



# agenda

**Location:** Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 West Hendrickson Road, Sequim WA  
**Date/Time:** January 27, 2017 – 10:00AM-3:00PM

10:00 – 10:15	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b>	Mark Ozias, Clallam County Commissioner
10:15 – 10:30	<b>Introductions</b> Welcome Rich Childers Approval of December meeting minutes	Nan McKay, Chair
10:30 – 10:55	<b>Clallam MRC Pigeon Guillemot Surveys</b>	Ed Bowlby, Clallam MRC
10:55 – 11:20	<b>NWSC Committee Reports</b> Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee Retreat Planning Committee External Relations Committee	Jamey Selleck Ron Thom Nan McKay Nan McKay
11:20 – 11:50	<b>Puget Sound Task Force</b>	Peter Murchie, EPA and Elizabeth Babcock, NOAA
11:50 – 12:00	<b>Public Comment</b>	All
12:00 – 1:00	<b>Working Lunch</b>	
1:00 – 1:10	<b>Puget Sound Partnership update</b>	
1:10 – 1:20	<b>Foundation update</b>	Caroline Gibson
1:20 – 2:00	<b>MRC Reports</b>	MRC Representatives
2:00 – 2:40	<b>Business items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Resource Advisory Council (MRAC)</li> <li>• Commission involvement in work related to underwater noise in Puget Sound</li> <li>• Funding update:</li> </ul>	Commission Staff



# agenda

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- NOAA Kelp Recovery funds
  - Ocean Acidification grant submission
  - WDFW online forage fish data update
  - 2017-18 MRC Request for Proposals
  - Affiliate membership in the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification
  - Net pen management update

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2:40 – 2:50

**Roundtable**

All

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2:50

**Adjourn**

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### **Rich Childers**

Rich Childers was born and raised outside Detroit, and migrated to the West Coast in 1979 to launch his career as a commercial diver. Growing tired of inspecting oil pipelines off the coast of Santa Barbara, Rich left the commercial diving world to earn a degree in marine fisheries at Humboldt State University, and a Master's degree from Oregon State University.

Rich has been managing shellfish fisheries in Puget Sound since 1995 and served as the shellfish policy lead for WA Department of Fish and Wildlife from 2000-2016, joining the Northwest Straits Commission as director in January 2017.



# minutes

December 9, 2016 • 10:00am-12:00pm  
WebEx Conference Call—WebEx

## **Attendees:**

**Commission members:** Nan McKay (Chair), Jamey Selleck (Vice-Chair, Skagit), Dale Moses (Jefferson), Alan Clark (Clallam), Doug Stark (Whatcom), Ed Adams (Island), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish), Jerry Masters, Tom Cowan, Ron Thom

**Commission staff:** Ginny Broadhurst, Nicole Jordan, Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst

**Others in attendance:** Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish MRC staff), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alt)

**Absent:** Terry Williams, Sheida Sahandy, Phil Green (San Juan)

## **Welcome and introductions**

Nan McKay opened the meeting and did roll call.

The minutes from the November Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved and are available here: <http://nwstraits.org/archive/>.

## **Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports**

### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron Thom said the committee discussed connecting either an undergraduate or graduate student with MRCs to analyze/summarize long-term data sets. The committee discussed the collected data from Cornet Bay which is in need of analysis. The committee is working on connecting a student with Island MRC to assist in compiling and analyzing the data.

### **External Relations Committee**

Tom Cowan updated on the work of the committee to help secure annual funding for MRCs. The committee sent a letter to key state legislators requesting their support for a budget request of \$32,500 annually for each MRC from the state budget.

### **Executive Committee**

Nan said the committee is working on ways to support the transition to a new Commission director, including a document Ginny is creating which provides an overview of the director's job and some historical information. The committee also discussed the MRC conference and the feedback from participants.

### **Hiring Committee**

Nan said the committee is working on the next steps in hiring a new Commission director following the December 5 candidate interviews at Padilla Bay.

## minutes

### **Discussion re: how and when NWSC writes comment letters**

Ginny explained the comment letter policy which according to by-laws requires a written request be made to the Commission, followed by review and discussion. If there is consensus that it's something worth commenting on (where our input would make a difference) and if there's agreement about the comments to be made, then a letter is drafted, usually by staff or in committee. Ginny said a subcommittee can be formed for commenting on issues that require more immediate action.

### **MRC Conference debrief and possible follow up actions**

Ginny noted the following subjects which arose at the 2016 MRC Conference requiring follow up.

#### **Olympia oyster meeting**

Lucas is working on finding common methodologies that can be implemented by all MRC's involved in Olympia oyster restoration, in addition to individual MRC approaches. Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation staff, is working on setting up an Olympia oyster workshop where common strategies will be discussed.

- Action: For more information on the upcoming workshop, contact Lisa Kaufman at [kaufman@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:kaufman@nwstraitsfoundation.org).

#### **Underwater sound issues**

The Commission discussed addressing ocean noise in future MRC projects related to vessel traffic.

#### **Forage fish recurring conference calls**

Lucas is working with the Science Advisory Committee to schedule conference calls with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and forage fish volunteers to provide additional guidance on survey methodologies.

#### **MRC reports**

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <http://bit.ly/2hmjq2R>

#### **Clallam**

Alan Clark said the MRC is working on collecting forage fish samples at Pitship Point, submitting them for analysis and researching ways to process their own samples. Nicole Harris, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, presented to the MRC at their most recent meeting on the topic of funding for education and outreach.

#### **Island**

Ed Adams said the MRC found forage fish eggs in Cornet Bay and was featured in the [Whidbey Island Times](#). He said a research article headed by Frances Wood which summarizes the pigeon guillemot study is scheduled to be published in the winter issue of Northwestern Naturalist.



## minutes

### **Jefferson**

Dales Moses said Anne Murphy left the MRC but joined the NWS Foundation board. The MRC co-hosted a king tide party to learn about the effects of storm surges and sea-level rise. Jeff Taylor said he is working on photography for the king tides which is being used by The ~~Weather Channel~~ National Weather Service. The MRC is also working on advertising for the voluntary no anchor zone.

### **San Juan**

There was no representation from San Juan at this meeting. Their monthly report stated they confirmation of three new members; Craig Wingert, Ken Carrasco and Laura Severson. Laura Arnold resigned from the MRC.

### **Skagit**

Jamey Selleck said the MRC has seven applicants for the Salish Sea Stewards 2017 training. Jamey is working on higher-profile outreach for the MRC by inviting reporters to their January MRC monthly meeting. Fidalgo Bay Day is set for August 12, 2017, which is earlier than usual to accommodate busy fall schedules.

### **Snohomish**

Paul Clampitt said the MRC is conducting interviews for new members. The MRC received \$50,000 from the Lead Integrating Organization for creosote removal which prompted a planning process identifying key sites for removal. The MRC recently found evidence of forage fish spawning at Howarth Park. The MRC finished their nearshore signs and will be installing them at Edgewater Beach Park.

### **Whatcom**

Bob Seaman was officially appointed to fill the environmental/conservation vacancy on the MRC. Doug Stark said he is working with Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation, to organize an Olympia oyster workshop. The MRC submitted a proposal to the NWS Foundation for the MRC Opportunity Fund to develop a citizen science volunteer program.

### **Northwest Straits Foundation**

Caroline said six of the seven MRCs applied to the Opportunity Fund. Proposals are currently being reviewed by Foundation Board members. She also said Chris Robertson, Department of Natural Resources, provided a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) for a survey at the Lummi Quarry project site and offered the use of the ROV to other MRC/Initiative projects.

- Action: Anyone interested in the use of the ROV can contact Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation staff, at [kaufman@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:kaufman@nwstraitsfoundation.org).

### **Round table**

Dale Moses said the comment period for the proposed Puget Sound No Discharge Zone for vessel sewage was extended to December 23.

- Action: To comment, check here: <http://bit.ly/1kZA9nW>

Ron Thom attended a recent State Climate Adaptation Forum focused on planning processes related to climate change.

- Action: To view the agenda from the forum check here: <http://bit.ly/2hFR3cy>



## minutes

Ginny worked with Robyn du Pré's family to start a scholarship in Robyn's name.

- Action: Click here for more information [www.whatcomcf.org/community-impact/scholarships/robyn-du-pre-memorial-scholarship](http://www.whatcomcf.org/community-impact/scholarships/robyn-du-pre-memorial-scholarship).

Dale Moses said Jefferson MRC is interested in the ecological impact of abandoned boats in their Voluntary No Anchor Zones.

- Action: Those with information on dealing with abandoned vessels are asked to contact Andy Palmer at [apalmer121@gmail.com](mailto:apalmer121@gmail.com).

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment

\*The next Commission meeting is scheduled for January 27 from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM in Clallam County \*

DRAFT



**Executive Committee Meeting  
January 9, 2017 • 11:00am-12:00pm  
Conference Call**

**Attending:** Nan McKay, Ron Thom, Jamey Selleck, Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Nicole Jordan, Caroline Gibson, Terry Stevens

**Not in Attendance:** Paul Clampitt

**Updates**

- **Hiring of Northwest Straits Commission Director**

Terry Stevens said the director position was offered to and accepted by Rich Childers. Rich is working on transitioning away from his current employer, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Terry said he notified Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell's offices, Sheida Sahandy and Marc Daily with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) and all those involved directly involved in the hiring process.

  - Action: Sasha set up a Northwest Straits Commission email address for Rich: childers@nwstraits.org
  - Action: Commission staff will announce Rich as the new NWS Commission Director in the January newsletter.
- **External Relations Committee**

Tom Cowan said the committee is working on sending letters and setting up meetings with key state legislators requesting their support for a budget request of \$32,500 annually for each MRC from the state budget.
- **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron Thom said Island County found an incoming graduate student from the University of Washington to analyze their seining data. Anne Murphy spoke at the recent Science Advisory Committee on ocean noise. The committee is working on setting up meetings with key contacts to discuss the potential role of the NWS Initiative in ocean noise issues of Puget Sound.

  - Action: Since Tom Mumford cannot attend the January NWS Commission meeting, the topic of ecosystem health will be forwarded to a later "in-person" Commission meeting.
- **Northwest Straits Foundation**

Caroline Gibson said she will be working from the NWS Commission offices at Padilla Bay one day a week while Rich is in transition to his position as Commission Director. Caroline said the Foundation is contracting with Ruth Blyther to work on a \$250,000 grant proposal to Shell Oil for supplemental MRC funding. The Foundation funded four MRCs through the MRC Opportunity Fund: Skagit, Island, Clallam and Jefferson.

  - Action: Caroline will include Rich in the Foundation Executive Committee and Foundation Board meetings.
  - Action: Caroline will send out information on MRC projects funded through the MRC Opportunity Fund.

**2017-18 MRC grants**

Sasha Horst said she is working on a draft timeline on MRC grant Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to share with Commission staff and Executive Committee for input.

**Northwest Straits Commission budget check in**

Sasha presented a spreadsheet outlining current Commission funds and proposals in progress, a funding timeline and upcoming funding gaps. The committee discussed opportunities and adjustments which could remedy gaps in funding. Ginny urged the Executive Committee to stay engaged in the Commission budget process and provide guidance to staff.

**January Commission meeting agenda**

The committee discussed the topics for the January Commission meeting. Ginny suggested 2016-2017 MRC grants and a local funding check in.

\*The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet over conference call for retreat planning on January 11 from 9-10:00 AM.\*

\*The next regular Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for February 13 from 11:00 AM- 12:00 PM\*





**Executive Committee Meeting  
January 11, 2017 • 9:00am-10:00am  
Conference Call**

**Attending:** Nan McKay, Ron Thom, Jamey Selleck, Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Nicole Jordan, Caroline Gibson, Paul Clampitt

**Not in Attendance:** Terry Stevens

**Retreat planning**

The committee agreed to keep the retreat scheduled for February 23-24 if Rich Childers can make it.

The committee discussed potential agenda topics for the 2017 NWS Commission Annual Retreat including:

- Making a smooth transition for Rich (Nan)
- Updating the Strategic Plan (Ron)
- Budget and Commission funding (Ron)
- Science Advisory Committee on ecosystem health (Ron)
- Team building/building relationships (Nicole)
- Emerging issues (ocean noise, oil transport, etc.) (Nan)
- Commission rules of operation (Ron)

The committee discussed the benefits of having a facilitator.

A subgroup of people agreed to serve on a retreat planning committee (Nan, Sasha, Rich, Jamey, and Nicole).

- Action: Others are welcome to join the retreat planning committee.

**Scheduling of next Executive Committee meetings**

The Committee decided to meet in person potentially with Foundation Executive Committee on either March 13 or 20 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM at Padilla Bay.

- Action: Caroline will coordinate with the Foundation Executive Committee on either March 13 or 20 dates.

\*The next regular Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for conference call February 13 from 11:00 AM- 12:00 PM\*



**SAC NOTES**  
**January 5, 2017**  
**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Attendees: Ron Thom, Tom Mumford, Lucas Hart, Jason Morgan, Anne Murphy, Nicole Jordan

**Highlights indicate action items**

**Ocean Noise**

Anne Murphy was invited to speak on ocean noise. She recently contacted with Scott Veers who is working on monitoring ocean noise through use of hydrophones in Puget Sound.

The committee discussed the involvement of the Navy contributing to ocean noise and ways to potentially incorporate MRC citizen science efforts in hydrophone modeling. The committee also discussed potential high priority actions which include the evaluating the impacts on endangered species, protection of sensitive habitat and filling data gaps.

Potential partners include:

- Shipping industries
- Marine exchange
- Ship designers
- Port of Seattle
- John Calambokidis with Cascadia Research
- Jeff Rice, Puget Sound Institute in Tacoma
- Rob Williams, Oceans Initiative

**Action: The committee will collect key questions and invite Scott Veer, Rob Williams, a Foundation staff member, and a Commission staff to a separate meeting to discuss how the Northwest Straits Initiative can move forward on work with ocean noise.**

**Ecosystem health**

The committee brainstormed where to present results from discussion on ecosystem health and agreed it needs to be in person with both Ron Thom and Tom Mumford present. The most likely venue would be the retreat.

**Action: Lucas will follow up with the Science Advisory Committee after the Executive Committee discussed retreat planning.**

**Northwest Straits Foundation/ MRC Citizen Science Opportunity Fund FY2017**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Approved</b>
<b>Clallam MRC</b>			
<b>Internship &amp; crabber outreach</b>	Extended college-level internship; outreach to recreational crabbers (w/Jefferson MRC)	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Pigeon guillemot intern</b>	Partner with Island MRC on internship, data analysis, and geographic expansion of surveys	\$1,440	\$1,440
<b>Island MRC</b>			
<b>Outreach tools</b>	Communications internship to result in promotional video and outreach materials. Produce displays for use by volunteers on-site.	\$7,000	\$7,000
<b>Pigeon guillemot intern</b>	Partner with Clallam MRC on above	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Jefferson MRC</b>			
<b>Outreach - 3 MRC projects</b>	Hire part-time program asst. to expand MRC's work with families, local schools and younger audiences on rain gardens, crabber outreach and sustainable shellfish harvest events.	\$7,570	\$7,570
<b>San Juan MRC</b>			
<b>Orcas Landing Graphic Panels</b>	Match county funds to produce info panels on area history/ marine education; additional panels on exhibits promoting citizen science. <i>Timeline premature relative to NWSC grant.</i>	\$10,000	\$0
<b>Skagit MRC</b>			
<b>Green Crab monitoring; Coastal Volunteer Partnership</b>	Monitor and remove invasive crabs (in coordination w/ state Green Crab Team) Support CVP Coordinator: recruit/ engage MRC volunteers, outreach and training, manage equipment, and provide reports.	\$10,000	\$5,200
<b>Snohomish MRC</b>			
<b>No application this round</b>			
<b>Whatcom MRC</b>			
<b>Citizen science training program</b>	Hold citizen science forum to showcase MRC projects; partner w/RE Sources to build citizen science training program. <i>Need clearer structure, project not yet ready for funding.</i>	\$10,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$54,010</b>	<b>\$24,010</b>

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Clallam

**Month/Year:** January 2017

**Submitted by:** Cathy Lear and Helle Andersen

**Membership/Leadership Changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Andrew Shogren has resigned as the representative for District I; Jeff Ward is now representing District I and the City of Sequim position is open. One candidate for the position has been recommended by CMRC.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

**MRC Meeting:** The monthly Clallam MRC meeting was held January 9<sup>th</sup> in Clallam County's Health & Human Services Room. Topics on the agenda included the 2017 work plan, the Ocean Science Program as an educational outreach event, and implantation of the two proposal funded by the NWSF Marine Resources Committee Citizen Science Opportunity Fund.

**ERN/LIO Meetings:** Due to inclement weather, the December 9, 2016 Strait ERN LIO Fall Quarterly Meeting was cancelled and rescheduled for January 13, 2017. None of the Clallam MRC members participated in the rescheduled meeting.

**Funding Updates:** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): None

**Project Updates:**

Forage Fish Surveys: The next monthly survey is schedule for January 30, 2017 at 11 am.

Educational Outreach: Clallam MRC's first educational outreach event in 2017 will be held Saturday February 25 between 2 and 4 pm in the Vern Burton Community Center. The title of the event is Science Saturday: Forage Fish and the Food Web (we are planning to come up with something catchier). Phil Dionne, WDFW, and Bob Boekelheide, Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, have agreed to give presentations about forage fish and seabirds foraging on the fish. The event will also include activities for children. The target audience for the event is younger adults and their children.

Oil Spill Preparedness: The annual 8-hr HAZWOPER will be held in Port Angeles, February 11, 2017. CMRC is organizing the training in partnership with US Coast Guard, WDFW, Department of Ecology, and Focus Wildlife.

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Island

**Month/Year:** December 2016 – January 2017

**Submitted by:** Anna Toledo

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Elsa Schwartz was elected as Chair. Barbara Bennett was elected as Vice-Chair.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

### Meetings

- On December 6, Todd Zackey, technical advisor on the MRC, and Marine & Nearshore Program Manager with Tulalip Natural Resources presented on a study to evaluate juvenile salmon use of small streams in Whidbey Basin.
- On January 3, Dawn Pucci, Island County Lead Entity Coordinator for Salmon Recovery, presented on sea level rise and storm surge maps developed for WRIA 6 Lead Entity.
- On January 17, the MRC discussed the status of projects in the current workplan, and project ideas for the 2017-2018 workplan.

### Events

- The MRC will have a table at Sound Waters University on Saturday, February 4 – a one-day university organized by Sound Water Stewards: <http://soundwaterstewards.org/sw/2017/>
- The MRC, Sound Water Stewards, and WSU Extension Island County will present the annual Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year award at Sound Waters University.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): None.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

Forage Fish: Below are results from forage fish sampling this past fall. September seems to have been a relatively good month for surf smelt at our locations.

Restoration Sites:

- Ala Spit: Surf smelt at all three sites on 9/15 (that's a first for us)
- Camano Island State Park: Surf smelt at all three sites on 9/27 and again on 10/28 (also a first for us)
- Cornet Bay: In addition to the 9/15 surf smelt find at site #1, a few smelt eggs were found at site #1 on 9/30

Index Sites:

- Long Point: Smelt on 9/15, 10/26, 11/25; Sand lance on 11/25
- Maple Grove: Smelt on 9/27, 10/28, 11/23
- Windjammer: There was one surf smelt egg found at Windjammer on 11/11, but since it was just one it doesn't get counted as presence

We are dropping Sandy Point as an index site due to access issues, and are beginning the process of adding Glendale.

Elgrass: The data analysis from 2016 monitoring has been completed. The team will review the data, including comparing the underwater videography and aerial photography with the multi-beam sonar data collected this past year.

Seining: An intern with NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center has been identified to conduct the data analysis of the 2009-2016 seining data from Cornet Bay. The MRC is working with Island County Salmon Recovery Lead Entity to explore the feasibility of conducting seining at the Dugualla pocket estuary.

Pigeon Guillemot: A poster abstract was submitted for inclusion at the International Seabird Conference in Tacoma in February.

Outreach: An outreach needs analysis is being developed to include information from interviews with Island County department heads and elected officials.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc): MRC staff will be informing the Board of Island County Commissioners about Department of Ecology's project scoping and timeline in developing a recommendations document regarding sustainable management of net pen aquaculture, including opportunities for comment.

**Photos** (share a few photos of recent projects—include project, photo credit and additional info):

## JCMRC Monthly Report

**County:** Jefferson  
**Month/Year:** January 2017  
**Submitted by:** Cheryl Lowe

**Membership/Leadership Changes** (*including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff*):

NEW MEMBER:

Kate Dean is now the BOCC Commissioner Representative to the Jefferson MRC.

**Events/Meetings** (*including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights*):

Past Meetings & Events:

- The JCMRC monthly meeting was held Jan. 3, 2017. 15 members/staff and 2 guests attended the meeting. John Cambaick, Coordinator for the Strait ERN, gave a presentation about this LIO, their accomplishments so far, and their regional planning goals for the next 2-3 years. He encouraged the MRC to review the documents and identify gaps. Other meeting topics included project and administrative status reports and meeting updates.
- Bob Simmons gave a presentation to the PSEMP Stormwater Working Group in Tacoma on January 18 about the successful collaborative rain garden efforts of MRC, WSU Extension and City of PT.
- Executive Committee met by email and conference call this month.
- Education sub-committee met on Jan 19 and finalized the 2017 Outreach-Education Plan.
- Bob Simmons & Neil Harrington attended the Strait ERN meeting on Jan 13.
- MRC hosted an informal "Blue Coffee" for marine practitioners (rotating monthly in PT) on Jan.19.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- Dale and Jeff will attend the NWSC meeting at the end of January.
- Cheryl will attend the MRC staff meeting on Jan. 31, 2017.
- Next MRC meeting is Feb. 7, 2017.
- On February 15, Jefferson MRC will be part of a special Roundtable sponsored by the Port Townsend School District's Maritime Discovery Program. The purpose of the Roundtable is to introduce teachers to community engagement opportunities. This is the next step in our efforts to engage teachers and students in the local area.

**Funding updates** (*newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments*):

In addition to the recent \$7,570 from Northwest Straits Foundation Opportunity Fund, Jefferson MRC will also be working with the Foundation on targeted shoreline landowner outreach in Discovery Bay as part of their SHARP program (\$7,000 agreement now going through County approval).

**Project Updates** (*progress from past month on existing projects or any new projects identified*):

1. Monitoring: a) **Fort Townsend:** Monthly monitoring for forage fish continues (Jan. 18). b) **Forage Fish Index Site (Adelma Beach):** Monthly monitoring for forage fish continues (Jan 19). c) **Kelp:** No updates.

2. Rain Gardens: Conversations also initiated with Wooden Boat School regarding a priority rain garden site in Port Hadlock.
3. Education & Outreach: As a follow-up to the King Tide event, MRC staff worked with WSU Extension to write a “Tides, King Tides & Storm Events” issue of the WSU Shore Stewards Newsletter that is now being shared (<http://shorestewards.cw.wsu.edu/news/>). 2017 Education-Outreach Plan now completed.
4. Olympia Oyster: Two Jefferson MRC members participated in the NWSF planning group for an NWSF Olympia oyster workshop tentatively scheduled for April. (1) **Discovery Bay**: no updates. (2) **Quilcene Bay**: no updates
5. Voluntary No Anchor Zones: Colorful paid ad about voluntary no anchor zones appeared in the January “Seattle Boat Show” issue of *48°North* boating magazine. (November ad was a donation by the magazine.) Our voluntary no anchor zones are part of an “All about Anchoring” seminar at the Seattle Boat Show presented by Amanda Neal. Several buoys went missing as a result of winter storms. One was found and returned. Others may be tangled underwater. “Search party” to be scheduled for spring...

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc.):

**Anchor Out For  
EELGRASS**

Look for Voluntary  
No-anchor Zones in Port  
Townsend, Port Hadlock  
& Mystery Bay.

Help protect eelgrass habitats  
from anchor damage.

Jefferson County  
**Marine  
Resources  
Committee**

[www.jeffersonmrc.org](http://www.jeffersonmrc.org)



## JCMRC Monthly Report

**County:** Jefferson  
**Month/Year:** December 2016  
**Submitted by:** Cheryl Lowe

**Membership/Leadership Changes** (*including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff*):

2017 Executive Committee elected in December:

Ashley Mackenzie & Wade Crouch, Co-Chairs  
Dale Moses, NWSC Rep  
Jeff Taylor, NWSC Alternate

NEW MEMBERS:

Sam Gibboney is now the Port of Port Townsend Alternate  
Nam Siu is now a Marine Practitioner representative.  
Emily Bishop is District 1 Rep.  
Frank Handler is District 2 Alternate Rep.

**Events/Meetings** (*including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights*):

Past Meetings & Events:

- The JCMRC monthly meeting was held December 6, 2016. 15 members/staff and 6 guests attended the meeting. Our guest speaker was Sam Gibboney, Executive Director of the Port of Port Townsend, who talked about Port planning and current/future challenges. Other meeting topics included elections, project status reports, green crabs report, new MRC member recommendations and other program and meeting updates.
- Dale attended a brief Web-ex NWSC meeting in December and Cheryl represented the Jefferson MRC during interviews for a new NWSC Executive Director.
- New Executive Committee met on Dec. 19 (Ashley, Wade, Jeff, Dale & Cheryl).
- Cheryl attended the Dec. 1 Chumsortium meeting.
- Education and Olympia oyster sub-committees met in December.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- Next MRC meeting is January 3, 2017.
- Strait ERN (LIO) meeting rescheduled to January 13th

**Funding updates** (*newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments*):

Notification of \$7,570 from Northwest Straits Foundation Opportunity Fund grant to expand outreach for rain gardens (local school involvement), Digging for dinner and preventing lost crab pots.

**Project Updates** (*progress from past month on existing projects or any new projects identified*):

1. Monitoring: a) **Fort Townsend:** Forage fish monitoring on December 21, 2016. PNPTC lab reported one smelt egg found in newly restored beach area. b) **Forage Fish Index Site (Adelma Beach):** Monitored on December 20, 2016. c) **Kelp:** No updates.

2. Rain Gardens: Conversations started with City of Port Townsend and County staff regarding best locations for 2017 installations.
3. Education & Outreach: Conversations continue with PTSD Maritime Discovery Program for MRC collaboration. Most likely class & field topics are our rain gardens and Olympia oysters, with an additional field trip contribution of Taylor Shellfish hatchery tours by MRC member Gordon King.
4. Olympia Oyster – Subcommittee met in December to bring new members up to speed and begin planning 2017 activities. (1) **Discovery Bay**: no updates. (2) **Quilcene Bay**: Overwintering cultch looked good during mid-winter check.
5. Voluntary No Anchor Zones: Voluntary no anchor zones will be one of the topics included in an “All about Anchoring” seminar at the Seattle Boat Show, as a result of the small ad about voluntary no anchor zones in the November issue of “48° North”. Speaker contacted us and we shared Powerpoint slides with her.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc.):

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** San Juan

**Month/Year:** January 2017

**Submitted by:** Arnie Klaus

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

Members Kathleen Dolsen and Chery Kummer have resigned. The MRC currently has two vacancies.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

San Juan County Marine Mangers Workshop April 3-4, 2017

Orcas Landing Exhibit Design Charette – Planned for late February.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

- The Marine Resources Coordinator position funding has been increased by San Juan County who is providing .25 FTE to the current funding, increasing the position from .55 FTE to .8 FTE.
- San Juan County Lodging Tax Committee completed the contract for funding \$6,400 in graphic panels as part of the Orcas Landing Experience exhibit that will be part of the new overlook being developed by San Juan County Public Works

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

- The Marine Managers Workshop will be at Camp Orkila on Orcas Island with announcements going out the week of January 23.
- Orcas Landing Design Charette is being finalized for late February to coincide with early access to the new public viewing area as it goes through renovation. The pre-design process has included gathering examples of regional marine exhibit panels as well as manuals for design parameters and identifying site preparations for exhibit related hardscapes including the native planting area, exposed large rock masses, and large remnant cement fixtures.
- The Facebook Playbook draft has been developed with plans for training, recruitment and request for contributors to begin in Early February

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc):

- The MRC may be involved in the public comment process of the recent petition to NOAA for increasing protection zones for the Southern Resident Killer Whales.

**Photos** (share a few photos of recent projects—include project, photo credit and additional info):

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Skagit

**Month/Year:** January/2017

**Submitted by:** Jamey Selleck/Tracy Alker

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Skagit MRC officer elections were held January 12:

- Jamey Selleck - MRC Chair
- Sarah Chang - MRC Vice-Chair
- Nathan Biletnikoff - NWSC Alternate

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

- MRC Meeting –January 12: Ron Judd, a reporter for The Seattle Times provided journalistic advice on how the MRC can increase exposure of the work we do. He spoke about what is newsworthy and what is not, and how we can appeal to reporters to get our stories told. Key takeaways: 1) appoint a MRC publicity chair; 2) brand development is important- clarify the message, create a tagline or slogan, and produce a set of talking points; 3) stories should focus on successes and the impacts, not the process; 4) and make the stories personal and easy for others to relate to.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

- Skagit MRC was recently awarded funding from the Northwest Straits Foundation's MRC Opportunity Funds and funding from Shell Puget Sound Refinery to expand the invasive green crab monitoring effort throughout Skagit County with the help of citizen scientists. Some of the funding will be used to pay for volunteer recruitment, training, and coordination. The rest would be used to purchase traps and other supplies. Washington Sea Grant and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) staff will provide green crab monitoring training for the volunteers on February 17<sup>th</sup> at Padilla Bay.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

- **Bowman Bay Restoration:** Recent winter storms caused some erosion and a loss of vegetation at the Bowman Bay restoration site. Luckily, the roots of the remaining dune grass are deep, extensive, and still holding strong. Student planting will be scheduled this spring through the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group. We currently have a team of about 5-6 stewardship volunteers to help with plantings and plant maintenance.



Photo Credit: Jack Hartt

- **Washington Park Interpretive Signage:** A Request for Quotes (RFQ) went out to several artists for the illustration, design, and layout of the interpretive signage at Washington Park. The Review Team (ie Jay- MRC project Lead, Tracy- MRC Coordinator, Samantha- Coastal Volunteer Partnership Coordinator, and Bob- Washington Park Manager) conducted a site visit and identified the best locations for sign installation. The purpose of the signage is to inform visitors about the fragile tide pool ecosystem and proper beach etiquette to help protect it.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** Save the Date! The date for Fidalgo Bay Day 2017 has been set for: Saturday, August 12, 2017 at the Fidalgo Bay RV Resort in Anacortes. Planning is currently underway. We are looking for new ideas for more hands-on activities for kids.
- **Salish Sea Stewards:** Registration for the Salish Sea Stewards training is open from December 1 through February 28<sup>th</sup>. Space is limited to the first 30 applicants. Applications can be downloaded from Skagit MRC's website. 16 people have already signed up for the 2017 class! The Salish Sea Stewards subcommittee (i.e. Pete, Phyllis, Morty, Tracy, and Samantha) met last week to continue the planning process for the upcoming Salish Sea Stewards training. Training will start March 7, 2017 through May 7, 2017 for a ten week period. Classes will be held Tuesdays from 1:00PM to 5:00PM at Padilla Bay. A potluck will be held from 4:00PM – 6:00PM after the first class.
- **Olympia Oyster Restoration:** Work won't begin again until the spring. Oyster shell will be placed along the west side of Fidalgo Bay near Weaverling spit to provide habitat for Olympia oyster larval settlement. Monitoring oyster shell bags will continue at Fidalgo Bay and Cypress Island. Paul Dinnel has been asked to help draft a case study about the Olympia oyster restoration work in Fidalgo Bay for a chapter in a book. The chapter is mostly case studies from around the US that highlight very different approaches to community outreach and engagement.
- **Pinto Abalone Restoration:** Josh Bouma gave a presentation at the December MRC meeting. Pinto abalone seeding and monitoring will likely take place in the winter/early spring of 2017. Approximately 1000 additional abalone seed will be planted at the six sites in Skagit County.
- **Kelp Monitoring:** No updates. Monitoring will begin again in June, 2017.
- **Nearshore Monitoring:** Dates are set up over next couple of months for beach seining at Bowman Bay. Instead of doing beach seining training, which is largely learned in the field, the NWSF will host a fish identification training instead.
- **Forage Fish Index Site Surveys:** Sampling continues once a month at Guemes Channel (Ship Harbor) and at the NE side of Similk Bay. We will also be adding another sampling site at Samish Island.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc):

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Snohomish

**Month/Year:** January 2017

**Submitted by:** Kathleen Herrmann and Elisa Dawson

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

The Snohomish MRC staff submitted four new MRC members for County Council approval in January 2017. In addition to the four new members, paperwork for Cathy Stanley's third term, Franchesca Perez's third term, and Michael Ehlebracht's second term, was submitted to the Snohomish County Council for approval of reappointment on the MRC. Council will likely review the appointments and reappointments in February 2017.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

The Snohomish MRC had their monthly meeting on January 18, 2017. MRC members Paul Clampitt, Mike Ehlebracht, Franchesca Perez, Traci Sanderson, Cathy Stanley, Susan Tarpley, and Sarah Brown attended. The MRC held Executive Committee Elections and the following members were elected: Franchesca Perez, Chair; Sarah Brown and Traci Sanderson, Co-Vice Chairs; Paul Clampitt, NWSC Representative; Mike Ehlebracht, NWSC Alternate. The Snohomish MRC discussed the creosote project, crabber education, and the Snohomish County Shoreline Master Plan update. Elisa gave an update on the Forage Fish project, reporting that forage fish eggs have been found at all of the nourishment locations. Forage Fish sampling in November was set for February 14 for sites 2-13, while Meadowdale and Picnic Point will be sampled on February 10. The MRC decided to cancel the February 15, 2016 meeting and instead hold a Yearly Retreat on Feb 16, 2016 from 4-8PM. The retreat will focus on onboarding new members as well as the 2017 work plan.

The Snohomish MRC co-sponsored a Starlight Beach Walk with Snohomish County BeachWatchers and the City of Mukilteo on January 10, 2017 at Mukilteo Lighthouse Beach Park. Snohomish MRC and Snohomish County BeachWatchers members gave a short introductory talk at the event. Snohomish MRC supplied the hot chocolate and apple cider for the event. Approximately 40 members of the public attended. Another Starlight Beach Walk which the Snohomish MRC will be co-sponsoring will be held in Edmonds on February 7, 2017.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

In January, Kathleen began to work with the Habitat Strategic Initiative team to begin contracting for the \$50,000 LIO grant for creosote piling removal in the Snohomish Estuary. Kathleen had a phone conversation with the LIO funding team on January 19, 2017 to get direction on the scope of work the MRC will need to write for this grant.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

Nearshore Beach Restoration Project: The Port of Everett received the nearshore interpretive signs for Howarth Park, Edgewater Beach Park and Pigeon Creek (which may be moved to Jetty Island). They will separate the signs to be moved to their respective locations.

Nearshore Restoration Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program (ESRP) Learning Grant: SWM Staff continue to work with a team of researchers from the University of Washington on this ESRP Grant. Samples were collected on January 17 and delivered to consultant Jamey Selleck from NRC Corp for processing. The MRC has added a WDFW forage fish Index site in the restored area of Howarth Park. Two samples were taken at the Howarth Park restoration site (Index) site location, one to be processed as usual by Jamey Selleck, and a second sample which MRC staff processed using the blue bowl method. The sample processed using the blue bowl is done in partnership with WDFW as an index site, and the sample was given to Paul Clampitt to deliver to Lucas Hart at the NWSC meeting.

Storm Surge Monitoring Project: The MRC installed an In-Situ water level monitoring device to measure tide level at Kayak Point. The device was installed January 25, 2017 and has been successfully uploading data to the online platform via the telemetry device. Staff has been monitoring data. The water level monitoring device was moved slightly lower on the cord to compensate for very low tides. The device continues to take data at 5 minute intervals and uploads data every 12 hours to the online platform. The MRC completed the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for this project.

Oil Spill Prevention, Preparedness and Response: Snohomish County MRC staff updated the list of key stakeholders Susan Tarpley used last month when she represented the Snohomish MRC at the National Response Corporation (NRC) Oil Spill Tabletop Drill. Susan's suggestion after attending the drill was to use the list for our group purposes only at this time.

Creosote Piling Removal in the Snohomish Estuary Project: The Snohomish MRC conducted two days of initial surveying for the Creosote Project to begin to establish protocols and baselines for the project. Two Snohomish County Public Works survey staff, a boat driver, and two Snohomish County staff who collected additional data participated in each day of the survey. The goal was to achieve high quality data points of creosote pilings and additional characteristics of the pilings to be imported into GIS. After the initial surveying, there were additional questions about how to gather data in an efficient and effective way. In particular, it was hard for survey staff to determine whether a piling had creosote on it. A follow up meeting was held for the survey staff to consolidate their questions after the survey trip. Kathleen will schedule a conference call with Chris from DNR to get some clarification on protocols used by DNR for these types of projects, and ask questions that the survey crew had.

Port Susan: No updates at this time.

Kelp Project: Traci Sanderson finalized the labeling of the kelp photographs and provided them to Lucas Hart. Traci is part of the Kelp Planning Team which is working on an evaluation of the kelp data gathering process, and will be considering changes to the process before next kelp monitoring season.

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Snohomish

**Month/Year:** December 2016

**Submitted by:** Kathleen Herrmann and Elisa Dawson

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

The Snohomish MRC Staff and several MRC Members conducted interviews for new members on Friday, December 16. Six applicants were interviewed and positions on the Snohomish MRC have been offered to four candidates. In addition to the four new members, three MRC members are recommended for another term on the MRC, including Cathy Stanley's third term, Franchesca Perez's third term, and Michael Ehlebracht's second term.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

The Snohomish County MRC did not have a formal meeting in December 2016. MRC members gathered for a holiday party to celebrate the successes of 2016.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) recommended funding the MRC's Near Term Action (NTA) Project- Removal of Creosote Pilings in the Snohomish Estuary for partial funding of \$50,000. The LIO Executive Committee approved this funding recommendation. The next step is to work with a member of the Habitat Strategic Initiative team to begin contracting in January.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

Nearshore Beach Restoration Project: The nearshore interpretive signs for Howarth Park, Edgewater Beach Park and Pigeon Creek (which may be moved to Jetty Island) were ordered and received.

Nearshore Restoration Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program (ESRP) Learning Grant: SWM Staff continue to work with a team of researchers from the University of Washington on this ESRP Grant. December samples were collected and delivered to consultant Jamey Selleck from NRC Corp for processing. The MRC has added a WDFW forage fish Index site in the restored area of Howarth Park to their sample sites and have agreed to use the blue vortex method on this sample. Snohomish County MRC staff attended a forage fish sampling day with the Skagit MRC, and were able to learn about and participate in the blue vortex method being used there. Several Skagit MRC members intend to come down for the January 17, 2017 sampling date in Snohomish County to assist with implementing the Index Site sampling and to see if we find live eggs. Snohomish County MRC staff are working with Phillip Dione and Erin Dilworth of WDFW to receive formal training on protocol for sampling the Index Site and the blue bowl method.

Storm Surge Monitoring Project: The MRC is working on installing an Aqua Level device to measure tide level at Kayak Point. The Aqua Level device has been purchased and the MRC is working on programming the device. Once the device is programmed it will be installed in the housing at Kayak Point.



Oil Spill Prevention, Preparedness and Response: Snohomish County MRC staff updated the list of key stakeholders Susan Tarpley used last month when she represented the Snohomish MRC at the National Response Corporation (NRC) Oil Spill Tabletop Drill. Susan's suggestion after attending the drill was to share the key stakeholder list with Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management. Snohomish County staff will follow up on this.

Creosote Piling Removal in the Snohomish Estuary Project: The MRC decided to prioritize gathering information about creosote piling locations in the Snohomish Estuary, and approved a form to add to the My Coast App called *Recording Creosote Piling Locations*. A draft of the App form has been created, and Blue Urchin LLC is working on creating a draft form.

Port Susan: No updates at this time.

Kelp Project: No updates at this time.

## MRC Monthly Report

**County:** Whatcom

**Month/Year:** January 2017

**Submitted by:** Austin Rose

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

Three vacancies were recently advertised due to members with term expirations. All members were eligible to reapply. Applicant positions included one relevant scientific interest and two Conservation/Environmental interest positions. The MRC wrote a recommendation to the County Executive to appoint Elizabeth Kilanowski for a second term in a Scientific interest position, Doug Stark for a second term in a Conservation/Environmental position, and Christine Woodward to join the MRC in a Conservation/Environmental position.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

- On Jan. 25 the MRC and WWIN will host a screening of 'A Plastic Ocean' at the Barkley Village Cinemas in Bellingham. Tickets for this showing have sold out, and efforts are being made to promote the showing at Cascade Mall in Skagit, which will screen on the same day.
- The MRC/WWIN Public Speaker Series subcommittee met on Jan 10 and outlined events/topics for 2017. The 2016 events were reviewed and summarized.
- The MRC held their general meeting on Jan 5. The group discussed Coast Guard Vessel traffic and management, information learned from Sonic Sea film and recent presentation on Chinook salmon in the Nooksack estuary.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

- The NWSF submitted two applications USFWS for funding to support 1) the implementation of the Clark's Point Breakwater removal project and 2) the design, permitting, and monitoring for the Lummi Island Nearshore Restoration project. It is anticipated that the MRC will begin intertidal monitoring in February or March at the Lummi Quarry.
- The MRC conducted forage fish surveys at Squalicum Beach and Marine Park on Jan 19.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, questions to the Commission, etc):

- MRC Staff and other interested MRC members will be attending an intertidal survey training hosted by RESources to review protocols, discuss amendments, and future trainings.

**Photos** (share a few photos of recent projects—include project, photo credit and additional info):



## Commission staff highlights January 2017

**Marine Resource Advisory Council (MRAC)** – Rich Childers attended the January MRAC meeting.

### **Commission involvement in work related to underwater noise in Puget Sound**

The Science Advisory Committee met by teleconference to discuss possibilities for ocean noise projects. Anne Murphy joined the call to talk about the work she's been doing to collect information. Lucas will be following up on this topic by assembling a small meeting with individuals suggested by Anne. That meeting will help provide guidance for next steps and clarification on possible MRC involvement.

### **NOAA Kelp Recovery funds**

Caroline Gibson, Sasha and Lucas assembled a proposal to NOAA for funds to draft a kelp recovery plan. Funding would be provided to the NWS Foundation with the NWS Commission as a partner. Other partners include Puget Sound Restoration Fund, Tom Mumford and Helen Berry.

### **Ocean Acidification grant submission**

Sasha and Lucas submitted an OA grant proposal to NOAA. The project proposes to collect social data around Puget Sound that will inform predictive models of ocean acidification. The proposal has multiple partners from Pacific Northwest National Labs, Ecology, DNR and Oregon State University.

### **2017-18 MRC Request for Proposals**

The Request for Proposals for 2017-18 MRC grants is anticipated to be issued in early March, with a goal of starting the new grant cycle on October 1, 2017. MRCs are encouraged to begin considering project ideas at their upcoming meetings. Commission staff is available for consultation as needed.

### **Net pen management update**

Lucas discussed Ecology's net pen management guidelines update with Cedar Bouta. These guidelines have not been updated for 30 years. Currently, Ecology has listed the topics that will be covered in the guidelines but has not yet moved forward with drafting the update.

### **Ocean acidification (OA)**

Lucas attended the Snohomish Conservation District Farm Tour, WA Conservation Commission meeting and Puget Sound Conservation District Caucus meetings in January. The goal was to begin making



## Commission staff highlights January 2017

contacts within the agriculture community to discuss the impact of nutrient loading on ocean acidification. These steps are necessary to fulfill one of the outreach deliverables of the existing NOAA OA grant. Contacts were made and will be followed up on in the near future, namely on the topic of nutrient budgets being created through the Whatcom Conservation District. There may be opportunities to partner on this work.

Lucas, Bill Dewey and Rich Childers will present the impacts of OA to shellfish to a group of chefs at the Sustainable Connections Chef's collective on March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Lucas attended a multi-agency (Ecology, WDFW and DNR) meeting designed to share ongoing OA work. These meetings will continue and are being led by DNR.

### **Olympia oysters**

An Olympia oyster restoration workshop is being planned for April. The Foundation is taking the lead on organizing the event. Lucas is on the planning committee, which met by teleconference for the first time in January. The format will involve presentations followed by facilitated discussions on topics centered on setting restoration goals and methodologies.

### **MRC Staff Meeting**

Commission staff is hosting a meeting of MRC staff on Tuesday, January 31. Agenda topics include regional projects, MRC grants, Foundation support, interpretive signage and a range of other discussion topics brought forward by MRC staff.

### **2017 MRC Conference**

The annual MRC conference is scheduled to be held on November 3-4, 2017 at the Sheraton Four Points in Bellingham. Commission and Foundation staff explored a wide variety of venues in all seven MRC counties and have identified a few to follow up on as potential future venues for the event, but recommend the Bellingham location for 2017.