commission should begin to identify needs and start the process immediately for the marine program and tribal participation tasks. Terry Stevens will give an update at the next meeting.

Commission meeting was adjourned at 1:15pm to Northwest Straits Foundation Meeting and re-convened at 2:00pm.

MRC REPORTS

Clallam MRC: The September meeting was a joint meeting with Jefferson. Alex Bradbury, Shellfish Biologist for the WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, briefed the MRCs on the recently negotiated settlement between the Treaty Tribes, Commercial Shellfish growers, and the State. John Cambalik provided an update on the infrastructure formation within the Puget Sound Partnership, the pending decision on the delineation of the Strait/Hood Canal Action Areas, and the Action Agenda. A discussion ensued on how to be more prepared to help the Puget Sound Partnership prepare its Action Agenda, including completion of a strategic plan, in the hope that it might be partially included in the Action Agenda. Jefferson County MRC members shared their experience with the Port Townsend's recent Shoreline Master Program update. Volunteer training is under way for the 2007 Beach Watchers with 19 trainees.

Jefferson MRC: LaRoche & Associates has been contracted to oversee all projects, coordinate with WSU on grant administration, and lead the strategic planning effort. Port Townsend Marine Science Center will subcontract with LaRoche for field biology and lab work associated with the Olympia Oyster Project. Two updates at the next regular meeting will be on the Protection Island Aquatic Lands Proposal and the Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program. The MRC distributed brochures, post cards and "Voluntary No Anchor Zone" key chains at the Wooden Boat Festival, where 176 boating community members signed the eelgrass pledge. The MRC conducted photographic monitoring of voluntary boater compliance of eelgrass zones throughout the month of September, and will work with DNR to update the boater information pamphlet on eelgrass for those desiring to have a mooring buoy.

San Juan MRC: The MRC completed a genetic analysis of juvenile salmon caught in beach seines in the San Juan Islands to determine where they came from and what kinds of habitats they use. The sample size was small but found juvenile Chinook from the Skagit, Stillaguamish, Fraser and Hood Canal watersheds. In response to the Puget Sound Partnership's call for nominations for the Ecosystem Coordination Board, the MRC sent a letter recommending that the Northwest Straits Commission be represented on the board and provided a letter of support for Mike Sato's nomination as representative for the San Juan Action Area. The MRC also sent a letter to the Commission recommending Ginny Broadhurst for the position of director.

Skagit MRC: Keeley O'Connell gave an overview of the People For Puget Sound's Sound Stewardship Program and shared future goals. The program goals for 2008 include adding 30 new stewards and adopting three new sites, one of them in Skagit County. Sampling has been completed for the Native Oyster Project. Thirty or more shell bags were placed over a larger geographic area, which will be sampled next summer to see how far the oysters are dispersing. Monitoring at the Lone Tree restoration site continues, with fish traveling upstream as far as possible. The Swinomish tribe has done additional native plantings in the buffer. The *Spartina* removal project is completed for the year. Three days of *Spartina* surveys were completed, and a report and map of sites will be available in October. Paul Dinnel has copies of the final report of the Creosote Project.

Snohomish MRC: The MRC will hire a consultant to facilitate a workshop in Jan/Feb 2008 and

develop a 5-year strategic plan from this workshop. The MRC is partnering with Port of Everett to monitor changes in sediment distribution and vegetation over time for the Jetty Island Beach Expansion Monitoring Project. Two monitoring surveys have already occurred, and another is anticipated for October 2007. DNR and the MRC surveyed creosote pilings in the Snohomish River estuary. Most of the pilings in the estuary are not creosote-treated; however, enough pilings may be present to justify removal by DNR. The first round of mussel sampling occurred at 6 of 7 sites in early September. Analysis can take up to six months and the data, when available, will be posted on the MRC website. The MRC is partnering with Stillaguamish Tribe and NOAA to test for Vtg in male Chinook salmon. Samples have been collected and sent to NOAA for analysis. Snohomish and Island MRCs have been reviewing the Port Susan MSA Working Group's proposal for the MRCs to serve a lead role in establishing a MSA in Port Susan. Kirby Johnson passed around the new edition of the Snohomish MRC handbook, which they believed should be provided in hard copy to each seat on the MRC

Island MRC: Houston Flores, a summer intern from Western Washington University, described Pigeon Guillemot research he did over the summer. A strategic plan was adopted and can be found on the website. As of September 1, 128 new members have been enrolled in the Shore stewards for a total of 428 in Island County. Seventeen copies of the common panel from the MRC's interpretive signage project are being placed at sites frequented by the public. Island County and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation have signed a contract for the Cornet Bay project. Sarah Schmidt will be the project manager.

Whatcom MRC: There is a Cherry Point stakeholder group comprised of environmental, agency, and commercial representatives in addition to the Washington State Dept. of Natural Resources. The focus of this group is to find common ground and objectives in satisfying the aquatic reserve requirements for Cherry Point while balancing economic opportunities with ecological issues. The MRCs representative for the group is Chris Fairbanks. A report from Coastal Geological Services has been reviewed by the nearshore subcommittee. Four areas were ranked the highest from this evaluation. The nearshore subcommittee requests input from the MRC on which of the four project to fund. The Port and City of Bellingham are campaigning to bring NOAA to Bellingham. MRC members agreed to send a letter of support.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
San Juan County– Rosario Resort, Orcas Island
November 2nd 2:00pm-3:15pm**

Attending: Duane Fagergren, Phyllis Kind, Polly Fischer, Kathy Fletcher, Stef Frenzl (alt.), Jonathan White, Scott McCreery, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Tony Petrillo (alt.), Bob Cecile (alt.)
Absent: Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Judy Surber, Terry Williams, Joe Gaydos
Alternates: Dick Toft
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst, Connie Price, Simon Geerlofs
Support: Joan Drinkwin

DRAFT

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 2:00pm with introductions.

September 28th Meeting Minutes: Approved as written.

Administrative Matters

January Retreat. Historically the strategic planning retreat has been held in January. Ginny proposed that we postpone the strategic planning retreat because of scheduling difficulties. The Commission agreed and staff will propose a new date at the next commission meeting.

Conference lunch table discussion topics. Loosely facilitated discussions are a tradition at MRC conference lunchtimes. So far, topics proposed are forage fish, marine stewardship areas, and increasing local business support through the Foundation. New suggestions included oil spills and the San Juan Initiative.

Commission updates

Puget Sound Partnership. Ginny explained that on October 1 she was joined by Phyllis, and Mike Doherty to provide an overview of the Northwest Straits Initiative to the Puget Sound Partnership's Leadership Council. An impressive number of people involved with the Northwest Straits Initiative were in the audience. Bill Ruckelshaus gave encouraging comments before and after the presentation. Even though the Leadership Council did not support the Commission's request for a seat on the Ecosystem Board, it was clear that there will be opportunities to work with the Partnership. David Dicks will be the Puget Sound Partnership representative on the Northwest Straits Commission, and will be attending the conference and speaking on Saturday afternoon. Commissioners agreed that this is an important opportunity to welcome David Dicks to the Commission.

Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Project. Ginny explained that on October 10 Kathleen Drew from the Governor's office and Judith Morris from Norm Dicks' office attended a demonstration of derelict gear removal in Hood Canal hosted by the Commission . This was the first time the Initiative has removed the nets from the Hood Canal area.

Ecosystem projects. Ginny discussed the ecosystem fund which has about \$50,000 in it. At the next meeting Commission meeting there will be time on the agenda to discuss potential projects. Suggestions include forage fish inventories, citizen monitoring (REEF), eelgrass monitoring, mussel watch program, and the PH:ARM (pharmaceutical) take- back program.

Ginny mentioned that the permitting to remove creosote logs at American Camp on San Juan Island has been approved. They expect to remove close to 100 tons with part of the \$111,000 in grant funding from NOAA.

MRC Reports

Whatcom MRC – Bob Cecile reported their monthly meeting was last night and they nominated new officers. Ron Akeson will be co-chair with Bob Cecile. Chris Fairbanks will be vice chair. Buck Meloy will continue as the Northwest Straits Commission representative. There are a few new members and they are working on getting them up to speed. They have been collecting data for several years and are excited to turn it into real projects. Some MRC members and staff have joined the Nearshore Working Group, which will meet quarterly. The Education and Outreach committee announced the recent public event on October 11 of a slideshow and presentation by Jim Johannessen of Coastal Geologic Services on sea level rise due to global warming and some of its impacts on Whatcom County. The annual Salmon Summit is scheduled for Nov. 15 this year and the Whatcom MRC will again host the nearshore section. Clam surveys are currently being conducted on Birch Bay Beaches where plantings were done last spring.

Snohomish MRC– Stef Frenzl will partner with People For Puget Sound on a restoration project at Kayak Point. A retreat for the strategic planning effort has been scheduled for February 22-23, 2008. Amy Johnson has begun her work with the MRC through the Washington Conservation Corps program. A consultant will be selected through a request for qualifications for Phase II of the Gravid Female Dungeness Crab habitat map. The MRC has partnered with the Port of Everett to evaluate the effectiveness of using dredged sand to restore shoreline functions along Jetty Island's armored shoreline. A one day workshop on Pharmaceutical in Households: A Return Mechanism will be held April 18 at the Marriot Hotel in Sea-Tac.

Island MRC– the first half of the strategic plan is posted on the website and the MRC is getting into the nuts and bolts with the help of Dan Pederson. Phyllis encouraged everyone to see the exciting video of the Pigeon Guillemots taking fish to their young. The MRC prepared a request for the Northwest Straits Foundation to submit to Ecology for a two-year \$120,000 maintenance grant to help fund the Shore Stewards coordinators. Sarah Schmidt, manager of the Cornet Bay project, will meet with State Parks to discuss how to harmonize the combined work. In the coming weeks 17 shoreline signs will be dispersed to sites on Camano and Whidbey Islands.

San Juan MRC– Jonathan White reported the at the last MRC meeting they have a Oil Spill Response in the San Juan Islands presentation by Carl Andersen, WA Department of Ecology,

NW Regional Office, Spill Response; Brendan Cowan, San Juan County Department of Emergency Management; Julie Knight, Islands Oil Spill Association; Gary Shigenaka, NOAA Emergency Response Science Support Team. The MRC can help by acting as a conduit to the community, identifying critical areas with the understanding of difference between what can be protected and what cannot, taking a close look at existing GRP's, developing a MRC policy on dispersants, working on prevention education (especially for chronic small spills that result in chronic exposures).

Jefferson MRC– co-hosted a presentation by Snohomish Public Utility District on their tidal energy proposal for Admiralty Inlet. The MRC's Olympia Oyster project is complete. The MRC will work with DNR to update the boater information pamphlet for persons desiring to have a mooring buoy. The revised pamphlet will be distributed through Jefferson County Department of Community Development. The eelgrass protection zone marker buoys will be removed in November and replaced next spring. The MRC conducted project-related outreach through three community events on the Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program. Several property owners expressed interest in pursuing soft shore stabilization techniques as an alternative to bulkhead replacement.

Skagit MRC– has begun a year-long study for the Fidalgo Bay Feasibility Project. The causeway has 800' of creosote trestle (700+ pilings) and 1500' of solid armoring. The study will assess possible ecological damage and contamination from creosote pilings and fill. The Fidalgo Bay Contaminant Study first sample round is completed with the exception of three dry sites. Fidalgo Bay Day was a success.

Public Comment

Rita Beal and Sally Hintz commented that there is a bottleneck in Congress and it may be March before any bills are passed. The Northwest Straits Initiative reauthorization is a priority for Senator Murray and Cantwell.

Scott McCreery reported that BP has begun to work with the Lummi Tribe to address the problem of derelict fishing gear around Cherry Point. Tom Cowan will be the project manager. Sally Hintz recognized this is a good example of industry, tribes, and the Northwest Straits Commission working together.

Phil Johnson from Jefferson County asked if the Commission plans to formally comment on the Pit to Pier project to expand the Fred Hill gravel mine just south of the Hood Canal Bridge and add a deepwater pier to allow loading of gravel to large oceangoing vessels and barges? The Commission recommended that the Jefferson MRC report to the commission on the matter.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on December 7 at Padilla Bay NERR in Skagit County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Padilla Bay NERR, Mount Vernon
December 7, 2007, 10:00am-3:00PM**

Attending: Duane Fagergren (alt), Stef Frenzl (alt), Andrea Copping, Judy Surber, Kathy Fletcher, Phyllis Kind, Joe Gaydos, Jonathan White, Mark Herrenkohl (alt.), Scott McCreery, Polly Fischer, Terry Williams
Absent: Joe Schmitt, David Dicks, Kirby Johnson, Buck Meloy
Staff/: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Simon Geerlofs, Connie Price
Support: Terry Stevens

DRAFT

Chair, Phyllis Kind, opened the meeting at 10:00 with introductions. The Commission reviewed the agenda and there were no changes.

November 2 Meeting Minutes: Approved as written.

Geographic Response Plan Update - Todd Hass from the Department of Ecology described the Geographic Response Plan (GRP) update process that the Department of Ecology is doing in the next six to eight months. They are interested in the local knowledge of the Northwest Straits Commission about resources and habitat in the region and how best to protect those in the event of an oil spill. Todd can be contacted at jowi461@ecy.wa.gov. Information about the program is on the spills website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/spills.htm>. The Northwest Contingency plan website is http://private.nwac.ene.com/nwac/nwacp_document.htm.

Questions and discussion followed the presentation.

Q: Why are certain areas not protected?

A: Some strategies are not effective in certain areas and under conditions such as high winds. Recovery is more effective when it is heavier black oil.

Q: Do you have good examples where these plans have been implemented and made a difference in recovering oil or minimizing damage to resources?

A: Yes, in the Tulalip Marina, Gig Harbor and Elliot Bay. It is best when the equipment is available and can be deployed quickly.

Q: Are there any specific data gaps?

A: Yes, but they have not explored these areas enough yet. The biggest data gap was along the coast and the tribal information, but they have made progress.

Q: Is there volunteer training for groups such as Beach Watchers?

A: No, not at this time but they are looking into enhancing the Beach Watchers program and using more volunteers. The contact information for people who are working on the GRP would be helpful.

Q: Can these plans be made broader than petroleum products, so that the same principles could be applied for the other types of spills such as chemical or sewage?

A: GRPs are limited and not as effective on oil that is not the heavy black type. But the protection of resources is important and Todd will bring it up at the GRP workgroup meeting.

Q: According to the map of the GRP coverage shows a gap in the north. Does Canada have a response plan? And if so, the contact or links to the British Columbia information would be useful.

A: Yes, Canada does have a response plan that is more heavily GIS based and covers all of Vancouver Island.

Q: Are there provisions for coordination between the U.S. and British Columbia?

A: Yes, there is a task force and our governments have agreements on how they would interact even though the strategies on how they manage response is different.

Terry Stevens will put together a focus group to gather details of the area with the key people in the Padilla Bay region.

Scott McCreery, who has experience using the GRPs, said Washington State is one of the first in the country to pre-plan for oil spill response. Scott believes the GRPs are a great tool and should be used as guidelines, noting that sometimes too many details can be a hinder the effectiveness of the response. The critical decisions should be left up to the professional oil spill responders.

Don Meehan explained the Beach Watchers have developed the Island County Oil Spill Assessment Committee. The committee is made-up of volunteers who help get spill information such as where and what reported to the responders. This is the type of program that volunteers can participate in easily.

The Islands' Oil Spill Assessment (IOSA) team in San Juan County now has over 350 members.

The Commission will look at bringing forward a combination of oil spill topics for a future meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Retreat - The strategic planning retreat date was discussed again due to a conflict with a Coast Salish Tribal forum. A new date of February 25-26 was confirmed (confirmation occurred after the meeting via email).

2008 meeting dates – A final list of 2008 NWSC meeting dates was distributed. Please note that due to the summer traffic on ferries Friday meeting dates have been changed to Thursdays in July and August.

FY2008 Budget – Sasha explained the budget outline handout which provides current information on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 and Fiscal Year 2007 grant awards. Due to conservative spending and funds being returned from the previous MRC grant cycle, the Commission has the opportunity to restore funds to some of the tasks from the FY2006 and FY2007 workplans. Ginny led a discussion to prioritize spending ideas for approximately \$300,000. The following list was compiled.

1. **Existing projects** (up to \$200k). The Commission felt the highest priority should be given to fund a few projects that are at the implementation stage and that could accomplish on-the-ground results.
2. **MRC grant funding** (\$140k-\$175k). Additional funds to MRCs could be provided if there aren't good projects to fund as in #1 above.
3. **Increase ecosystem project** (\$50k). An ecosystem project is already in the budget plan for this year but the funding should be increased to \$100k.
4. **British Columbia Transborder** (\$50k).
5. **Capacity Building**. The Commission could hire interns to help with specific projects.
6. **Education** (\$50k). Staff will look into funding high priority recommendations that were made in an education audit last year.

In addition to the Commission's regular budget, Ginny recently spoke with the Environmental Protection Agency about some project implementation funding that may be available to the Commission in early 2008. Joan Drinkwin suggested restoration projects that have been vetted but did not receive funding through other sources such as the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Project. Kathy Fletcher mentioned the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) has a backlog of reviewed projects that the Commission could partner on.

Terry Stevens recommended that for efficiency the Commission should consider ways to add to existing contracts or working through intergovernmental agreements. He also noted that there is a possibility of extending the grant period. He thanked the Commission staff for doing an excellent job managing and tracking the budget.

2007 Annual Report – Simon has started work on a 2007 annual report and will be getting input from Commissioners and MRCs.

Conference Outcomes – A summary of the survey results and water quality project opportunities. Complete conference information is available on the Northwest Straits Commission web site.

Public Comment –There was no public comment.

Puget Sound Partnership Update – Duane Fagergren reported that the first meeting of the Ecosystem Coordination Board will be in Federal Way on December 14. The Partnership's

Leadership Council will meet in La Conner on December 17. The Partnership has hired five new staff, and has experienced approximately 75% staff turnover. There is at this point no development of the regional liaison positions.

Committee Reports

Growth and Development Committee – Joan Drinkwin reported the closing out of some grants including a grant from The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for derelict fishing gear removal that restored over 50 acres of habitat. A new contract with Natural Resources Consultants for gear removal will entail over 70 days on the water in the next seven months.. Joan is also working to raise funds for other projects such as the Cliffside Beach Restoration project and the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area project. Joan has written proposals for continuation of Shore Stewards and support for the Beach Watchers Program. The Commission commended Joan for her excellent work. Scott McCreery reported that a contract between the Foundation and BP will be putting together a one day forum with the Lummi Nation to address tribal gear loss specifically from vessel traffic. Hopefully the success of this project will expand to other areas and bring more derelict fishing gear work to the Northwest Straits Initiative.

Executive Committee - Scott McCreery reported that the executive committee met on November 14 and that most the topics discussed appear elsewhere on the Commission agenda. The committee will work on developing an agenda for the February Strategic Planning Retreat. They will also be looking at a long term vision of Northwest Straits Foundation.

Technical Committee – Joe Gaydos explained the idea of the ecosystem project to look at the ecosystem at large. The Commission has approximately \$50,000 remaining in the budget for an ecosystem project to be spent by June 2008. Andrea Copping referenced a memo that was circulated to the technical committee in December, 2006 that described four potential projects. The list was narrowed down from eight possible projects by the Commission and MRCs. Following discussion, the Commission agreed that larger, long term projects with regional impact should be the priority. The technical committee will develop cost and time estimates for the list of four possible projects. Judy Surber recommended adding a fifth project, a framework for monitoring no net loss related to local Shoreline Master Program updates. She will forward a short summary description to Commission staff.

Tribal Committee - Terry Williams said they are excited the film *Shadow of the Salmon* is finished and will be shown today. Steve Robinson, the producer, is working to market the film and is hoping to start working the program into a curriculum for schools. The film will be shown at the Native American Museum in Washington, DC. The commission suggested a benefit showing in their home town theaters and possibly using the film for a MRC fund raiser. Terry will talk with Steve Robinson and find out what the restrictions on using the film might be.

Ginny invited anyone interested in participating on the tribal committee to contact her.

PROJECT UPDATES

Creosote log removal – Ginny reported the funds we received from NOAA have been quickly spent on creosote log removals in Fort Ebey on Whidbey Island and American Camp on San

Juan Island. Our projects have been finished but the Department of Natural Resources plans to continue creosote log removal.

Derelict Gear – Ginny described the ongoing removal operations. The Governor’s office is reviewing a proposal for funding a derelict gear demonstration project with British Columbia.

University Sound Partnership – Don Meehan introduced Pete Granger, Program Leader for Sea Grant Marine Advisory Services. Pete gave a handout about the University Sound Partnership, a cooperative partnership between the University of Washington and Washington State University, and their mission of educating the public for the health and recovery of Puget Sound. Originally WSU and Sea Grant had water quality specialists funded by the Puget Sound Action Team in some counties. When the Puget Sound Partnership was formed, University Sound Partnership put together a proposal for Puget Sound Partnership that would fund water quality specialists in all 12 counties but to date only the existing water quality specialists have received funding. Don would like the Commission and other MRCs to support the University Sound Partnership and make the Puget Sound Partnership aware of our support.

Samish Tribe Fidalgo Bay Project – Christine Woodward, Director of Natural Resources for the Samish Indian Nation and member of the Skagit MRC. Christine explained that Fidalgo Bay is among several early focus areas under Governor Gregoire’s Puget Sound Initiative. Fidalgo Bay is extremely rich in marine plant and animal life and a unique ecosystem. The project is at the end of Phase I and they hoping to have all of the information gathered by January. Ultimately they would like to remove the rock causeway and existing creosote pilings and replace it with a more environmentally friendly support structure that continues to serve the public. This would also improve eelgrass habitat by restoring more natural water flow and remove contamination. Duane suggested they contact Burlington Northern, the original builders of the structure, to see if there are opportunities for funding to support the project.

MRC REPORTS

Skagit MRC - Paul Dinnel presented *The Bamboo Worm Invasion of Samish Bay. Ecology and Control of Clymenella torquata in a NE Pacific Estuary, a report* by Freya Goetz, Lillian Hancock, Paul Dinnel and P. Sean McDonald of Shannon Point Marine Center. There is a new lead staff person for the MRC, Tracy Patton. Rick Haley and Jim Ramaglia met with Gary Rowe, the local representative to the Partnership’s Ecosystem Coordination Board, to raise awareness of the MRCs and stress the importance of their work.

Whatcom MRC- Whatcom MRC received funding from the Northwest Straits Commission and is moving forward on the Chuckanut Bay Causeway project. The focus is to begin the feasibility study within the next six months. Nominations were made for current members to remain in their positions and elections will be held at the December meeting. The group discussed a draft list of the MRC habitat objectives.

Jefferson MRC - On December 6 the MRC elected its officers for the coming year. Michael Adams is the new chair, Hal Beattie is vice chair. Tony Petrillo will be the new commission representative and Judy will be the alternate. On November 6 the Jefferson County MRC and

others co-hosted a presentation by Snohomish Public Utility District on their tidal energy proposal for Admiralty Inlet. About 50 people attended the presentation. After several weather related delays, fall eelgrass protection zone buoy removal was accomplished on November 13. The MRC is working with DNR and the Jefferson County Department of Community development to update the boater information pamphlet for persons desiring to have a mooring buoy. The MRC received the final image created by Cory and Catska Ench which will be used on brochures and interpretive signage.

Snohomish MRC - Sally Van Neil, a long time MRC member, passed away just before Thanksgiving. The MRC and NWSC are coordinating a donation to Pilchuck Audubon Society in Sally's name. The MRC presented a 2007 Annual Report to the County Council on December 4. The MRC plans to hold its strategic plan retreat in February 2008, hiring Pacifica Blue Consulting to facilitate the retreat and help develop a 5-year strategic plan. The MRC coordinated with the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum and WSU Beach Watchers to host a 2-day workshop bringing in over 20 partners to identify existing projects, and to begin to develop a strategy for the cooperative. The MRC has developed a database with over 1,000 contacts to aid in the Ph:ARM Team's efforts to identify conference attendees and target outreach efforts. The MRC is partnering with DNR to identify creosote pilings likely for removal in the Snohomish River estuary. The MRC is completing a map with all creosote pilings identified with landownership and likelihood of willingness.

San Juan MRC - Kevin Ryan of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said that the agency is beginning the process of developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for both the San Juan Islands and the Protection Island National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs). The CCP will guide management of the Refuges for the next 15 years. Tina Wyllie-Echeverria has synthesized nine recommendations on "What the MRC can do in an oil spill?" The MRC and Community Development and Planning Department have submitted an application for the DOE Source Control Program, that would provide technical assistance to county businesses to reduce hazardous wastes. Fred Felleman led a discussion of oil spill risk at Cherry Point due to potential increased vessel traffic. Kyle Murphy, Aquatic Reserve Program Manager for WA DNR, explained the nomination process and timeline for new Aquatic Reserves.

Island MRC - On Nov. 6, Kevin Ryan, Project Leader, US fish and Wildlife Service, described *Comprehensive Conservation Planning – Smith and Minor Islands and the San Juan Island National Wildlife Refuge*. On Nov. 20, Kit Rawson, Senior Fishery Management Biologist, Tulalip Tribes, discussed *Tulalip Tribal Treaty Rights and Fishery Management* and described the process for development of the *San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area*. Island County Shore Stewards membership is now 445, of whom 140 have been added this year. The four Camano Island common interpretive signage panels have been delivered to Friends of Camano Island Parks for installation. The Cornet Bay project planning is moving forward with Sarah Schmidt as project manager. The MRC designed a new logo that features salmon and eelgrass.

Clallam MRC – No report.

PREMIERE SHOWING: SHADOW OF THE SALMON – Terry Williams provided a brief introduction to the premiere showing of the film *Shadow of the Salmon*. The premiere was open to the public and many eager viewers joined the commission to watch the film.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.