



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting**  
**Service Alternatives Building – Coupeville, Island County**  
**January 23, 2004, 10:00am – 2:30pm**  
**Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Kathy Fletcher, Anne Murphy, Buck Meloy, Kirby Johnson, Gary Wood, Ed Bowlby (alt.), Kevin Ranker, Andrea Copping, Paul Dinnel  
Members absent: Terry Williams, Joe Schmitt, Mike Stoner, Duane Fagergren, Dave Anderson  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst,  
Support: Terry Stevens, Sally Hintz

Paul Dinnel, chair, opened the meeting at 10:10 with introductions and a review of the agenda. A discussion of potential presentation proposals to the Restore America's Estuaries conference was added to the agenda.

The minutes of the November 21 meeting were approved as written.

Tom Cowan provided an overview of the recent panel meetings. Tuesday, January 20 was the final day and included a summary session. Key presentations included charge to the panel; benchmarks, strategic planning, funding, tribal participation and exporting the model outside the Northwest Straits region. The panel is now working on a report, which is expected to be complete at the end of March.

Peter Fromm of the San Juan MRC presented information about the release of balloons and the harm to marine life due to plastics. A short video and packet of materials was provided for each MRC representative to take back to their MRC. Discussion followed about marine debris, including plastics, and how each MRC and the Commission might become involved or move forward with various aspects of this problem within their local area.

During public comment, Michael Kyte of Golder Associates noted that marine debris is much broader than plastics on the surface, and that there is debris on the bottom as well.

During administrative matters, the Restore America's Estuaries conference was discussed and a plan to prepare and submit proposals from MRCs and the Commission was outlined. Proposals are due as of February 2. Terry Stevens provided an update of the Northwest Straits grants for Year Four and Year Five, as well as funding for the derelict fishing gear project. It was agreed that ecosystem funds previously identified for derelict gear removal would be reprogrammed. Discussion followed on other uses for these funds and a preliminary list developed, with general agreement that priority should be for action projects. The Year Six Workplan was discussed and it was agreed that Tom and the AP committee will develop a draft to present at the February Commission meeting. Tom noted that the PS/GB International Task Force is polling members as to whether to continue with the current structure. It is expected that the Commission will be invited to have a representative on the Sanctuary Advisory Council of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Discussion of this is planned for the next Commission meeting. Recent legislation on oil spills was discussed and if there is full consensus a letter of support will be drafted. However, it was recognized that the short time frame may prevent action since MRCs are not familiar with this legislation. If specific recommendations are being made the MRCs would need time to review them.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping presented at the recent evaluation on science in the Northwest Straits including notable milestones that have been carried out by the Commission and the individual MRCs; organized a Science Roundtable to discuss scientific basis for the Initiative for the evaluation panel. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Kathy Fletcher noted that the evaluation was a main topic for this committee and is covered as a separate item on the agenda; planning is underway for the June public conference and that a registration system

is now in place - MRC members are encouraged to register early. **Education Committee**, chair Duane Fagergren was not present but noted that the most recent newsletter was mailed from the Dept of Printing to the mailing lists compiled for the upcoming NWSC conference and that MRCs have been given a stack of newsletters for handout. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**. There was no report of the **Fundraising committee**.

The status of the MRC grant proposals was discussed. All MRC grant proposals have been approved. The Department of Ecology will be sending contracts for signature in the near future.

MRC representatives summarized their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** focused on plans and arrangements for the evaluation panel sessions including updating some of their posters for the reception; posted their web site to a new server and domain name at <http://www.clallammrc.org/MRC/>; had updates on our continuing monitoring efforts on shellfish PSP collections and forage fish surveys; a subcommittee discussed the review of bids for a facilitator and a technical writer for the Elwha Nearshore workshop to be held March 30 - April 1. **Island MRC** presented Senator Patty Murray with the signage and booklet and designated her as an Honorary Shore Steward; is discussing a potential project with DNR funding for a pilot Oak Harbor beach restoration project. Executive director Gary Wood participated in the Asian Pacific Economic Conference on Derelict Gear Recovery in Hawaii this month; the Board of County Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution to create two marine stewardship areas in Island County, which received coverage in the Whidbey News Times and Stanwood-Camano news; will hold the Sound Waters one day university on Saturday, January 31. **Jefferson MRC** will take over Olympia Oyster monitoring duties in 2004 in coordination with Jamestown S'Klallam tribe; volunteers are locating the deepest edge of the eelgrass along the Port Townsend waterfront, and looking for damage to the eelgrass meadow; continue to work on permitting for signage for the eelgrass protection zones; will use DNR funding to remove a derelict creosote trestle in Port Townsend; had a presentation on the PSNERP project; will present to the County Commissioners on February 9; has been asked to serve as coordinating entity for the development of a harbor management area in Lower Hadlock as a possible way of addressing some problems in that area, primary of which is a shellfish area that is under threatened status – a MRC subcommittee is going to talk with County staff and discuss this. Representative Kevin Ranker departed early, so there was no report of the **San Juan MRC**. **Skagit MRC** prepared a proposal to DNR for creosote log removal; are working with Tesoro for funding for shoreline restoration projects; the final report for the Skagit Bays Blueprint is nearly complete; elected Mike Sato as the chair and Ivar Dolph as the new NWSC representative; will partner with PSRF on a NOAA grant to restore Olympia Oysters; is working with the City of Anacortes on a forage fish shading project. **Snohomish MRC** will conduct an as-built survey of the planting areas at Kayak Point on 1/22/04; is preparing to roll out the Shoreline Enhancement Incentive Program to the public, and will have a fact sheet this month on the project; elected Daryl Williams as the new MRC chair; have been tracking the Point Wells oil spill, and information can be found at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/incidents/fosspointwells/fosspointwellsbase.htm>. **Whatcom MRC** had a presentation on the Bellingham Bay stewardship work and Port plans for the future, and discussed ways to use available DNR funds for this project if possible; distributed MRC member handbooks to all MRC members; discussed creation of an administrative grant subcommittee to develop workplans; forage fish surveys are proceeding; elected Michelle Evans as the new chair; are working on protocols for bottomfish dive sites; will start their Birch Bay clam restoration project in May; have identified potential sources of pollution within the commercial portion of Drayton Harbor and plan to implement at least one pilot project to reduce pollution; noted that a Bellingham sewer overflow caused the recently re-opened Portage Bay shellfish beds to be closed again.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm. The next meeting will be on February 27 at the Port of Everett in Snohomish County.



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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
Port of Everett, Snohomish County  
February 27, 2004, 10:00am – 3:30pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Amy Kraham (alt.), Kirby Johnson, Gary Wood, Naki Stevens (alt.), Kevin Ranker, Andrea Copping, Paul Dinnel, Dave Anderson  
Members absent: Kathy Fletcher, Terry Williams, Joe Schmitt, Mike Stoner, Duane Fagergren, Buck Meloy  
Alternates attending: Ivar Dolph  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst  
Support: Rachelle Hein, Sally Hintz

Paul Dinnel, chair, opened the meeting at 10:10 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Marian Krell, councilmember for the City of Everett welcomed the group and described some of the current projects of the City, including the new Events Center where the Commission will hold their upcoming conference.

Naki Stevens was nominated and approved as an alternate for Kathy Fletcher.

The minutes of the January 23 meeting were approved as written.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping noted that there was no activity of the committee this month. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Kathy Fletcher was not present but a report was provided. The upcoming conference was discussed, including a draft agenda, sponsors, registration and invitations to speakers. MRC members are encouraged to register early. **Education Committee**, chair Duane Fagergren was not present but a report was provided. A Commission display will be developed for use at upcoming conferences. The next newsletter is underway, which will focus on volunteer efforts and accomplishments and the results of the evaluation. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**, but it was reported that two contracts are in progress for tribal projects. The proposal for the project with Skagit River System Cooperative will be sent to MRCs. There was no report of the **Fundraising committee**.

Gary Wood provided the Seminar Report from the recent Derelict Fishing Gear/Marine Debris conference in Hawaii and noted the sessions in which the Northwest Straits Commission project was featured. It was noted that the Commission project is one of the few that were involved in actual removal of gear and that the Commission's "no fault" approach was a key recommendation to come out of the sessions. Tom Cowan provided an update on the current derelict fishing gear removal operations in Clallam County. Governor Locke is visiting the gear removal site today, and will see the 18-20,000 pounds of gear removed over the past three days. In addition, the new Northwest Dive News magazine features a full page advertisement of the project, including hotline and web site information.

Tom described the proposed Year Six workplan and budget recommended by the Administrative/Planning committee. The structure is similar to previous years, with the total funding amount of \$750,000. Some reprogramming of Year Five funds was also described in order to add a Marine Conservation Program component to the regional objective. A strategic planning task was also added to the regional objectives and is funded by reducing the ecosystem project budget. The Commission may be able to seek outside grant funding to accomplish regional ecosystem projects. It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt the proposed Year Six workplan and budget.

During public comment, Sean Edwards, lead staff for the Snohomish MRC thanked the Commission for coming to Snohomish County. Rachelle Hein of Senator Patty Murray's office congratulated the Commission and MRCs on the successful evaluation

panel meetings. David Roberts of the Department of Natural Resources introduced Lisa Kaufman, who is a new restoration manager with the agency. David also provided information to the Commission on cooperative restoration projects being undertaken by the MRCs with funding from the Department of Natural Resources.

Sarah Wilson, Program Manager for the Derelict Vessel Removal Program at Department of Natural Resources presented information about the program. A handout was provided with details including the guidelines and process for removing derelict vessels.

During administrative matters, Tom Cowan noted that he will not be present for the March meeting. The draft report from the evaluation panel will be available near the end of March. There was a discussion of the invitation to participate on the Sanctuary Advisory Council for the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Further discussion will be scheduled at the March meeting. It was recommended that Tom contact the Sanctuary thanking them for the opportunity and letting them know that the Commission is considering the invitation but that limited staff time and upcoming strategic planning require careful consideration of additional commitments.

Ginny Broadhurst presented an outline of the current MPA project. The Commission received funding from The Russell Family Foundation to initiate a regional MPA project. The focus of the project is to expand upon our knowledge and understanding of existing marine protected areas in the Northwest Straits region, and to support the work of the MRCs to create a science-based network of MPAs. Through this project, Ginny will be working with resource managers and others to identify and communicate the science and management needs of existing MPA sites and identify opportunities to improve protection of existing sites. MRCs can be partners on these projects and should contact Ginny for more specific project information. Look for a new MPA web page on the Commission web site.

MRC representatives provided written summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** held their monthly meeting on February 9 and had a presentation on Sea Otters from Melinda Chambers; had a presentation from Doug Morrill of the Elwha Tribe on their proposed marina in Port Angeles harbor; had updates from their subcommittees on Olympia oysters, Elwha Nearshore Monitoring workshop, shellfish PSP monitoring, derelict fishing gear and web site. **Island MRC** will host a Saratoga Passage Stewardship Cruise on June 4; has one new MRC member – Ian Jefferds of Penn Cove Shellfish; hired a new Shore Stewards Coordinator; has completed all field work for eelgrass surveys with final mapping expected in the spring; Gary Wood will represent the MRC on the City of Coupeville Shoreline Plan updating committee; submitted abstracts for the upcoming Restore America's Estuaries conference on Forage Fish Surveys and Shore Stewards. **Jefferson MRC** will complete installation of signage and buoys for the Anchor Free Zone in May; are removing a derelict trestle in Port Townsend with funding from Dept of Natural Resources; are planning for upcoming planting/monitoring/outreach on Olympia oyster restoration; has three new members. **San Juan MRC** established a subcommittee to develop strategies for minimizing balloon releases in County waters; is working with Dept of Natural Resources for derelict vessel removal; the Board of County Commissioners signed a resolution to designate the County as a Marine Stewardship Area. **Skagit MRC** has submitted proposals for grant funding for creosote log removal; continues to work with Texaco Restoration Fund for funding for shoreline restoration projects; wrote to the City of Anacortes offering assistance on future Shoreline Master Plan updates. **Snohomish MRC** continues work on Kayak Point Nearshore Pilot Project, with spring planting and permanent signage underway, as well as preparation of a stewardship plan and baseline monitoring; held a Dungeness Crab Stewardship subcommittee meeting to discuss next phase work plan items; is working with regional and local partners to organize a technical workshop on nearshore actions for salmon recovery; have scheduled their summer beach expos; have updated their MRC library and estimated financial support to the MRC since inception. **Whatcom MRC** had a presentation on ballast water and Spartina in the Northwest Straits region; has been offered involvement options by the Port of Bellingham for their Marine Park project – signage, long-term monitoring and planting; completed and distributed their 2003 Annual Report.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm. The next meeting will be on March 26 at the Port Angeles Red Lion in Clallam County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
Red Lion Inn, Port Angeles – Clallam County  
March 26, 2004, 10:30am – 3:00pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Kirby Johnson, Gary Wood, Kevin Ranker, Paul Dinnel, Dave Anderson, Kathy Fletcher, Terry Williams, Buck Meloy, Duane Fagergren, Ed Bowlby (alt.)  
Members absent: Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Mike Stoner  
Alternates attending: Ivar Dolph  
Staff: Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Paul Dinnel, chair, opened the meeting at 10:35 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Richard Headrick, mayor of Port Angeles welcomed the group. As a diver, citizen and mayor, he appreciates the work of the Clallam MRC and the Commission to restore the marine environment.

The minutes of the February 27 meeting were approved as written.

Jacques White and Curtis Tanner provided a presentation on the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP). Their work is with the steering committee, where they are looking at the nearshore in three parts: function, structure and process. They are currently working on a needs assessment and early action projects list that will be presented as a report in June 2006. Their presentation to the Commission is to determine what the relationship between PSNERP and the Commission is and how the two can work together. Kathy Fletcher will prepare a letter of support for PSNERP and other restoration projects including mapping and data systems which will be circulated to the Commission next week before mailing to the Congressional delegation.

There was no public comment.

Ginny Broadhurst, Kevin Ranker and Terry Williams provided an overview of the Salmon Beaches project. The project is happening through the work of a steering committee which is comprised of Kevin Ranker, Ginny Broadhurst and Kit Rawson (Tulalip Tribes). Phase I of the project was focused on creating maps for San Juan and Island counties by overlaying data from forage fish spawning surveys, DNR's Shorezone and the Anchor habitat characterization. Using these maps, the steering committee generated some hypotheses regarding juvenile salmon travel corridors and high use areas. Phase II, which is just beginning (through funding from the national MPA Center), will pull together a scientific workgroup to discuss the salmon corridor maps and identify high priority research that will help us to better understand how salmon travel through these sections of marine waters. A research project identified in this workgroup will then be funded. The ultimate goal of the project is to make recommendations regarding needed protection of high value juvenile salmonid sites and travel corridors.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping was not present but reported that there was no activity of the committee this month. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Kathy Fletcher reported that the upcoming Initiative conference registration is open and encouraged MRCs to contact organizations who may want to participate as a sponsor. Information is available on the Commission web site. It was noted that the evaluation report is in progress and expected at the end of March. **Education Committee**, chair, Duane Fagergren reported that a newsletter is now in progress. Volunteer efforts from all MRCs will be highlighted in this issue. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**. There was no report of the **Fundraising committee**.

During administrative matters, a nominating committee for the election of officers was appointed. It was moved and approved by consensus that Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren and Terry Stevens serve as the nominating committee. Sasha Horst provided an update of the results to date on derelict fishing gear removal. The summary information will be circulated to all

Commissioners via email. It was moved and approved by consensus that the Northwest Straits Commission accept the invitation to serve on the Sanctuary Advisory Council for the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

Annette De Knijf of the US Fish and Wildlife Service presented information about the San Juan Islands and Protection Island National Wildlife Refuges. Comprehensive Conservation Plans for these areas is expected to begin in October 2004. Discussion followed, and Annette will provide information to the Commission regarding participation in this process.

**MRC representatives provided written summaries of their current MRC activities.** **Clallam MRC** spent time discussing Elwha workshop strategies and decided to provide a field trip for participants to the physical site including the mouth of the river and Freshwater Bay; the MRC has already accomplished one of our goals and that was to serve as a spark plug to get different agencies looking at the impacts to the straits; John Cambalik gave a brief description of the Limiting Factor Analysis for the strait - additional discussion is planned for the next meeting. **Island MRC** submitted grant proposals to four different funders for Shore Stewards, data collection in preparation for Shoreline Master Program updating, and other projects; completed digital forage fish survey data and distributed to participating counties; had a presentation from Eric Beamer on a pocket estuary project underway with funding from the Commission; scheduled a tour of local creosote problems for April 13; completed several tasks for the feeder bluff and accretion shoreform mapping project. **Jefferson MRC** is ready for buoy installation in early May in their voluntary Anchor Free Eelgrass Protection Zone; scheduled monitoring dates for Olympia Oysters in April; are working with Port Gamble S'Klallam on a Dosewallips Restoration Interpretive Signage Project; are upgrading their web site – look for an unveiling soon; have submitted grant applications for Public Involvement and Education funds from Puget Sound Action Team. **San Juan MRC** continued working to define the Marine Stewardship Area outreach program; has completed the Rockfish/Lingcod Final Report - preferred management actions for bottomfish recovery and conservation will be presented to the fishery co-managers in the coming weeks; the final Forage Fish Report is complete including Spawning Habitat Assessments, Exploratory Herring Spawn Surveys & Marine Riparian Restoration; had presentations on the Marbled Murrelet and the Derelict Vessel Program; provided final comments on the GSX pipeline shoreline permit application. **Skagit MRC** has designed interpretive signage for Pacific Oyster Enhancement projects; had a presentation on the Shore Stewards program; completed a report on the ROV surveys of candidate Bottomfish Marine Reserve sites; are continuing negotiations with Texaco Restoration Fund for funding for shoreline restoration projects; are completing the final report for the Skagit Bays Blueprint project. **Snohomish MRC** discussed next steps for the stewardship plan and the juvenile crab habitat survey project; had a presentation on the Point Wells oil spill from MRC member Alan Mearns of NOAA HazMat; received forage fish survey data and will integrate this with existing data; had a presentation on the expansion of the Beachwatchers program; submitted a letter to the County Executive recommending the County request water quality monitoring sites in central/ north Snohomish County under the Dept. of Ecology's Beach Environmental Assessment, Communication and Health Program. **Whatcom MRC** filled their only vacancy; established a planning committee to develop annual work plans; discussed the potential problem of *Spartina* in Boundary Bay; continued discussions on ballast water and invasive species; members are participating in a Marine Shoreline Workshop funded by the Puget Sound Action Team.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next meeting will be on April 30 at the County Courthouse in Whatcom County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
County Courthouse, Bellingham – Whatcom County  
April 30, 2004 - 10:00am – 3:30pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Daryl Williams (alt), Kevin Ranker, Paul Dinnel, Kathy Fletcher, Terry Williams, , Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Mike Stoner, Amy Kraham (alt.), Don Meehan (representing Island MRC)

Members absent: Kirby Johnson, Gary Wood, Dave Anderson, Buck Meloy

Alternates attending: Ivar Dolph, Scott McCreery

Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Paul Dinnel, chair, opened the meeting at 10:05 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Bruce Roll, assistant director of Public Works, welcomed the group to Bellingham and described the extensive planning and project work being done in Whatcom County. He also thanked the Commission, the MRC and lead staff Erika Stroebel for the work done to date.

The minutes of the March 26 meeting were approved as written.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping reported that there was no activity of the committee this month. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Kathy Fletcher reported on the upcoming Initiative conference, which was the main topic of the April committee meeting. Commissioners requested that the email invitation be sent again in order to target individuals on Commissioners contact lists. Sponsors are still encouraged to participate, especially those interested in utilizing display space at the event. **Education Committee**, chair, Duane Fagergren reported that a newsletter is now in progress. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**, but it was noted that tribal projects are moving forward. There was no report of the **Fundraising committee**.

Don Meehan of Island County Washington State University Cooperative Extension presented information about the expansion of the Beach Watchers program to the seven county Northwest Straits region. It is expected that each county will be somewhat different in their approach to developing the program, but that MRCs will have an advisory role. Other key partners will be involved as well, including those organizations that are already on the beach in Northwest Straits counties.

During administrative matters, it was announced that Kathy Fletcher and Andrea Copping have been officially reappointed to the Commission. Several staff and Commissioners will be attending and presenting at The Coastal Society conference in Rhode Island at the end of May. Year Four action grants are in the final stages, and Year Five grants are underway as of March 1. The next round of Administrative grants will begin July 1 and an application will be sent to MRC lead staff in May. Ginny Broadhurst is arranging a meeting with Department of Natural Resources staff to discuss the recent grants provided to MRCs. Draft maps were also provided by Ginny with information on existing Marine Protected Areas in each county. MRCs are encouraged to review these draft maps and provide input. The US Ocean Commission report was discussed, and the Commission will provide comments to Governor Locke at a May 13 public forum from 3-6pm at the Seattle aquarium. Commission staff and others will work to put comments together in the next week, and it was noted that the lack of tribal perspective in the report should be part of the comments.

During public comment, Lisa Kaufman of the Department of Natural Resources provided an update on the status of projects funded through grants to the MRCs and noted that there is some additional funding available and they are hoping that additional funds will be available in the next biennium. Jasper MacSllarrow, district representative in Whatcom County for Congressman Rick Larsen, introduced himself and encouraged MRCs and the Commission to ask for assistance if needed.

Officers for the Commission were elected for one-year terms. Following the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, Kathy Fletcher was elected chair, and Anne Murphy was elected as vice-chair. The Commission expressed appreciation and many thanks to Paul Dinnel for serving as chair for the past year.

Jessamine Fung of People For Puget Sound presented information about the Skagit Bays Blueprint project of the Skagit MRC. This project has helped the MRC identify high priority areas for restoration and conservation.

Dan Siemann of the Policy Consensus Center provided a briefing on the Congressionally-mandated evaluation conducted by a national panel of experts. The panel's report was issued at the end of March. It was noted that their report is now available on the Commission web site. The panel commended the MRCs and Commission for implementation of the Initiative, and recommendations were made for future priorities such as strategic planning.

MRC representatives provided written summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** held their Elwha Nearshore Workshop at the end of March, bringing together technical experts to identify data gaps and restoration priorities for the Elwha Dam removal; followed the workshop with a debriefing at the MRC meeting; had a presentation on the expansion of the Beach Watcher program in Clallam County. **Island MRC** will expand their Spartina removal due to delays in their Cama Beach projects; are completing the Shoreline Hardening Surveys on Whidbey Island; are making progress on their Feeder Bluff assessment, which will become a digital GIS product; are seeking funding to support the Shore Stewards program. **Jefferson MRC** plans to install eelgrass protection zone buoys in May; will monitor Olympia oysters in May; presented the Eelgrass Protection Zone project at the Science of Eelgrass forum and have placed an ad on the project in the County Guide. **San Juan MRC** had a presentation on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's upcoming Comprehensive Conservation Planning process; sent final bottomfish management recommendations to fisheries co-managers across Puget Sound; developed a map workbook that includes all Marine Protected Areas in the County (available online); made presentations on the Stewardship Area to the Whalewatch Operators Association and the Whale Museum Naturalist Training program. **Skagit MRC** completed final designs for interpretive signage for the Pacific Oyster and Bayview Oyster projects; are working on a final draft of the Skagit Bays Blueprint report; will monitor Olympia oysters for survival and growth in May; . **Snohomish MRC** negotiated a scope of work with Parks & Recreation Dept. for the Kayak Point Nearshore Project interpretive signage; participated in a workshop to identify potential nearshore projects for the WRIA 8 salmon recovery plan, using the MRC candidate sites work as a key source of information; expect a draft of the Dungeness crab survey methodology by May 1 for MRC review; sent an advisory letter, approved by the County Executive, on the Washington Department of Ecology's draft list of marine water quality monitoring sites for the BEACH Program; noted that Jeanne Koenings from the Washington DNR is seeking input from all MRCs on the State's investigation of the potential for licensing geoduck aquaculture operations in Puget Sound. Background information is posted on the Internet at [www.dnr.wa.gov/htdocs/aqr/shellfish/aqua/index.htm](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/htdocs/aqr/shellfish/aqua/index.htm). **Whatcom MRC** had a presentation from the County Noxious Weed Coordinator on *Spartina* survey efforts; had a presentation from the Water Resources Planning Division on the Shoreline Master Program Update; scheduled the first volunteer beach sampling for the Birch Bay Clam Restoration Project; will have a display at the upcoming Shuckin' on the Spit event; will have additional staff help from the County soon.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm. The next regular meeting will be on June 25 at a location to be determined in Jefferson County. The Northwest Straits Initiative conference will be held on June 4-5 at the Everett Events Center.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
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**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
Fort Worden State Park, Jefferson County  
June 25, 2004 - 9:45am – 2:40pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Dennis Willows (alt.), Gary Wood, Ivar Dolph, Kathy Fletcher, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Amy Kraham (alt.), Kirby Johnson, Dave Anderson  
Members absent: Buck Meloy Terry Williams, Mike Stoner, Kevin Ranker  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst  
Support: Terry Stevens, Rachelle Hein

Kathy Fletcher, chair, opened the meeting at 9:50 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Glen Huntingford, Jefferson County Commissioner, welcomed the group to Port Townsend and noted the many accomplishments of the Jefferson MRC and the Commission. He thanked the Commission and the MRC for the work done to date.

The minutes of the April 30 meeting were approved as written.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping noted that the Year 6 Request for Proposals will be discussed later on the agenda. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Anne Murphy reported on the conference evaluations that were completed. Overall the response was positive. A CD of all presentations from the conference was provided to the MRC representatives and can be sent out to others upon request. The Year 6 action grants and a Commission strategic planning retreat were also discussed, both of which are separate agenda items. **Education Committee**, chair, Duane Fagergren noted that the summer newsletter was provided to conference participants. Web site updates are ongoing, and MRCs should forward any summer events to be included on the calendar. Also, images from projects are needed – please forward to Sasha. A meeting of the **Tribal Committee** is scheduled for early July. There was no activity of the **Fundraising committee**.

During administrative matters, it was noted that applications have been sent out to MRCs for the next administrative grant which will start on July 1. Final deliverables and invoices for the Year 4 action projects are due, Year 5 projects are now underway, and the Year 6 grant starts as of July 1. Terry Stevens provided a budget update for each of the Commission grants.

Tom Cowan provided an update of the derelict fishing gear removal project. A dive team has now finished net removals at the south end of Lopez Island, removing 125 gillnets. Surveys for crab pots in Padilla Bay is to be done over the next few days. Tom and Jeff June made presentations this week on derelict gear removal as mitigation for several projects in Puget Sound. It is estimated that there may be 2.6 million pounds of lost gear in Puget Sound. To date, approximately 200 gillnets have been removed, 2 purse seine nets, 1 aquaculture net and 466 pots. Discussion followed about the Commission recommending steps to prevent future gear loss and returning to monitor sites where gear has already been removed. The Technical Committee will draft a plan for assessing biological impacts of derelict gear and for monitoring post removal biological changes.

A draft Request for Proposals for the Year 6 MRC grants was distributed, and several changes were noted. Changes included an emphasis on inventory and monitoring projects; encouraging but not requiring an outreach component to each project; and encouraging phased, multi-year projects. It was moved and approved by consensus to adopt this as the Year 6 Request for Proposals. Ginny Broadhurst will send this to MRCs in the next week.

Ginny provided an update on the Marine Protected Areas project. A workshop is planned for November in San Juan County to bring together agencies and organizations that manage shoreline and marine sites for conservation purposes in the San Juan archipelago. The workshop will focus on improving management and conservation of the region. Ginny is working with the San Juan MRC and an advisory group to organize the event.

During public comment, Suzanne Sinclair from Island County noted that the Commission meeting has been informative and interesting. Rachelle Hein from Senator Patty Murray's office noted that the Senator enjoyed the recent conference and the paddle presented to her. The funding path for the expanded Beachwatcher program is in progress.

As a follow up to the evaluation and public conference, the July 30 meeting will be a Commission retreat for strategic planning rather than a regular business meeting. The meeting will be held on July 30 at the La Conner Country Inn, with two representatives from each MRC. A draft agenda was distributed, and there were several questions for Commissioners to review in advance. It was agreed that facilitation would be shared, and that Puget Sound Action Team local liaisons would also be invited to this retreat. Commissioners should provide any input on the agenda to Ginny right away and she will send in electronic format in the next week. It was also recommended that a survey be conducted over the next few months on our web site to gather additional outside input.

MRC representatives provided written summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** enjoyed a joint meeting with the Jefferson MRC; had a presentation on the Venus System fiber optic cable crossing from Canada; are interested in planning a clean up of the Strait of Juan de Fuca in coordination with the outer coast beach clean up; are doing surveys of derelict gear in Discovery Bay. **Island MRC** completed a "Report to the Community" that was printed and provided to cruise participants and will be handed out at upcoming events; will submit a full proposal for funding from the Fisheries Conservation Foundation for the Shore Stewards program; have finalized the protocols for Shoreline Hardening Surveys; have expanded their *Spartina* removal efforts to expend remaining grant funds; have two openings on the MRC to fill. **Jefferson MRC** held a joint meeting with Clallam MRC, with many thanks to John Cambalik of the Action Team for coordination; completed spring monitoring of Olympia Oysters in Discovery Bay with analysis pending; will take a volunteer group out on June 28 on the *Centennial* to look at several important sites; have installed their eelgrass protection zone buoys with some challenges due to drifting. **San Juan MRC** will be replacing signage for their Bottomfish Recovery Zones; held a forum about San Juan and Orcas Island fish farming; elected Jim Slocomb as chair; presented the Marine Stewardship Area to several groups and organizations and published the map in the San Juan Journal. **Skagit MRC** placed clean oyster shell in Fidalgo Bay to provide habitat for new oysters; held a *Spartina* removal Dig Day on June 19; are starting meetings to coordinate creosote log removal; have final reports for several projects including Olympia Oysters, Pacific Oysters and Skagit Bays Blueprint. **Snohomish MRC** had a meeting with the County Executive and Tom Cowan; had a presentation on the Beachwatchers program; will meet with the County Council in July to present a look at future goals. **Whatcom MRC** conducted clam surveys in Birch Bay on June 13 using volunteers; formed a Shoreline Master Plan Technical Advisory Committee to assist the County and City with updating; went through a priority setting exercise for future planning, with salmon, shellfish and bottomfish rating very high priority; had a presentation on the Drayton Harbor Shellfish district, and co-hosted an open house to celebrate the re-opening of the shellfish beds after 10 years of closure.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 2:40pm. The next regular meeting will be on August 27 at a location to be determined in San Juan County. The Northwest Straits Commission retreat will be held on July 30 at the La Conner Country Inn in Skagit County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
Lopez Islander, San Juan County  
August 27, 2004, 11:15am-3:30pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Gary Wood, Ivar Dolph, Kathy Fletcher, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping, Joe Schmitt, Michelle Evans (alt.), Kirby Johnson, Dave Anderson, Terry Williams, Kevin Ranker  
Members absent: Buck Meloy  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst

Kathy Fletcher, chair, opened the meeting at 11:15 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Rhea Miller, San Juan County Commissioner, welcomed the group to Lopez Island. David Roberts and Lisa Kauffman of the Department of Natural Resources provided a brief update on DNR-funded MRC projects.

The minutes of the June 25 meeting were approved as written.

An alternative process for the Year Six MRC Grants was discussed, with details provided on a separate handout. Rather than submit proposals in October, MRCs will be submitting a two-year proposal with a July 1, 2005 start date. Commission staff will work with MRCs individually to clarify details. It was moved and approved by consensus to accept this process for the Year Six MRC grants.

It was noted that all Year Six MRC Administrative Grants are now in place.

Projects for the NOAA Community Based Restoration Program were discussed. It was recommended that the Commission undertake a regional creosote log removal project. This project is timely and has potential for many partners and volunteers to participate. It was moved and approved by consensus to apply for the Community Based Restoration Program funding for a creosote log removal project.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping noted that the Year 6 grants were discussed earlier on the agenda. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Anne Murphy noted that the strategic planning is a separate agenda item; the Fall MRC Conference was also discussed, and MRCs have the opportunity to present if they choose to – notify Commission staff by September 7. Registration for the conference is underway, and MRC representatives should encourage members to participate. There was no meeting of the **Education Committee**. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**. The **Fundraising Committee** is planning for the NOAA CRP application process, which has a deadline of September 15.

There was no public comment.

Tom Cowan provided a brief overview of the July 30 retreat. It is expected that Senator Patty Murray will sponsor a Northwest Straits Initiative reauthorization bill to be considered by Congress in 2005.

A draft set of goals and revised benchmarks was presented based on MRC input from the July 30 retreat in La Conner. Discussion followed on each of the goals and revised benchmarks. Comments will be compiled and sent to MRC representatives, along with an electronic copy of the draft goals and benchmarks. Comments /feedback from Commission members is needed before the September 24 Commission meeting.

MRC representatives provided written summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** did not hold a regular monthly meeting. **Island MRC** will hold their second annual “planning retreat” dinner on September 14; have a new MRC member – Ken Urstad; had a presentation on the Skagit Bays Blueprint project; will present the Shore Stewards program at the upcoming RAE conference in Seattle; will apply for grant funding for environmental education on board cruise ships in the area; are working on preparing a proposal for Year Six grant funding. **Jefferson MRC** has found northern Olympia oyster broodstock in two locations that will be useful to learn from; continues outreach on eelgrass protection zones and are working to maintain existing buoys; presented to the local Puget Sound Anglers chapter to describe the MRC and projects; hosted a booth at the Jefferson County Fair, briefly featuring 8 projects for people to cast their vote for (top three were Derelict Gear Removal, Olympia Oyster Restoration, Eelgrass Protection) **San Juan MRC** is working to replace bottomfish recovery zone signage; is analyzing committee membership to ensure interests are balanced; had a booth at the County fair; continues to work on the Marine Stewardship Area, including presentations to several groups and meetings with interested citizens, a published map in the San Juan Journal, a laminated handout map and a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners. There was no report of the **Skagit MRC**. **Snohomish MRC:** several members of the MRC went out on the derelict fishing gear survey in July; the MRC held a beach expo at Jetty Island (about 80 people visited the tent, beach walks of 40-50 people); held a meeting at Kayak Point to do a walk-through of their nearshore pilot project; will present an annual report to County Council and County Executive in the next month. **Whatcom MRC** is working to prepare projects for Year Six funding; recognized that the County budget is very tight and that MRC administration needs to be provided for in funding from the Commission; had a presentation from Wendy Steffenson on the Waterfront Futures Group plan; held a thorough discussion on upcoming projects which were organized into a matrix with details on budget, lead, timeline and objectives.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm. The next regular meeting will be on September 24 at the Stillaguamish Tribal Center in Arlington.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
marine conservation initiative

**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting  
Stillaguamish Tribal Center, Arlington  
September 24, 2004, 10:00am-3:00pm  
Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Anne Murphy, Gary Wood, Ivar Dolph, Kathy Fletcher, Duane Fagergren, Andrea Copping., Kirby Johnson, Scott McCreery (alt.), Harlan James (alt.)  
Members absent: Joe Schmitt, Buck Meloy, Dave Anderson, Terry Williams, Kevin Ranker  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Sasha Horst, Ginny Broadhurst  
Support: Rachelle Hein, Sally Hintz

Kathy Fletcher, chair, opened the meeting at 10:00 with introductions and a review of the agenda. Shawn Yannity, chair of the Stillaguamish Tribe and fisheries manager, welcomed the Commission to their new offices. He noted that the tribe has focused on natural resources since the 1970s but have expanded to work on economic development and health services more recently.

The minutes of the August 27 meeting were approved as written.

A revised draft of the Goals and Benchmarks document was prepared and sent to Commissioners prior to the meeting. The timeline for strategic planning was reviewed, with several MRCs still needing time for review. The finalized document is to be provided as recommendations to Congress for the reauthorization process. Discussion followed, and input provided will be incorporated into a new draft.

There was no public comment.

Eric Beamer of the Skagit River System Cooperative presented information about a Pocket Estuary Project funded in part by the Northwest Straits Commission. Jason Griffith of the Stillaguamish Tribe provided input as well. The project looked at juvenile salmon use of pocket estuaries and is working to identify future restoration priorities. This geographic scope of the project includes Saratoga Passage, Skagit Bay, Fidalgo Bay, Padilla Bay and Samish Bay.

Committee chairs provided their monthly reports. **Technical Committee**, chair Andrea Copping reported no actions this month. The Year Six action grant process has been discussed with each of the MRC lead staff. **Administrative/Planning Committee**, chair Anne Murphy provided an update on the October MRC Conference. A draft agenda was reviewed and will be sent to MRC members next week. The Strategic Planning process was discussed, but is a separate item on the agenda. There was no meeting of the **Education Committee**. **Tribal Committee**, chair Terry Williams was not present but Tom Cowan provided an update on planning for derelict gear removal training operations for tribal dive teams. The **Fundraising Committee**, chair Gary Wood noted that the grant application for the NOAA Community Based Restoration Program was submitted by September 15 for creosote log removal.

A draft schedule for the 2005 meetings of the Commission was reviewed. There were two changes made with no meeting to be held in February and a March 4 meeting added. The schedule was adopted with these changes. Sasha will send this schedule out to all interested people next week.

MRC representatives provided summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** discussed project ideas for Year 6 and 7 funding; had a presentation on Beachwatchers by Ian Miller; will start surveys of derelict fishing gear this week; noted that lead staff Pat Crain is leaving his position – the MRC will write a letter to the head of

Community Development recommending that the position be refilled; are working on bringing to the MRC a presentation on the Sea Star aquaculture project to farm lingcod and sablefish. **Island MRC** held their annual dinner retreat on September 14, with a summary document now in progress; presented the Shore Stewards project and entered a poster on the Forage Fish project at the Restore America's Estuaries in Seattle on September 14; currently has three grant applications pending. **Jefferson County MRC** received 35 bags of oyster seed and approximately 73,500 Olympia oyster seed were placed on Discovery Bay beaches; had a shoreline property owner offer to serve as Site Host for future oyster planting; secured educational booth space for Wooden Boat Festival '04 and published a request in the Port Townsend Leader and Peninsula Daily News papers for volunteers to help; side scan sonar survey for derelict fishing gear will begin in Jefferson County Friday, September 24. **San Juan MRC** developed a proposal for a community mapping project designed to educate County residents about the Marine Stewardship Area and capture local knowledge; approved a design for new signs marking the Bottomfish Recovery Zones; are working to fill 2 open positions on the MRC; continued to strategize methods for mitigating the harmful impacts that released balloons can have on marine species; had a presentation from members of the Waldron community on their effort to protect and restore Cowlitz Bay as a community assisted marine recovery area. **Skagit MRC** will have a new lead staff person as Ric Boge has been promoted; had a presentation from Dept of Ecology on Toxic Cleanup in Anacortes/Fidalgo Bay; participated in Marine Ecology Day which had a full program with concurrent sessions in two or three locations; made a well-received presentation to the County Commissioners. **Snohomish MRC** was reauthorized by the County Council this week with broad support from the Councilmembers. **Whatcom MRC** worked on the 2005 work plan; discussed draft benchmarks - members were asked to review and provide comments at the next MRC meeting in October; completed a clam survey of Chuckanut bay with nine volunteers; MRC staffed a booth at the Eco Expo which coincided with the Bellingham Traverse; adopted the Skagit County Rockfish survey methods with some changes for use in the Bottomfish recovery project.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next regular meeting will be a brief business meeting starting at 1pm on Friday, October 29 at The Skagit Resort in Bow.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
marine conservation initiative  
**Northwest Straits Commission**  
**October 29, 2004, 1:00pm – 3:00PM**  
**The Skagit Casino & Resort, Bow, Skagit County**  
**Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

**DRAFT**

Members attending: Kathy Fletcher, Anne Murphy, Joe Schmitt, Gary Wood, Ivar Dolph, Daryl Williams (alt.), Buck Meloy, Terry Williams, Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Dave Anderson  
Members absent: Kirby Johnson, Kevin Ranker, Susan Bauer  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst  
Support: Rachelle Hein, Sally Hintz

The meeting was started at 1:00pm. Kathy Fletcher, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. There were no changes to the agenda.

The meeting minutes from the September 24 meeting were approved as written.

The draft “Goals and Benchmarks” document was discussed. Ginny Broadhurst reviewed the changes made since the last draft, which included incorporating changes from several MRCs and those brought forward at this meeting. After thorough discussion, it was agreed that the following changes should be made:

- Revise the opening goal statement to incorporate language about ecosystem health and sustainable resource use
- Revise bullet points on marine protected areas to emphasize management tools
- Add an implementation section at the end to focus on the next steps that will include measurement capability.
- Emphasize making recommendations...

With these changes incorporated, by consensus, all the commissioners accepted this document as complete and ready to forward to Senator Murray.

There was no public comment.

The structure of the commission was discussed, with the only proposal being that an additional tribal representative seat should be added. There was consensus that this structural change should be recommended to Congress

Committee chairs reported on recent activities. The **Administrative/Planning Committee** chair, Anne Murphy, noted that the main focus of the committee has been the Goals/Benchmarks document and planning for the MRC Conference. The Commissioners were very pleased that Susan Bauer of the Port of Port Angeles has been appointed to the Commission and will attend her first meeting on December 3.

There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**. Chair Terry Williams reported that a subcommittee has been working on revised tribal language for the Initiative. There was no report of the **Fundraising Committee**. The **Technical Committee** reported no actions this month. The **Education Committee** is a separate agenda item.

Duane Fagergren, chair of the education committee, provided an overview of what the committee has done to date and reviewed the Communication Strategy developed several years ago. The committee received some guidance from the Commission on priorities, and MRC members are encouraged to join the Education Committee as there is a need for MRC participation.

MRC representatives provided summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** had a presentation from Dr. Richard Dewey, from University of Victoria on the Venus proposed fiber optic cable extending from near Victoria across the straits and terminating near the mouth of the Elwha River; discussed the draft Goals and Benchmarks document. **Island MRC** had a presentation on “Predicted Impact of the Restoration of Full Tidal Access to Crescent Harbor Marsh” by Danelle Heatwole; received a grant from WA Fish and Wildlife for Shore Stewards; renewed the executive director’s contract for another year; participated in a regional meeting on the forage fish habitat inventory project. **Jefferson MRC** completed buoy removal operations for their eelgrass protection zones for the season (to be installed again in the spring); have exciting prospects for expanding their Olympia Oyster program due to the discovery of Olympia oysters in Scow Bay; are working to fill a vacancy on the MRC; are working on a Discovery Bay Stewardship Project, starting with researching the history of the area through communication with local residents. **San Juan MRC** distributed hundreds of laminated Marine Stewardship Area maps at the Einar Nielsen Fishing Derby; Received consent from shoreline property owners adjacent to Bottomfish Recovery Zones for the replacement of educational marine signs; had a presentation from Mark Tompkins, from the San Juan County Environmental Health Department, presented on water quality monitoring projects in the county; reviewed their draft aquaculture protocol checklist for final approval by the MRC next month. **Skagit MRC** had 13 guests in attendance at their recent meeting; have a new lead staff person, with Rick Haley replacing Ric Boge and appointed a new member – Erika Pickett; will begin creosote log removal operations on November 2; will begin planting for forage fish shading in November; two MRC members will serve on the hiring committee for a Beachwatcher director for Skagit/Snohomish. **Snohomish MRC** was reauthorized by the County in September; received their Kayak Point nearshore interpretive signs which will be installed by the Parks and Recreation Department; has several MRC members who are nearing the end of their appointments; are beginning their 2005 workplan development; noted that Juvenile Crab Survey intertidal habitat mapping has been completed for south Snohomish County. **Whatcom MRC** will coordinate the annual Salmon Summit Nearshore sessions; are developing final survey protocols for bottomfish project; are discussing a project to work with the Vancouver Aquarium to develop a local sustainable fishery card; noted that Birch Bay shellfish areas have been listed as “threatened” following stormwater runoff events and elevated fecal coliform.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next regular meeting will be on December 3 at the Service Alternatives building in Coupeville, Island County.



NORTHWEST STRAITS  
marine conservation initiative  
**Northwest Straits Commission**  
**December 3, 2004 – 10:00am-3:15pm**  
**Service Alternatives, Coupeville, Island County**  
**Decisions and Future Agenda Topics**

Members attending: Kathy Fletcher, Anne Murphy, Joe Schmitt, Gary Wood, Ivar Dolph, Daryl Williams (alt.), Buck Meloy, Terry Williams, Andrea Copping, Duane Fagergren, Joe Gaydos, Susan Bauer, Jody Kennedy  
Members absent: Kirby Johnson  
Alternates attending: Harlan James  
Staff: Tom Cowan, Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst

The meeting was started at 10:00am. Kathy Fletcher, chair, opened the meeting with introductions. New members Joe Gaydos, Susan Bauer and Jody Kennedy were welcomed to the Commission. Dave Anderson and Mike Stoner, the two Commissioners who retired, were recognized for their contribution to the Commission with letters of thanks. There were no changes to the agenda. It was announced that \$1.25 million for the Northwest Straits Initiative was included in the budget recently passed by Congress.

The meeting minutes from the October 29 meeting were approved as written.

Bruce Higgins from the Edmonds Underwater Park presented information on the invasive tunicate (*Didemnum cf lahillei*) identified in the park. Volunteer recreational divers have worked to control the spread of the tunicate, and reduce the size of the current patches found.

**Dr.** Russ Herwig of the Washington Sea Grant Program presented information about the issue of ballast water in ships in Puget Sound and elsewhere. He described the state and federal laws that apply to ballast water and changes expected in the future.

During public comment, Carol Bernthal of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary noted that ballast water and invasive species are big issues for the sanctuary. Since the Northwest Straits and the Olympic Coast are a continuum of inland to outer waters, these issues may provide an opportunity for the two organizations to collaborate.

During administrative matters, a letter thanking Senator Murray for her leadership in securing funding for the initiative was circulated for signature, as well as letters thanking the other members of Congress for their support. Tom Cowan reviewed a budget update on Commission grants provided by Terry Stevens. Tom also provided a brief update on the status of the derelict fishing gear removal project.

Ginny explained the details of a Marine Site Managers Work Session that she organized in partnership with the San Juan MRC in November. The focus of the project was to bring together organizations with management responsibilities for sites along the marine shoreline in the San Juan archipelago and discuss options for improving management and conservation efforts at these sites. Ginny provided examples of

some of the various outcomes of the event. A final summary of the Work Session will be provided to all participants and others who are interested.

The Strategic Planning retreat was discussed and the commission identified areas of specific concern for discussion. The retreat will be held at the Fort Casey Inn in Coupeville. Commissioners and Alternates are encouraged to attend.

Committee chairs reported on recent activities. The **Administrative/Planning Committee** chair, Anne Murphy noted that most topics were covered elsewhere on the agenda. There was no meeting of the **Tribal Committee**. There was no report of the **Fundraising Committee**. The **Technical Committee** reported no actions this month. The **Education Committee**, chair Duane Fagergren, noted that the committee did not meet this month but that an overhaul of the Commission web site is underway and expected to be complete by January.

MRC representatives provided summaries of their current MRC activities. **Clallam MRC** discussed derelict fishing gear and how to address laws regarding gear such as crab pots; noted that Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning levels are dropping on beaches monitored by MRC members. There was no report of the **Island MRC**. **Jefferson MRC** is recruiting new members to fill 4 positions; have removed eelgrass markers for the season and are following up with additional outreach; will attend a regional meeting on Olympia Oysters in December; is participating in the revision process of the City of Port Townsend's Shoreline Master Program. **San Juan MRC** held an outreach meeting on Waldron Island attended by 26 people; participated in the San Juan Marine Site Managers Work Session; held a retreat to generate long term objectives and action items; had a presentation from WDFW on the Groundfish Plan. **Skagit MRC** inventoried beaches for creosote logs and removed many logs from areas along March Point and Guemes Island; are working with the Beachwatchers program as they hire a director for Snohomish/Skagit; had presentations from the San Juan Oil Spill Association about their organization and WDFW about restoration of Skagit delta habitat. There was no report of the **Snohomish MRC**. **Whatcom MRC** held elections for MRC and Commission positions with incumbents re-elected by consensus; supports in principle the Port of Bellingham's proposed central waterfront acquisition from Georgia-Pacific; are working with the Vancouver Aquarium on developing strategic ways to reach seafood consumers to make informed choices; participated in the annual Salmon Summit on November 18; will participate with PSAT to hold a Marine Shoreline Landowner Workshop on December 4.

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm. The strategic planning retreat will be held on January 12-13, 2005 at the Fort Casey Inn in Coupeville. A short meeting will be held following the retreat on January 13 from 1:00-3:00pm at the Fort Casey Inn. There is no meeting of the Commission in February.