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**July 28, 2017 • 10:00am-12:00pm**  
**WebEx Conference Call—WebEx**

### **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Jamey Selleck (Skagit, Vice-Chair), Jerry Masters, Pete Granger (Whatcom-alternate), Ed Adams (Island), Alan Clark (Clallam), Ron Thom, Tom Cowan, Dale Moses (Jefferson), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal-alternate), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership-alternate), Mike Ehlebracht (Snohomish-alternate)

**Commission Staff:** Rich Childers, Nicole Jordan, Sasha Horst, Lucas Hart

**Others in Attendance:** Mel Malkoff

**Absent:** Nan McKay (Chair), Sheida Sahandy, Terry Williams, Tom Temple (San Juan), Doug Stark (Whatcom), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Jamey Selleck opened the meeting and did roll call.

The minutes from the May and June Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved.

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

#### **Executive Committee**

Jamey said the Executive Committee met twice in July to discuss MRC grant proposals and the 2017-2018 Northwest Straits Commission budget. The committee discussed MRC Conference planning progress so far and the sessions chosen thus far. The committee will meet in person on August 14 at Padilla Bay Reserve.

#### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron said the committee focused on ecosystem health calculations—Ron is working with Tom Mumford on a presentation explaining the calculations, which will be shared with the Commission when ready.

- Action: Ron Thom will invite Rich to represent the Northwest Straits Commission at a symposium on climate change organized by the Washington State Academy of Sciences at the Seattle Museum of Flight in September.

#### **External Relations Committee**

Tom Cowan said the committee is working on identifying new priorities now that the state budget has passed.

### **Review and approval of 2017-18 NWSC budget**

The Commission discussed the 2017-2018 Northwest Straits Commission budget, which includes Washington state funding as well as pending funds from EPA (via the Puget Sound Partnership) and NOAA (via the Northwest Straits Foundation) for a kelp recovery plan.

- Motion: Dale moved to approve the budget providing funding of \$74,000 to each MRC and an ecosystem budget to support regional and multi-county projects. The motion was seconded by Jerry and approved by consensus of the Commission.



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### **2017-18 MRC grant proposals–review and approval**

Jamey led a brief discussion on the 2017-18 MRC grant proposals from all MRCs.

- Motion: Tom moved to approve the 2017-2018 MRC grant proposals. The motion was seconded by Dale and approved by consensus of the Commission.
- Action: Sasha will work with MRC staff on their individual agreements to finalize a scope of work and budget.

### **Business items**

#### **MRC Conference**

Rich said the planning committee met over conference call and identified potential sessions. The committee is reaching out to potential keynote speakers.

#### **Kelp survey season underway/kelp condition index update**

Lucas is working with Holly Garland, Northwest Straits Initiative intern, to finish the draft bull kelp condition index protocol.

- Action: Kelp project leads for each MRC will continue to receive updates on condition index protocol.
- Action: Zoe Zilz, Kelp Coordinator for the Northwest Straits Foundation, is working with MRCs for the current kelp survey season. MRCs can reach her at [zilz@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:zilz@nwstraitsfoundation.org).

#### **Washington Shellfish Initiative meeting**

Rich said he and Lucas attended the July 17 Washington Shellfish Initiative meeting. Rich said that management and coordination of the Washington Shellfish Initiative (WSI) will no longer reside in the governor's office. All aspects of the WSI will be moved to the Washington Department of Agriculture (WDA) and a position was created in WDA to coordinate the Initiative. Rich presented some highlights from the meeting.

#### **Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) regional priorities comment letter**

Lucas said the PSP is preparing the 2018-2022 Puget Sound Action Agenda and is currently accepting public comments on the draft solicitation for Near Term Actions for the 2018-22 Action Agenda Implementation Plan. Lucas submitted a letter requesting the PSP prioritize native shellfish restoration in the 2018-2022 Action Agenda.

- Action: MRCs are encouraged to [submit comment letters](#) through the new deadline of August 4.

#### **Multi-county eelgrass survey**

As a result of the recent joint meeting of the Island, Clallam and Jefferson MRCs, multi-beam sonar eelgrass mapping may expand from Island County to Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

#### **Ocean Acidification project summary/wrap-up**

Lucas provided a summary of the NOAA-funded ocean acidification outreach project which was complete as of June 30. The two-year effort included a tour of the raingardens to the Puget Sound Partnership, a session at the 2016 MRC Conference, forums, presentations and outreach to conservation districts.

- Action: A final report will be shared when completed in September.



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### **Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update**

Laura Blackmore, Puget Sound Partnership Deputy Director and alternate to the Commission, reminded everyone that the Partnership has extended the comment period on the draft solicitation for Near Term Actions for the 2018-2022 Action Agenda Implementation Plan to August 4. [Click here](#) for more information. The Partnership is working on making up for lost match from the new gap in the capital budget.

### **MRC reports**

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

#### **Clallam**

Alan Clark said their interns are busy on their respective projects including; kelp monitoring; water quality, crabber outreach and shellfish monitoring. Forage fish spawning survey efforts were expanded to include two new sites at the Lower Elwha Beach. Lyn Muench and Helle Andersen gave a presentation about Clallam MRC Olympia oyster restoration efforts at the Dungeness River management team meeting on July 12.

#### **Island**

Ed Adams said the MRC participated in the joint meeting of Island, Jefferson, and Clallam County MRCs held on July 11. The MRC has kelp survey supplies and surveys will begin late July. A draft report is being reviewed and finalized by Dawn Pucci, Lead Entity Coordinator, which analyzes the last eight years of pre- and post-restoration data at Cornet Bay.

#### **Jefferson**

Dales Moses said the MRC hosted a joint meeting of Island, Clallam and Jefferson MRCs on July 11—46 people attended with a key focus on education/outreach and eelgrass protection strategies. The MRC is also working on outreach events including a workshop for teachers on ocean acidification in August and the Wooden Boat Festival.

#### **San Juan**

Arnie Klaus said the MRC has five vacancies and initiated a membership committee to focus on recruitment and to determine the optimum size of the committee. The MRC is working with Puget Soundkeeper, the Whale Museum and has met with people at NOAA to help distribute “Be Whale Wise” materials to boaters throughout the San Juan region.

#### **Skagit**

Jamey Selleck said the MRC is getting geared up for Fidalgo Bay Day on August 12. The MRC is working on summer kelp surveys. He said Marta Green, San Juan County’s Local Integrating Organization Coordinator, gave a presentation on their outreach campaign to reduce potential vessel traffic impacts on southern resident orcas. Kimberly Cauvel, a reporter with the Skagit Valley Herald, is interested in doing a story about the kelp monitoring project.

#### **Snohomish**

Mike Ehlebracht said the MRC partnered with Snohomish County Beach Watchers for 2017 Crabber Education on opening weekend July 1 and 2. The MRC is working on forage fish surveys at Howarth Park and is getting



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geared up for a round of kelp monitoring at all known locations. MRC members are also encouraging the use of the MyCoast app for citizen science data collection.

### **Whatcom**

Pete Granger said there is currently one MRC vacancy for an environmental/conservation interest being widely promoted. The MRC is hosting Cedar Bouta from the Department of Ecology, regarding recommendations for managing commercial net pen aquaculture at their next meeting. The MRC is also getting geared up for Whatcom Water Week scheduled for September 16-23.

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) update**

Jerry said the Foundation is working on expanding the MRC Opportunity Fund. The NWSF Board is creating a corporate sponsorship policy which is scheduled to be approved at the August board meeting and will be shared with the Commission when approved.

### **Round table**

The Northwest Straits Initiative (NWSI) launched a new animated short film: ["Engaging Conservation Leaders"](#) illustrating the work of Northwest Straits Initiative.

Rich will be presenting on the work of the Northwest Straits Initiative at an upcoming meeting of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission.

- Action: Rich will reach out to Commission members for additional support and participation.

\*The next Commission meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on August 25 at Pacific Rim Institute, Coupeville, WA\*