



minutes

July 27, 2018 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

WebEx Conference Call

Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Paul Clampitt (Snohomish-Chair), Alan Clark (Clallam-Vice Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Tom Cowan, , Christina Koons (San Juan), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Nate Biletnikoff (Skagit), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Nan McKay, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

Commission Staff: Nicole Jordan, Sasha Horst, Lucas Hart

Others in Attendance: Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Amy (Whatcom MRC intern), Karin Roemers-Kleven (San Juan-Alternate), Kirsten Feifel (Department of Natural Resources)

Absent: Sheida Sahandy, Jerry Masters, Ron Thom

Welcome and Introductions

Paul opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

The minutes from the June Northwest Straits (NWS) Commission meeting were approved as written.

NWS Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Alan said the committee reviewed the draft budget for FY2018-19. Two NWS Commission gubernatorial appointees' terms expire in October, leaving vacant positions. Familiarity with government appropriations and the network of environmental interests in Puget Sound are useful skills for nominees to have.

- Action: Suggestions for nominations should be sent to Lucas at hart@nwstraits.org.

External Relations Committee

Tom said the committee is working on funding strategies. Paul offered to meet with elected officials if needed.

Net Ecosystem Improvement name change

The Commission provided input on changing the name of the "Net Ecosystem Improvement" project to "Actions to Impacts". The new name more clearly captures the variety of work MRCs carry out.

- Motion: Tom Cowan motioned to change the name. Christina Koons seconded. The NWS Commission approved by consensus.

Puget Sound priorities survey results

Kirsten Feifel, Department of Natural Resources, presented on the results of a recent survey sent out to key stakeholders in Puget Sound gauging interest in changes in Washington's marine waters. The goals of the survey were to identify common concerns, inform future priorities based on management and



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policy implications, improve linkages and coordination among partners and connect results to broader efforts.

MRC reports

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <https://bit.ly/2M0oCWk>

Clallam

Alan said Pete Schroeder is the new MRC representative for tourism and recreation. The MRC is busy with field work and has six interns working on crabber outreach, pigeon, guillemot surveys, green crab surveys, Elwha Beach stewardship and kelp bed monitoring. The intern program culminates in the Intern Celebration August 20.

Island

Elsa said the MRC recently participated in a joint meeting with Skagit and Whatcom MRCs on July 18 at Padilla Bay—the agenda included presentations and discussions on the NWS Initiative Strategic Plan and marine debris. Forage fish surveys are starting up on Camano Island at Maple Grove and Camano Island State Park. Volunteers have started summer surveys for bull kelp, pigeon guillemot and eelgrass.

Jefferson

Jeff said the MRC completed their first monitoring of North Beach kelp bed on June 23. The MRC's Digging for Dinner event had 43 participants. A rain garden was installed at the corner of Madison and Garfield Streets on June 26, in partnership with WSU Extension and City of Port Townsend.

San Juan

Christina said Jaclyn Fowler resigned from the MRC on July 10. Since the end of June more than 100 whale wise flags have been distributed, including larger flags for land-based sites. The ecology sign is in the final phase of production for the Orcas Landing Project. Installation of the signs is delayed until the fall due to construction delays at the site.

Skagit

Nate said Rachel Best was appointed to the MRC as Morty Cohen's replacement. Volunteers surveyed the kelp bed at Coffin Rocks in July. Surveys will take place again in August and September. The Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, on behalf of the Skagit MRC, coordinated a weeding and watering work party at the Bowman Bay restoration site on June 22 and July 13.

Snohomish

Paul said Congressman Rick Larsen and County Executive Dave Somers visited Meadowdale Beach Park to review the proposed restoration plan. The MRC is working with a team to make the MyCoast App available statewide. The Kelp Team completed July kelp monitoring. The first day of monitoring was at Mukilteo, where only one bed of kelp was found of the previously documented six or more kelp beds.



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Whatcom

Bob said the MRC has a new volunteer intern, Amy Keiper, who is completing her Master's Degree in Environmental Education. The MRC plans to conduct their first kelp survey for 2018 on July 31 at Aiston Preserve. A marine special sampling was developed for North Chuckanut Bay which evaluates bacteria results in the shoreline areas immediately adjacent to the mouth of Chuckanut Creek.

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) update

Karin met with Sasha to discuss the FFY18 work plan—the goal is to have the transition between work plans and federal fiscal years as seamless as possible. The [2018 draft Action Agenda](#) will be released for public comment on 1 September. The PSP is in the process of updating their cooperative agreements with EPA. Under the base award, funding for NWS Commission remains at \$800,000.

Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update

The NWS Foundation Board held elections at the June meeting. Anne Murphy is the new president. \$58,000 is currently contracted out to MRCs in MRC Opportunity Fund grant funds which includes five internships. The Foundation Board is seeking candidates with non-profit experience for board membership from Island, Whatcom and San Juan counties.

- Action: Suggestions for prospective board members can be sent to Caroline Gibson at gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Business items

Marine program manager update

There were 41 applicants for the marine program manager position. Lucas is moving forward with career review phone calls followed by in-person interviews mid-August.

20th Anniversary

Sasha said a subcommittee is working on a legacy member project focused on interviewing past NWS Initiative members. Results from the project will be shared at the MRC Conference in November.

Kelp recovery plan update

Lucas said the NWS Commission has funding to continue working on the plan through 2019.

Strategic Plan update

Lucas is working with the Strategic Planning Committee on presenting the plan to each MRC and gathering input. A draft will be shared with the Commission once ready.

MRC Conference

2018 is the 20-year anniversary of the NWS Initiative. The MRC Conference is scheduled for November 16-17, 2018.

- Action: Those with questions on logistics can contact Nicole at jordan@nwstraits.org.



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Public comment

There was no public comment

The next NWS Commission meeting will be on August 24, 2018 in Bellingham