



minutes

February 22, 2019 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

WebEx – Conference call

Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Paul Clampitt (Snohomish-Chair), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Tom Cowan, Elsa Schwartz (Island), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Christina Koons (San Juan), Ron Thom, Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Pete Haase (Skagit), Nan McKay, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Chris Castner, Sissi Bruch (Clallam Alternate)

Commission Staff: Lucas Hart, Nicole Jordan, Sasha Horst, Dana Oster

Others in Attendance: Don Hunger (Northwest Straits Foundation), Phyllis Bravinder (Skagit Alternate)

Absent: Alan Clark (Clallam-Vice Chair)

Opening and Introductions

Paul opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

The minutes from the January Northwest Straits (NWS) Commission meeting were approved by consensus.

NWS Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Lucas said the committee reviewed and approved a request from the Puget Sound Restoration Fund asking for the Commission's support on [Senate Bill 5404](#) and the funding requests. A joint NWS Foundation and Commission Executive Committee meeting will be scheduled after the retreat.

External Relations Committee

Tom said Christina Koons and Don Hunger joined the committee. External Relations Committee members continue to meet with state legislators to update them on the NWS Commission and discuss funding. The committee will continue to work on coordinating future meetings with key officials.

Science Advisory Committee

Ron Thom said the committee provided guidance to NWS Commission staff on streamlining the Request for Proposals for the 2019-20 NWS Commission grants. The committee will be scheduling a follow up meeting soon.

MRC reports

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <http://www.nwstraits.org/archive/>



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Clallam

Sissi said the MRC is working on winter forage fish sampling and planning their 2019 internship program. The MRC submitted an application for the Lodging Tax Grant to cover some of the costs of the upcoming Orca forum.

Island

Elsa said the MRC had to cancel their February meeting due to weather. The MRC recently hosted booths at the Habitat Restoration Demystified Workshop and at Sound Waters University. The MRC is considering ways to celebrate their 20th anniversary as a public relations opportunity.

Jefferson

Jeff said the MRC is planning their shellfish forum for June and is working on winter forage fish surveys. The MRC's 2018 annual report and summary version are available on our website home page <http://www.jeffersonmrc.org>.

San Juan

Christina said the MRC hosted a Be Whale Wise booth at the Seattle Boat Show. The MRC talked to over 3,000 people, distributed at least 2,000 Be Whale Wise leaflets, sold over 100 whale warning flags and estimated that >50,000 people saw the Be Whale Wise logo. The MRC has two vacancies.

Skagit

Pete said the MRC had to cancel their February meeting due to weather. The MRC is accepting applications for the Salish Sea Stewards training. The MRC is working on winter forage fish surveys. Fidalgo Bay Day is now scheduled for August 24, 2019.

Snohomish

Paul said the MRC hosted a booth at Sound Waters University 2019. The MRC is working on analyzing nearshore restoration project data from before and after restorations. The nearshore data will be used to create an online story board to convey this information to the public.

Whatcom

Bob said the orca forum originally planned for January was postponed due to the federal government shutdown leaving speakers unable to commit. A North Sound Stewards advisory committee is planning an orientation evening for volunteers—47 people have signed up to participate in the program.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC)/Tribal update

Cecilia said she is reviewing information collected by NWS Commission staff on tribal partnerships throughout the NWS Initiative. Cecilia is working on possible ways to strengthen collaboration with tribes.

Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update



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Don Hunger introduced himself as the interim director for six months in Caroline Gibson's absence. The NWS Foundation is continuing work to attract support from the private sector. NWS Foundation staff will be in contact with the MRCs on submissions to the MRC Opportunity Fund. The NWS Foundation board is seeking candidates with non-profit experience for board membership from Island, Whatcom and San Juan counties.

- Action: Don can be reached at don@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update

Karin said Sheida Sahandy is leaving the Partnership May 3 after five years of leadership. Her prospective replacement is Laura Blackmore. The EPA approved the 2018 Action Agenda without condition, concurrently lifting the conditions on the 2016 Action Agenda. The Partnership is seeking collaboration points between the NWS Initiative and the implementation of the Action Agenda, specifically Chapter 2 in the Implementation Plan. Puget Sound Day on the Hill is scheduled for May 14-16.

Business items

Chair/Vice-Chair Nominations Committee

Nan agreed to serve as the Nominations Committee for NWS Commission elections in April.

Kelp recovery plan workshop update

Dana said the February 28 Kelp Conservation and Recovery Workshop will focus on high-priority data gaps and discussing actions organizations can take to address data gaps.

Pinto Abalone support letter

Dana said a letter was submitted to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife supporting the state listing of pinto abalone as endangered.

MRC grants request for proposals

Commission staff are developing the request for proposals that will be issued in the spring of 2019. Quarterly deliverables and payment requests for the current sub-awards were reviewed, and final payment approvals completed by Ecology fiscal staff.

Sound Water University report out

Several members of the NWS Initiative attended the recent Sound Waters University event on Whidbey Island in early February including Snohomish MRC, Island MRC and NWS Initiative staff.

Northwest Straits Infographics



minutes

Nicole's position was reclassified as Communication and Outreach Specialist and she will be full-time in March. This will allow for expanded support on NWS Initiative-wide communication and outreach efforts, facilitation support, infographic creation and more.

- Action: Contact Nicole at jordan@nwstraits.org with questions.

Round table

The Commission discussed various bills in the current legislative session. Commissioners are encouraged to take advantage of the Partnership's legislative update calls which are open to anyone interested in the current state legislative session.

- Action: Those interested in joining the weekly Partnership legislative calls can dial 1-855-929-3239, access code 807 543 663 each Friday at 11:30. The hour-long calls will take place through the end of session.

Public comment

There was no public comment.

- * The next Commission meeting will be on April 26, 2019 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend, WA.