



minutes

Meeting: Northwest Straits Commission

Location: Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 West Hendrickson Road, Sequim WA

Date/Time: January 27, 2017 – 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

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), Ron Thom

Commission staff: Rich Childers, Nicole Jordan, Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst

Others in attendance: Mark Ozias (Clallam County Commission), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Jay Lind (Skagit), Peter Murchie (Environmental Protection Agency, EPA), Elizabeth Babcock (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA), Bob Vreeland (Clallam), Ruth Blyther (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam MRC, Chair), Ed Bowlby (Clallam MRC, Chair), Helle Anderson (Clallam MRC staff), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alt), Nathan Biletnikoff (Skagit-alt)

Absent: Terry Williams, Sheida Sahandy, Phil Green (San Juan), Tom Cowan, Jerry Masters

Welcome and introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting. Mark Ozias, Clallam County Commissioner, welcomed the Commission to Clallam County and thanked the MRC for their work. Nan introduced Rich Childers as the new Northwest Straits Commission Director.

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

Clallam MRC Pigeon Guillemot Surveys

Ed Bowlby, chair of the Clallam MRC, presented on a citizen science project to monitor Pigeon Guillemots in Clallam County, an expansion of a project started more than 10 years ago in Island County. His presentation described habitat and behavioral information about the birds. He explained plans to expand the project by adding at least three sites, based on the availability of volunteers.

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Jamey Selleck said the director hiring process is complete, welcoming Rich Childers as new Commission Director. A subcommittee was formed to plan the annual retreat in February. MRC representation on the committee shifted as Phil Green, San Juan MRC, stepped down and Paul Clampitt, Snohomish MRC, joined.

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.



minutes

Cedar Bouta, Dept. of Ecology, spoke with members of the Science Advisory Committee on [net pen management guidelines](#). Public comments on the [summary of early “scoping-level” decisions](#) can be submitted to Cedar at cedar.bouta@ecy.wa.gov. Comments are due by March 4.

- Action: MRCs are encouraged to read through the “scoping level” decisions. If MRCs submit comments, please provide a copy Lucas at hart@nwstraits.org.
- Action: Lucas and Caroline will collect previously-sent net pen comment letters, along with deadlines and appropriate contacts for future commenting.
- Action: After reviewing any comments from MRCS, the Commission will make a decision whether to submit a separate comment letter.

Retreat Planning Committee

Nan said the committee hired a facilitator for the 2017 retreat. The committee is working on clarifying goals of the retreat. The Commission discussed incorporating strategic planning into the retreat. The Commission agreed that discussing future Commission meeting topics would be helpful.

- Action: Commission members and alternates are asked to respond to Nicole at jordan@nwstraits.org with your RSVP for the retreat, which is scheduled for February 23-34 at Padilla Bay Reserve.

External Relations Committee

Committee chair Tom Cowan was absent, so Nan updated on the work of the committee to help secure annual funding for MRCs. The committee is working on meeting with key state legislators requesting their support for a budget request of \$32,500 annually for each MRC from the state budget.

Puget Sound Task Force

Peter Murchie, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), explained the creation of the Puget Sound Federal Task Force through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Task Force, made up of nine federal agencies and cabinets, has adopted an interim draft action plan ([Puget Sound Task Force Action Plan](#)) that describes the federal role in Puget Sound recovery and is broken into several prioritized areas including cross-cutting actions, habitat, storm water, federal lands and facilities, vessel traffic, shellfish, science and monitoring and treaty rights.

Elizabeth Babcock, NOAA, spoke on Appendix D of the Action Plan, which highlights Puget Sound monitoring and specific issues relevant to the Northwest Straits Commission. Peter encouraged the Commission to look at the Action Plan and identify key areas of collaboration.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update

Rich updated on behalf Sheida Sahandy, PSP Executive Director. He said the Partnership is trying to get more information on the announced “EPA grant and contract freeze”. All actions currently approved will continue to their stated end dates, including existing MRC grants. Marc Daily has accepted a position as the executive director of the Thurston County Planning Commission and will be leaving the Partnership in mid-February. The Partnership is in the process of recruiting for a number of key positions.



minutes

- Action: Sheida requested people share the job openings far and wide to help find the best candidates. <http://www.psp.wa.gov/employment.php>

Northwest Straits Foundation

Caroline said four MRCs were approved for funding by the Foundation's new MRC Opportunity Fund. The Northwest Straits Foundation has contracted with Ruth Blyther to prepare a funding proposal to Shell, in coordination with Nathan Biletnikoff, Skagit MRC member and representative from Shell. Caroline is trying to schedule "friend-raisers" for five MRCs to increase visibility within their communities.

MRC reports

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

Clallam

Alan Clark said Andrew Shogren resigned as the representative for District I; Jeff Ward is now representing District I and the City of Sequim position is open. Clallam MRC's first 2017 educational outreach event, Food Webs Can Be Fishy, will be held Saturday February 25 from 2:00-4:00 PM in the Vern Burton Community Center. The annual 8-hr HAZWOPER will be held in Port Angeles, February 11, 2017.

Island

Ed Adams said Elsa Schwartz was elected as chair. Barbara Bennett was elected as vice-chair. He presented the MRCs forage fish findings from fall, pointing out that September was a particularly good month for surf smelt at all monitoring locations. The MRC is working with Island County Salmon Recovery Lead Entity to explore the feasibility of conducting seining at the Dugualla pocket estuary.

Jefferson

Dales Moses said Kate Dean is now the Board of County Commissioners' representative to Jefferson MRC. Sam Gibboney is now the Port of Port Townsend alternate, Nam Siu is now a Marine Practitioner representative, Emily Bishop is District 1 representative, and Frank Handler is District 2 alternate representative. The MRC is planning for 2017 grants and will discuss it at their next meeting.

San Juan

There was no representation from San Juan MRC at the meeting. Their report stated members Kathleen Dolsen and Chery Kummer have resigned. The MRC currently has two vacancies. Nan said San Juan County has approved some County funding so that Arnie Klaus, San Juan MRC staff, can increase work from 55% to 80% time.

Skagit

Jamey was elected as the new chair for Skagit MRC, Sarah Tchang is the new MRC vice-chair. Nathan Biletnikoff is the new Commission alternate. Ron Judd, a reporter for The Seattle Times visited the last Skagit MRC meeting and provided journalistic advice on how the MRC can increase exposure of their projects in their community. Skagit MRC was recently awarded funding from the Northwest Straits Foundation's MRC Opportunity Fund and from Shell Puget Sound Refinery to expand the invasive green crab monitoring effort.



minutes

Snohomish

Paul Clampitt said Snohomish MRC staff and several MRC members conducted interviews for new members, positions were recommended for four candidates. The MRC will receive \$50,000 from the Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) for the MRC's Near Term Action (NTA) Project: Removal of Creosote Pilings in the Snohomish Estuary. The MRC found forage fish eggs at Howarth Park on the first forage fish survey on the newly-restored beach.

Whatcom

Doug Stark said 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, filling Laura Hanna's position. The MRC hosted a sold-out screening of [A Plastic Ocean](#) at Barkley Cinemas in Bellingham.

Business Items

Marine Resource Advisory Council (MRAC)

Rich said he attended the January MRAC meeting. He said the [Blue Ribbon Panel](#) recommendations are being refreshed. Discussions on the refresh will start March 17.

Funding update:

- **NOAA Kelp Recovery funds**

Caroline, 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 (Dept. of Natural Resources).

- **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.

WDFW online forage fish data update

Lucas said he is working on helping MRCs utilize forage fish data available at the [WA Department of Fish and Wildlife website](#).

2017-18 MRC Request for Proposals

Sasha said the Commission is proceeding as planned with 2017-18 Request for Proposals for MRC grants—anticipated to be issued in early March, with a goal of starting the new grant cycle on October 1, 2017.



minutes

- Action: MRCs are encouraged to begin considering 2017-18 project ideas at their upcoming meetings. Those with questions can contact Sasha Horst at horst@nwstraits.org

Affiliate membership in the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification

The Commission discussed and agreed to join the [International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification](#) as the Northwest Straits Initiative.

- Action: Rich will take the lead on the process of beginning membership with the alliance.

Round table

The Commission discussed ways to approach education and outreach centered on Ocean Acidification within the Initiative.

*The next Commission meeting is scheduled for March 31 from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM over WebEx *



minutes

March 31, 2017 • 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), Jerry Masters, Tom Cowan, Tom Temple (San Juan)

Commission staff: Rich Childers, Nicole Jordan, Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst

Others in attendance: Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation)

Absent: Terry Williams, Sheida Sahandy, Ron Thom, Paul Clampitt (Snohomish)

Welcome and introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting and did roll call.

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

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Jamey Selleck said the committee discussed outcomes from the Commission's Annual Retreat and key priorities for the coming year. They also had a joint meeting with the Northwest Straits Foundation Executive Committee on March 13.

External Relations Committee

Tom Cowan updated on the work of the committee to help secure annual funding for MRCs. He recently went to Olympia to meet with Senator Kevin Ranker and said the committee will continue to work with legislators through the current session. Nan, Rich, Jerry, Ginny and Caroline are attending Puget Sound Day on the Hill in Washington DC from May 1-3.

Science Advisory Committee

Lucas Hart said Kathleen Pozarycki presented on the MyCoast App to the committee. The app currently includes Storm Surge Monitoring with USGS (25-30 people using the app for this); Locating and marking derelict boats in Snohomish Estuary; Creosote log counting in Snohomish Estuary. Snohomish MRC would like to add one more project. SAC provided several ideas, including: beach wrack tracking, erosion/feeder bluff photo's. Kathleen will discuss ideas with MRC for final decision.

Northwest Straits Foundation update

Jerry Masters reminded MRCs that the MRC Opportunity Fund is available. MRCs are encouraged to consider projects for the upcoming year.



minutes

- Action: MRCs wanting more information on the MRC Opportunity Fund should contact Caroline at gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Caroline Gibson said the Foundation secured Holly Garland as a 2017 summer season kelp program intern. Also, the first sponsorship for the 2017 MRC Conference was received from Samish Indian Nation.

The Northwest Straits Commission and Foundation staff met on March 22 to talk about recreational crabber outreach to reduce lost pots, and will work together to support the regional Catch More Crab project. MRCs are encouraged to participate.

- Action: Contact Sasha Horst at horst@nwstraits.org or Jason Morgan at morgan@nwstraitsfoundation.org for more information.

MRC reports

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <http://bit.ly/2oqxU2q>

Clallam

Alan Clark said Doug Morrill, representative from the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe on the MRC, was replaced with Mike McHenry. Shannon Weaver, a senior at Huxley College on the Peninsulas, was selected as the crabber outreach intern. The Olympia oyster project at Pitship Point ran into a glitch when MRC members reported the wide scattering of shells—the MRC is in the process of looking for another restoration site.

Island

Ed Adams said Tony Turpin resigned from the MRC and Tom Leschine joined. Caitlin Budd and Dawn Pucci are coordinating MRC through April and May during Anna Toledo's maternity leave. He also reported that beach seining was not possible at proposed sites, so the MRC will continue to look for a feasible monitoring site.

Jefferson

Dales Moses said the MRC is working on reaching out to regional groups to attend their meetings. The MRC briefed their Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in March on the MRC's recent projects. Digging for Dinner recreational clam digger outreach events are scheduled for Saturday, May 13 in Quilcene and for Friday, June 9 in Dosewallips, with more details to follow.

San Juan

Tom Temple said the MRC has two vacancies and is in the process of encouraging applications through the San Juan County Council. He said the MRC is hosting their Marine Managers' Workshop on April 3 and 4 at Camp Orkila on Orcas Island. He said the MRC is also working on Orcas Island Landing interpretive signage.

Skagit

Jamey Selleck said Dr. Jude Apple, Research Coordinator for Padilla Bay Reserve, presented on the Coastal Blue Carbon Project at Padilla Bay at the MRC's monthly meeting in February. Their Salish Sea Stewards program started with 35 volunteers participating. Salish Sea Stewards were featured in the [Skagit Valley Herald](#) recently.



Snohomish

Snohomish provided a written report. The MRC is working on the Storm Surge Monitoring Project Planning and the MyCoast App. In effort to engage more users, the MRC created a new app form which would use specific landmarks and ask citizen scientists to take specific photographs from those designated points to measure visual change over time.

Whatcom

Doug Stark said Bert Rubash resigned from the MRC in February. Christine Woodward joined, filling the Conservation/Environmental position. They are currently working on a feasibility study to model a volunteer training program for Whatcom MRC similar to Skagit MRC's Salish Sea Steward program. He also said the MRC got great feedback from attendees to the screening of the film [Plastic Ocean](#).

Business items

Scoping for forage fish training

A forage fish training through WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) will be held April 10 at Padilla Bay Reserve.

- Action: Those interested in attending should contact Lucas Hart at hart@nwstraits.org.

Kelp workshop

A kelp workshop will be held April 15 at the Maritime Center in Port Townsend with the goal of discussing the future of the project.

- Action: Those with questions can contact Lucas at hart@nwstraits.org.

Olympia oyster workshop

Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation staff, is organizing an Olympia oyster workshop April 21 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend to discuss the future direction and metrics of Olympia oyster restoration.

Forage fish conference call

Lucas is holding regular calls for MRCs involved in forage fish monitoring. Erin Dilworth from WDFW is quality checking MRC forage fish samples and will send out a summary spreadsheet of quality assurance test results on a monthly basis to MRCs.

2017 NWSC Retreat survey

The Northwest Straits Commission hosted its Annual Retreat at Padilla Bay Reserve February 23-24. Survey results indicated the retreat achieved all of its desired outcomes.

April Commission meeting

MRCs will each present a proposed project at the April 28 Commission meeting at Padilla Bay. MRC members are encouraged to attend.



minutes

- Action: Each MRC should contact Nicole Jordan at jordan@nwstraits.org to sign up for a presentation timeslot and provide a presentation title.

Election nomination committee

The Northwest Straits Commission will elect officers at the April Commission meeting. Jerry Masters agreed to serve as chair of an ad-hoc nominating committee.

Discussion/questions on Near-Term Action (NTA) solicitation process for the 2018 Action Agenda

Rich Childers spoke with Peter Best, Puget Sound Partnership, and offered to bring questions forward from the Commission and MRCs to the Partnership about the Near-Term Action solicitation process and timeline.

- Action: Those with specific questions should contact Rich at childers@nwstraits.org.

Round table

There were no round table topics.

Public comment

There was no public comment

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2017 from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM at the Northwest Straits Commission offices at Padilla Bay Reserve



minutes

**April 28, 2017 • 9:00am-3:00pm
Big Room, Padilla Bay Reserve
Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

Attendees:

Commission Members: Nan McKay (Chair), Jerry Masters, Doug Stark (Whatcom), Jamey Selleck (Skagit, Vice Chair), Ed Adams (Island), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish), Ron Thom, Tom Cowan, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alternate)

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

Others in Attendance: Commissioner Ron Wesen (Skagit County Commissioner), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Elisa Dawson (Snohomish MRC staff), Morty Cohen (Skagit MRC), Gregg Ridder, Ruth Blyther, Rachel Best, Ed Bowlby (Clallam MRC, Chair), Tracy Alker (Skagit MRC staff), Cheryl Lowe (Jefferson MRC staff), Arnie Klaus (San Juan MRC staff), Franchesca Perez (Snohomish MRC, Chair), Jay Lind (Skagit MRC), Traci Sanderson (Snohomish MRC), Sarah Brown (Snohomish MRC, Vice Chair), Christie Heyer, Mel Malkoff, Austin Rose (Whatcom MRC staff)

Absent: Sheida Sahandy, Terry Williams, Dale Moses (Jefferson), Tom Temple (San Juan) representative

Welcome and Introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting and introduced Ron Wesen, Skagit County Commissioner. Commissioner Wesen provided a welcome, thanking the Commission and Skagit MRC for their work and highlighted the importance of agriculture as well as shorelines in the County economy. He encouraged attendees to go see the tulip fields in bloom.

The minutes from the March Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved with one change.

MRC Presentations

Each MRC presented a proposed project for the upcoming year. The Commission and other attendees provided feedback during a question and answer period following each presentation

1. **Skagit MRC, Morty Cohen–Salish Sea Stewards**
 - a. Morty presented on the Salish Sea Stewards volunteer training program. The goals of the program are to provide background, training and volunteer coordination; increase visibility of the Skagit MRC through volunteer activity and publications; and provide a strong base of training volunteers to support programs of Skagit MRC and the Northwest Straits Initiative.



minutes

- b. The Commission discussed the class as an opportunity for local residents to learn project background and basic volunteer aspects of the MRC. The Commission discussed the difficulty of tracking volunteer hours across all MRCs. Skagit MRC uses [Volgistics](#) to track volunteer hours.
2. **Whatcom MRC, Doug Stark–Chuckanut Bay Health and Restoration**
 - a. Doug presented a Story Map on the community use of Chuckanut Bay and the MRC's effort to restore and preserve its health. MRC activities include outreach to the local neighborhood, school groups and recreational users of the area. The MRC plans to do a community workshop in June to communicate their work in Chuckanut Bay.
 - b. Commission members discussed the local and tribal use of the area including public shellfish harvest. No other organization is involved in restoring the area, so this is work that would not be happening without the MRC. Ron suggested looking at the Dungeness Bay study on pollution source.
3. **Jefferson MRC, Cheryl Lowe–Evaluating Outreach Efforts**
 - a. Cheryl presented on the MRCs strategies to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach campaigns. Key steps include identifying the purpose, audience and context of outreach messages. They explored various ways to measure changed behavior including photos of voluntary no anchor zone usage during busy seasons, online surveys after programs and follow up evaluations taking place six months after the event.
 - b. Commissioners discussed the difficulty in measuring effectiveness of outreach campaigns across the Northwest Straits Initiative. Suggestions on improving outreach efforts included being deliberate in targeting an audience and narrowing monitoring efforts to one aspect of a project. Ron suggested looking at eelgrass health as a measurement of effectiveness of no anchor zones.
4. **Clallam MRC, Ed Bowlby–Pigeon Guillemot Surveys**
 - a. Ed presented on the Pigeon Guillemot monitoring project. The MRC hosted a training and then identified volunteers to survey at designated sites. Volunteers record the total number of birds, burrow visits, fish prey and any disturbances. The MRC is expanding the project to survey additional sites.
 - b. Commission members discussed the use and end result of collected monitoring data. Ed said the information is given to WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project in Clallam County is an expansion of the project done by Island MRC.
5. **Island MRC, Gregg Ridder–Eelgrass Measurement Methods**
 - a. Gregg presented on the various methods used to survey eelgrass beds in Island County by the MRC. Ken Urstad, Island MRC member, conducts underwater surveys at selected sites using a towfish laser camera and his boat. Gregg conducts aerial surveys of the entire shoreline by plane and captures thousands of images which are stamped with GIS coordinates and stitched into a continuous record. A third method was tested this year with a sonar survey done by Albert Foster at ten sites. The data is given to Department of Natural Resources and included in SoundIQ.



minutes

- b. Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of using the different methods. Aerial surveys are efficient for large areas but do not identify plant species as underwater videography does.
6. **San Juan MRC, Arnie Klaus–Marine Managers’ Workshop–Next Steps**
 - a. Arnie presented an overview of the San Juan MRCs projects for 2017-2018. He presented figures and maps of the San Juan region and showed the potential impacts of increased ship traffic and oil spill risks. The Marine Managers’ Workshop is a venue to build community resilience to oil spills.
 - b. The Commission recommended the MRC focus on breaking down the larger issue of oil spill risk into projects that can be executed by the MRC on a yearly basis. Notes from the previous Marine Mangers’ Workshop will provide focus for future workshops.
7. **Snohomish MRC, Franchesca Perez–Ocean Literacy, Awareness and Engagement**
 - a. Franchesca presented on their project to promoting ocean literacy in the community by screening an ocean conservation themed film, both at a public venue and in several school districts, and using the [MyCoast](#) smartphone app for collective monitoring of shoreline. The project team is watching several ocean conservation themed films to select from.
 - b. Commission members praised the MyCoast app as a way to engage citizen scientists and discussed its potential future applications, and suggested Florian Graner’s film [Beneath the Salish Sea](#). The Commission discussed using voluntary surveys as a way to measure changed behavior.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Business Items

The 2017 MRC Conference will be held November 3-4 at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel in Bellingham, Washington. Ideas for conference topics or presenters can be forwarded to Nicole Jordan at jordan@nwstraits.org.

An MRC staff meeting will be held on July 18 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Northwest Straits Commission offices at Padilla Bay Reserve.

Election of Officers

Nan McKay was elected to serve another one-year term as Chair of the Commission. Jamey Selleck was elected to serve another one-year term as Vice Chair of the Commission.

The next Commission meeting will be on May 26, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM by WebEx Conference Call



minutes

May 26, 2017 • 10:00am-12:00pm
WebEx Conference Call—WebEx

Attendees:

Commission Members: Nan McKay (Chair), Jamey Selleck (Skagit, Vice Chair), Jerry Masters, Pete Granger (Whatcom-alternate), Ed Adams (Island), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish), Ron Thom, Tom Cowan, Dale Moses (Jefferson), Bob Campbell (Clallam-alternate), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal-alternate)

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

Others in Attendance: Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Austin Rose (Whatcom MRC staff)

Absent: Sheida Sahandy, Terry Williams, Tom Temple (San Juan), Doug Stark (Whatcom), Alan Clark (Clallam)

Welcome and Introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting. The Commission approved by consensus Laura Blackmore, Deputy Director for the Puget Sound Partnership, as Commission alternate for Sheida Sahandy.

The minutes from the April Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved with one change.

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Jamey said the committee discussed the recent trip to Washington DC for Puget Sound Day on the Hill, budget updates and the upcoming MRC grants. The committee also discussed potential presenters for upcoming Commission meetings, including topics for the June in-person meeting.

Science Advisory Committee

Ron said the committee welcomed a new member, Hugh Shipman, a Coastal Geologist with the Washington Department of Ecology. Ron Thom and Tom Mumford are developing a two-page document on ecosystem health/condition which will include a conceptual model to quantify actual progress of example Northwest Straits Initiative projects and the suggested next steps. The document will be presented at the June Commission meeting.

External Relations Committee

Tom Cowan updated on the work of the committee on securing biennial funding for MRCs in the amount of \$450,000 from the state legislature.

- Action: Tom Cowan will update the Commission as information comes available.



minutes

Puget Sound Day on the Hill

Rich updated on the recent trip to Washington DC for the Puget Sound Day on the Hill event. He said around 60 people representing the Puget Sound region attended including Rich, Nan, Jerry, Caroline and Ginny. The group met with Senator Patty Murray who reaffirmed her support of the Northwest Straits Initiative. The Puget Sound Partnership posted highlights from the event, which can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2qKUjHz>

MRC reports

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

Clallam

Bob Campbell updated on the work of Clallam MRC. Jeff Ward is the new Chair, Brad Collins is the new Vice-Chair, and Peggy McClure is the new alternate MRC member for the City of Sequim. Bob said the MRC is pursuing educational and outreach efforts this summer and has many projects underway including crabber outreach, forage fish surveys and Olympia oyster restoration.

Island

Ed Adams said William Bell joined the MRC in the Port of Coupeville seat and Anna Toledo will be returning from maternity leave in June. The MRC is working on forage fish surveys and have found eggs at Maple Grove. On May 24, the Pigeon Guillemot team held a training on the Pigeon Guillemot survey protocols.

Jefferson

Dales Moses said the MRC has a new seasonal program assistant, Tim Weissman. The MRC is installing their 7th rain garden on June 6-7. He said forage fish monitoring is continuing at the Fort Townsend site with a new index site at Adelma Beach. The MRC lost 8 of the 21 winter marker buoys and are working on finding divers to reinstall the recovered buoys.

San Juan

San Juan provided a written report. Kendra Smith, the new Environmental Resources Director for San Juan County Public Works, was appointed by San Juan County Council to serve on the Marine Resources Committee. The MRC currently has two vacancies. Marine Managers' Workshop results and recommended actions are being compiled into a final report and will be available on the MRC website.

Skagit

Jamey Selleck said Dr. Jude Apple, Research Coordinator for Padilla Bay Reserve, is the newest member to the MRC. He said 34 volunteers graduating the Salish Sea Stewards program. Skagit MRC partnered with the Washington Sea Grant to expand European green crab monitoring throughout Skagit County. The MRC is providing a letter of support for eDNA to University of Washington.

Snohomish



minutes

Paul Clampitt said Elisa Dawson will be covering for Kathleen while she is out on maternity leave. Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife has provided \$50,000 in grant funds through the Local Integrating Organizations (LIO) to the MRC to remove derelict boats. The MRC and Washington Dept. of Natural Resources will provide matching funds contributing to a total working budget of approximately \$100,000.

Whatcom

Pete Granger said a speaker from Washington Sea Grant on European green crab presented at their last MRC meeting. Glen Alexander (Alex), former Education Coordinator at Padilla Bay Reserve, was appointed to the MRC to fill a Citizen-at-Large interest position. Austin said Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation, is organizing an Olympia oyster workshop focused on MRC permitting questions at Padilla Bay Reserve on June 5—all are welcome to attend.

Business items

Northwest Straits Initiative – 2016 Annual Report

Sasha reminded everyone that the [Northwest Straits Initiative 2016 Annual Report](#) is available. This year the format is slightly different and includes project tables for each MRC.

- Action: Commission staff will follow up with MRC staff to identify the number of copies needed for each MRC.

Ocean acidification symposium report

Rich and Lucas attended the ocean acidification symposium hosted by the University of Washington on May 22. Lucas is exploring options for the Northwest Straits Initiative to research the impacts of ocean acidification in the Puget Sound area.

Olympia oyster and Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) Habitat Strategic Initiative

Lisa Kaufman, Northwest Straits Foundation, is working on creating a protocol specific for MRC oyster restoration projects. Lucas and Rich attended the Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network (ERN) meeting on May 12 and advocated for Olympia oyster restoration as a focus area in the Habitat Strategic Initiative of the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Kelp project update

Holly Garland, Northwest Straits Foundation intern, is developing a condition index for kelp bed health. She will meet with Tom Mumford and Phil Green to discuss the project and will test a protocol. Gregg Ridder volunteered to take aerial photos for all MRCs.

- Action: Those interested in aerial photos from Gregg should contact Lucas at hart@nwstraits.org.

2017 MRC Conference



minutes

The annual MRC conference is scheduled for November 3-4, 2017 at the Sheraton Four Points in Bellingham. The planning committee includes Rich Childers, Caroline Gibson, Lucas Hart, Nan McKay, Ed Bowlby and Pete Granger.

Catch More Crab

Sasha, Nicole, and Jason at the Northwest Straits Foundation are working on the Catch More Crab campaign. Jason has contacted MRCs to determine interest in joining the campaign

- Action: MRCs interested in joining the campaign should contact Jason at morgan@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)

Laura Blackmore provided an update. The Partnership published [a blog](#) and hard copy book which includes success stories on restoration throughout Puget Sound. She said [House Bill 1121](#) was signed into law, which changes the Partnership's Action Agenda reporting requirements from every two years to every four years.

- Action: Those with questions on the Puget Sound Action Agenda and/or general PSP questions can contact Laura at laura.blackmore@psp.wa.gov.

Round table

There was no round table discussion.

Public comment

There was no public comment

*The next Commission meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on June 30 at the Snohomish County Campus Building.



minutes

June 30, 2017–10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Skykomish Conference Room, Snohomish County Campus, Everett, WA
Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Nan McKay (Chair), Jerry Masters, Paul Clampitt (Snohomish), Tom Cowan, Dale Moses (Jefferson), Doug Stark (Whatcom)

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

Others in Attendance: Dave Somers (Snohomish County Executive), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Jeff Ward, Erin Ryan-Peñuela (Puget Sound Partnership), Sarah Brown, Debbie Watkins, Tom Doerge, Elisa Dawson, Mel Malkoff, Laura Gurley, Jay Lind, Elsa Schwartz, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alternate)

Absent: Jamey Selleck (Skagit, Vice Chair), Sheida Sahandy, Terry Williams, Tom Temple (San Juan), Alan Clark (Clallam), Ed Adams (Island), Ron Thom

Welcome and Introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting and introduced Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive, including his long background of public service to support Puget Sound recovery. Executive Somers thanked all those involved in the Northwest Straits Initiative for their work in restoring our mutual home, Puget Sound.

MyCoast Mobile App

Paul Clampitt and Elisa Dawson presented on the [MyCoast app](#), a system for submitting citizen science data to state and environmental agencies. The app captures reports for king tides, abandoned boats, storm surge, creosote logs and beach change for Snohomish County. The Commission discussed the interest of the app throughout other MRCs and the logistics of analyzing and processing the collected data on an ongoing basis.

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Nan said the committee discussed topics for the June Commission meeting and MRC Conference planning committee priorities. Commission staff completed a first round of review on MRC grant proposals and will take the full list to Executive Committee and the Science Advisory Committee before seeking final approval from the Commission at the July meeting.



External Relations Committee

Tom reported for the External Relations Committee that \$450,000 in state funding for MRCs was approved by the state legislature for the 2017-19 biennium.

Science Advisory Committee

Lucas said the committee continued the discussion on ecosystem health/condition from the 2016 retreat. The committee defines “ecosystem health” as the actions that result in measurable improvement of the ecosystem. Ron Thom and Tom Mumford will present on the topic at the August Commission meeting.

MRC reports

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <http://bit.ly/2uKKpc7>

Clallam

Jeff said nearly 100 European Green Crab were found at Dungeness Spit. After two site visits to Dawley Road and Dungeness Farms in May, the MRC compiled the information into a presentation shown to the members at the June MRC meeting. MRC members determined that the Dungeness Farms site is too exposed for Olympia oysters and will not pursue restoration at that site.

Island

Elsa said MRC staff member Anna Toledo returned from maternity leave. The seasonal pigeon guillemot surveys began and will continue for 10 to 12 weeks or until the birds depart their breeding colonies. Island, Clallam and Jefferson MRCs plan to host a joint meeting in July. Jefferson MRC is hosting, with discussion topics selected by all three MRCs.

Jefferson

Dale said the MRC hosted their second Digging for Dinner event and was featured in the [Port Townsend Leader](#). The MRC plans to join the Catch More Crab campaign with MRC volunteers stationed at a few local boat launches for the first two weekends of July, and providing materials to local licensing/crabber supply places.

San Juan

San Juan provided a written report. Site preparation for the Orcas Landing Experience began the last week of June with removal of invasive species by partner organizations. Marine Managers’ Workshop results are being compiled into a final report that will go out to attendees and will be available on the MRC website.

Skagit

Jay said Hannah Moon, Anacortes Ace Hardware, presented at the recent MRC meeting on their “Orca Friendly” product label campaign to help build awareness about “greener” alternative products—the Commission discussed lack of science behind the labeling. The MRC is getting ready for crabbing season and plans to be involved in the Catch More Crab campaign. The MRC is also involved in monitoring for invasive European Green Crab.



Snohomish

Paul said the MRC's new intern, Tim Keal, will be working on the MRC's Forage Fish Ecosystem Analysis by compiling the data taken since 2012. The MRC is working on crabber outreach in partnership with Beach Watchers. A letter from the MRC on the Stillaguamish Geographic Response Plan update was electronically submitted to Ecology on June 15, 2017.

Whatcom

Doug said the MRC hosted a speaker series event at the Lummi Island Town Hall featuring local experts. At the June MRC meeting, Port of Bellingham staff provided an update on the Bellingham Waterfront improvement projects. MRC member, Chris Brown, is coordinating volunteers to monitor green crab in Chuckanut Bay.

Public comment

There was no public comment

Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) update

Caroline said the NWSF approved their 2017-2018 budget at their June meeting. Heidi Lehman, Administrative Coordinator, left the NWSF mid-June for a new position and Nicole Jordan is now working with the NWSF one day a week as communications coordinator. Caroline shared an educational short film created by Andrea Love about the Northwest Straits Initiative.

- Action: Please send ideas on venues to roll-out the new film to Caroline at gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Near-Term Action (NTA) solicitation process for the 2018 Action Agenda

Erin Ryan-Peñuela, Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator and Local Integrating Organizations Coordinator at the Partnership, presented on the Near Term Action (NTA) solicitation process for the 2018 Action Agenda. This year there is a single solicitation period and technical review for the NTAs. The official request for proposals will be issued September 28.

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update

Erin said following the passage of HB 1121 in the State legislature this year, the Action Agenda will be now be updated every four years instead of every two years. The Partnership's State of the Sound report will be out in September. She also said in Partnership's 2018 operating budget, the National Estuary Program is not funded.

Western Washington University Salish Sea Studies Institute

Ginny presented on her new position as Director of the Salish Sea Studies Institute. The Institute is housed on Western Washington University's campus and is brand new as of June 2017. Ginny's currently



minutes

working on building bridges to local partners and resources and works with a diverse group of community and regional partners including over 60 nations. After the Institute is fully functional, students should be able to register for a Salish Sea Studies degree by 2019.

Business items

MRC grants

The Science Advisory Committee is reviewing the list of projects submitted for the 2017-18 MRC grants. A full list of projects will be sent to Commissioners in July to review and approve at the July meeting.

#CatchMoreCrab

Sasha, Nicole, and Jason Morgan at the Northwest Straits Foundation are working on the Catch More Crab campaign to reduce the number of lost recreational crab pots. MRCs are encouraged to contact any of them with questions as crabbing season begins.

Olympia oysters in the Action Agenda

Lucas and Rich are in communication with Laura Blackmore of the Puget Sound Partnership and Emily Sanford from the Department of Health and lead for the Action Agenda's Shellfish Strategic Initiative, about elevating the importance Olympia oyster restoration within the Action Agenda. Lucas and Rich plan to bring partners together to provide written comment

Kelp project update

Zoe Zilz was hired by the Northwest Straits Foundation in June as the summer kelp coordinator. Lucas is working with Holly Garland, a volunteer from the University of Victoria, on a kelp condition index that can be used in the future to track the health of bull kelp. Helen Berry and Tom Mumford are serving as advisors on the project.

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference sessions

Lucas submitted a session proposal to the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference that aims to highlight citizen science projects, focusing in particular on data management and effectiveness monitoring methodologies. Jamey and Lucas also submitted a session proposal on kelp.

Roundtable

There was no round table discussion.

*The next Commission meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM on July 28 over WebEx.



minutes

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.



minutes

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.

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.



minutes

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



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



minutes

August 25, 2017–10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Pacific Rim Institute, 180 Parker Road, Coupeville, WA, Island County
Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Nan McKay (Chair), Jerry Masters, Tom Cowan, Doug Stark (Whatcom), Terry Turner (San Juan-alternate), Elsa Schwartz (Island MRC-alternate), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alternate), Ron Thom

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

Others in Attendance: Keith Higman (Island County Public Health Department-Director), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Tom Doerge, Mel Malkoff, Anna Toledo (Island MRC staff), Tom Mumford, Cheryl Lowe (Jefferson MRC staff), Lisa Kaufman (Northwest Straits Foundation)

Absent: Dale Moses (Jefferson), Jamey Selleck (Skagit, Vice Chair), Sheida Sahandy, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Ken Carrasco (San Juan), Alan Clark (Clallam), Ed Adams (Island), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish)

Welcome and Introductions

Nan McKay opened the meeting and introduced Keith Higman, Director of Island County Public Health Department. Keith welcomed and thanked the Northwest Straits Commission for bringing the meeting to Island County.

The minutes from the July Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved.

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Nan said the committee discussed purchasing restrictions on equipment with EPA grant funds. The issue is somewhat alleviated for MRCs in the coming year as they will have state funds that allow equipment purchases. Staff have not been successful at getting clarification from EPA as to what constitutes equipment vs. supplies.

External Relations Committee

Tom Cowan said the committee is working on identifying new priorities now that state funding is secured.

Science Advisory Committee

Ron said the committee assisted in reviewing the recent MRC grant proposals and provided feedback.



minutes

Education and outreach in Island County

Barbara Bennett, Island MRC member, presented on the outreach efforts of Island MRC as they tie into the overall work of the Northwest Straits Initiative. The MRC identified key decision makers within their county governments and presented a questionnaire to focus communications with the county. The Commission discussed communication and outreach to elected officials within other MRC and suggested Barbara's presentation might be a good item to present at the annual conference.

MRC reports

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <http://bit.ly/2x6OdYZ>

Clallam

Clallam provided a written report. The three interns are working on completing their projects and summarizing the outcomes in posters for a presentation on August 28 at the Intern Celebration event. MRC members are continuing recreational crabber outreach throughout the entire crabbing season.

Island

Elsa said the MRC is working on monitoring eelgrass beds which were surveyed by underwater videography. Gregg Ridder completed aerial photography of Whidbey and Camano and Albert Foster has conducted monitoring with multi-beam sonar at several sites.

Jefferson

Jeff said the MRC is preparing for outreach at the Wooden Boat Festival. They completed installation of all summer navigational buoys for the Port Townsend waterfront no-anchor zone. All 7 Mystery Bay buoys were checked in early August and are still in place.

San Juan

Terry said a subcommittee met to plan for three meetings in late October to address issues of vessel traffic and noise, prey availability, and pollution to the southern resident killer whale population. The MRC is working on a project to restore vegetation at the Orcas Landing Experience.

Skagit

Nate said Skagit MRC member, Kit Rawson, passed away. Paul Dinnel is working with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife to distribute and monitor stacks of ceramic tiles at four locations in Fidalgo Bay to monitor native oyster settlement. 22 people are now on the wait list for next year's Salish Sea Stewards training.

Snohomish



minutes

Tom said the MRC is working on kelp monitoring. Elisa Dawson and Zoe Zilz attended the Warm Beach Summerfest on August 12, 2017, focusing on initial outreach on shoreline armor removal—four property owners signed up for site visits.

Whatcom

Doug said Laurie Caskey-Schreiber resigned from the MRC—the MRC has two prospective candidates for their vacancies. The MRC is getting ready for several events including Bellingham SeaFeast, the culminating event of Whatcom Water Week. The MRC will have their booth amongst several others.

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update

Rich updated on behalf of the PSP. The PSP hired several new people including Jennifer Lee as the new Planning Director, Stacy Vynne as the Salmon Recovery Manager and Tristan Peter-Contesse as the Boards Program Manager. The Partnership is beginning to feel the effects of the lack of a 2017-2019 capital budget, which has not yet passed in the Washington State Legislature.

Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) update

Caroline said the NWSF is feeling the effects of the capital budget stagnation on their restoration projects. She is focused on building donors through fundraising efforts to businesses and corporations. The NWSF will host a silent auction at the 2017 MRC Conference.

Public comment

The Commission discussed the most effective strategy to approach net pens.

Business items

Zooplankton monitoring program update

Lucas said Long Live the Kings currently manages the [Marine Survival Project](#), which aims to understand factors impacting salmon with zooplankton monitoring as a piece of the project. Lucas reported that the bottleneck in these projects is the lack of taxonomists to do species identification on collected samples. With past expressed interest by MRCs to do zooplankton monitoring on their own, this hurdle would have to be overcome to build a meaningful MRC project.

Marine renewable energy workshops

Commission staff updated on the two Marine Renewable Energy seminars put on in partnership with Washington Sea Grant and Jefferson and Skagit MRCs. Each MRCs hosted an event, one in Padilla Bay on September 8 and another at Port Townsend on September 21. Commission staff helped with promotion of the events.

Commission topic list review

Commission members were asked to review the list of commission meeting topics and provide feedback.

Locations for 2018 MRC Conference



minutes

Commission staff are previewing locations for the 2018 MRC conference – the Northwest Straits Initiative’s 20th anniversary.

Ecosystem health

Ron Thom and Tom Mumford presented on their work to help define ecosystem health by developing a model based on function x area x probability to equal Net Ecosystem Improvement (NEI). The ultimate goal of this project is to build a model that will provide the ability to report and document ecosystem impacts resulting from MRC projects. As an example, the model was applied to the eelgrass no anchor zone to quantify the impact of the project. The Commission discussed the equations usefulness in other MRC projects.

- Action: The topic will be forwarded to the Executive Committee to summarize next steps.

Roundtable

There was no roundtable discussion.

The next Commission meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM on September 29 over WebEx.



minutes

September 29, 2017 • 10:00am-12:00pm
WebEx Conference Call—WebEx

Attendees:

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

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

Others in Attendance: Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership), Terry Stevens, Amy Windrope (WA Department of Fish and Wildlife), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson-alternate)

Absent: Sheida Sahandy, Ken Carrasco (San Juan), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

Welcome and Introductions

Nan opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

The minutes from the August Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

Northwest Straits Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Jamey said Cecilia Gobin was approved by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) to serve as a tribal representative to the Northwest Straits Commission. The NWIFC sent an official letter to the Commission recommending Cecilia for the position. The committee agreed to move the Executive Committee meetings to the first Monday of each month.

External Relations Committee

Tom Cowan said the committee is working on coordinating a date in October to meet.

Science Advisory Committee

Ron said the committee is putting together a presentation explaining ecosystem health calculations and conceptual modeling. The presentation will be shared with the Commission and MRCs when ready.

Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) update

Caroline is seeking two qualified candidates for the NWSF Board of Directors; one individual from each San Juan and Whatcom Counties. Lisa Kaufman is organizing several Shoreline Landowner Workshops. For more information visit the NWSF events page. Cathy Cameron, Chief Financial Officer, is leaving the NWSF and will be working through October. The Request for Proposals for the MRC Opportunity Fund will likely be released in November.



minutes

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update

Karin Berkholtz said the new [PSP vital signs](#) are ready. On September 27, Governor Inslee met with state and local leaders to discuss strategies and challenges in the effort to protect and improve the health of Puget Sound—to see the video stream, [click here](#). Karin said the PSP welcomed Jennifer Lee as the new director of policy and planning.

- Action: Please see the attached fact sheet in post-meeting materials to review the Science/Implementation Strategy EPA Award.

Net pen overview/update

Amy Windrope, North Puget Sound Regional Director with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), provided an update on the recent net pen incident off Cypress Island. WDFW is working with the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Ecology and local tribes to respond to the spill of Atlantic salmon.

- Action: Those interested in more information can check this webpage, which is regularly updated: <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/atlanticsalmon>.

MRC reports

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

Clallam

Alan Clark said in late August, Jeff Ward and Albert Foster conducted three eelgrass surveys in Port Angeles harbor using a fish finder and are now ground-truthing the data. The MRC is working on moving their last meeting to Neah Bay in an attempt to include the far western Clallam communities.

Island

Ed Adams said surf smelt eggs were found at Cornet Bay within one of their restoration areas. Kelp surveys are wrapping up and the data and photos are being reviewed and analyzed. Pigeon guillemot surveys have been completed, and a presentation is scheduled for the MRC meeting on October 3.

Jefferson

Dales Moses said two rain gardens were installed during the week of September 19-22. The MRC participated in the 2017 Wooden Boat Festival with an estimated 300 people stopping at the MRC booth. MRC completed photo-documentation of boater compliance in the “no anchor zones” during Wooden Boat Festival.

San Juan

San Juan provided a written report. The MRC has six vacant positions and the membership subcommittee has generated a list of potential new members with the focus on recruitment. The subcommittee is discussing the number of members to be most effective.



minutes

Skagit

Jamey Selleck said the MRC was busy with Bowman Bay restoration and a planting/maintenance party, beach seining, and forage fish survey occurred on September 12. Forage fish eggs were found at Bowman Bay. Eggs were also found at Ship Harbor site for the first time ever after sampling there for over a year.

Snohomish

Paul Clampitt said Kathleen Pozarycki is planning on returning in November. The MRC is working on forage fish monitoring. The kelp team surveyed kelp locations at Meadowdale, Edmonds, and Mukilteo and compared data from 2015, 2016, and 2017 data. From 2015 to 2017 the bull kelp surface area decreased at all three sites.

Whatcom

Doug Stark said the MRC hosted a booth focused on water quality at Bellingham SeaFeast, the culminating event of Whatcom Water Week. The MRC participated in the Baker to Bay Symposium, with an overarching goal/message to support and inform ecosystem recovery activities in Whatcom County.

Business items

2018 proposed Commission meeting dates

2018 Commission meeting dates can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2xagTS9>

Kelp Recovery Plan update

The Northwest Straits Foundation received funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to work towards a kelp recovery plan, with some of the funding passing through to the Commission for the project. A meeting will be held on October 17 to discuss further planning.

Kelp monitoring strategy update

Lucas is working with Suzanne Shull to analyze kelp data to determine trends in kelp area. A kelp strategy meeting was held in September focused on investigating ways in which current and future data can influence management and policy decisions.

Kelp Condition Index

Lucas said a subcommittee of the Science Advisory Committee finalized the Kelp Condition Index. The index will undergo testing at current kelp monitoring sites next season to better guide future kelp protocol.

MRC role in rockfish recovery plan

Lucas said he is exploring options for MRCs to get involved with the rockfish recovery plan, potentially through the kelp monitoring program. Lucas will update the Commission with any developments.

Northwest Straits Initiative's (NWSI) presentation to Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission



minutes

Rich said he and Caroline are on the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission's agenda in December to present on the NWSI project collaborations with WDFW. Several high profile MRC projects will likely be the focus of the presentation.

Round table

Rich said the NOAA Marine Debris program will be holding a summit on December 5 and 6 in Ocean Shores, Washington with the purpose of drafting an action plan. Representation from the Northwest Straits Initiative is encouraged.

- Action: More information can be found here: <https://goo.gl/forms/Qo0h8mFqiqt1LbT93>

The National Shellfisheries Association is planning on having a session on Olympia oyster restoration at their annual meeting in March 2018. Rich and Betsy Peabody, Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF), are discussing a joint PSRF/NWSI presentation that highlights MRC restoration projects.

- Action: Those interested can check here: <http://www.shellfish.org/annual-meeting>

Public comment

There was no public comment.

The next Commission meeting will be from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM on December 8 over WebEx