



## minutes

**January 25, 2019 • 10:30 AM-3:00 PM**  
**Camano Island Library, 848 N Sunrise Blvd, Camano Island, WA 98282**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

### **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Paul Clampitt (Snohomish-Chair), Alan Clark (Clallam-Vice Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Christina Koons (San Juan – phone), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Pete Haase (Skagit), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Jerry Masters

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

**Others in Attendance:** Anne Murphy (Northwest Straits Foundation), Janet St. Clair (Island County Commissioner), Phyllis Bravinder (Skagit Alternate), Austin Rose (Whatcom staff), Chris Castner, Jay Krienitz (WA Department of Fish and Wildlife), Tish Conway-Cranos (WA Department of Fish and Wildlife), Florian Graner, Mark Stamey, Russell Calendar (WA Sea Grant)

**Absent:** Tom Cowan, Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Ron Thom, Nan McKay

### **Opening and Introductions**

Paul opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

### **Welcome to Island County**

Janet St. Clair, Island County Commissioner, welcomed the group to Island County and expressed appreciation for the work of the Island MRC and the NWS Commission.

### **MRC Diaries: Protecting and Preserving Our Island Waters**

Elsa introduced a film by Florian Graner, Island MRC technical advisor, called [MRC Diaries: Protecting and Preserving Our Island Waters](#). The film provides an overview of the work of the Island MRC and highlights MRC members and partners as they share their connection to our local marine environment. The film will be used throughout Island County to create awareness of Island MRC.

### **NWS Commission - committee reports**

#### **Executive Committee**

Alan said the committee discussed the upcoming NWS Initiative joint retreat scheduled for March 21-22. Commission staff will develop a Communications Plan to complement the Strategic Plan.

#### **Science Advisory Committee**

Dana said the committee is working with Dana to find a social scientist to join the committee. The committee drafted a volunteer job description and circulated to the Puget Sound Partnership's Social Science Advisory Committee.

- Action: Those with candidate recommendations should contact Dana at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).



## minutes

### **Director's Report**

Lucas said The External Relations committee is working on educating legislators about the NWS Commission. Securing state funding is a priority this session. MRCs are working to obtain letters from their county commissioners/councils that express the importance of MRCs to their counties. Letters are being sent to state legislators.

Lucas encouraged Commissioners 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.

Lucas thanked Jerry Masters for serving as governor appointee to the NWS Commission. Jerry's term on the NWS Commission expired in October 2018, he graciously stayed on until January while a replacement was being confirmed.

### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Anne said the NWS Foundation hired Don Hunger as the interim director for six months in Caroline Gibson's absence. The NWS Foundation is shifting focus to private donors including private businesses and corporations. 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](mailto:don@nwstraitsfoundation.org).
- Action: NWS Foundation Staff will be in contact with the MRCs on submissions to the MRC Opportunity Fund.

### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Karin said the Partnership secured funding to pursue a Mobilizing Funding Strategy, having a strategy is a requirement of all National Estuary Programs and is an element of the agency's strategic plan. . The current effort will assess the feasibility of activating the foundation, which is authorized in the authorizing legislation for the Partnership. Initially, the partnership is looking to support Near Team Actions in the Action Agenda by developing relationships and seeking private sector support. .

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment.



## minutes

### **MRC reports**

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

### **Clallam**

Alan said Kathy Cooper resigned in December 2018 and the MRC has a vacancy. Forage fish sampling was conducted at Cline Spit in January. The Clallam MRC is in the process of having the County Commissioners declaring March the "Oil Spill Preparedness Month".

### **Island**

Elsa said the MRC has two new members; Jodi Crimmins and Randy Berthold. The MRC is now producing a quarterly newsletter to the Board of County Commissioners. The MRC will be participating in vegetation plantings at the newly-restored beaches at Sunlight shores.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff said Kate Dean was replaced by Greg Brotherton as the new BOCC commissioner assigned to the MRC. The MRC's eelgrass buoy ad appeared in the January issue of 48° North regional boating magazine, which will be distributed free at the Seattle Boat Show. Planning has begun for 2019 rain gardens.

### **San Juan**

Christina said the MRC established a membership subcommittee to address the current vacancies. 25 people will be volunteering at the Be Whale Wise booth at the Seattle Boat Show including MRC members and partners. A subcommittee has been formed to perform an initial review of the Marine Stewardship Area Plan.

### **Skagit**

Pete said applications are now being accepted for the Salish Sea Stewards training and are available on the Skagit MRC website. The application deadline is March 1. Fidalgo Bay Day is scheduled for August 24, 2019. Paul Dinnel recently completed a report on Olympia Oyster Restoration in Fidalgo Bay.

### **Snohomish**

Paul said the MRC continues to collaborate with the Snohomish Conservation District, who recently received a grant to study commercial kelp harvesting in the northern Puget Sound area. The MRC plans to have a booth at Sound Waters University 2019.

### **Whatcom**

Austin said the MRC has two vacancies, an economic and conservation seat. The February MRC meeting will be a retreat. MRC intern Amanda Weiss is continuing to lead the forage fish surveys on behalf of the MRC. The MRC is brainstorming possible projects and consulting with Dana Oster.



## minutes

### **Business items**

#### **MRC grants**

Sasha thanked MRCs for getting quarterly reports in on time and said Commission staff are preparing for the next round of awards and developing the request for proposals that will be issued in the spring of 2019, and coordinating with Dept. of Ecology administrators of the online grant management system (EAGL).

#### **Kelp project update**

Dana said a survey was created and sent out to people in the kelp community to prioritize data gaps relating to kelp and kelp management.

- Action: Those interested in taking the survey or know people who work with kelp that should participate in the survey please contact Dana at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).

#### **February 22 Commission meeting**

Lucas said due to the NWS Initiative Retreat moving to March, there will be a NWS Commission meeting on February 22 over WebEx.

#### **Pinto Abalone support letter**

The Science Advisory Committee recommended the Commission write a letter to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife supporting the state listing of pinto abalone as endangered.

- Motion: Alan motioned to have the NWS Commission write the letter, Jeff seconded and the NWS Commission agreed by consensus.

#### **Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) presentation**

Jay Krienitz and Tish Conway-Cranos, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), presented on the ESRP small grants program designed to support smaller projects, which don't compete well in large-scale restoration grant programs.

#### **Round table**

There was no discussion.

\* The next Commission meeting will be on February 22, 2019 over WebEx.



## 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/>



## minutes

### **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 20<sup>th</sup> 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**



## minutes

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](mailto: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](mailto: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.



# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.



## minutes

**May 31, 2019 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM**

**WebEx – Conference call**

**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

### **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island -Vice Chair), Tom Cowan, Christina Koons (San Juan), Phyllis Bravinder (Skagit-alternate), Franchesca Perez (Snohomish), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Ron Thom, Chris Castner, Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership) , Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

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

**Others in Attendance:** Tanya Roberts (Puget Sound Institute), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate)

**Absent:** Nan McKay, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson)

### **Opening and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

### **NWS Commission - committee reports**

#### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee recommended approval of the amount budgeted to MRCs for the 2019-2020 grant cycle in the amount of \$91,000, the Northwest Straits (NWS) Commission approved by consensus. A joint meeting of the NWS Commission and NWS Foundation Executive Committees will be held June 7 in Port Townsend.

- Motion: Ron made a motion to approve \$91,000 to each MRC in the 2019-20 Commission budget, Alan seconded and the NWS Commission agreed by consensus.

#### **External Relations Committee**

Tom said the committee met in person on May 24 at Padilla Bay. The committee discussed Lucas and Christina's recent trip to Washington DC for Puget Sound Day on the Hill. They also discussed key areas to focus on over the next year, which included communication strategies.

#### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron said the committee is working on finding a replacement for Hugh Shipman who will be leaving the committee upon his retirement from the Department of Ecology. Science Advisory Committee members will be signing their own Conflict of Interest forms. The vital sign refresh will be implemented in the 2022 Action Agenda.



## minutes

### **MRC reports**

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <https://bit.ly/2W7ST9L>

#### **Clallam**

Alan said the MRC's marine trades' position changed to a citizen at large position. The MRC held elections and had no leadership changes, but will be assessing recruitment for future leadership roles. Five students from Port Angeles High School and Peninsula College were selected for their summer internship program. Forage fish sampling was conducted at Cline Spit May 7 and at Elwha Beach and Ediz Hook May 9.

#### **Island**

Elsa said Phill Dionne (WA Department Fish Wildlife) presented at the May 7 MRC meeting on forage fish and smelt fishing practices and regulations. The MRC is wrapping up their classroom-based art contest that accompanied the *Discover Our Island Shores* video by Florian Graner. The MRC is recruiting volunteers to form teams which will be assigned to specific beaches for forage fish monitoring.

#### **Jefferson**

Jefferson submitted a written report. The MRC installed their first 2019 rain garden on April 30 in uptown Port Townsend. Their Digging for Dinner event on May 10 was a great success and 38 attendees. On April 22, volunteers and staff spread 112 bags of clean Olympia oyster cultch in the lagoon area of Discovery Bay to provide substrate for oyster larvae.

#### **San Juan**

Christina said the MRC took part in the Anacortes Boat Show (May 16-19) to help with boater education efforts as part of Be Whale Wise and also to promote the whale warning flag. Volunteers from Whatcom and Skagit MRCs also helped. The Plastic Free Salish Sea subcommittee continued to meet through April in the lead up to the Talking Trash Community Forum.

#### **Skagit**

Phyllis said Fidalgo Bay Resort is reserved for Fidalgo Bay Day on August 24, 2019. The MRC successfully completed the 2019 Kids of the Beach Program: 50 Conway students with 25 volunteers performed research activities at Fidalgo Bay Resort beach on May 1, and on May 2, 50 La Conner students with 25 volunteers performed research activities at the Lone Tree Point.

#### **Snohomish**

Franchesca said the MRC is working on the roll out of their [MyCoast](#) marketing effort. A final draft of the MyCoast marketing and communications graphics developed by EnvirolIssues Inc. was completed in early May. The MRC is working on analyzing nearshore restoration project data from before and after the restoration. The MRC will lead another year of crabber education.



### **Whatcom**

Bob said an extensive amount of garbage was found on the shoreline of Drayton Harbor. MRC staff met with Department of Natural Resources staff who will assist with the cleanup and disposal in July/August. Dr. Paul Dinnel visited the MRC's Olympia oyster test plots in North Chuckanut Bay and provided suggestions on the monitoring that should occur over the next couple of years.

### **Business items**

#### **MRC Conference**

The 2019 MRC Conference will be held November 15-16 in Snohomish County at the Courtyard by Marriott in Everett. The reception and dinner will be held down the street at the Angel of the Winds Arena in downtown Everett. More information will be available here: <http://nwstraits.org/2019-mrc-conference>.

A survey was emailed to NWS Initiative members to gauge interest in topics and solicit additional conference topics.

- Action: Those interested in contributing suggestions for speakers/sessions can contact Sasha at [horst@nwstraits.org](mailto:horst@nwstraits.org).

#### **Communication ad hoc committee**

An ad hoc Communications Committee is needed to provide input on a communication plan and develop some common messaging for the NWS Initiative. Pete Haase and Christina Koons have agreed to co-chair.

- Motion: Alan made a motion to create an ad hoc Communications Committee with Pete and Christina to serve as co-chairs, Tom seconded and the NWS Commission approved by consensus.
- Action: Those interested in joining the Communications Committee should contact Sasha at [horst@nwstraits.org](mailto:horst@nwstraits.org).

#### **June presentations**

At the June 28 NWS Commission meeting, MRCs will each make a 15-minute presentation on a project in their 2019-20 Commission grant proposal.

- Action: Those with questions should contact Nicole at [jordan@nwstraits.org](mailto:jordan@nwstraits.org).

#### **Strategic and operations plan summary**

Lucas plans to have the NWS Initiative Strategic and Operations Plans ready for approval at the June NWS Commission meeting.

#### **Puget Sound Day on the Hill**

Lucas is working on follow up from his recent trip to Washington DC for Puget Sound Day on the Hill. Lucas encouraged MRCs to continue doing their work and keep telling stories about their projects.



## minutes

### **Kelp Workshop update**

There is a kelp management workshop scheduled for June 13 in Olympia as part of the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan effort being led by the NWS Commission (funded by NOAA).

- Action: Those with questions on kelp should contact Dana at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).

### **High density rural housing growth across Puget Sound counties from 2011-2016**

Tanya Roberts, Puget Sound Institute, presented on a study regarding housing growth in Puget Sound. The study concluded that smaller counties are expanding outside of urban growth areas at a higher rate—this urban sprawl may have significant ecological impacts. Across all counties, most growth is occurring in urban growth areas. The NWS Commission discussed possible uses for the data in informing decision makers on where urban sprawl may impact conservation efforts in their counties.

### **Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC)/Tribal update**

Cecilia is working with San Juan MRC on scheduling a presentation on the Be Whale Wise flag project to the NWIFC. She is also discussing with Lucas how the NWS Commission and Tribes can continue to collaborate.

### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Laura said the Orca Task Force will meet June 3 to talk about climate change, how population growth will affect orca recovery and topics for the Partnership's Year Two report. The Partnership is incorporating more than six years of feedback about the Vital Signs and indicators to strengthen them in advance of the 2022 Action Agenda. The Partnership recently underwent several staffing changes through promotions and new hires. Learn more about the changes here:

<https://www.psp.wa.gov/staff.php>.

### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Lucas updated the group on behalf of the NWS Foundation. Tarrell Kullaway, Director of Philanthropy, is leaving the NWS Foundation—her last day will be June 11. Don is working closely with Lucas on the NWS Initiative Operations Plan.

### **Round table**

There were no announcements for the round table.

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment.

\* The next Commission meeting will be on June 28 in Snohomish County.\*



## minutes

**June 28, 2018 • 10:00am-3:00pm**  
**Snohomish County Campus Room 1F03, 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

### **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Alan Clark (Clallam, Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island, Vice-Chair), Ron Thom, Christina Koons (San Juan), Pete Haase (Skagit), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Nan McKay, Chris Castner, Franchesca Perez (Snohomish)

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

**Others in Attendance:** Dave Somers (Snohomish County Executive), Barbara Bennett (Island-alternate), Don Hunger (Northwest Straits Foundation), Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Kathleen Pozarycki (Snohomish MRC staff), Austin Rose (Whatcom MRC staff), Phyllis Bravinder (Skagit MRC member), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership alternate), Elisa Dawson (Snohomish MRC staff), Anna Toledo (Island MRC staff), Paul Clampitt (Snohomish MRC member), Maddie Beaudry (NOAA Hollings scholar), Gwendolyn Hannam (Island MRC member), Laura Gurley (Snohomish MRC member), Crystal Schmalz (Whatcom MRC volunteer), Cameron Caldwell (Outreach Director for Office of U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell)

**Absent:** Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Tom Cowan, Bob Cecile (Whatcom)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and introduced Cameron Caldwell, NW WA Outreach Director for Office of U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell. Cameron confirmed Senator Cantwell's support for the Northwest Straits Initiative.

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

### **Presentations**

Each MRC presented a project for the upcoming year that was submitted in their grant proposal to the NWS Commission. The NWS Commission and other attendees provided feedback during a question and answer period following each presentation. In addition, there was a presentation from a NOAA Hollings Scholar working on a project in collaboration with NOAA and the NWS Commission.

1. **Clallam MRC, Alan Clark – Kelp Monitoring Project**
  - a. Alan presented on the MRCs kelp monitoring project, which aims to provide the Salish Sea International Kelp Alliance with useful spatial trend data. The monitoring efforts are expected to continue for at least a decade. The goals are to use the science in support of decision-making and to promote environmental stewardship.
  - b. The group discussed the importance of the surveys and agreed the recent kelp workshops organized by the NWS Commission are very useful. Continued collaboration is important.
2. **San Juan MRC, Christina Koons – San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area Plan Update**



## minutes

- a. Christina presented on the San Juan MRC's Marine Stewardship Area Plan which consists of six top strategies: reduce toxins entering the food web, foster a stewardship ethic in residents and visitors, manage activities to reduce harm to marine habitat and water quality, reduce the risk of large oil spills, recover bottomfish species and preserve marine access and views.
  - b. The group discussed next steps of updating the Marine Stewardship Area Plan and potential communication and outreach opportunities throughout the San Juan Islands.
3. **NOAA Hollings scholar, Maddie Beaudry-Local ecological knowledge of kelp in the San Juan Islands**
  - a. Maddie introduced her project to harvest local ecological knowledge on bull kelp to illustrate distribution in Puget Sound. Goals of the project include identifying factors contributing to bull kelp loss and informing future kelp conservation and recovery planning.
  - b. The audience praised Maddie's efforts and offered to send her potential contacts to interview with those familiar with historical kelp beds in the Salish Sea. Those with any historical knowledge or a potential contact, should email Maddie at [madeline.beaudry@noaa.gov](mailto:madeline.beaudry@noaa.gov).
4. **Island MRC, Gwendolyn Hannam-Community Engagement Through Creosote Identification**
  - a. Gwendolyn presented on the MRC's project on identifying creosote debris on private property in Island County as a way to engage the community in shoreline protection. The MRC intends to use MyCoast, a citizen science application, to increase community understanding of the impacts of creosote, how to identify it, and how to report it.
  - b. The audience noted that several MRCs are involved in creosote-related projects and encouraged MRCs to work together on similar projects to share lessons learned and techniques.
5. **Snohomish MRC, Laura Gurley-Prioritizing Pilings in the Snohomish Estuary**
  - a. Laura presented on the MRC's project to identify and prioritize creosote pilings in the Snohomish Estuary. The project aims to map the location of the pilings on public land through desktop GIS analysis and develop a prioritization process, gather data, and prioritize pilings.
  - b. The group discussed benefits of having a toolkit for creosote prioritization projects that could be used by other MRCs.
6. **Skagit MRC, Pete Haase - Salish Sea Stewards**
  - a. Pete presented on the Salish Sea Stewards, a program to train volunteers to support Skagit MRC and other local marine projects. The program was derived from WSU Beach Watchers and began with a pilot season in 2014. Each year the program provides at least 50 hours of training to volunteers. Volunteers then contribute at least 40 hours each to projects in return.
  - b. The Commission discussed the value of training volunteers specifically for MRC project support and issues in maintaining similar programs, including capacity to administer the programs, which differ by county.



## minutes

### 7. **Whatcom MRC, Crystal Schmalz-North Sound Stewards**

- a. Crystal, Whatcom MRC volunteer, presented on Whatcom MRC's new volunteer training program, North Sound Stewards. The program was set up to train volunteers specifically in support of MRC and other citizen science projects. The MRC looked at similar programs, such as Skagit MRC's Salish Sea Stewards volunteer training program.
- b. The audience discussed the benefits of the program and how the program differs from other volunteer training programs.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Business Items**

- The 2019-2020 NWS Commission budget was approved by consensus. This decision included allowing flexibility in the contractual budget line item to accommodate varying options in creating a NWS Initiative project database, populating the database and for use on other needs, such as communications.
- The NWS Commission 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and 2020 Operations Plan were approved by consensus.
- The NWS Commission and Foundation Executive Committees held a joint meeting in June where they discussed how to better collaborate and coordinate in support of the NWS Initiative. The group agreed the joint meetings are essential and should be held regularly.
- NWS Foundation update: Don Hunger will serve as the Foundation's new director as of July 1 and Caroline Gibson is now the Director of Partnerships for the NWS Foundation. The 2019 MRC Opportunity Fund and Boeing Storm water grants were awarded.
- The 2019 MRC Conference will be held November 15-16 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Everett. Ideas for conference topics or presenters can be forwarded to Sasha Horst at [horst@nwstraits.org](mailto:horst@nwstraits.org). Questions on lodging, registration and logistics can be forwarded to Nicole at [jordan@nwstraits.org](mailto:jordan@nwstraits.org).

\*The next Commission meeting will be on July 26, 2019 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM by WebEx Conference Call\*



# minutes

**July 26, 2019 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM**  
**WebEx – Conference call**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

## **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island -Vice Chair), Tom Cowan, Christina Koons (San Juan), Pete Haase (Skagit), Ron Thom, Chris Castner, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Mike Ehlebracht (Snohomish Alternate)

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

**Absent:** Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Franchesca Perez (Snohomish), Nan McKay, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

## **Opening and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

## **NWS Commission - committee reports**

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee recommended a change to the committee description to clarify their role in providing advice, guidance and recommendations to the Northwest Straits (NWS) Commission .

- Motion: Tom motioned to approve the changes to the committee description, Elsa seconded and the NWS Commission approved by consensus.

### **External Relations Committee**

Tom said the committee is tentatively scheduled to meet in September. The committee would like see continued project site visits for local elected officials and has recommended several action items to reach local and regional media, larger local audiences, and audiences outside the NWS area.

### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron said the committee is seeking a replacement for Hugh Shipman, who has retired from the Department of Ecology. The committee recommended a contact for Commission staff to consult with about databases as they explore the creation of a project database. They also recently worked with Dana to review the 2019-2020 MRC grant project proposals.

## **MRC reports**

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <https://bit.ly/2ZnSP8b>

## **Clallam**

Alan said volunteers conducted forage fish sampling at Cline Spit, Elwha Beach and Ediz Hook. In May the Marine Trades position on the MRC was changed to an At-Large position. The monitoring efforts of the pigeon



## minutes

guillemot breeding colonies started at 12 sites. The internship program is now in full swing. The MRC continued the sampling of shellfish biotoxins every other week in July.

### **Island**

Elsa said volunteers are conducting kelp surveys at three sites: Possession Point, Ebey's Landing, and Polnell Point. Gregg Ridder presented on the 2018 eelgrass data at the July 2 MRC meeting. Governor Jay Inslee visited Cornet Bay on July 17. Several project partners and MRC volunteers attended. Click this link for the article about the visit from the Governor's office: <https://bit.ly/2LVBfVr>.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff said Shannon Davis, Anna Bachmann and Al Bergstein resigned from the MRC. The MRC held a Shellfish Aquaculture Educational Forum on June 28. The event had 76 attendees, 8 speakers and 2 staff attending. The MRC is planning to write up a summary report to share with the Board of County Commissioners and the NWS Commission.

### **San Juan**

Christina said the MRC hosted screenings of the new Patagonia film "Artifishal" on Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Island. These collectively attracted around 150 members of the community and the MRC included time for discussion after the film, including information about the value of hatchery fish in salmon recovery. New Be Whale Wise material will be available soon.

### **Skagit**

Pete said the Kids on the Beach program is now complete. The program details and recommendations will be compiled into a final report that will be used to help expand the program to other schools next year. The MRC is getting ready for their popular Fidalgo Bay Day event on August 24 and are seeking volunteers to help with a wide variety of tasks and activities for the event.

### **Snohomish**

Mike said the MRC is working on outreach for the MyCoast App project. Rack cards and posters for the marketing campaign were finalized on June 21 and 4,000 were distributed to nearly 20 organizations in the county. The MRC is providing comments on the Geographic Response Plan for the Department of Ecology.

### **Whatcom**

Bob said Darcy Bird, Oil Spill Preparedness Planner with Ecology's Spill Program will be the guest speaker at the August 1 MRC meeting. BP will be partnering with the MRC to conduct beach clean ups from Point Whitehorn to Neptune Beach on August 2. The MRC will have a booth at Bellingham SeaFeast on September 21.



# minutes

## **Business items**

### **Kelp update**

Kelp monitoring season is in full swing. Most MRCs have conducted their late June or early July surveys. [KoBo ToolBox](#), a web platform for data ingestion developed for the MRC project by a volunteer in Clallam County, is live and receiving kelp survey data. The Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan should be ready for public comment in October.

### **Olympia oyster call**

Dana said she participated in the Olympia oyster call coordinated by Puget Sound Restoration Fund and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. An Olympia oyster story map featuring several MRC projects is available at <http://tjuanariver.trnerr.org/oystermapping/>.

### **Hollings Scholar update**

Maddie Beaudry, the NOAA Hollings Scholar, wrapped up her project, concluding with a presentation at Padilla Bay of her work. The presentation can be accessed by this link (start at minute 12): <https://vimeo.com/350200005/2e81098399>

### **Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference**

Commission staff plan to be involved in the 2020 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference in a variety of ways, including chairing and speaking at sessions and volunteering at the event.

### **Governor Inslee visit**

Governor Inslee visited the Island MRC restoration site at Cornet Bay on July 17. Several Island MRC members, NWS Commission and Foundation staff attended.

### **SoundIQ**

Nicole and Dana met with Ann Stark, staff for City of Bellingham, and Suzanne Shull to assess the features of SoundIQ and learn options in incorporating possible new features to the application. They are now working on assessing the layer menu and rewording content to make the MRCs role in SoundIQ clearer.

### **MRC Conference**

The 2019 MRC Conference will be held November 15-16 in Snohomish County at the Courtyard by Marriott in Everett. The reception and dinner will be held nearby at Angel of the Winds Arena. A conference planning committee is developing the agenda. More information will be available here: <http://nwstraits.org/2019-mrc-conference>. For information on logistics contact Nicole at [jordan@nwstraits.org](mailto:jordan@nwstraits.org).

### **MRC grant proposals—review and approval**

Lucas presented the list of MRC proposals and requested approval to move forward while allowing flexibility to make amendments as needed. The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the MRC project list.



## minutes

- Motion: Pete moved to approve the MRC grant proposals. Elsa seconded and the NWS Commission approved by consensus.

### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Karin shared at the following updates:

- [National Estuaries Week](#) is September 14-21. A toolkit is available that provides social media and event planning resources, and you can register local events online.
- Larry Epstein started as the Partnership's new Deputy Director.
- The Partnership launched an online platform for sharing information and stories called [Puget Sound Info](#). The platform includes: a revitalized, interactive [Vital Sign website](#), the new [Action Agenda Tracker](#), a revitalized [National Estuary Program \(NEP\) Atlas](#), and a [common Data Center](#).
- The Protect and Restore America's Estuaries Act, a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Program ([HR 4044](#)) was introduced in the US House of Representatives in July.
- The Partnership's [support letter](#) for the PUGET SOS Act ([HR 2247](#)) is available. Those interested in signing on to the letter of support can contact Denise Ross at [denise.ross@psp.wa.gov](mailto:denise.ross@psp.wa.gov) to provide an electronic signature.

### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Lucas updated the group on behalf of the NWS Foundation.

- The NWS Foundation is soliciting sponsorships for the MRC Conference. If you know of a business/individual who might be interested in sponsoring, please contact Caroline at [gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org).
- The NWS Foundation is seeking long-term investment from the maritime industry, specifically businesses headquartered in Puget Sound. Suggestions can be directed to Caroline at [gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org).
- Contracts are being developed for the new MRC Opportunity Fund awards. Questions should be directed to MRC staff.

### **Round table**

The group discussed interest in having each MRC represented on the NWS Foundation board.

The group discussed expanding the Plastic Free Salish Sea materials for use for all MRCs. Those interested should contact Frances Robertson at [francesr@sanjuanco.com](mailto:francesr@sanjuanco.com).

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment.

\* The next Commission meeting will be on August 23 at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Clallam County.\*



## minutes

**August 23, 2019 • 10:15 AM-2:45 PM**  
**Red Cedar Room, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Center, Clallam County**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

### **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island-Vice Chair), Tom Cowan, Christina Koons (San Juan), Pete Haase (Skagit), Ron Thom, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership Alternate), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Nan McKay

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

**Absent:** Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Franchesca Perez (Snohomish), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Chris Castner

**Others:** Marta Green (Puget Sound Recovery Coordinator for San Juan County), John Cambalik (Coordinator for Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network), Mike Doherty (Clallam MRC member), Robert Knapp (Clallam MRC member), Alisa Taylor (Clallam MRC Intern), Helle Andersen (Clallam MRC Staff), Lyn Muench (Clallam MRC member), Cheryl Lowe (Jefferson MRC staff), Carrol Hull

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

### **NWS Commission - committee reports**

#### **Executive Committee**

Elsa said the committee received an update on the planned project database. Several MRC members, NWS Commission, and NWS Foundation representatives attended Governor Jay Inslee’s visit to the Cornet Bay restoration site. The committee agreed the Commission should sign on to the support letter for PUGET-SOS Act.

#### **Science Advisory Committee**

Dana said the committee is still seeking social science guidance on effectiveness of education and outreach projects and is also seeking a shellfish biologist to join the committee. On October 1, Dana is presenting to the Puget Sound Partnership’s Social Science Advisory Committee on understanding and monitoring social impacts.

#### **External Relations Committee**

The committee would like to work with other MRCs in the future to organize project site visits with elected officials and leaders. Contact Lucas if you have ideas.

#### **Communication Committee**



Christina said the committee met and discussed communication staff responsibilities across the NWS Initiative. The committee's purpose is to serve as communication advisory role to the NWS Commission. The committee is seeking representatives from other MRCs to participate. Contact Sasha if interested.

### **Director report**

Lucas delivered the following director updates:

- He is tracking updates on the Partnership's proposed Day on the Hill in Olympia, tentatively scheduled for October 8.
- Don and Lucas are working with Snohomish MRC to plan a tour of the Snohomish Estuary for partners, local leadership, decision makers and others. The tour will highlight the work of the NWS Initiative. The site visit is scheduled for September 25. Site visits are part of objective 4.3 in the NWS Initiative's Operations Plan.
- Lucas noted that Puget Sound was designated a [National Maritime Heritage Area](#) and a celebration will be held August 29<sup>th</sup> in Tacoma.

### **Business items**

#### **Kelp**

Dana Oster and other partners developing the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan presented to Department of Ecology staff to discuss what Ecology's role can be in kelp conservation and recovery. For more details contact Dana Oster at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).

#### **MRC symposium**

An MRC project symposium is tentatively scheduled for January 8, 2020 at Padilla Bay. The symposium is intended to bring together members and staff from all seven MRCs to share project ideas, lessons learned, MRC networking, and regional project development. For more information, contact Dana at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).

#### **MRC Conference**

The 2019 MRC Conference will be held November 15-16 in Snohomish County at the Courtyard by Marriott in Everett. The reception and dinner will be held nearby at Angel of the Winds Arena. A conference planning committee is developing the agenda. Conference site: <http://nwstraits.org/2019-mrc-conference>. Registration will be sent in mid-September. For information on logistics contact Nicole at [jordan@nwstraits.org](mailto:jordan@nwstraits.org).

### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Don provided the following updates:

- The NWS Foundation is focusing on fundraising and is cultivating the maritime industry for sponsorship.



## minutes

- The NWS Foundation is soliciting sponsorships for the MRC Conference. If you know of a business/individual who might be interested in sponsoring, please contact Caroline at [gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:gibson@nwstraitsfoundation.org).
- They are evaluating a restructuring of the MRC Opportunity Fund for 2020 as well as other ways to engage with the Foundation. For more information, contact Don at [don@nwstraitsfoundation.org](mailto:don@nwstraitsfoundation.org).
- The Seahorse Siesta restoration project, Island County has been postponed until next year, due to lack of adequate bids.

### **Oil Spill Consequences to San Juan County and Emergency Response Towing Vessels to Mitigate Risk**

Marta Green, Puget Sound Recovery Coordinator for San Juan County, presented on an oil spill risk consequences assessment in San Juan County. Marta discussed two studies that evaluated impacts to ecosystems and the economy and the cost of an emergency response towing vessel. To read the full assessment, [click here](#).

### **Afternoon welcome**

Robert Knapp, Environmental Planning Program Manager for Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, welcomed the group to the tribal center and said the tribe appreciates the opportunity to partner with the MRC on projects, particularly the intern program.

### **MRC reports**

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

### **Clallam**

Alan said Clallam MRC helped WA Department of Fish and Wildlife conduct their annual intensive sampling for forage fish at a total of 14 beaches. The MRC continued their pigeon guillemot monitoring efforts at the 12 sites and continued their shellfish biotoxin sampling every other week in July. Their annual intern celebration was held August 19.

### **Island**

Elsa said the MRC continued their forage fish monitoring. The MRC participated in Family Outdoor Discovery Day--MRC member, Gwendolyn Hannam, developed a felt board of a marine ecosystem to engage children. The MRC will host screenings of the "Discover Our Island Shores" film at the Coupeville and Oak Harbor libraries in September.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff said the MRC has five openings. The MRC completed kelp surveys at North Beach. MRC members cleaned the Port Hadlock voluntary no anchor zone buoys and lines so the buoys were more visible. A rain garden installation in Quilcene is now scheduled for September 24, with initial preparations underway. Plans are underway for the MRC booth at Wooden Boat Festival.



## minutes

### **San Juan**

Christina said Laura Jo Severson was elected to serve as the NWS Commission alternate representative. The MRC has contracted with Shew Design to produce the Plastic Free Salish Sea website design and branding for the whale wise campaign. The MRC hosted a booth at the San Juan County Fair with information on what they can do as individuals to help reduce the negative impacts on Southern Resident killer whales.

### **Skagit**

Pete said the Kids on the Beach pilot program is now complete and the MRC will be partnering with Padilla Bay NERR to administer and expand the program next year. The MRC continued their forage fish surveys at their main sites and index sites. There was a lot of spawning at the NW March's Point restoration site. Unfortunately, none of the surf smelt eggs were viable in the areas with no shading.

### **Snohomish**

The MRC submitted a written report. The MyCoast partner toolkit was finalized with digital collateral and draft content for use by partner agencies. The MRC's kelp team spent much of August completing surveys of Mukilteo, Edmonds and Hat Island. Several dates were identified for their fall and winter forage fish sampling season.

### **Whatcom**

Bob said the MRC conducted several beach clean ups. The MRC found three European green crab in Chuckanut Bay at the Whatcom MRC water quality sampling site. Whatcom Public Works staff and MRC staff took bracket water quality samples in Chuckanut Creek near the hotspot area for high fecal coliform counts.

### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Karin delivered the following Partnership updates:

- There were 200 signatures in the support letter for the Heck/Kilmer PUGET SOS bill, H.R. 2247. More information: summary of the [Act](#) and the [full text](#).
- There are several budget bills this session, one of which is for [Puget Sound Info](#). Also check out the [Action Agenda Tracker](#) and Puget Sound [Vital Signs](#) portal.
- The Partnership hired Chrys Bertolotto as Monitoring Network Coordinator and Katherine Wyatt as Assistant Science Director. They are still hiring for several positions, [click here for more information](#).

### **Life and Times of a Clallam Intern Presentation and Panel**

Alisa Taylor, Clallam MRC Intern, presented on her project surveying kelp forests in Clallam County. A panel discussion followed, with her Clallam MRC mentor Alan Clark and MRC staff Helle Andersen discussing the benefits and challenges of the internship program, lessons learned and how other internships can be incorporated into various projects.



# minutes

## **Roundtable**

There were no topics presented for roundtable discussion.

## **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

\*The next Commission meeting will be on September 27 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM by WebEx Conference Call\*



## minutes

September 27, 2019 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

WebEx – Conference call

Northwest Straits Commission meeting

### Attendees:

**Commission Members:** Tom Cowan, Ron Thom, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Karin Berkholtz (Puget Sound Partnership – alternate), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Chris Castner, Barbara Bennett (Island – alternate), Franchesca Perez (Snohomish)

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

**Absent:** Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island-Vice Chair), Nan McKay, Christina Koons (San Juan), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Pete Haase (Skagit)

**Others:** Phil Green (San Juan member), Claire Cook (Swinomish Indian Tribal Community staff), Neil Harrington (Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe staff), Angela Cruz (WA Sea Grant Hershman Fellow)

### Welcome and Introductions

Both the chair and vice-chair were unable to attend. Lucas opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

### NWS Commission - committee reports

#### **Executive Committee**

The committee recommended the NWS Commission adopt the newly-developed procedure for providing comments on proposed legislation. The committee agreed that Lucas should nominate Dr. Ron Thom for the 2020 Seattle Aquarium Conservation Research Award on behalf of the NWS Commission.

- Motion: Franchesca motioned to approve the new rules of procedure on providing comments on proposed legislation. Jeff seconded. The NWS Commission approved by consensus.

#### **External Relations Committee**

The committee provided feedback to Lucas on his upcoming presentation on the NWS Initiative at the WA Association of Counties Conference. The committee also discussed their legislative strategy for the upcoming session which begins in January.

#### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron said the committee recently discussed adding a social scientist to the committee and agreed on extending an invite to Dr. Kathleen Wolf, Research Social Scientist at the University of Washington. Dana is going to present an overview of the NWS Initiative and the Actions to Impact program to the Puget Sound Partnership’s Social Science Advisory Committee.

#### **Communication Committee**



## minutes

Sasha said the committee met twice and is working on messaging in support of the Strategic Plan objectives. The committee also helped reveal a need for clarification in the roles of NWS Initiative communication staff and where support can be provided to MRCs.

### **MRC reports**

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link: <https://bit.ly/2VtYqJ1>

### **Clallam**

Clallam submitted a written report. A new member joined the MRC, Tim Cochnauer, a retired fishery biologist. The MRC hosted a booth at Dungeness River Festival on September 27 with a theme of crabber outreach. Forage fish volunteers monitored three locations in September: Cline Spit, Elwha Beach and Ediz Hook. The MRC will hold a retreat in October.

### **Island**

Barbara said there are two upcoming Sea Level Rise Forums. The MRC is working on their own communication plan. Forage fish monitoring was re-initiated at Ala Spit, Cornet Bay, and Glendale, and is planned to start at Seahorse Siesta in November. Volunteers have completed summer bull kelp monitoring.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff said the MRC has five openings. The MRC installed a new raingarden in Quilcene on September 24. The MRC held a 'Searching for Seaweed' beach walk September 1 highlighting marine habitats and ecological connections through an educational program about seaweeds and sea grasses.

### **San Juan**

Phil provided the update for the MRC. The MRC is finishing up their outreach season for the Be Whale Wise Project. The MRC has contracted with Shew Design to produce the Plastic Free Salish Sea website design and branding for the campaign. Christina Koons and Frances Robertson attended a workshop to discuss the locations of Geographic Response Plans in San Juan County.

### **Skagit**

Skagit submitted a written report. The Kids on the Beach program completed its second year and the MRC will be partnering with Padilla Bay NERR to administer and expand the program next year. The MRC continued their forage fish surveys at their main sites and index sites. They found significant forage fish forage spawning at the Northwest March's Point restoration site.

### **Snohomish**

Franchesca said forage fish monitoring dates are set for their fall and winter forage fish sampling season. The MRC held their annual Summer Picnic at the Mukilteo Rose Hill Community Center on August 21. The MRC completed their MyCoast marketing campaign. Since the campaign began, 129 new users are



## minutes

using the MyCoast app and 364 reports were submitted. The MRC's kelp team wrapped up the monitoring season.

### **Whatcom**

Bob said the MRC will have several openings coming up in January. Austin Rose, Whatcom MRC staff, will be on maternity leave starting in October. The MRC is presenting to their county council's Surface Water Work Session on November 20 for their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. An intern was chosen to work as the MRC Forage Fish survey coordinator and act as the point person for the monthly forage fish surveys.

### **Zooplankton Monitoring**

Claire Cook presented the Swinomish Indian Tribal Communities' Crab Abundance Monitoring Program (CAMP) which seeks to fill extensive gaps in knowledge of early life history phases of Dungeness crab in Puget Sound. Floating light traps are used to attract the larval crab (zooplankton) to the monitoring traps. Deployment of the light traps are supported by citizen science. [Click here for the method manual.](#)

### **Business items**

#### **Operations Plan review**

Lucas said NWS Commission staff reviewed progress on the Operations Plan. The plan is intended to be a working document which will assist in tracking implementation of the Strategic Plan.

#### **Snohomish Estuary tour**

Lucas said the Snohomish MRC hosted a boat tour with the NWS Foundation and NWS Commission. The tour showcased the MRCs restoration projects and was a celebration of their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

#### **MRC Conference**

The conference will be held on November 15-16, 2019 at the [Courtyard by Marriott](#) in downtown Everett, with the Friday evening dinner and reception nearby at the [Edward H. Hansen Conference Center](#) (adjacent to Angel of the Winds Arena). Registration deadline is October 21. Contact Nicole with any questions on logistics at [jordan@nwstraits.org](mailto:jordan@nwstraits.org).

#### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Lucas provided an update on behalf of the NWS Foundation:

- Caroline is working on MRC conference sponsorships.
- The Opportunity Fund getting a makeover in 2020. Guidelines and grant amounts will be based on donations raised and funding available at time of solicitation. Don and Caroline will visit the MRCs this winter.
- Caroline is the primary contact to the NWS Foundation for MRC matters.

#### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Karin delivered the following Partnership updates:



## minutes

- Puget Sound Day on the Sound (a mini-Puget Sound Day on the Hill) is scheduled for October 8 at the Puyallup Tribal Youth Center in Tacoma. See the [save the date](#) from the Puget Sound Partnership.
- Discussions about the EPA funding model are starting. Expect more on this over the coming months.
- The NWS Commission's base award was approved by EPA and will go into effect October 1.

### **Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission/Tribal update**

Cecilia provided the following tribal updates:

- Comments on the EPA proposed repeal of WA Water Quality Standards were being accepted through October 7, 2019. More information can be [found here](#).
- The Southern Resident Killer Whale Task Force is scheduled to meet on October 7 at UW Longhouse, Seattle WA. [More information here](#).
- Save the date for [Billy Frank Jr. Pacific Salmon Summit](#): November 5, 2019. Squaxin Island Tribe, Shelton, WA.

### **Roundtable**

There were no topics presented for roundtable discussion.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

\*The next Commission meeting will be on December 6 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM by WebEx Conference Call\*



# minutes

**December 6, 2019 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM**

**WebEx – Conference call**

**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

## **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island-Vice Chair), Tom Cowan, Ron Thom, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Chris Castner, Franchesca Perez (Snohomish), Nan McKay, Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Pete Haase (Skagit)

**Commission Staff:** Lucas Hart, Nicole Jordan, Sasha Horst

**Absent:** Christina Koons (San Juan), Bob Cecile (Whatcom)

**Others:** Elizabeth Kilanowski (Whatcom member), Phil Green (San Juan member), Don Hunger (NWS Foundation Director), Dr. Alejandro Acevedo-Gutierrez (Western Washington University)

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

## **NWS Commission - committee reports**

### **Executive Committee**

The committee recommended the NWS Commission prioritize the following with existing funds; hiring an ecosystem coordinator, contracting for professional communication plan development and reviewing MRC project supply needs.

The committee also recommended the Commission provide comments to the EPA funding model.

- Motion: Nan moved to approve the recommendations on funding. Pete seconded. The NWS Commission approved by consensus.
- Motion: Tom moved to approve the NWS Commission make comments on the EPA funding model with recommendations that EPA fund stewardship and marine habitat, which encompass things such as volunteer training, public and electeds education, native shellfish restoration, marine vegetation restoration etc. An overarching theme of climate resiliency should be stressed. Nan seconded. The NWS Commission approved by consensus.

### **External Relations Committee**

Lucas met with Representative Rick Larsen's staff who articulated their interest in supporting the work of the NWS Commission. Lucas presented to the Washington State Association of Counties' Coastal Caucus and received several positive comments from the audience regarding



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the purpose and structure of the NWS Initiative. MRCs are encouraged to continue engaging with their local elected officials.

### **Science Advisory Committee**

Ron said the committee is reviewing their committee dates for 2020, building in capacity to support MRCs. They are also considering ways to integrate social impacts framework into the Actions to Impacts program.

### **Communication Committee**

Pete said the committee plans to spend time at the MRC Project Symposium considering ways the MRCs interact and communicate regarding their projects.

### **Northwest Straits (NWS) Foundation update**

Don provided an update on the NWS Foundation:

- They have a new board member, Lee Whitford. Those with ideas on board members with experience in administration/non-profit fundraising/communications should contact Don at [don@nwstraits.org](mailto:don@nwstraits.org).
- New staff: Brooke Friesen, Administrative Coordinator; and Melanie del Rasario, Nearshore Restoration Program Outreach Assistant.
- They are working on a grant proposal to fund a Kelp public service announcement campaign in partnership with the NWS Commission.

### **MRC reports**

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

### **Clallam**

Alan said the Clallam MRC held a retreat in October. Jeff Ward participated in the oil spill task force 2019 annual meeting and 2019 Salish Sea Shared Waters Forum in November. Forage fish sampling is continuing into winter.

### **Island**

Elsa said Linda Rhodes is completing her term on the MRC as a member but will continue to be a technical advisor. The MRC is working on their own communication plan. Forage fish monitoring is continuing into the winter at Hidden Beach, Ala Spit, Cornet Bay, and Seahorse Siesta.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff said the MRC has several applicants. The MRC installed a new raingarden in Quilcene. Neil Harrington will give a European Green Crab update at the December MRC meeting. Forage fish



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sampling was conducted at Fort Townsend in November but no eggs were found. MRC continuing study and discussion about recommendations for City of Port Townsend outfall pipe.

### **San Juan**

Phil provided the update for the MRC. The MRC held their annual retreat. Save-the-date notices were distributed for the Marine Managers' Workshop that the MRC will host in March 2020. The MRC is wrapping up the Whale Warning Flag study that aimed to look at the effectiveness of the flag to improve compliance levels of vessels with the Be Whale Wise guidelines and regulations.

### **Skagit**

Pete said Jamey Selleck resigned from the MRC. The MRC partnered with Padilla Bay NERR to administer the Kids on the Beach and Salish Sea Stewards programs—the MRC will still be managed by the MRC. The 2020 Fidalgo Bay Day will be August 29 at the Fidalgo Bay Resort—a subcommittee was formed to help plan and implement the event.

### **Snohomish**

Franchesca said Kathleen Pozarycki accepted a new position at Snohomish County as the Local Integrating Organization lead staff. The MRC held their annual retreat in November where they discussed the 2020 Annual Workplan, MRC Leadership, and connecting with local officials.

### **Whatcom**

Elizabeth said the MRC is recruiting for several positions and had a great turnout at their recent MRC meeting. The MRC held elections, results were Eleanor Hines as chair, Kristen Murray as vice chair, and Bob Cecile as NWS Commission representative.

### **Business items**

#### **Conference debrief**

The 2019 conference wrapped up and post-event survey results are available. Additional information from the conference was posted to the webpage at [www.nwstraits.org/2019-mrc-conference](http://www.nwstraits.org/2019-mrc-conference). This includes a gallery of photos, presentations and audio/video as it is available.

#### **Retreat facilitator and planning committee volunteers**

Lucas said preliminary planning is now underway for a 2020 NWS Initiative retreat, scheduled for March 26-27 at Padilla Bay Reserve. Hilary Wilkinson is secured as a facilitator. The planning committee is now Nan, Alan, Chris, Elsa, Lucas, Don and Sasha.

- Action: Those interested in joining the Retreat Planning Committee should contact Lucas at [hart@nwtraits.org](mailto:hart@nwtraits.org).



### **Database update**

The NWS Commission project database is moving forward with support from Richard Austin, a volunteer recruited through Clallam MRC. Commission staff will be working with Richard over the next several months to take the next steps to creating the database.

### **Puget Sound Day on the Hill**

The planning process has started for Puget Sound Day on the Hill. Lucas plans to attend. Those interested in more should contact Lucas at [hart@nwstraits.org](mailto:hart@nwstraits.org).

### **Kelp update**

The Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan draft is being completed and will be available for public comment within the next month. The comments will be incorporated into a final plan to be available in 2020. For more details contact Dana Oster at [oster@nwstraits.org](mailto:oster@nwstraits.org).

### **2020 meeting calendar**

The 2020 NWS Commission meetings were finalized and posted on [nwstraits.org](http://nwstraits.org).

### **Nicole leaving**

Nicole's last day with the NWS Commission is December 11. Nicole expressed her gratitude in working with the NWS Initiative and is moving to Central Washington, where she will be working with the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board.

### **Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) update**

Laura delivered the following Partnership updates:

- State of the Sound report available online at [stateofthesound.wa.gov/](http://stateofthesound.wa.gov/). The Partnership welcomes comments on the layout of the State of the Sound report.
- Puget Sound Day on the Hill is being planned--once the congressional calendar is released a date will be finalized.
- The Partnership is hiring an EPA Coordinator. For more information [click here](#).

### **Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission/Tribal update**

Cecilia provided the following tribal updates:

- A recap of the [Billy Frank Jr. Pacific Salmon Summit](#) was sent to the full NWS Commission.
- Lucas attended the Tribal Habitat Conference and Billy Frank Jr. Pacific Salmon Summit in October.

### **Student Research in Action: Harbor Seal Impacts on Salmon in the Salish Sea**

Dr. Alejandro Acevedo-Gutierrez, professor at Western Washington University, gave an update on a project by biology students to identify the potential impacts of harbor seals on local



## minutes

salmon populations. Studies revealed male seals consume more salmon over other available species while females consume less salmon over other species (sculpins, herring, etc. which include some juvenile salmon predators). A published paper documenting this work can be [found here](#).

### **Roundtable**

There were no topics presented for roundtable discussion.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

\*The next Commission meeting will be on January 31 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Coupeville Library in Island County\*