



Northwest Straits Commission Meeting

MORNING: Maritime Center, 431 Water Street, Port Townsend WA

AFTERNOON: 375 Hudson Street, Port Townsend WA

January 31, 2014, 9:45am – 3:00pm

Commission Members: Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lenny Corin (Island), Terry Williams, Jerry Masters, Marc Daily (PSP), Nan McKay, Terrie Klinger, Jay Lind (alternate - Skagit), Duane Fagergren (alternate - PSP)

Absent: Christine Woodward, Diana Bob

Additional MRC Representation: Cheryl Lowe, Tony Petrillo and Al Bergstein (Jefferson), Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish), Austin Rose (Whatcom)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Austin Rose, Paul Argites

Foundation Staff: Robyn DuPré

Others: Jefferson County Commissioner Phil Johnson, James Selleck, Rich Childers (WDFW), Judith Morris (Rep Kilmer's office), Emily Bishop, Eileen Cooney

Introduction and Agenda Review

Ken Carrasco opened the meeting with introductions. The meeting agenda was approved. Minor changes were made to the agenda to provide time for Marc Daily to give a Puget Sound Partnership update.

Welcome

Phil Johnson, Jefferson County Commissioner, welcomed the group to Port Townsend. Jefferson county commissioners recently approved a new Shoreline Master Plan which included the allowance of net pens for the farming of fish just offshore. Commissioner Johnson requested support from the Northwest Straits Commission, MRCs, and tribes on his resolution because he is concerned about the impacts of net pens on the water quality and habitat of Puget Sound. Ginny will circulate the previous comment letter that the Northwest Straits Commission wrote to Ecology Director Sturdevant in 2011, along with the response from Ecology and a resolution to ban net pens that was adopted by the Washington Democratic caucus. This topic is tabled for further discussion at a future Northwest Straits Commission in-person meeting.

Approval of December Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the December 13th Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written pending change of the incorrect dates listed for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference.

MRC Reports

Whatcom: Ken reported that four members were recently appointed to the MRC by the Whatcom County Council; Laurie Caskey-Schreiber (also nominated as Chair), Jeremy Brown, Rachel Benbrook, and Jim Hansen. Andrea MacLennan, from Coastal Geologic Services, recently provided an update on the WRIA 1 Nearshore Prioritization addendum to the MRC. The Science/Advisory and Project Development subcommittees have scheduled a joint meeting to review the addendum and discuss changes to the projects recommended for MRC support. Julie Hirsch provided an overview of the Garden of the Salish Sea Curriculum and ways the MRC could partner with portions of the curriculum. The forage fish survey training is scheduled for May 17th at Ecology's Bellingham field office. The Oil Spill Response workshop is scheduled for February 22nd at the Squalicum Boathouse in Bellingham.

Island: Lenny highlighted the next steps for the Cornet Bay restoration project, including a celebration with elected officials and local media at ground breaking, which is slated for September 2014. The Island MRC Port representatives have changed; Curt Gordon is now the South Whidbey Port representative and Bill Larsen is the representative for the Port of Coupeville. Applicants have been interviewed for the MRC Coordinator position; the Board of County Commissioners will approve the selection by mid-February.

Jefferson: Shannon reported that the MRC recently presented their annual update to County Commissioners and it was well received. Sarah Fisker, with WA Sea Grant, joined the JCMRC as a District 3 representative representing the boating community. Two applicants are being interviewed for the Recreation position. The voluntary no-anchor zone marker buoys are in place at Port Hadlock. Paul Argites discussed the marine debris cleanup program with Ecology's veterans crews at the January JCMRC meeting. Maureen Goff will be replacing Judy D'Amore as the Northwest Straits Commission alternate.

Snohomish: Lincoln reported that Snohomish County is recruiting two members from County Council Districts 2 and 3 for a three year term on the MRC. Elections were held at the January MRC meeting. Tom Hoban stepped down as Chair of the MRC and Northwest Straits Commission representative. Paul Schlenger is the new Chair. Simon Geerlofs and Franchesca Perez now serve as co-vice chairs. Lincoln Loehr now serves as the Commission representative. The MRC is co-sponsoring two Starlight Beach Walks with the Snohomish Beach Watchers; one already occurred in January and one in February. At the January Beach Walk, participants

noticed the star fish population was looking sparse and sickly. Natural Resources Consultants removed ninety-two crab pots from the Port Gardener study area. Side scan sonar surveys also identified eighty-one potential targets in fishing grounds around Hat Island. AMEC conducted a cultural resource assessment for the nearshore restoration project between Everett and Mukilteo. Coastal Geologic Services conducted a LiDAR/GIS analysis along the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area identifying the crest of shoreline bluffs to inform future restoration and shoreline management planning.

San Juan: Greg updated the group on an all day MRC retreat that was held at Friday Harbor Labs that included a historical overview of the Northwest Straits Initiative and the inception of the MRCs to the eight new San Juan MRC members. The 2013 Annual Report and 2014 Work Plan was drafted at the retreat. MRC members attended the San Juan County Natural Resource Data workshop in January. The Port of Friday Harbor representative resigned from the MRC and will be replaced with another Port representative. The county Shoreline Master Program is moving forward pending responses on changes to the County Critical Area Ordinances. A program manager for the San Juan Island National Monument has been appointed. An advisory committee will exist for that national monument and the MRC hopes to have a representative on the committee.

Clallam: Jeff reported that the Clallam Oil Spill Workshop was well attended, though the MRC will work to improve promotion for future MRC events. The MRC is considering collaborating with the local college on Speaker Series events. The MRC hopes to recruit a representative from Platypus Marine to fill the open Marine Trades seat. The MRC is working to revise their Strategic Plan for consideration at the February MRC meeting. Seven star fish were found in Freshwater Bay exhibiting sea star wasting syndrome.

Skagit: Jay reported that the MRC is working to recruit new members. Beach restoration work is proceeding around March Point and Bowman Bay. The Salish Sea Stewards program is coming together. There is effort to promote this program at Western Washington University's Huxley College and Skagit Community College. Christine Woodward was re-elected as Commission representative.

NWSC Committee Reports

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee met and discussed the agenda for the January Northwest Straits Commission meeting and got an update on the strategic planning process.

Strategic Planning Advisory Committee: Ginny noted the requirement of an updated strategic plan as a deliverable for the current EPA grant, due June 2014. An advisory committee is in place that includes Ken Carrasco, Jeff Ward and Nan McKay, they met to begin developing an agenda for the retreat. In order to help prepare everyone for the upcoming retreat, a handout highlighting the overarching

goals and discussion questions for the Northwest Straits Initiative retreat was shared with the group and will be distributed electronically along with a matrix of work conducted by MRCs and the Commission. Staff will prepare a brief overview on the value of the Commission and Foundation to share with MRC staff and Northwest Straits Commission representatives.

NWSC Director's Report: 2013 overview

Ginny referred the group to the handout in the meeting packet outlining the Commission activities from 2013. She emphasized that it's important for MRC reps to share the Commission's work with their respective MRCs.

Business Items

Marine debris project – introduce Paul Argites: Ginny reported that the Department of Ecology's Washington Conservation Corps received funding from the legislature to support the hiring of recently returning military veterans for beach cleanup work. The Northwest Straits Commission was asked to partner with this project to help identify shoreline areas where cleanup work is needed. Ginny introduced Paul Argites, who has been hired by the Commission as part-time staff to gather information from the MRCs about work needed at particular cleanup sites.

Update Northwest Straits Commission rules of procedure: Ginny reviewed the updated Northwest Straits Commission rules of procedure, which was included in the meeting packet. Proposed revisions were developed with the executive committee and distributed in December. It has been 6 years since they've been updated – revisions include describing the Commission's coordination with the Northwest Straits Foundation and updating the name of the Puget Sound Partnership. The Executive Committee reviewed the changes and the document was also sent to the full Commission for review. A motion was made to approve the changes to rules of procedure pending the simplification of a sentence in the membership description. Motion was approved.

Puget Sound Partnership Update: Marc Daily reported that Governor Jay Inslee appointed Sheida Sahandy as the new Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership. Her appointment is effective February 4, 2014. Marc or Sheida will continue to be active participants in the Northwest Straits Commission meetings. Marc discussed Senate Bill 6381 which would authorize the Partnership to review the existing framework of watershed councils and make recommendations on how to strengthen their role in Puget Sound. A Marine Resources Committee (MRC) is defined as a watershed council.

NWSC budget briefing: Ginny shared a handout outlining the Northwest Straits budget summary as of December 31, 2013, and noted the extra funds may be available to carry out operations and remaining tasks through December 2014. Exact numbers are difficult to get given the current tracking system, but Ginny will

be sharing a more accurate budget summary with the Executive Committee as it is available.

Robyn provided a brief update on the Derelict Gear Program. An informational flyer was shared with Commission members and will be made available electronically.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Welcome to WDFW Facility

Ken started the afternoon session with roundtable introductions. Rich Childers with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Shellfish Unit welcomed the group to the new WDFW offices and provided a historical overview of the building. Rich updated the group on China's recent ban of imported bivalves from the west coast of the US and Canada, and how this ban is impacting the shellfish industry in Puget Sound. This ban initiated from an independent testing of commercial geoduck from Tacoma in which high levels of arsenic were found. WDFW is collaborating with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund and NOAA to restore the population of abalone, which could potentially be listed on the Endangered Species list.

NWSC Marine Program Updates

Caroline reported on her work to advance kelp recovery efforts with technical input from experts in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. An ad hoc committee of MRC volunteers is forming to identify and support local kelp projects. The goal is to develop a shoreline boat-based survey protocol that is practical for citizen scientists. The data will be mapped and will be contributed to the Washington Vegetative Atlas and SoundIQ.

Caroline introduced Emily Bishop, from the University of Rhode Island, who was awarded an Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship from NOAA, and will be partnering with the Northwest Straits Commission and MRCs in order to fulfill her internship. Emily will help develop the survey protocols for kelp monitoring in collaboration with Caroline and others.

Caroline also provided an update on her work with WDFW and Washington Department of Natural Resources staff to develop new training opportunities for forage fish spawning surveys. Trainings have been scheduled in four MRC counties; Jefferson, Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom. MRC members have priority, along with project partners, with the expectation that those who take the training are interested in using the information to carry out a project. Caroline will send out date/location information to MRCs, along with a list of egg identification experts that might be hired for contract work.

Legislative Updates: Request for support of HB 2347

Ginny explained that a request was made for the Commission to consider commenting on HB 2347 through Shannon Davis. Al Bergstein described the goals of the bill.

After discussion, a motion was made to write a comment letter encouraging the House Committee to move HB 2347 out of committee and to the floor for further discussion, and to request that the Northwest Straits Commission be consulted in those further discussions on safety concerns of oil transport along our marine shorelines. Motion was approved. (Abstention – Marc Daily)

Ginny will draft a letter and send it to Commission members to review.

Tribal Treaty Rights at Risk Update

Terry Williams provided an update on tribal treaty rights and actions being taken with agencies and managers to improve habitat availability and conditions. State and federal agency rules are sometimes conflicting, and thus, not consistently enforced. The tribes are requesting that the federal agencies meet to discuss how to achieve the goals of tribal resource protection. Terry hired Joe Uravitch, former director of NOAA's Marine Protected Areas program to review the State's management rules. Terry will share that report with the Commission once complete. The tribes will be meeting with Ron Sims and EPA representatives to discuss the questions that agencies need to be asked to in order for regulatory changes to be made.

Roundtable

Duane Fagergren was acknowledged for his time and contributions with the Commission. Duane mentioned that he plans to stay engaged with Puget Sound and Ocean Acidification issues.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:04pm



Northwest Straits Commission
February 21, 2014, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Conference call

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Lenny Corin (Island), Jerry Masters, Terrie Klinger

Absent: Nan McKay, Diana Bob, Terry Williams, Marc Daily

Additional MRC Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish), Jay Lind (Skagit), Austin Rose (Whatcom)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Austin Rose

Foundation Staff: Robyn du Pré

Other support: Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve)

Introductions

Christine opened the meeting with introductions.

Approval of January Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the January 31st Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

Business Items

Budget update – admin staff position: Ginny developed a job description for a .75 FTE administrative staff position with the Commission. The job announcement will be sent out next week and Commission members will be notified when that happens.

Retreat schedule: Commission staff is working with the ad hoc Strategic Planning Advisory Committee to develop an agenda for the Northwest Straits Initiative retreat at Padilla Bay Reserve. The retreat will be all-day on Thursday, March 20th and half of Friday, March 21st. A draft agenda will be circulated to

Commission members early next week. The agenda may be adjusted in order to provide time for a business meeting. Andy Cline, from Cline Consulting, LLC, will help facilitate the retreat. The bunkhouse is an option for accommodations. Christine asked each Commission member to verify their commitment to attend the retreat. Sasha will send out a formal invitation to MRC staff and NWSC alternates.

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference registration: The Northwest Straits Commission has covered the early-bird registration costs for two members of each MRC. The conference schedule is now available [online](#). The conference will include several panels and presentations by Northwest Straits Initiative representatives, and Ginny will circulate those session descriptions to Commission members.

2014 MRC Grants: The current MRC grant cycle ends in September 2014. Ginny is expecting a seamless transition to the new grant cycle. Sasha will send out Request for Proposals to MRCs next month. The information required from MRCs and available funding will be similar to last year.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Ken reviewed the topics addressed at the February Executive Committee meeting. The committee discussed the 2014 Commission funding, the potential strategies the Northwest Straits Commission could take in adopting a netpen resolution, as well as a follow up discussion on bills introduced to the state legislature (SB 6381 and HB 2347) which were discussed at the January Northwest Straits Commission meeting. Ginny added that the committee discussed the frequency of in-person Northwest Straits Commission meetings and came to the consensus that the current meeting schedule, alternating in-person and conference call meetings, is achieving the right balance for Commission members.

Legislative Updates

Ginny reviewed the current status of SB 6381 and HB 2347 and mentioned Kathleen Herrmann's recent opportunity to present comments from the Snohomish MRC on HB 2347 to the Snohomish County Council. Ginny will circulate the video of Kathleen's presentation to County Council to Commission members.

Ginny mentioned another bill about forage fish that was recently introduced by Senators Rolfes and Ranker. This bill (SB6072) requested Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to report results on forage fish research and stock assessments but did not move forward due to fiscal implications. This bill invigorated conversation about the need to get a better handle on the status of forage fish populations and associated fisheries in Washington State. Caroline will share a link to the hearing with Commission members.

Netpen discussion follow up

Consider adoption of Northwest Straits resolution: Ginny referenced the Washington State Democratic Central Committee's Moratorium on Fish Pens resolution included in the meeting materials. The group discussed using language from the moratorium to develop a Northwest Straits Commission resolution. Ginny will prepare a summary of the resolution for Commission members to share with their MRCs for

further discussion. This topic will be revisited at a future Commission meeting, after receiving feedback from MRC's.

MRC Reports

Island: Lenny reported that Kristen Cooley Stavros has been selected as the new MRC coordinator. Sound Waters was held on February 1st and over five hundred people attended. At this event, Jill Hein received the 2014 Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award.

Snohomish: Lincoln reported that two new candidates have been nominated to the MRC and are awaiting Council approval. MRC members and staff will participate in a half day planning seminar to develop a two-year workplan. The MRC is co-sponsoring a Starlight Beach Walk on February 26 at the Mukilteo Lighthouse Park. Futurewise has been authorized to work with Snohomish County and MRC to select ten shoreline protection strategies. Work to implement the Nearshore Beach Restoration Project is continuing.

Clallam: Jeff mentioned that the MRC hosted Paul Argites and Jon Schmidt at the February MRC meeting. Paul and Jon will be collaborating on marine debris cleanup work along the shorelines of Clallam County. The HAZWOPER training scheduled for March 8 is full. The MRC is approaching the local Burger King for possible sponsorship for this Haz "whopper" training.

Whatcom: Ken reported that Rachel Benbrook and Jim Hansen have officially been appointed to the MRC. Stephanie Williams (Vice Chair) has accepted a job in Seattle and will be stepping down from the MRC. Over thirty people registered for the Whatcom Oil Spill Workshop scheduled for February 22nd. The MRC project development subcommittee and science advisory subcommittee recently reviewed the addendum to the WRIA 1 Nearshore Prioritization Report and discussed potential projects for MRC support. The MRC submitted a funding request to BP for completion of *Jerry's Journey* and is waiting for a response.

Skagit: Christine reported that three new prospective members attended the February MRC meeting. The MRC will hold elections at the March meeting. Erika Pickett recently retired from the MRC and will be sorely missed. The Salish Sea Steward training will begin on March 10. The Shannon Point riprap removal project received funding and will be moving forward. A report from Coastal Geologic Services on the Bowman Bay restoration work is due at the end of March. New MRC members expressed interest taking over the logistics of Fidalgo Bay Day. The five-year strategic plan was recently updated. The MRC is reviewing what is expected of MRC members beyond attending regular monthly meetings and will be developing a new member orientation packet.

San Juan: Greg reported that Sam Gibboney has been appointed as permanent Director of Community Development and Planning and is on the MRC. There is still an effort to recruit a tribal representative as well as a representative from the Port District. The MRC has begun education and outreach to local community organizations on who the MRC is and the work that they do. Barbara Bentley provided a presentation on the Mussel Watch program and put in a funding request to the EPA for additional outreach and education work. The MRC discussed the issue of netpen fish farms and how that issue fits

into the Shoreline Master Program. Barbara Bentley also presented the 2014 Strategic Plan to the County Council. The MRC discussed the preparation questions for the Northwest Straits Initiative retreat. One or two MRC members will be selected to join the National Monument Advisory Committee. The MRC prepared a response to the Kinder Morgan pipeline transfer station for the Council to share with the Canadian government.

Jefferson: Shannon provided an update on the upcoming restoration meeting hosted by the MRC. The Jefferson County Shoreline Master Program mentions that the MRC will host meetings and bring the restoration community together to discuss the success of the restoration plan. Two new MRC members have applied to fill recreation seats on the MRC. Sara Fiskin, with Washington Sea Grant, also recently joined the MRC. Gabrielle LaRoche has wrapped up the buoy installation project at Port Hadlock which completes her contractual project work with the MRC. Tony Petrillo is preparing a draft update to the MRC business rules. Design work for the Fort Townsend restoration project is underway. Forage fish survey training for Jefferson County is scheduled for March 19.

Public Comments

No public comment.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:34am.



Northwest Straits Commission

April 25, 2014, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Conference call

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Tom Hoban (Alternate, Snohomish), Joe Hillers (Alternate, Island), Terrie Klinger, Nan McKay, Jerry Masters, Diana Bob

Absent: Marc Daily, Greg Ayers, Lenny Corin, Lincoln Loehr, Terry Williams

Additional MRC Representation: Barbara Bentley (San Juan), Jay Lind (Skagit), Kristen Stavros (Island), Maureen Goff (Jefferson), Austin Rose (Whatcom)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Austin Rose, Holly Faulstich

Other support: Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve)

Introductions

Ginny opened the meeting with introductions and roll call for the Chair.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the February 21st Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

Business Items

Introduce Holly Faulstich: Holly started on April 16 and will be serving as the Project Coordinator at 80% time. You will meet her in person at the May 30 meeting, but feel free to call or stop by and introduce yourself, if you haven't already. Please add her to your distribution lists for MRC meeting agendas, minutes and other materials.

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference: The conference is scheduled for April 30-May 2 in Seattle. The detailed conference schedule and session information is now available on the website, along with a mobile app. There will be great representation by the MRCs, including many presentations and posters. We will update the list of presenters associated with NWSI and distribute that to everyone.

2014 MRC Grant Request for Proposals: Ecology has a new system for managing grants called the Ecology Administration of Grants and Loans (EAGL). Sasha has been contacting staff from each MRC and is willing to meet individually or attend meetings to help with the transition to this system. At this point, each MRC should plan for \$75k in grant funding. Sasha reminded everyone to read the RFP criteria carefully and adhere to the guidelines when developing proposals. The NWSC application deadline may be pushed back to mid-June to give MRCs one more meeting to finalize details.

Reports out from Ginny trip to DC: Ginny traveled to Washington DC on April 8-10 to meet with a governmental advisory committee to EPA regarding NAFTA. She presented on the impacts of ocean acidification and emphasized the importance of climate change to the group. While on the Hill, she met Representative Rick Larsen's staff (Matt Bormet), as well as Congressman Derek Kilmer's Legislative Director Kevin Warnke and Senator Patty Murray. It was a worthwhile and productive trip overall.

Ocean Health Forum – May 14, Everett: The Snohomish MRC and Northwest Straits Commission are co-sponsoring a community forum on ocean health next month. Dave Somers will moderate the session and there will be presentations by Franchesca Perez, Terrie Klinger, Betsy Peabody and Simon Geerlofs.

Next NWSC Meeting: Next month's Commission meeting will be held at the Mullis Senior Center in Friday Harbor on May 30.

Committee Reports

Executive committee: Christine reviewed the topics addressed at the April Executive Committee meeting. Ginny discussed her meeting with the Puget Sound Partnership director, Sheida Sahandy, and the task of sending thank you notes to legislators. A timeline for the strategic plan was drafted and will be discussed further at the May Commission meeting. Jerry offered to lead the nominating committee for Northwest Straits elections.

Strategic planning advisory committee: Nan reported that the committee hopes to have a draft of the strategic plan ready for discussion at the May30 meeting. It will be distributed ahead of time. The committee's goal is to take the work from the Padilla Bay retreat and boil it down to a ten-page plan that is inspirational and clearly focused. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

Nominating committee: Jerry was slightly preoccupied with becoming a grandfather last week (welcome Henry!), thus, hasn't made much progress on phone calls. He plans to get back on the task of discussing leadership positions and how they are rotated amongst the Commission next week.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Jeff reported that the upcoming Oiled Wildlife Rescue training classes are both full and the April beach cleanup was highly successful, with more participants than last year. Most of the debris was 'fresh garbage' rather than tsunami debris. The Olympia Oyster Restoration Project received funding to plant an extra half acre of oyster seed this spring. Jeff mentioned that the MRC is planning to host a public forum at the community college about increased tanker traffic in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Two reports on this topic should be available soon.

Island: Joe reported that the Island MRC is looking forward to future participation in the Kelp Monitoring Program and Forage Fish Surveys. Thanks to Caroline Gibson for training their new member,

Dan Matlock. On April 14, Gregg Ridder and the eelgrass team presented their annual report and Gregg expressed interest in participating in kelp monitoring via aerial photography. The estuary seining project at Cornet Bay has begun and will continue through June. Christine Goodwin will be working with the Commission staff to host an ocean acidification workshop in September.

Jefferson: Shannon informed us that the Nearshore Restoration Planning and Shoreline Landowner Workshops were highly successful with great participation. The net pen moratorium sparked a long, lively discussion at March meeting. The new director of the Marine Science Center, Janine Boire, attended the March meeting to introduce herself and discuss what the PTMSC is doing currently.

San Juan: Barbara reported that an ocean acidification workshop is tentatively planned for September 10, in cooperation with a variety of organizations. The MRC submitted a proposal to EPA to run a series of workshops that would train citizen scientists to collect valid and legally-defensible samples from shorelines. They are concerned with increased traffic of oil and coal-carrying vessels. A proposal has been submitted one other project as well: a mussel-watch type program.

Skagit: Christine explained that the Skagit MRC recently updated and adopted a five-year strategic plan. The Skagit Restoration Initiative Committee has identified three monitoring priorities for Fidalgo Bay and a workplan is being drafted. WSU will be turning the Skagit Beach Watcher program into a Master Naturalist online training program next year. The Beach Watchers topic sparked questions from other Commission members and it was suggested that a phone conference would be set up for interested parties to discuss this issue sometime after mid-May.

Snohomish: Tom discussed the half-day planning retreat for the MRC members, where they addressed potential projects and a two-year work plan. The Starlight Beach Walk at Mukilteo Lighthouse Park was a great success, attended by over 120 people. Suzanne Shull attended the April MRC meeting to present expanding the Sound IQ project. A public information meeting on the Nearshore Beach Restoration Project was held on April 24th and work continues to implement this project.

Whatcom: Ken reported that the MRC's Strategic Plan expires in 2015 and a subcommittee is working updating and drafting a new workplan. Keats Garman is organizing a tour for the MRC and Council members to discuss salmon habitat and water quality issues in the Birch Bay, Terrell Creek area on May 10. Lisa Kaufman requested assistance from the MRC with planning another Shoreline Landowner Workshop, which she is trying to organize for Whatcom County this summer.

Public Comments

No public comment.

Round Table Discussion

Kristen discussed the EPA-funded Nearshore Beach Restoration Project and social marketing campaign. New marketing terminology: "shore friendly." There is a new grant based on reducing shoreline armoring. Non profits cannot apply for it directly, but can partner with other organizations. Proposals are due at the end of July.

Jeff announced that the Northwest Straits Foundation has new Administrative Coordinator, Sharon Cody, and she will be a great asset. He also mentioned that the Foundation was nominated by Ian

Jefferds to receive proceeds from the Pacific Coast Shellfish Grower's Association SLURP event. Jill and Jeff traveled to Olympia on April 27 to participate.

Ginny informed us that Ron Akeson, former member of Whatcom MRC, passed away in a diving accident April 23. He will be greatly missed. A tribute to him will be included in next month's newsletter.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 am.



**Northwest Straits Commission Meeting
Mullis Community Senior Center
589 Nash St, Friday Harbor, WA 98250**

May 30, 2014 10:30 am – 3:30 pm

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Lenny Corin (Island), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Terrie Klinger, Nan McKay, Jerry Masters

Absent: Marc Daily, Terry Williams, Diana Bob

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich

Additional MRC Representation: Marta Branch (San Juan), Laura Arnold (San Juan), Barbara Bentley (San Juan), Jay Lind (Skagit), Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish)

Other Attendees: Joan Drinkwin, Northwest Straits Foundation; Jamie Stephens, San Juan County Council; Joe Downes, Senator Maria Cantwell's office; Lovel Pratt and Janet Loehr

Introductions

Christine opened the meeting with introductions and roll call. She acknowledged and thanked Joe Downes for attending on behalf of Senator Cantwell's office.

Welcome

Jamie Stephens, San Juan County Council member and liaison to the MRC, welcomed the Commission to San Juan County and conveyed his appreciation for the work of the Northwest Straits Commission.

Approval of April Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the April 25 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved with two corrections noted.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Jeff discussed the Clallam MRC's May meeting in Neah Bay. Aaron Parker, water quality specialist for the Makah Tribe, presented an overview of the Tribe's water quality and shellfish sampling program. Keith Ledford, Office of Marine Affairs for the Makah Tribe, discussed results of the Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment. Jeff highly recommended reading the [VTRA 2010 Final Report](#). The Olympia oyster restoration project in Sequim Bay will expand an additional ½ acre on the Jamestown S'Klallam tidelands, bringing the restoration area total up to 1 ½ acres.

Island: Lenny reported that Island County Commissioner Kelly Emerson resigned her position. If the local process for a replacement fails to reach agreement within 60 days, a final decision will be made by the Governor. The MRC is reviewing their resolution and bylaws and hope to have an updated version approved within the next few months.

Jefferson: At their May business meeting, the MRC discussed the need to update their business rules, including clarification on membership positions, and reviewed project ideas for the next grant cycle. The MRC is hoping to expand the 'no anchor zone' past the port, if funding is obtained. A 'Dig for your Dinner' educational program, co-sponsored by the MRC, will be held at popular clamming beaches in Jefferson County on June 17 and July 26.

San Juan: Greg welcomed the Commission to San Juan County and reported that he, Barbara Bentley (chair) and Terry Turner (vice-chair) were re-elected to their current positions at the MRC meeting in May. A summer [climate change lecture series](#), co-sponsored by the MRC, will run weekly from July through August. They are also organizing a shellfish grower's symposium on ocean acidification to be held on San Juan, Orcas and Lopez Islands. Funding decisions on two grants are being awaited, and if awarded, will support a substantially increased citizen scientist initiative.

Skagit: Jay reported that the MRC passed a budget and adopted the Skagit Restoration Initiative Annual Workplan, pending budget revisions. Shannon Point and Bowman Bay Riprap Removal, Native Oyster Restoration and March's Point Beach Enhancement projects are all moving forward. The Salish Sea Stewards/Beach Naturalist volunteers graduated on April 29 and are eager to help with projects.

Snohomish: Lincoln and Kathleen announced that on May 28, the Snohomish County Council voted to designate Port Susan as a Marine Stewardship Area and agreed to remove the sunset clause from county code for the MRC. They were also awarded a \$240,000 grant from ESRP/SRFP and construction will begin this fall on their Nearshore Restoration Project. A very exciting week!

Whatcom: Ken reported that the MRC Executive Subcommittee recommended Eleanor Hines from the Surfrider Foundation to fill the scientific expertise position on the MRC. The Surfrider Foundation and Whatcom MRC were recently awarded \$3,100 from the Ocean Foundation to assist with the purchase of clean-up kits and pay disposal fees related to cleanup events on Whirlwind Beach (a.k.a. Locust Beach). The MRC agreed to use some of the leftover funds from the Mussel Watch program to support a post-restoration survey at Boulevard Park, which will occur in late June.

Strategic Plan Review and Discussion

Nan McKay facilitated a discussion of the draft 2014 Strategic Plan. The conversation was focused on reviewing and discussing the four main goals in the strategic plan and gathering feedback on whether or not to use the lens of climate change. Particular attention was paid to the 'Measure(s) of Progress' and 'Responsibility' sections within each goal. Input from this productive discussion will guide the next round of editing by the Strategic Planning Committee. A revised draft will be sent to Commissioners and MRC Staff in advance of the June Commission meeting, along with a Survey Monkey containing focused questions for the MRCs to answer. Comments on this draft and survey will be incorporated into a document that is anticipated to be presented and adopted at the August Commission meeting.

Public Comment

Level Pratt delivered a presentation on the Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment (VTRA) 2010 Final Report. The majority of vessel traffic in the northern Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca is transport of fossil fuels. Level recommended reading this report, or at the very least the [executive summary](#), and advocated for stronger language around oil spill preparedness in the Initiative's strategic plan.

Laura Arnold of the San Juan MRC urged the Commission not to ignore concerns about baseline data in the strategic plan.

Oil Tanker Traffic in Salish Sea

Stephanie Buffum, Director of FRIENDS of the San Juans, informed the Commission about an international tool that may be used to limit fossil fuel export through the Salish Sea. A [Particularly Sensitive Sea Area \(PSSA\)](#) is an area that needs special protection through action by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) because of its significance for recognized ecological, socio-economic, or scientific attributes, where such attributes may be vulnerable to damage by international shipping activities. Stephanie provided a copy of a report, funded by the Samish Indian Nation and FRIENDS of the San Juans, entitled, *Global Solution to the Risk of International Shipping in Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas: A Feasibility Study for the Salish Sea*. Stephanie and Dr. Alexander Gillespie presented these results in a special session at the Salish Sea Conference and announced that they have a solid candidate to move forward collectively with US and Canada in a bi-national nomination, or individually with an exclusive US nomination. Stephanie is willing to discuss this project with Commission members and MRCs.

NWSC Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Ken reported that the Executive Committee had a productive WebEx meeting on May 20, during which they discussed the 2014 budget and workplan, the strategic planning process and the MRC fall conference.

Nominating Committee: Jerry recommended that the Commission continue to increase operational capacity through building separate Commission and Foundation boards. Several MRC representatives

noted that finding MRC members who are able to serve as a representative to the Commission has been difficult. The Nominating Committee recommended that Christine remain as Chair for another year and Nan was nominated as Vice Chair.

Election of Officers: Per the recommendation of the nominating committee, the Commission moved and approved by consensus the election of Christine Woodward as chair and Nan McKay as vice chair for the next year.

Business Items

Northwest Straits Commission work plan and budget: Ginny presented the draft FY 2014 Workplan and Budget, which consisted of a \$200k NOAA grant and \$800k EPA/PSP grant. The Commission moved and approved by consensus to adopt the budget as written, with correction to two typographical errors on dates.

Themes and ideas for 2014 Northwest Straits Conference: The Commission and Foundation staff met in May to start brainstorming themes and session ideas for the fall MRC conference. Caroline will take the lead planning role and will spearhead the formation of an advisory committee. Commission and MRC members should let her know if interested in participating in the planning committee. Jeff suggested a session centered on energy and the environment: tanker traffic, tidal power, and the work of Brian Polagye from UW. Shannon mentioned Megan Dethier's research on the effects of shoreline armoring on nearshore habitats. Lincoln was interested in including results from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife caged mussel studies and new kelp protocols. A survey will be sent out to all MRC members soon to get feedback on topics.

WebEx Demo: Holly provided a 'quick and painless' WebEx demonstration and noted some of the benefits of using WebEx over traditional conference calls. Commission meetings that are not "in-person" will be held via WebEx conference call starting June 27.

Other business: Ginny followed up on a discussion that started months ago regarding a possible Commission endorsement of a net pen moratorium. Given that the Commission is already on record with questions and concerns stated in a comment letter to Ecology in 2011 and Commission meeting time is limited, she recommended that discussions about net pens should remain at the MRC level but remains open to revisiting this if there is a timely and pressing interest in doing so. There was general agreement with this approach.

Round Table Discussion

Ken provided a brief update on his biodiesel project. As an investor in Whole Energy Fuels, he helped convert an Army Corps of Engineers boat, which burns 6,000 gallons of fuel per month, to run on biodiesel. He will give a presentation on this project at the next roundtable.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on June 27 from 10am-12pm by WebEx conference call.



Northwest Straits Commission

June 27, 2014

10:00 am – 12:20 pm

WebEx Conference Call

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Lenny Corin (Island), Jerry Masters, Nan McKay

Absent: Diana Bob, Terry Williams, Marc Daily, Terrie Klinger

Additional MRC Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish), Austin Rose (Whatcom), Tom Temple (San Juan)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich

Additional Attendees: Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve), Dr. Drew Harvell (Cornell University), Emily Bishop (NOAA Hollings Program), Joe Downes (Senator Cantwell's office), Suzanna Stoike (PSP)

Introductions

Christine opened the meeting with introductions.

Approval of May Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the May 30 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

MRC Reports

Skagit: Christine provided an update on current and future projects including the Salish Sea Stewards, Beach Naturalists, and Shannon Point and Bowman Bay Riprap Removal. Planning for Fidalgo Bay Day (September 13) is well underway. Beach Naturalist volunteers have selected several dates in June and July to provide informal interpretation of the beach life at the Washington Park Sunset Beach in Anacortes.

Jefferson: Shannon reported that the Jefferson MRC has a new District 1 Alternate Representative, Nam Siu, who has worked in the marine sciences field in both the academic and private sectors. The MRC will be co-sponsoring a second “Diggin’ for Dinner” educational program at a popular clamming beach on July 26. Information about the connection between water quality and shellfish safety will be presented, along with demonstrations on sustainable clam harvesting. The first Diggin’ for Dinner event was held on June 17.

Whatcom: Ken announced that Eleanor Hines was officially appointed by the County Council to fill the scientific expertise position on the MRC. The MRC is co-sponsoring a beach cleanup at Whirlwind/Locust Beach in Bellingham on July 5. The Project Development Subcommittee is researching a wetland reconnection project on Lummi Island that is identified as a priority in the WRIA 1 Nearshore Restoration Report.

San Juan: Greg reported that the County Council re-appointed MRC members Tom Temple and Kathy Dolson to four-year terms. The MRC’s first June meeting was dedicated to Salmon Recovery projects, which included presentations and field trips. Planning is underway for the Marine Managers’ Conferences. The first will be held September 10 in combination with a Shellfish Growers’ Workshop. The second will focus on [Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment](#) and occur in October, date to be determined.

Snohomish: Lincoln informed the Commission that their July MRC meeting will be held at Meadowdale Park, a future restoration site, and local elected officials are expected to attend. Kathleen Herrmann joined the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Department and Dept. of Natural Resources employees on a boat tour of the Snohomish River Estuary to discuss the future of derelict vessel removal in the county. Lincoln is reviewing a report by the WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife on a caged mussel study, which is part of the Mussel Watch Pilot Expansion Project.

Island: Lenny reported that the county will soon be advertising the Project Coordinator and Communications Coordinator positions for the MRC (both are ending in August). In conjunction with the Board of Island County Commissioners, the MRC continues the process of revising the MRC’s enabling legislation to reflect the move from WSU Extension to the Department of Natural Resources. Lenny hopes to have some interpretive signs in place at Cornet Bay before the September 18 celebration of the restoration work at the site.

Clallam: Jeff announced that the Clallam MRC has selected four summer interns to work on oil spill prevention and response, outreach and education, marine debris, and Olympia oyster restoration. The MRC is still brainstorming education/outreach ideas for the next fiscal year. One thought was to host multiple speakers throughout the year that will give presentations on specific environmental issues, targeting a variety of audiences, including County Commissioners, college students and the general public.

Committee Reports

Executive committee: Nan informed the Commission that the Executive Committee recently discussed the idea of forming of two new committees. One would track implementation of the strategic plan and the other would focus on external relations. Charters for the two committees, including an outline of duties and the process for selecting members, will be drafted and presented to the full Commission for feedback at the July meeting.

Strategic planning advisory committee: The Strategic Planning Committee took the comments from the May Commission meeting and incorporated them into a new draft of the Strategic Plan. This amended draft, along with survey questions, was distributed to the MRC representatives and the Foundation. Responses, comments and input will be incorporated into a final draft of the plan by the end of August, which will hopefully be adopted at the Commission and Foundation meetings in September.

Review 2014-15 MRC Projects: Ginny provided a summary of MRC Grant Proposals for 2014-15. Commission staff are in the process of screening proposals and working with the MRCs to finalize language and content. Ginny explained that Task 1 Operations costs are different for every MRC, depending on local funding and expenses. External reviewers will likely assist with some of the review process, which is planned to be wrapped up by mid-July. Final proposals will be presented to the Commission at the July meeting for final approval.

With regards to Oil Spill Preparedness and HAZWOPER training, Jeff made a request to Joe Downes from Senator Cantwell's office that the certifications remain effective for 2-3 years in order to stagger trainings and reach more people.

Business Items

2014 MRC Conference: Caroline reminded Commission members to participate in the conference planning survey before it closes on Thursday, July 3. She invited volunteers to join the advisory committee, which will be tasked with outlining sessions and securing speakers, and is currently comprised of Rachel Benbrook, Cheryl Lowe, Diana Bob and Sasha Horst. Registration will be handled by Foundation staffer, Heidi Lehman, and Jill Clark is working on sponsorships. Save-the-date cards will be available at the July Commission meeting for Commissioners to disperse to their MRCs.

Puget Sound Partnership update: Marc Daily provided a list of Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) updates that Ginny reviewed for the Commission. The PSP will receive proposals from contractors for the watershed group proviso work on July 3 and Ginny will assist in reviewing the proposals. . The PSP Action Agenda was updated and adopted by the Leadership Council on May 30, 2014. Nan suggested that an invitation be extended to John Stein, Chair of the PSP Science Panel, to speak at the September Commission meeting or MRC Conference about the Biennial Science Work Plan. The question of how to evaluate MRC project proposals in tandem with the

newly adopted local Near Term Actions (NTAs) was posed. Suzanna Stoike will provide information on the NTAs to be included in the post-meeting handouts.

Marine Debris Project update: Ginny provided an update on the marine debris removal work carried out by Department of Ecology's Veteran Conservation Corps and Northwest Straits Commission staff, Paul Argites. Paul has been locating sites in need of clean up and coordinating with work crews, landowners, Marine Resources Committees and other partners. To date, this project has resulted in the removal of 12,060 pounds of marine debris from eight shoreline project sites located in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, and Island counties. Ginny encouraged the Commission to contact Paul with beach cleanup recommendations.

Forage Fish update: Caroline reported that the Northwest Straits Commission has trained a total of 40 volunteers to survey beaches for forage fish spawn in three recent intertidal survey workshops. Pending availability of staff, a workshop will likely be held in Skagit County in late August/early September. Caroline is coordinating with agency staff on a sampling/monitoring plan for the Northwest Straits region and is representing the Commission on the PSEMP Forage Fish and Food Webs Work Group.

Eelgrass Working Group update: Ginny and Caroline are participating in a regional working group led by the Puget Sound Partnership and the Department of Natural Resources to develop an eelgrass recovery strategy to allow the 20% recovery goal to be achieved. The group's main objective is to identify recovery actions that are realistic given the existing capacity of participating stakeholders. Actions under consideration include eelgrass monitoring and mapping, strategic outplanting, volunteer protection zones, and enforcing additional policies. Results will be shared with the Leadership Council this fall for consideration and approval.

Kelp Project Update: With help from Friday Harbor Labs, WA Dept. of Natural Resources, Leal Dickson (Island MRC) and others, Emily Bishop is drafting a boat-based survey protocol for monitoring kelp beds. Emily will be out on the water with MRC members in the coming weeks to field test her methods. She will give a final project presentation at the July Commission meeting and at NOAA Headquarters the following week.

Public Comments

No public comment.

Roundtable

- West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel recently published a new ocean acidification fact sheet entitled, *Ocean Acidification in the Pacific Northwest*, which will be distributed with post-meeting materials.
- Ginny reminded Commissioners who are seeking travel reimbursements to have their forms submitted to the Northwest Straits Commission by July 7.

- Ginny asked for speaker or presentation recommendations for the July and September Commission meetings. Lenny mentioned that NOAA Fisheries just released a special 10-year report that found the number of southern-resident killer whales in Puget Sound is still in decline.
- Friday, June 27 was Austin's last day with the Northwest Straits Commission and she will be greatly missed. She will continue in her current role as the Whatcom County MRC Coordinator and will take on some additional water quality work for the county.
- Lincoln brought up the recent press regarding microplastic bead pollution and efforts to ban them from cosmetics and facewash. These microbeads are making their way to surface waters where small fish and zooplankton are mistaking them for food and ingesting them. Lincoln suggested this might be an issue worth taking up and encouraging the state to take action.
- Caroline mentioned a new exhibit called [Sharkmania!](#) at the Point Defiance zoo featuring the artwork of Ray Troll.
- Sasha shared a picture of a recently-installed electric vehicle charging station at the Padilla Bay Reserve that was donated by Valley Supply Company, courtesy of Jerry Masters. The Commission will develop an interpretive sign about Ocean Acidification to install next to the station.

Sea Star Wasting Disease: Dr. Drew Harvell provided a brief update on the sea star wasting disease (SSWD) epidemic. She explained that the epidemic is a research priority due to its unprecedented scale and affect on keystone species. Her research group has seen very high mortality in Oregon and Washington and some local extinctions in California. Juvenile sea stars are under careful observation, as their survival will determine the overall impact of the epidemic. Dr. Harvell encouraged the Commission to spread the word about a [new site](#) that was launched to acquire critical information on the spread of SSWD. The PBS NewsHour Segment on Sea Star Wasting Disease [can be found here](#).

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.



**Northwest Straits Commission
Service Alternatives for WA
20 NW 1st Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
July 25, 2014 10:00 am – 3:00 pm**

Attendees

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Lenny Corin (Island), Jerry Masters, Nan McKay, Diana Bob, Terry Williams, Marc Daily, Terrie Klinger

Additional MRC Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish), Frances Wood (Island), Joe Hillers (Island), Leal Dickson (Island), Jay Lind (Skagit), Cheryl Lowe (Jefferson)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich

Additional Attendees: Helen Price Johnson (Island County Commissioner), Emily Bishop (NOAA Hollings Program), Suzanna Stoike (PSP), Jill Clark (NWS Foundation), Lou Licht (Ecolotree Inc), Barbara Bennett (Island Beach Watchers), Lynne Barre (NOAA), Gregg Ridder

Introductions and Welcome

Christine opened the meeting with introductions.

Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner welcomed the Commission to Coupeville and expressed her appreciation for their work.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the June 27 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

MRC Reports

San Juan: Greg reported that the Citizen Advisory Group performed a final review of the Salmon Recovery Fund grants at the July 16 MRC meeting. Four grant proposals (a total of \$1.8M) were scored for funding. The San Juan MRC grant proposal to set up a mussel watch study was not approved by the Coastal Protection Fund, Terry Husseman Account.

Skagit: Jay reported that all major projects are moving forward. Lisa Kaufman from the Foundation provided a project status update at the Skagit MRC's July meeting. March's Point and Shannon Point are still in the permitting process. The design report and planting plan are complete for Bowman Bay and permit applications will be submitted by the end of August. Olympia oysters are being monitored for growth at seeding locations.

Whatcom: Ken reported that the Whatcom MRC co-sponsored a beach cleanup at Whirlwind/Locust Beach on July 5 that was attended by 23 people. At their July meeting, a portion of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan was reviewed and comments were gathered. Ken brought up questions regarding the appropriate degree of involvement by the MRC in these activities and their role in providing scientific expertise.

Snohomish: Lincoln reported that the July Snohomish MRC meeting was held at Meadowdale Park, where they were given a tour of the proposed restoration site. Kathleen Herrmann is working with Parks Department staff to select a consultant to lead the feasibility study. Kathleen, Franchesca Perez and two local farmers that are practicing organic fish-friendly farming were interviewed for a Port Susan video that will be shown at Snohomish County's 11th annual Focus on Farming Conference.

Jefferson: Shannon announced that the Jefferson MRC will be co-sponsoring a second 'Diggin' for Dinner' event on July 26 (currently 39 participants registered) and an Ocean Health Forum on October 7. Final permits for Olympia oyster seeding were issued at the end of July and the MRC is now recruiting volunteers for manual dispersal of shells across the ½ acre site on August 9.

Island: Lenny reported that the county will soon be advertising the Project Coordinator and Communications Coordinator positions for the MRC. They are moving ahead with the September 18 Cornet Bay Celebration and compiling a list of potential invitees. Frances Wood added that the 10th season of pigeon guillemot breeding surveys just wrapped up. It has been a very successful citizen science outreach project with over 60 volunteers counting birds and determining the probability of breeding success.

Clallam: Jeff reported that the Clallam MRC submitted their survey response to the Commission's draft strategic plan. The MRC's project interns were active participants in the July 4-5 activities at Fiero Marine Life Center and hosted a successful beach cleanup on Ediz Hook. The MRC is working with Sasha to create a new web site that is separate from the county's site.

Committee Reports

Executive committee: Nan reviewed the Executive Committee meeting minutes and announced that Senator Murray's Legislative Assistant, Anna Sperling, will visit the Northwest Straits Commission on the morning of August 6. Nan also presented charters for the proposed External Relations Committee and Implementation Tracking Committee. The Commission approved the creation of these two committees. MRC staff and representatives were encouraged to submit

recommendations to Ginny for committee participants. Jeff suggested that the External Relations Committee partner with Jill at the Foundation to conduct outreach and educational activities. Caroline proposed that the Technical Committee be reinstated in the future to review proposals and help with project guidance.

Strategic planning advisory committee: Survey responses on the draft strategic plan are due August 15. The committee is asking for MRCs to contribute action statements and consider if/how they see themselves working toward the four main goals. Responses, comments and input will be incorporated into a final draft of the plan by the end of August, which will be adopted at the Commission meeting in September.

Commission Projects and Business Items

2014 MRC Conference: Caroline formed an advisory committee that will guide the development of the agenda and speaker choices. Their first meeting was July 17. Information from the survey monkey was used to decide on the session topics. Save-the-date cards for the conference were passed out to MRC representatives to be delivered to MRC members.

Carbon calculations for new meeting regime: Holly calculated that over the course of one year, the Commission saved an average of \$10,422.00 and 3.36 metric tons (7,407 pounds) of CO₂ by switching to an every-other-month conference call schedule for Commission meetings.

Ocean acidification outreach events: As part of a NOAA grant agreement, the Commission is committed to organizing community forums on ocean health. Ocean acidification events will be held October 7 and 9 in Jefferson and Island counties, respectively. Ginny and Caroline are involved in planning the events and contacting speakers.

Sound IQ: An advisory committee is being organized to help guide growth and expansion of Sound IQ and bring additional expertise to the project. Suzanne Shull and Ginny are points of contact for the committee, which will bring together 5-6 GIS experts from different agencies and organizations in September for a first meeting.

Web site overhaul: Sasha is working with Mindfly in Bellingham to upgrade and overhaul the Commission web site at www.nwstraits.org. The new site will be mobile-friendly and still include the online library and links to the SoundIQ system. The existing web site will become the Northwest Straits Foundation's site and will be located at www.nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Approval of MRC project proposals: Commission staff have been reviewing MRC projects and identifying external reviewers where appropriate. Meetings with MRC staff and chairs have been occurring to discuss projects, provide feedback and get clarifications as needed. Sasha is the point of contact for grants. Caroline reminded MRCs that projects must align with the Action Agenda or else they don't qualify for this funding.

Puget Sound Partnership updates

Marc Daily discussed Puget Sound Partnership's (PSP) budget proviso, which reads:

\$71,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2015 is provided solely for the Puget Sound Partnership to collaborate with interested parties to review the roles of local watershed and salmon recovery organizations implementing the action agenda and provide legislative, budgetary, and administrative recommendations to streamline and strengthen Puget Sound recovery efforts. In conducting this work, the partnership must coordinate with the following interested parties: The Hood Canal coordinating council, marine resources committees, including the Northwest straits initiative, regional fisheries enhancement groups, local integrating organizations, lead entities, and other county watershed councils, as well as representatives of federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies. Recommendations must be provided to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2014.

Ross Strategic was selected as the contractor for this work to complete an evaluation of roughly 50 organizations in a transparent and objective manner. They are taking a three prong approach: 1) Review all possible literature about what these watershed organizations do and who is involved; 2) Conduct 11 framing interviews (including Ginny) and up to 20 opinion leaders interviews; 3) Conduct an electronic survey to gather input from everyone involved in organizations.

"Dedoose" software will be used to code and quantitatively assess the survey data to inform conclusions. Ross Strategic's report is due to PSP on November 21 and PSP's final report with recommendations to the legislature is due December 1.

Marc asked the Commission and MRCs to help by submitting rosters/email addresses of members, completing the survey and suggesting interviewees. Commissioners offered thoughts, suggestions and concerns about the project, which were discussed at length.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Biodiesel project briefing

Ken Carrasco provided the Commission with an update on his biodiesel project. He was involved in the conversion the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' M/V Raccoon, which previously burned 6,000 gallons of diesel and emitted 134,400 pounds of CO₂ per month, to biodiesel.

Island phytoremediation project report

Island MRC is working to test the effect of tree roots on waste water nitrogen removal. Test cells were built and planted in May 2011 and continue to operate by daily effluent irrigation through the root zone. Joe Hillers and Lou Licht presented one of their opened test cells and provided a briefing on the phytoremediation project.

Kelp survey protocol presentation

Emily Bishop, a NOAA Hollings Scholarship Intern with the Commission, spent the past nine weeks developing a boat-based survey protocol for bull kelp in Puget Sound. Her final project was presented to the Commission and will also be delivered at the NOAA Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland on July 29. [Click here to view Emily's presentation.](#)

Round table

Jeff Ward, President of the Northwest Straits Foundation Board of Directors, informed the Commission that Robyn du Pré will be resigning as Executive Director, effective September 30, 2014, due to ongoing health challenges. This decision will enable her to focus on healing, and spend more time with her family. She will be greatly missed. Over the next few months, the Foundation Board and staff, along with Robyn, will work together to find a worthy successor.

Ginny announced that Terrie Klinger was recently named Director of the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs at the University of Washington, effective September 1.

Update on southern resident killer whales

Lynne Barre of NOAA Fisheries presented a briefing on “Endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales: 10 Years of Research and Recovery Efforts.” In 2005, southern resident killer whales were listed as endangered under ESA. Major threats to killer whales include prey availability (75% Chinook), marine contaminants (significant bioaccumulation), and vessels/noise (interrupts echolocation). Lynne presented ongoing and future research, management and conservation efforts. [Click here to view Lynne Barre's slides.](#) The official NOAA report and supporting materials [can be found here.](#)

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.

The next Commission meeting will be a WebEx conference call on August 22 from 10:00am-12:00pm.



**Northwest Straits Commission
August 22, 2014 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
WebEx Conference Call**

Attendees

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Chair, Skagit), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Lenny Corin (Island), Thomas Temple (San Juan, Alternate), Jerry Masters, Nan McKay, Terrie Klinger

Absent: Greg Ayers (San Juan), Terry Williams, Sheida Sahandy, Diana Bob

Additional MRC Representation: Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish), Al Bergstein (Jefferson)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich

Additional Attendees: Suzanna Stoike (PSP), Jill Clark (NWS Foundation)

Introductions and Welcome

Christine opened the meeting with introductions.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the July 25 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Jeff reported that the Clallam MRC summer interns wrapped up their projects and gave presentations on marine debris cleanup, Olympia oyster restoration and oil spill preparedness. The internship program was very successful and will hopefully encourage more young people to get involved with the MRC. Suzanne Shull gave a presentation at their August meeting on SoundIQ. The Dept. of Ecology and Dept. of Fish & Wildlife invited MRC members to attend a drill/demonstration of their Mobile Oiled Wildlife Response Unit on September 4 at the Port Angeles airport.

San Juan: Tom Temple reported that the San Juan MRC recently participated in the Library Fair and the County Fair, where they distributed literature and information about the Marine Stewardship Area to event participants. On September 10, the MRC will be hosting a Marine Managers and Shellfish Growers Workshop in Friday Harbor. The NW Straits Foundation will be sponsoring an evening reception after the work shop. A Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment program for marine managers is also planned for October.

Island: Lenny reported that the MRC staff positions are ending in August and a meeting with the county is scheduled to discuss support during the transition. At their August meeting, Blain Reeves of WDNR gave a presentation on the ghost shrimp moratorium in Saratoga Passage. After 12 years, Scott Chase, the Shore Stewards program coordinator will no longer be officially involved with the MRC. They will be looking for a new MRC representative to be involved with the Port Susan project. Lenny invited the Commission to attend the Cornet Bay Shoreline Restoration Celebration on Sept. 18 and Jill asked that interested parties send her an RSVP.

Snohomish: Lincoln reported that the Nearshore Beach Restoration Project plans were submitted and construction is expected to begin in November. The first forage fish spawning surveys for the 2014-15 sampling season are scheduled to start August 25 and will continue through construction of the project. A consultant has been selected to lead the feasibility study of the Meadowdale Beach Restoration project. Kathleen reported that next spring or summer, the MRC will host a ribbon-cutting event at the Howarth Park restoration site and will send out more information as it draws closer.

Whatcom: Ken reported that the Whatcom MRC will be hosting Doug Huddle as part of the MRC/WWIN Public Speaker Series. He will give a presentation on the distribution and abundance of local salmonids. Whatcom Water Weeks will occur Sept. 6-20 and the MRC is involved in multiple events. Ken encouraged participation in the Oyster Fest Northwest at Bellewood Acres on September 6. The MRC's Project Development Subcommittee is continuing to research a wetland reconnection project on Lummi Island that is identified as a priority in the WRIA 1 Nearshore Restoration Report.

Jefferson: Al reported that a crew of MRC and Beach Watcher volunteers laid down eight cubic yards of shell on Aug 9, creating 0.5 acre of new habitat for the Discovery Bay Olympia oyster population. Press releases and photos were sent to two local newspapers with nice articles resulting. The MRC will have an interactive booth set up at the Wooden Boat Festival on Sept. 5-7 and Shannon encouraged participation in the event. The MRC is going to use the last of its grant money to put together an ad campaign branded with the MRC logo that will be shown on the ad rotator before shows at the Rose Theatre in Port Townsend. This will help raise public awareness, as the theater is highly attended. Other Commission members expressed interest in the transferability of this type of campaign to other theaters.

Skagit: Christine reported that the main focus of the MRC's August meeting was the revision of their 2014-15 grant proposal, which is now submitted. The Shannon Point Riprap Removal

project has been delayed due to landowner concerns about erosion. WSU Beach Watcher Beckie Arnold volunteered to take the lead on coordinating the Fidalgo Bay Day event. The permitting is complete for the NW March's Point project and bids are due on August 20 at 2:00pm. Christine reminded MRC representatives to hand out save-the-date cards for the December MRC Conference at their next meeting, if they haven't already done so.

NWSC Committee Reports

Executive committee: The Executive Committee (EC) did not meet in August, but plans to reconvene in September. Ginny announced that Jerry Masters agreed to chair the External Relations Committee and both Nan McKay and Tom Cowan agreed to join as members. Additional members may be recruited from the Commission or MRCs as needed. The EC will begin recruiting for the Implementation Tracking Committee once the strategic plan is adopted in September.

Strategic planning advisory committee: Ginny presented a summary document of the strategic plan survey results and feedback from the MRCs. A bar graph of results showed strong support for the four environmental goals of the strategic plan.

In order to better incorporate current interests and projects of the MRCs, Lincoln suggested revising Goal 2 to read, *"Support water quality monitoring efforts and measures to improve water quality."* Lenny was supportive of the change. Jerry was concerned that simplifying and broadening the goal might make it difficult for the Implementation Tracking Committee to evaluate and measure success. Nan agreed that it was important to focus on a specific outcome. Terrie thought the revised wording was too focused on monitoring and didn't encourage further action. She suggested altering it slightly to read, *"Support water quality monitoring efforts and take specific actions to improve water quality."* Ginny invited the Commissioners to send her any additional suggestions for wording so that the advisory committee could consider it at their next meeting.

Ginny provided responses to all of the comments in the document and said that she would follow up with MRC staff where additional information was needed. She explained the intent of the Operational Goals as the "how" we work, which are now added into the plan. The Environmental Goals are the "what" we do and are intended to provide vision for the future. The strategic plan is a deliverable that is due to the Puget Sound Partnership at the end of September and Ginny reminded the group that they need to approve the plan at the September Commission meeting.

Suzanna Stoike suggested integrating the sustainability plan into the strategic plan. Ginny replied that the sustainability plan would make a good addendum to the strategic plan after it has been updated.

The advisory committee is scheduled meet on September 4 and 5 to incorporate changes and suggestions into the plan and prepare it for final adoption at the September 26 Commission meeting.

Commission Projects and Business Items

2014 MRC Conference: Ginny reported that the MRC conference advisory committee has been working on an agenda and shortlist for keynote speakers with Caroline leading the group. Any last minute ideas for session topics or speakers should be sent to Caroline. Jill announced that the Foundation has secured over \$20k in corporate sponsors and are continuing to solicit others. Nan requested that a list of sponsors be sent out to the Commission to help with brainstorming ideas for additional sponsors.

Commission member handbook: Ginny presented the Commission Member Handbook and proposed that it be stored on the NW Straits Commission web site as a living document for all to access ([click here to view](#)). Holly requested that the Commissioners check over their contact information and email her with any necessary corrections or other revisions/additions. Christine said it would be a great resource for new MRC chairs, members and staffers to reference. Ginny mentioned that she planned to give a “Northwest Straits 101” presentation at the conference in December. Shannon proposed that it be a separate session at the beginning of the conference for new members so that they feel comfortable asking lots of questions.

2014-14 MRC grant update: Sasha congratulated the MRC representatives for working through the EAGL system and getting their grant proposals submitted. Final revisions and fine-tuning of agreement language is underway and will likely be wrapped up soon. She is hoping for a seamless transition once the Commission’s grant agreement with Puget Sound Partnership is finalized.

Closing out current grants: Most of the FY2013-14 grant agreements are ending in September, with a few ending in August. Sasha reminded the MRC representatives that final reports, invoices and deliverables are due soon. Any money left unspent at the end of the grant period must be returned.

Miscellaneous: Ginny reported that an MRC staff meeting will be held at Padilla Bay on September 24.

The Puget Sound Partnership’s evaluation of watershed organizations is underway and Ginny will participate in one of 11 framing interviews. More details will be forthcoming.

The NW Straits Commission will be participating in a review process of the National Estuary Program on September 9. Ginny and Christine will host EPA and PSP representatives for an hour at Padilla Bay during their three-day tour.

Congratulations to Sasha, who just celebrated her 13th year with the NW Straits Commission!

Public Comment

No public comment.

Round table

Al Bergstein gave a brief update on the Mount Polley mine spill. He suggested that the Commission read his [blog post on the topic](#), as well as the [Vancouver Sun article](#) and consider getting involved.

Shannon asked the Commission to spread the word to MRCs and others about the Foundation's Executive Director job opening, which closes September 4.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 pm.

The next Commission meeting will be held September 26 at the Bellingham Field Office, Groucho Room.



Northwest Straits Commission
Department of Ecology – Bellingham Field Office
1440 10th Street, Suite 102, Bellingham, WA 98225
September 26, 2014 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Attendees

Commission Members: Jerry Masters, Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Jeff Ward (Clallam), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Lincoln Loehr (Snohomish), Lenny Corin (Island), Jay Lind (Skagit alternate), Ron Thom (alternate)

Commission & Foundation Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich, Jill Clark, Robyn du Pre, Joan Drinkwin

Others in Attendance: Carl Weimer (Whatcom County Council), Todd Hass (Puget Sound Partnership), John Veentjer (Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee), Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve), Jonathan Quimby (Padilla Bay Reserve), Austin Rose (Whatcom MRC), Elizabeth Kilanowski (Whatcom MRC), Bert Rubash (Whatcom MRC), Eleanor Hines (Whatcom MRC)

Absent: Christine Woodward, Nan McKay, Diana Bob, Terry Williams, Marc Daily, Terrie Klinger

Introductions and Welcome

Jerry Masters chaired the meeting in the absence of both Chair and Vice Chair. He opened the meeting with introductions.

Carl Weimer, Whatcom County Councilmember and member of the Whatcom MRC, welcomed the Commission to Bellingham and expressed his appreciation for their work and the efforts of the Whatcom MRC.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the August 22 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

Whatcom MRC Local Projects

Eleanor Hines, newly appointed to the Whatcom MRC, presented an overview of the MRC's recent and upcoming projects. Some of the highlights included: N. Chuckanut Bay clam surveys, Boulevard Park intertidal surveys, Whatcom Water Action Plan and Comprehensive Plan review, Whirlwind Beach Community Stewardship Program, Jerry's Journey, Chuckanut Pollution Identification and Control Project, and restoration projects at Little Squalicum Beach and Lummi Island Quarry. Upcoming projects



include forage fish surveys, Legoe Bay wetland reconnection project and State of the Bay Research Symposium. The MRC is brainstorming ways to increase involvement of a younger demographic.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Jeff reported that the Clallam MRC was participating in the Dungeness River Festival on Sept. 26-27 with an interactive booth and a tank of geoduck clams to kiss. Deborah Kucipeck is the new Natural Resources Planner for Clallam County and will help staff the MRC. Clallam MRC's new web site is launching on Monday, September 29.

Whatcom: Ken announced that the MRC hosted two successful events for Whatcom Water Weeks during Sept. 6-20. Austin noted that while helping with recent MRC events, she was pleased to find that many community members were familiar with ocean acidification. The MRC is undergoing a time capacity study to better understand and assess volunteer interests and project commitments.

Island: Lenny reported that the MRC will be losing three members next year as a result of term limits and will begin advertising the open positions soon. Jason Toft from UW SeaGrant presented his Nearshore Monitoring Toolbox at their Sept. 16 meeting, which was highly attended. On Sept. 18, the MRC, NWS Foundation and partners celebrated the completion of Phase 1 of the Cornet Bay Project.

Jefferson: Shannon gave an overview of recent MRC education and outreach activities including movie theater advertisements on eelgrass protection/marine stewardship, MRC bookmarks, Olympia oyster "thank you to sponsors" newspaper ad, Community Forum on Ocean Health, and Wooden Boat Festival photo booth and voting panel. Shannon also noted that members of the public at the festival knew about ocean acidification.

Snohomish: Lincoln reported that Kathleen will be giving a tour of Port Susan for students at the UW School of Environmental Affairs on Oct. 17. Francesca Perez will be presenting on shellfish and water quality at Sound Living in Everett on Oct. 25 and the MRC will have a booth at the event. The Crabber Education Subcommittee is developing a social marketing plan.

Skagit: Jay announced that the Skagit MRC is currently looking for new members and/or alternates. Over 330 people attended Fidalgo Bay Day, which was held Sept. 13, and was a great success. At their September meeting, Jamey Selleck provided a forage fish spawning survey update at the Custom Plywood restoration site in Anacortes.

San Juan: Greg provided an overview of the Marine Managers and Shellfish Growers workshop on Sept. 10. The Foundation's reception prior to the Climate Action Imperative Speaker Series finale was very well attended. The Stormwater Advisory Group put together a plan for San Juan County and are hoping residents will renew the stormwater utility tax that runs out in 2015.



Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Ginny reviewed the EC meeting minutes and announced that the committee supported the idea of recognizing Mike Doherty for his work as Clallam County Commissioner and his contributions to the Clallam MRC. He will be presented with a paddle at the MRC Conference.

Strategic Planning Advisory Committee: Jeff discussed the strategic planning process and timeline over the past year and led the Commission through a final review of the four environmental goals and three operational goals. A few small wording changes and clarifications were proposed. Shannon motioned to approve the strategic plan as presented and amended on September 26, with encouragement for MRCs to submit additional projects through January 2015 and for Commission staff to make final edits. No changes will be made to the environmental goals. Lenny seconded the motion. Motion was approved by consensus. The group supported using the MRC Conference as a time to discuss the plan and share ideas for project work to be added.

External Relations Committee: Jerry reported that the ER Committee met on August 29 and discussed the importance of making sure local county councils and commissions are aware of MRC work on a regular basis as well as the federal delegation, state legislators and agency leaders. Jerry asked each of the MRC representatives to think of one or two MRC members with relevant experience who could be approached to contribute to this committee. Tom Cowan, previous director of the Commission, has agreed to serve.

Public Comment

Elizabeth Kilanowski of the Whatcom MRC followed up on Ken's comment about the time capacity survey. She explained that it was initiated due to response/attendance issues. A document is being created to clarify membership roles and members will be asked about their volunteer capacity and interests. The MRC is interested in increasing diversity of membership and engaging younger people in the work and projects of the MRC.

Commission Projects and Business Items

2014 MRC Conference: Caroline displayed a draft agenda for the MRC Conference, which will be held Dec. 5-6 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. The theme is "Mapping our Progress" and invited speakers are confirmed. In addition to a great lineup of guests from the region, the Friday afternoon keynote presentation will be given by Beth Kerttula, the new White House Ocean Policy Director. Caroline wants to ensure that MRC projects and interests are plugged into every session, especially the Saturday morning plenary about the Northwest Straits Initiative and MRC project sharing. Each MRC will be provided a table and should plan to set up a display for exhibit during lunch on Saturday.



2014-15 MRC grant update: Sasha notified the group that the funding agreement between the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) and the Northwest Straits Commission should receive the final signatures this week. Tentative start date for MRC grants is October 1 – most agreements have been sent off for signatures.

Appointment of Alternates: Commission members approved Ron Thom, former member of the Clallam MRC and NWSC Technical Committee, as Terrie Klinger's alternate to the Commission. Ron recently retired from the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories (PNNL) after serving as a marine ecologist for 23 years.

Gov's Office of Boards & Commissions: Ginny attended a training organized by the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions in early September. One emphasis from the Governor's staff was a new law which took effect on July 1, 2014. It requires elected officials and members of governing bodies (including gubernatorial appointees to the Commission) to receive training on the "Open Public Meetings Act" and "Public Records Act." Ginny suggested that the online training be completed by all Commission members (not just the gubernatorial appointees) during an upcoming Commission meeting, depending on the time commitment involved. Other issues, such as attendance and active participation by gubernatorial appointees, were expressed as a priority by the Governor's staff.

Eelgrass Recovery Committee update: Caroline reported that she and Ginny had been attending meetings of the Eelgrass Recovery Committee organized by Puget Sound Partnership and Dept. of Natural Resources. The goal of the committee was to come up with a collaborative strategy to recover eelgrass in one or two specific pilot areas. The final meeting was held at PNNL on Sept. 24 and Caroline will distribute final recommendations and materials when they become available.

New web sites: Sasha announced that the new Clallam MRC and Commission web sites will launch on September 29 and 30, respectively.

Invited Speakers

Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment

Todd Hass, Program Manager for Marine and Nearshore Special Projects for PSP, presented results from the 2010 Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment (VTRA) for Puget Sound. He provided background information on PSP's role and priorities in this study, an overview of the VTRA model/tool and identified potential changes in risks and effects of risk mitigation measures in the region. He discussed the report findings and future steps, including quarterly workgroup meetings, collaboration with Canadian peers and development of a risk management strategy for Puget Sound.



John Veentjer, Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and Chair of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee, presented slides showing a decline in US vessel traffic over the past 20 years while also noting that size of vessels has generally increased (especially cargo ships). He presented live ship maps with vessel position tracking based on Automatic Identification System (AIS) data. AIS is a collision avoidance tool and real-time ship locations, port arrivals and departures can be viewed for free at www.marinetraffic.com.

Roundtable

Puget Sound Partnership is reviewing roles of watershed organizations to provide recommendations to the state legislature. Ginny participated in one of the original framing interviews and emailed a survey to each MRC member to fill out by October 8. She encouraged all to participate.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

The next Commission meeting will be a WebEx conference call on October 24 from 10:00am-12:00pm.



Northwest Straits Commission
October 24, 2014 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
WebEx Conference Call¹

Commission Members: Christine Woodward (Skagit), Shannon Davis (Jefferson), Greg Ayers (San Juan), Ken Carrasco (Whatcom), Frances Wood (Island Alt.), Jerry Masters, Nan McKay, Terry Williams, Bob Campbell (Clallam)*, Kathleen Herrmann (Snohomish) *

Other MRC Representation: Jay Lind (Skagit)

Commission Staff: Ginny Broadhurst, Caroline Gibson, Sasha Horst, Holly Faulstich

Others in Attendance: Ann Seabott (Sen. Murray's Office), Suzanna Stoike (PSP), Terry Stevens (Padilla Bay Reserve), Joan Drinkwin (NWS Foundation)

Absent: Jeff Ward, Lincoln Loehr, Lenny Corin, Terrie Klinger, Diana Bob, Sheida Sahandy

Introductions and Welcome

Christine opened the meeting with introductions.

Approval of September Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the September 26 Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved as written.

MRC Reports

Clallam: Bob reported that roughly 2750 people attended the Dungeness River Festival on Sept. 26-27, where the Clallam MRC staffed a booth. MRC members and staff used live geoducks to communicate the importance of good habitat and clean water for healthy shellfish populations. The MRC is also working with the NW Straits Foundation to host an oil spill preparedness workshop.

Whatcom: Ken announced that the Whatcom MRC has a vacant Economic Interest seat, which is currently being advertised. At their Nov. 6 meeting, the MRC will host a fish and wildlife biologist from WDFW to present the results from the 2013-14 caged mussel study. The MRC will kick-start Jerry's Journey by developing a three-panel triangular kiosk to be installed at the BP Heron Center.

Island: Frances announced that the Island MRC has hired a new coordinator. Anna Toledo will start in the next few weeks and everyone will have a chance to meet her at the MRC Conference in December. She has significant conservation experience and is very enthusiastic.

Jefferson: Shannon reported that the MRC hosted a very successful Ocean Health Forum with over 90 participants. Presenters covered topics ranging from the latest science on ocean acidification to local actions and

¹ Some agenda items occurred out of sequence but were organized under the correct headings for readability

* Indicates unofficial alternate to the Commission (non-voting member)



ways to get involved. The MRC is busy scheduling speakers for upcoming meetings, including Scott Brewer, Director of the Hood Canal Coordinating Council, for their December meeting.

Snohomish: Kathleen reported that MRC member Mike Montanari resigned in September and recruitment is underway for 1-2 new committee members. MRC staff and members gave a tour of Port Susan to 18 graduate students in the UW School of Marine and Environmental Affairs on October 17. The MRC will have a booth at two upcoming events: Sound Living (October 25) and NOAA Nite (November 6).

Skagit: Jay announced that Jamey Selleck of Hart Crowser was recently appointed to the Skagit MRC. The NW March's Point Beach Enhancement project is now complete. MRC volunteers and Dan Penttila surveyed the site for forage fish eggs prior to construction and long-term post-construction monitoring will begin soon.

San Juan: Greg reported that the manager of Deer Harbor Marina, Marc Bowman, was recently appointed to the San Juan MRC, representing the port position. Planning is underway for a Marine Managers Workshop in March, with a focus on marine traffic issues and opportunities. The MRC's annual retreat will take place on November 17 to discuss next year's work plan.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee (EC): Nan reported that the EC will begin developing a calendar for next year's Commission meetings, including potential presentation topics and possible speakers, as well as business milestones such as election of officers, budget and workplan approval and tracking of strategic plan implementation. The Commission meeting in January will be an opportunity to refresh everyone (and inform new MRC representatives) on the current budget and workplan and discuss the roles/responsibilities related to this.

External Relations Committee (ERC): At their October 17 meeting, the ERC discussed the need to ensure that regular communications occur with local elected officials. Jerry reported that the committee expressed a strong interest in establishing a goal for 2015: to ensure that every county commissioner/councilmember in the Northwest Straits area has the opportunity to hear about the work of their MRC and understand its relationship to the NW Straits Initiative. Ginny expressed interest in organizing several MRC project highlight tours in 2015 for elected officials, regional managers and other interested parties.

Commission Projects and Business Items

2014 MRC Conference update: Caroline reported that final details of the conference agenda are underway and reminded everyone to register by November 4. Plenary sessions at the conference will showcase nearshore marine habitat protection, sea level rise, oil transport, and endangered species recovery. Special work sessions for MRCs will feature restoration planning tips and effective applications of the SoundIQ web platform.

Salish Sea International Kelp Alliance: Caroline announced that the Kelp Alliance officially launched last week. In partnership with interested MRCs, the Alliance aims to raise awareness about the ecological and cultural importance of kelp and promote its protection and recovery through citizen science monitoring and research.

PSEMP Forage Fish Workgroup: Holly reported that she is now staffing the Forage Fish and Food Webs workgroup for the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP), in addition to her role with the Commission. She will be reconvening the group with a meeting on October 28 at the Center for Urban Waters in Tacoma.



Final report on 2013-14 funds: Sasha explained that she is working with Ecology to close out the 2013-14 award from the Puget Sound Partnership. Final invoices from MRC grants are in process and the new agreement with the Partnership began on September 23.

2014-15 MRC grant update: All seven MRC grants have been prepared and sent out for signature to the counties. The end date for these agreements is September 30, 2015.

New web site launch: Sasha showed off the Commission's new web site at www.nwstraits.org and requested that MRCs check for any broken links to pages on the previous site. Commission staff provided support to launch a new site for Clallam MRC as well, which can be found at www.clallamcountymrc.org. Sasha encouraged MRCs to 'share' and 'like' the Commission's Facebook page in order to stay informed of recent and upcoming events.

Next steps on strategic planning: Ginny reported that the Commission adopted the strategic plan at its September 26 meeting with the understanding that there would be additional time provided for MRCs to add projects and actions under the environmental goals. The conference is a time for MRCs to consider new projects in the context of the strategic plan. She encouraged MRC representatives to work with their staff and chair to determine what projects to add.

Marine Disease Emergency Act: Nan informed the group that Congressmen Denny Heck and Jim McDermott recently introduced a bill to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to identify, declare and respond to marine disease emergencies (in response to sea star wasting disease). The Seattle Aquarium and members of the Marine Conservation Network drafted a letter to Congressmen Heck and McDermott in support of this "Marine Disease Emergency Act" and are looking for organizations to be listed as supporters. Nan asked the Commission if they were interested in endorsing the letter and all were in favor.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Roundtable

Shannon reported that the search committee for the NW Straits Foundation did not end up hiring an executive director. The search will continue after a short break from the process. Joan will continue as the interim director in the meantime.

Jay mentioned an article about the decline of pinto abalone populations and Caroline provided some additional clarification: In June 2013, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) petitioned NOAA Fisheries to list the pinto abalone as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act. The agency has since conducted a status review to decide whether to propose a listing. NOAA's recommendations will be announced any day.

Ginny mentioned that she, Christine, Holly, Joan and Lisa will be attending and/or presenting at the Restoring America's Estuaries (RAE) conference in Washington DC during the first week of November.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 pm.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for January 30 in Island County.