



minutes

April 26, 2019 • 9:45 AM-2:30 PM
Northwest Maritime Center
Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Paul Clampitt (Snohomish-Chair), Alan Clark (Clallam-Vice Chair), Tom Cowan, Elsa Schwartz (Island), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Christina Koons (San Juan), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Pete Haase (Skagit), Nan McKay

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

Others in Attendance: Greg Brotherton (Jefferson County Commissioner), Jon Bridgman, Cheryl Lowe, Caroline Gibson, Anne Murphy

Absent: Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Ron Thom, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Chris Castner

Opening and Introductions

Paul opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

NWS Commission - committee reports

Executive Committee

Alan said the committee agreed extending Nan's appointment so she can serve two full terms is a good idea. The committee recommended the annual Northwest Straits (NWS) Initiative Retreat be held as a joint retreat with the NWS Foundation. The committee recommended the NWS commissioners sign a Conflict of Interest Policy.

- Motion: Elsa motioned, Christina Koons seconded to hold a joint retreat. The NWS Commission agreed by consensus.
- Motion: Paul motioned, Alan seconded to require NWS commissioners sign a Conflict of Interest Policy. The NWS Commission agreed by consensus.

Science Advisory Committee

Dana said the committee is still seeking social science guidance on effectiveness of education and outreach projects. The committee reached out to the Social Science Advisory Committee with the Puget Sound Partnership. NWS Commission is on the agenda to present to the Social Science Advisory Committee in September.

External Relations Committee

Tom said the committee is focused on the state budget and preparing for 2019 Puget Sound Day on the Hill. The committee agreed to hold an in-person meeting in May at Padilla Bay to discuss expanding their focus to other audiences and explore new external relation possibilities.

Director report



The 2018 Northwest Straits Initiative's Annual Report is complete. Read more here: <http://bit.ly/2JT6llm>

Lucas said the state budget is final and will be released April 27. He plans to attend Puget Sound Day on the Hill with Christina Koons. Nan McKay and Jerry Masters also plan to attend part of Puget Sound Day on the Hill to support the NWS Initiative.

Lucas is working with Commission, MRCs and Foundation staff to create an operations plan to complete the strategic planning process with a goal of adopting a final strategic plan in June.

Business items

MRC Conference planning committee

An MRC Conference planning committee is being formed. A survey will be circulated to NWS Initiative members to solicit possible conference topics.

- Action: Those interested in joining the 2019 MRC Conference planning committee or contributing suggestions for speakers/sessions can contact Sasha Horst at horst@nwstraits.org.

Communication ad hoc committee

A communication ad hoc committee is being formed to support the creation of a communication plan. The chair will need to be a member of the NWS Commission.

- Action: Those interested in joining the communication ad hoc committee should contact Sasha at horst@nwstraits.org.

MRC project collaboration event

There is interest in holding a project collaboration event. Commissioners discussed the advantage of holding it separate from the MRC conference. Web-based meetings were suggested as a possible solution for ongoing topics and engaging broader NWS Initiative members/partners.

- Action: Those with input on creating a project collaboration event should contact Dana at oster@nwstraits.org.

Meeting highlights

The NWS Commission discussed the meeting highlights document circulated after Commission meetings. The group agreed the document is worth continuing and most useful when it is simple and straight forward.

April Kelp Workshop

Members from all seven MRCs attended the Kelp Workshop on April 18 at the Maritime Center in Port Townsend to review the regional project, and discuss methods and strategies going forward.

Retreat debrief



minutes

The NWS Commission discussed the retreat and thanked Elsa for the use of her home. Commissioners agreed the event is useful in building relationships and fostering collaboration across the NWS Initiative.

Supplementing kelp surveys with satellite images

Jeff Taylor, Jefferson MRC Representative, presented on supplementing kayak-based kelp surveys with satellite images. Possible uses of the images include supplementing aerial images for eelgrass, kelp and shoreline restoration projects.

MRC reports

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

Clallam

Alan said forage fish sampling was conducted at Cline Spit March 27 and the April sampling is planned for April 24. The oiled wildlife training in partnership with Focus Wildlife is planned for April 27 with 53 volunteers signed up for the class. The MRC is seeking interns and advertised with different educational institutes, posted on Clallam MRC website and submitted an article in the [Peninsula Daily News](#).

Island

Elsa said the MRC welcomed Gwendolyn Hannam as a new MRC member. The MRC will continue forage fish monitoring at restoration sites: Cornet Bay, Ala Spit, Hidden Beach, and Seahorse Siesta. They will discontinue monitoring at Camano Island State Park. Underwater eelgrass videography is planned for Cornet Bay this summer with aerial photography conducted for both islands.

Jefferson

Jeff said the MRC is installing new rain gardens in uptown Port Townsend in April and Quilcene in fall 2019, in partnership with a Jefferson County Public Works road project. The MRC is planning a shellfish aquaculture forum with Northwest Straits Commission and Northwest Maritime Center as co-sponsors. The MRC is also planning two crabber 101 outreach events.

San Juan

Christina said she attended a luncheon with Senator Patty Murray and emphasized the work of the NWS Initiative. The MRC provided 50 whale warning flags to the counties auditor's office to give to the first 50 individuals that renew or purchase a boat license this year and are willing to be whale stewards. In addition to the Whale Warning Flag the MRC has continued to participate in education and outreach surrounding best boating practices in the vicinity of whales.

Skagit

Pete said the MRC has a new member, Diane Hennebert with the City of Anacortes. Planning is currently underway for three special events to help celebrate Skagit MRC's 20 year anniversary. Fidalgo Bay



minutes

Resort is reserved for Fidalgo Bay Day on August 24. The 2019 plant maintenance work parties with the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group will take place from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM on May 17, June 21, July 12, August 16, and September 20.

Snohomish

Paul said the MRC is working on creosote piling removals—Kathleen and Elisa met with Chris Robertson from Washington Department of Natural Resources to investigate piling removal in the Snohomish Estuary. The MRC is working on analyzing nearshore restoration project data from before and after the restoration and will continue creating an online story board to educate the public.

Whatcom

Whatcom submitted a written report. The MRC is scoping a new forage fish survey index site in Birch Bay. The MRC has put out a volunteer internship announcement with Bellingham Technical College. The Whatcom Conservation District is conducting a project to test whether the DNA of bacteria in waterways can be used to identify sources of fecal coliform pollution—two MRC sites were included in the study.

Developing an external communications strategy – igniting the network

Jon Bridgman, Visual Communication Lead with the Puget Sound Partnership, presented on communication efforts at the Partnership. Jon said the Partnership is working on a communication plan amplifying the voice of the work being done in the Puget Sound region.

Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update

Anne Murphy said the NWS Foundation is continuing to work with MRCs on Opportunity Fund submissions. The NWS Foundation welcomes Nan McKay as the newest board member.

- Action: Those with questions on the MRC Opportunity Fund should contact Don Hunger at don@nwstraitsfoundation.org.

Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update

Karin said Sheida Sahandy is resigning from her position as executive director of the Partnership as of May 3. Puget Sound Day on the Hill in Washington DC is scheduled for May 14-16. The NWS Initiative will be well represented.

- Action: Those interested in Puget Sound Day on the Hill can follow along and show support via social media, look for #PSDOTH19.
- Action: May is Puget Sound Starts Here month with the theme Orca Health Starts Here. Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/2IQRRGz>

Elections



minutes

Nan nominated the candidates for the chair and vice-chair. The commission held elections; Alan Clark of the Clallam MRC will serve as chair, and Elsa Schwartz of the Island MRC as vice-chair for the one-year term.

Round table

There was no round table.

Public comment

There was no public comment.

* The next Commission meeting will be on May 31 over WebEx.