



**Meeting:** Northwest Straits Commission  
**Location:** WebEx Conference Call  
**Date:** February 28, 2020  
**Time:** 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

[To join the WebEx meeting, click here.](#) Enter your name and email address and click "Join."  
For audio conference, dial: 1-415-655-0001 or 206-207-1700, access code: 804 689 071

10:00-10:05	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> Approval of January minutes	Alan Clark, Chair
10:05-10:15	<b>NWSC committee reports</b> Executive Committee External Relations Committee Science Advisory Committee Ad hoc Communications Committee	
10:15-10:25	<b>NWIFC/Tribal update</b>	Cecilia Gobin
10:25-10:40	<b>Business items</b> Retreat planning (MRC questions and agenda) (Lucas) Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference sessions (Lucas) Ecosystem Coordinator hiring (Lucas) NWSI Conference: November 6-7 (Katie) Kelp monitoring (certification needs) (Dana) Kelp WebEx (Dana) MRC summit (Dana) Database development (Dana/Sasha) MRC contract amendments (Sasha)	Staff
10:40-10:50	<b>NWS Foundation update</b>	Caroline Gibson, NWS Foundation
10:50-11:00	<b>Puget Sound Partnership update</b>	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
11:00-11:20	<b>Green Crab update</b>	Emily Grason, Washington Sea Grant
11:20-11:50	<b>MRC reports</b>	MRC Representatives



## agenda

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11:50-11:55

**Round table**

All

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11:55-12:00

**Public comment**

All



**Executive Committee Meeting Notes  
February 3, 2020 • 11:00am-12:00pm  
Conference Call**

**Present:** Elsa Schwartz, Alan Clark

**Commission Staff/Support:** Sasha Horst, Lucas Hart, Katie Harris

**Absent:** Ron Thom, Tom Cowan, Jude Apple

**Derelict Vessel Bill –**

Lucas informed the committee that he provided testimony on HB2769 (companion SB6528), which is a state bill that aims to prevent derelict vessels.

**Billy Frank Jr. Coalition Update -**

Lucas is planning to bring Executive Committee questions to the Coalition's coordinator, Pegen Frank, to gather further information about member expectations and coalition objectives.

**Retreat -**

The Planning committee has begun developing an agenda with the help of our facilitator Hilary Wilkinson. One agenda topic has a strong focus on MRC support, which is also related to specific action items in the current operations plan. Questions have been posed to the MRCs to help guide this agenda topic. MRCs have been asked to respond to the questions by 3/16.

**NOAA Collaboration -**

Lucas and Chris Castner met with NOAA representatives to explore collaborative opportunities. He and Chris are evaluating the outcomes of the meeting and plan to follow up with NOAA. One topic that was discussed was the possibility of Veterans Corps providing some capacity to the Commission. Lucas is scheduling a call with program coordinators to gather more information.

**Job vacancy update -**

Lucas and Dana are reviewing Ecosystem Project Coordinator applications. This will be a full time 6-8 month position to assist on a variety of projects, including data analysis of regional monitoring and restoration work.

**Next meeting: March 2<sup>nd</sup>.**



**January 31, 2020 • 10:30 AM-3:00 PM**  
**Coupeville Library**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

**Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Chris Castner, Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island-Vice Chair), Nan McKay, Phyllis Bravinder (Skagit-Alternate)

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

**Absent:** Christina Koons (San Juan), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Pete Haase (Skagit) Tom Cowan, Ron Thom, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

**Others:** Phil Green (San Juan member), Barbara Bennett (Island – alternate), Laura Rivas (Puget Sound Partnership), Monica Montgomery (Jefferson MRC staff), Anna Toledo (Island MRC staff), Linda Ridder (President-Sound Water Stewards), Janet St. Clair (Island County Commissioner)

**Welcome and Introductions**

Alan Clark opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

**NWS Commission - committee reports**

**Executive Committee**

Elsa reported out on the Executive Committee. The committee is discussing an invitation to join the Billy Frank Jr. Salmon Coalition and the Commission submitted comments to the EPA on their current National Estuary Program (NEP) funding model review.

**Science Advisory Committee**

Dana reported that the committee is working on the meeting calendar and work plan for 2020. Looking forward to social scientist Kathy Wolf joining the committee this year. The committee is planning to generate a project priority list in case of new funding opportunities.

**External Relations Committee**

Lucas reported that the committee has a meeting scheduled in March. Main focus has been conversations with NOAA on shared priorities. Will have more information after March.

**Communication Committee**

Sasha updated the group on the status of a Request for Qualifications and Quotations (RFQQ) that will be posted by Ecology in early February. The RFQQ will solicit bids for a contractor to provide a communications audit and plan. The work is anticipated to be done during the late spring through summer, depending on the eventual contract timing.

**Director's report**



Lucas reminded the group that the Commission approved a policy in September that is part of the Rules of Procedure. He distributed copies of the current rules for the Commission to review and confirm approval at the next meeting in February.

The Governor's office has reappointed Nan McKay and Tom Cowan to serve on the Commission. They are now beginning a four-year term.

A new staff member for the Communication and Outreach Specialist position has been hired and will begin on February 3. Her name is Katie Harris. A position announcement for a temporary Ecosystem Project Coordinator was posted and is now closed. The review and hiring process is now underway. This position is estimated as a six-month position.

The 2020 planning retreat will be on March 26-27 at Padilla Bay. Hilary Wilkinson of Veda Environmental is facilitating. Lucas shared a draft version of advance questions for MRCs and some background information about the questions and the purpose, along with some guidance about how to approach them. The Commission discussed the questions and provided input for Lucas to revise the document before sending to MRCs. Lucas plans to send the questions directly to MRCs on Monday, February 3 with responses due by March 16 to allow time for all MRCs to discuss it as a group at their meeting.

#### **Presentation: Island MRC – Sea Level Rise Workshops**

Anna Toledo presented on the Island MRC's Sea Level Rise workshops. A copy of the presentation is available. Copies of the workshop presentations and sea level rise materials can be found [here](#). To focus on local actions during the workshops, Anna talked about local strategies such as building higher, moving houses back, and natural softshore protection. A key point made is that armoring is not meant to be flood protection, it's designed for erosion protection.

#### **Presentation: Sound Water Stewards**

Linda Ridder presented about the Sound Waters Stewards program, which provides training to volunteers in Island County to support Puget Sound community outreach, stewardship and citizen science. Sound Water Stewards has trained 720 volunteers and volunteers log more than 20,000 volunteer hours annually. The Sound Waters One-Day University is held the first Saturday in February, and Linda encouraged everyone to attend.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

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

Caroline Gibson provided an update on the Northwest Straits Foundation. The Foundation has operationalized their fundraising plan by quarter, and they are emphasizing individual and corporate giving, along with partnerships with business. The Foundation board has two new board members: Lee Whitford (Jefferson County) and Emily Schaller (San Juan County). Each brings a different skill set to the



board. The Foundation currently has a development position that is open until filled. The Opportunity Fund for 2020 has an estimated \$20,000 available, and the Foundation anticipates issuing a call for applications to MRCs in the next few months. A total of \$140,000 has gone out to MRCs since the Opportunity Fund was started.

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

Laura Rivas attended the meeting on behalf of the Partnership and provided a report. The Partnership is beginning a National Estuary Program evaluation process that requires a written report due in mid-March. A corresponding site visit will happen in June. Partnership staff will keep us informed about the process.

The federal National Estuary Program budget was approved with good news, as the Puget Sound geographic program was approved at \$33 million, which is up \$5 million from last year. How those funds will be programmed has not yet been determined.

Puget Sound Day on the Hill is coming up April 28-29, and Laura encouraged those who are able to attend to go. Information is available on their website at <https://www.psp.wa.gov/psdoth2020.php>.

#### **Welcome – Island County**

Island County Commissioner Janet St. Clair welcomed the group to Island County. She is interested in the science behind the work of the MRC and Commission, and how to talk to people about it. Island County has the largest contiguous shoreline of any county in the state so allocating resources and policy around shorelines makes sense, and she is always seeking to improve or add to the protection of the Salish Sea. Commissioner St Clair expressed her appreciation for the Commission and the work that it does.

In response to a question about the value of the local MRC, Commissioner St. Clair noted that to get good policy you must have good data and tell the story. She appreciates that the MRC is volunteer driven and non-partisan, and is a unique voice that provides information that isn't vested in protecting their job or turf. This is powerful regardless of where someone is on the political spectrum.

In addition to marine issues, she shared that the County is currently spending a lot of time on health care, launching a long-term expanded broadband effort, looking at growth management, and gearing up to conduct the 2020 census.

#### **Business items**

Dana updated the group about the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan and the comments submitted during the public comment period that ended January 22. She shared some of the input from public comment, both from individuals and organizations. There are other potential next steps and roles for the Commission moving forward. The lack of funding was recognized as an issue for implementing the Plan. The Washington Department of Natural Resources will plan to lead working groups for research and monitoring as well as policy and planning for the next two years.



The MRC symposium originally planned for January will be re-booted and scheduled for early April. Dana noted that we are hoping to schedule it as an annual event in January. She is seeking MRC feedback on the draft agenda, particularly to ensure that it will serve what the MRCs want. It is expected to be an opportunity to share information about current projects.

Lucas reported that some individuals have been discussing creation of a mitigation bank in Washington State, primarily to facilitate faster removal of creosote pilings. This is still in very early stages of discussion.

Lucas shared the Operations Plan and reviewed and focused on a short list of those items that are behind schedule or need additional focus. The Operations Plan will be part of the discussion at the upcoming retreat in March.

Lucas reported out on a few bills introduced in the WA State Legislature: HB2769/SB6528 on prevention of derelict vessels, SB6147 on shoreline stabilization, SB6454 on anadromous fish preservation, HB2549 on salmon recovery in the growth management act, HB2550 on net ecological gain, HJM40112 on international year of the salmon, and SB6213 on polystyrene product phase out.

Sasha reminded MRCs to watch for an update on the process for year two project proposals that will need to be done.

### **MRC reports**

Monthly reports for each MRC are available by visiting this link (MRC reports begin on p.12):  
[https://www.nwstraits.org/media/2902/nwsc-jan31\\_updated.pdf](https://www.nwstraits.org/media/2902/nwsc-jan31_updated.pdf)

### **Clallam**

Alan noted that the MRC has traditionally done oiled wildlife and HAZWOPER training, but they are re-thinking how they will carry out their oil spill training. The MRC is working with the county commissioners on climate resiliency. They currently have two open positions to be filled.

### **Island**

Elsa reported that MRC member Linda Rhodes has term limited out so they have a vacancy. Linda will remain involved as a non-voting science advisor to the MRC. The MRC is holding a retreat on February 18 and will be part of the Great Northwest Glass Quest ([www.thegreatnwglassquest.com](http://www.thegreatnwglassquest.com)) on February 14-23. In their forage fish sampling eggs were found in Hidden Beach samples. The MRC is working on feasibility and conceptual design for a restoration project at Hoypus Point or Possession Point.

### **Jefferson**

Jeff reported that Jefferson has seven new members and a new staff member, Monica Montgomery. There is some loss of institutional knowledge, but some very involved new members. A new forage fish



**Northwest  
Straits**  
COMMISSION

# minutes

monitoring site in Discovery Bay is currently on hold due to questions about site ownership. Planning for rain gardens to be installed in 2020 continues.

## **San Juan**

Phil reported that San Juan MRC has people at the Seattle Boat Show to talk to people and boaters and distribute the whale warning flag. A presentation on the project will be given at the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference in April, along with their Plastic Free Salish Sea as part of the film program and the Marine Stewardship Area Plan in the poster session. There is currently one vacancy on the MRC to be filled.

## **Skagit**

Phyllis reported that Kevin Anderson was appointed to replace Sarah Tchang from the Port of Anacortes, and Matt Castle replaces Todd Woodard from Samish Indian Nation. The MRC is partnering with Padilla Bay Reserve for Salish Sea Stewards and Kids on the Beach. Fidalgo Bay Day will be held on August 29, 2020.

## **Snohomish**

Snohomish MRC submitted a written report. The MRC has six new members, and have elected a new representative to the Commission, Sarah Brown. The MRC is finalizing a contract for their project to prioritize piling removal in the Snohomish River estuary.

## **Whatcom**

Bob reported that the MRC has six new member appointments to the MRC and two reappointments. The North Sound Stewards program kickoff event drew 25 people. The MRC is lining up their speakers for the 2020 public speaker series.

## **Roundtable**

Elsa mentioned that Restore America's Estuaries has a call for proposals for their summit out, which can be found online at <https://estuaries.org/events/2020-summit/>. Initiative session encouraged.

\*The next Commission meeting will be on February 28 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM by WebEx Conference Call\*





## Commission staff highlights- [February 2020]

**2020 Retreat** – The Northwest Straits Initiative retreat will be held March 26-27 at Padilla Bay. Katie sent registration information to all members of the Commission, the Foundation board, and staff from both organizations. Hilary Wilkinson will serve as the facilitator, and an agenda is currently being developed by a planning committee. MRCs received a set of questions from Lucas that are part of the preparation for retreat sessions. Responses are due back to Lucas by March 16. The retreat agenda is expected to be completed March 20 or 23.

**Kelp** – A 2019 kelp monitoring WebEx is scheduled for March 6 to review the data and how the season went. An in-person workshop on planning for the 2020 kelp monitoring season is scheduled for May 6, location TBD. The Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan revisions are wrapping up after incorporating feedback from the public review. The goal is to release the final plan in March.

**Communications** – Commission staff are exploring opportunities to work with a communications consultant to review communications strategies and create a communications plan. The Dept. of Ecology posted a Request for Qualifications and Quotations on February 7 and the bidding opportunity will close on March 4. Sasha has identified an evaluation committee to provide review of bids submitted, and a contract resulting from the bids is expected to start in May.

**Hiring** – Katie Harris is the new addition to the team as the Communications and Outreach Specialist. The posting for a short-term Ecosystem Coordinator closed the week of January 27. Dana and Lucas are conducting phone and in person interviews.

**MRC Symposium** – The Symposium is scheduled for April 3 at Padilla Bay. The goals of the event are 1) bring together members and staff to share near and long-term project ideas, 2) share nuts and bolts of how specific projects were started and funded, how they are run, challenges they found, lessons learned, 3) develop cross MRC collaboration, MRC networking, and regional project development.

**Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference** – Sasha, Dana, Lucas and Suzanne will attend the conference. Dana and Suzanne will be there to share the kelp survey project, Lucas will present on collaborative conservation and lead a citizen science session, and Sasha is serving on the volunteer coordination committee and as a social media captain for the event.

**Puget Sound Day on the Hill** – Lucas is planning to attend the event in Washington, DC in late April, and is currently scheduling meetings with members of the federal delegation and others to make effective use of his time in the area.

**MRC Lead Staff Meeting** – The MRC Lead Staff meeting will be held on June 18 at Padilla Bay.



## Commission staff highlights- [February 2020]

### **Meeting attendance –**

Lucas attended the Jefferson MRC meeting on Feb. 4.

Sasha and Katie attended the Whatcom MRC meeting on February 6.

Dana, Lucas and Katie attended the Island MRC retreat on February 18.

Dana and Lucas attended the North American MPA Network meeting February 25.

Lucas attended the Puget Sound Ecosystem Coordination Board meeting on Feb. 27.

## MRC Monthly Report – February 2020

**County:** Clallam

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Helle Andersen

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): In October Mike McHenry resigned from the Clallam MRC and in November Pete Schroeder resigned. In December Sissi Bruch retired as the mayor of City of Port Angeles and therefore as the City Representative on the MRC. The new City Representative is LaTrisha Suggs with Navarra Carr as alternate. The other positions have not been filled.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights): The February meeting will be held February 24<sup>th</sup>. Topics on the meeting agenda include: Emily Grason, Marine Ecologist and Crab Team Program Manager for WA Sea Grant, will present on the European green crab removal efforts planned for 2020; oil spill preparedness to be carried out in 2020; members to provide comments to the draft NWSC retreat agenda and the MRC questions provided by the NWSC; Port Angeles Harbor crabber outreach map; and an update of the 2020 internship program.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): None

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project, any new projects identified, project activities):

Forage Fish: Sampling was conducted at Cline Spit February 7<sup>th</sup> and at Ediz Hook February 20<sup>th</sup>.

2020 Internship Program: Public announcements of the spring internship program were posted February 6<sup>th</sup>. A press release was also submitted to the Peninsula Daily News. Helle Andersen will visit classes at the Peninsula College February 25<sup>th</sup>. The two intern projects are smolt trap on Tumwater Creek in Port Angeles and green crab trapping and removal in Neah Bay with Makah Tribe. Application due date is March 9, 2020. In addition, The Clallam MRC is working with the Port Angeles High School to identify one student to work on the video project.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.): None

**Photos:** none

## MRC Monthly Report – February 2020

**County:** Island

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Anna Toledo

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Ann Prusha joined Island County Department of Natural Resources as an Environmental Health Technician. She will be providing about 10 hours/week of administrative support to the MRC.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

Past Meetings/Events:

- February 1: MRC had a booth at Sound Waters University. Nicole Luce was awarded the 2020 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year award, hosted by MRC, Sound Water Stewards, and WSU Extension.
- February 4: MRC meeting (Camano) – Salmon recovery projects, project and outreach planning
- February 14-23: Great Northwest Glass Quest on Camano
- February 18: MRC Strategic Planning Meeting

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- March 1: Camano 101 – MRC will have booth
- March 3: MRC meeting – project planning
- April 3: Rain garden tour
- April 7: MRC meeting

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): None.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):  
Forage Fish: Regular sampling continues at Cornet Bay, Ala Spit, Hidden Beach, and Seahorse Siesta. Sampling at Glendale was re-established in January.

Seining: The MRC, supported by the Northwest Straits Foundation and Island County Lead Entity, is returning to conduct seining at Cornet Bay in 2020 and 2021. A great group of volunteers is seining about every two weeks from January-June.

Hoypus Point and Possession Point Restoration Feasibility: The MRC, Island County, NWSF, and WA State Parks is working with Blue Coast Engineering to conduct a feasibility study at both sites, and bring one site to conceptual design. A kick-off meeting was held to discuss project goals and timelines.

The Great Northwest Glass Quest: The MRC, funded through the NWSF Opportunity Fund, participated in The Great Northwest Glass Quest, hiding “clue balls” at Camano parks which, when found, are redeemed for hand-blown glass balls. The MRC posted clues on their website and the Island County DNR Facebook page. Successful clue ball finders met up with Elsa to receive their prize ball and hear a little bit about the MRC.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.): None.

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):



*MRC members and staff at Strategic Planning Meeting. Photo credit: Dana Oster*



*These successful Questers found MRC balls during The Great Northwest Glass Quest. Photo credit: Elsa Schwartz*

## MRC Monthly Report – February 2020

**County:** Jefferson

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Monica Montgomery

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

Nothing to report at this time.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

Past Events/Meetings:

- Jan 17 – Exec Committee meeting
- Jan 31 – NWSC meeting
- Feb 4 – MRC monthly meeting (20 members/staff, 9 guests). Scott Pearson, Senior Research Scientist with WDFW, presented on current research findings on “Pinnipeds abundance, distribution & diet”, with focus on harbor seals. Discussion items included updates on legislative session, project updates, and request for input on MRC retreat questions and symposium draft agenda.
- Feb 6 – NOSC Chumsortium meeting
- Feb 9 – Neil Harrington, Tribal rep, presented on “Biotoxins” at the Fort Worden Chapel
- Feb 17 – Adelma Beach forage fish sampling

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

- Feb 27 – FT forage fish sampling
- Feb 28 – Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network Meeting
- Mar 3 – MRC monthly meeting
- Mar 6 – MRC kelp data review WebEx
- Mar 24 – Exec Committee meeting

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

Nothing to report at this time.

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

1. Monitoring:

- a. **Fort Townsend:** Forage fish sampling will be done on Feb 27, 2020. This may be the final survey for this restoration site (potentially one more in March), as this marks the fifth year of monitoring post-restoration – waiting to hear back from Jason and Lisa.
- b. **Adelma Beach:** Forage fish sampling was done Feb 17, 2020.
- c. **Kelp:** Nothing to report.

2. Rain Gardens: Working with the city engineer to identify potential rain garden sites to collaborate on with the City of Port Townsend. Maintenance was performed on the rain garden at 1<sup>st</sup> Security Bank.
3. Education & Outreach: Intend to appoint a project lead at the March MRC meeting. Will be discussing member interest in Digging for Dinner, Wooden Boat Festival, Earth Day, etc.
4. Olympia Oysters: Permit authorized by Army Corps of Engineers to add cultch to Discovery Bay sites. Department of Ecology has determined that an Individual Section 401 certification will not be required and distribution of cultch can proceed as directed by the Corps. Working on permit from WDFW for transferring shells from Taylor Shellfish. Plan to add cultch at both the Powerline & Lagoon sites in Discovery Bay in April.
5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones: Lost a marker buoy at the end of Boat Haven, totaling two that have been lost in recent months.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

Forage fish monitoring: In communication with Lisa (WDFW) to potentially add a new forage fish Index Site at Dabob Bay on the Toandos Peninsula, where an MRC member has shoreline property.

PT sewer outfall: The subcommittee is editing its letter to the City of Port Townsend and waiting to see the city's upcoming presentation before finalizing and sending to the BoCC for approval.

Update on NW Straits Foundation projects:

NWSF Opportunity Fund: The Rain Garden training for landscape professionals and high-level volunteers will take place March 24<sup>th</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> at the Cape George Clubhouse. As part of this, a rain garden will be installed in collaboration with the WSU Extension Master Gardener Program and the Cape George community at a nearby site. Postcards were sent to 80 professional landscapers and as of Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 12 volunteers have signed up with a commitment to provide 10+ hours of volunteer service.

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):



## **MRC Monthly Report – February 2020**

**County:** San Juan County

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Frances Robertson

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

No changes to membership during February

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

February MRC meeting: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February

Quarterly LIO meeting: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February

MSA plan subcommittee meeting: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February

PFSS subcommittee meeting: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February

MRC Vice-Chair and NWSC Commissioner Christina Koons also participated in the State's Commercial Whale Watching licensing intergovernmental coordination meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup> in Seattle.

MRC Chair Karin Roemers-Kleven presented on the Plastic Free Salish Sea effort at Sound Waters University on Whidbey Island on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

No new funding updates to report

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

SRKW Outreach and education: The MRC participated in the Be Whale Wise booth at the Seattle Boat Show January 24 – February 1. MRC members Laura Jo Severson, Jeff Dyer and Kendra Smith along with MRC administrator Frances Robertson all assisted with educating boat show attendees on best boating practices around whales in the Salish Sea. In addition to the boat show effort the MRC also published a storyboard outlining the efforts of the County and the MRC over the years for Southern Resident killer whale stewardship. This storyboard was produced by communications fellow, Hillary Shedd and was made possible through funding from the Northwest Straits Foundation. The storyboard can be found here: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/h09XWPsvE876O/>

Plastic Free Salish Sea: The PFSS group comprising of MRC member and other community partners continued to work towards a number of projects. These included capital improvement project to install water fountains on San Juan and Lopez Islands –a project made possible through a local LTAC grant, and started the contracting work necessary for the next phase of the PFSS outreach efforts in the production of a dedicated website. The group also advertised for a research intern who will be assisting with the production of toolkits. The project lead, MRC Chair Karin Roemers-Kleven presented about the project at the Sound Waters University on February 1<sup>st</sup> on Whidbey Island. The group made the decision to not hold a workshop on Lopez this year and subsequently the grant will be amended in April to reflect this.



MSA Plan update: Planning for the 2020 Marine Managers Workshop is in full swing. Invitations to speakers and attendees were dispatched in early February and a draft agenda will be available by the end of the month. Efforts to obtain information related to the biodiversity targets identified in the 2007 plan continue with MSA intern Abigail Ames working to follow up with all those that have not yet responded to the survey request.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):



Be Whale Wise port signage distributed to ports and marinas willing to display the signs.



Another happy Be Whale Wise message sharer!

## MRC Monthly Report – February 2020

**County:** Skagit

**Month/Year:** February/2020

**Submitted by:** Tracy/Pete

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Betsy Stevenson was elected to serve as MRC Chair for a second term. Jay Lind will continue serving as interim MRC Vice-Chair until that position is filled.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

- **MRC Meeting Highlights- February 13:** The Committee provided feedback to the questions addressed to the MRCs for the NWSI 2020 retreat, reviewed the MRC Symposium agenda, and provided project updates.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

No updates.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project, any new projects identified, project activities):

- Salish Sea Stewards: Classes are free and will be held every Tuesday starting March 10<sup>th</sup> through May 12<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-5pm at Padilla Bay. The application deadline is March 1, 2020. Applications are available on the [MRC website](#). The training schedule is very close to being finalized. Last week the training announcement was posted online at all the local online news outlets including two local newspapers. So far only six people have registered for the training. Our goal is 20-25. Please help spread the word and share the link to the Salish Sea Stewards [Facebook](#) page.
- Fidalgo Bay Day: The event will be held Saturday, August 29, 2020 at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. Save the Date cards were distributed at the Storming the Sound Event in La Conner. The County Intern will take the lead in coordinating Fidalgo Bay Day this year. Jay Lind will continue to serve as Event Chair. The event planning subcommittee will be meeting soon to discuss task assignments, timeline, and budget. The Anacortes Green Club has agreed to help out with the kids' activities. Diver Laura will once again host the very popular virtual reality diving experience.
- Bowman Bay Restoration: Plant maintenance will start again in May or June. Monthly beach seining and forage fish surveys continue at this site. Lots of newly hatched surf smelt were caught in the seine net at the restoration site.
- Forage Fish Surveys: Surveys continue at the Bowman Bay, NW March's Point, and Kukatali Preserve restoration sites, as well as the three index sites (Similk Bay, Guemes Channel at Ship Harbor, and Samish Island). The County just hired a new intern who will be trained to take the lead on the surveys at the three index sites.
- Kids on the Beach: The program will start up again in April. Volunteers will be recruited to help with activities on the beach.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: Surveys started up again this month and will continue over the next month or two. The preliminary results from last year's experimental outplanting of younger and much smaller abalone indicated only a 10% survival rate compared to the 20-25% survival rate of the larger juvenile abalone outplants. However, the caveat is that it is much harder to find the smaller abalone in the rocks and algae than the larger abalone. They also might be staying

hidden beneath the rocks for protection until they get a little bigger. More monitoring is needed before any final conclusions can be made. Puget Sound Restoration Fund, in collaboration with Western Washington University, is applying for grant funding to establish abalone grow-out tanks in remote locations from the Manchester hatchery including the Shannon Point Marine Center. They are interested in working with local high school students and community volunteers to help take care of the abalone in the tanks.

- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Field work will likely start up again in April, 2020 through July. The monitoring will be reduced this year. The larger oyster beds will now only be monitored on a three year cycle. Paul Dinnel was interviewed for an [article about Olympia oyster restoration](#) in the United Press International. Paul has also been asked to present on Olympia oysters for Skagit MRC's Salish Sea Stewards training as well as Whatcom MRC's North Sound Stewards training.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys: There will be a kelp WebEx meeting on Friday March 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:30am-11:30am to review the MRCs' 2019 kelp monitoring season data. Surveys will likely start up again in June or July 2020.

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc)

**Photos** (share a few photos of recent projects—include project, photo credit and additional info):



## MRC Monthly Report – February 2020

**County:** Snohomish

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Elisa Dawson

**Membership/Leadership changes** (including new members, departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

Elisa Dawson continues to serve as MRC Program interim lead staff. Snohomish County Surface Water Management is working on filling the position for the MRC lead staff. The position was opened, and closed February 18<sup>th</sup>. Interviews will likely be in early March.

The Snohomish MRC has 6 people who have been appointed to the MRC. New Member profiles on the MRC and listed below:

Mike Sadler is a Microbiologist with roots to the outdoors. He grew up in Utah where he gained a passion for all things outside that is maintained to this day. Mike received his B.S. in Microbiology from Weber State University in Ogden, UT and his M.S. in Environmental Biology from Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, MO. Whether it is in the mountains, desert, or ozark rivers, Mike has been committed to local environmental issues. He has a passion for Science, conservation, sustainability and public education. In the past he has taught molecular genetics and microbiology classes, and currently works for a wastewater utility to monitor and improve water quality that is discharged to the Puget Sound. New to the North West, Mike is quickly becoming aware of the unique challenges that face our local marine habitats and resources. Mike enjoys hiking, fishing, skiing, and is also a rock climbing instructor.

Julie Schlenger: Julie is happy on a boat or mucking around in coastal marshes. Growing up, she loved learning about baleen whales and great white sharks. Now her favorite organisms are best seen under the microscope such as caprellids and polychaetes. She earned a double B.S. degree in Zoology and Environmental Studies from the University of Washington and a M.S. degree in Marine Biology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Her professional background includes habitat restoration, habitat assessment, environmental toxicology and project permitting for private sector businesses and for governmental agencies. As a volunteer in the classroom, she enjoys spotlighting local ecological issues and using current ecological challenges to enhance and promote STEM activities with students and with the public at local events. She enjoys studying native plants and pollinators and volunteers at both the Edmonds Wildlife Habitat & Native Plant Demonstration Garden in Edmonds, and at the Kruckeberg Botanic Garden in Shoreline.

Kip Killebrew received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology with a Minor in Marine Science from Penn State University in 1977. During his career, he has worked for NASA, University of Washington, NMFS, WDF&W and Snohomish County. As the Stillaguamish Tribe's enhancement biologist for over 30 years, Kip oversees the tribal hatchery and natural stock restoration programs. He provides technical advice and assistance to the tribal natural resources manager, fisheries director and staff on fisheries enhancement issues. He performs frequent public speaking and public relations activities within the local community and acts as the tribal liaison with county, state and federal agencies involved in salmon restoration within the watershed.

Tim Ellis, a retired IT manager with a business degree, turned towards life at the beach by becoming a Beach Watcher in 2015. He is the Beach Watcher project lead for Department of Ecology water sampling for Snohomish County (BEACH), as well as the lead at Mukilteo Lighthouse Park for youth education and beach naturalist activities. Each year he: grows 100+ garlic plants, harvests 10,000 mason bees from 50 boxes, plinks on and tunes pianos, and tries to raise his bowling average. He bicycles everywhere he can in the rare non-inclement weather in Puget Sound. He and his wife Jayne volunteer for the Nick-of-Time foundation, and often visit their son in Tokyo, Japan.

Natasha Coumou is an Assistant Restoration Ecologist with the Tulalip Tribes, and resident of Snohomish County. Originally from Republic of Macedonia, she found her calling in conservation of the PNW after moving to Washington in 2010. Her academic background includes a degree in Environmental Science from The Evergreen State College in Olympia. Natasha is passionate about restoration of Puget Sound rivers and estuaries, fish passage improvements and all things related to salmon habitat enhancement. As part of the Tulalip Tribes' staff, her focus has been on outlining a comprehensive Invasive Species Management Strategy, creating community engagement opportunities and adopting ecosystem-based management practices. Excited to be part of the MRC, Natasha believes that environmental stewardship is key to addressing pressing issues like climate change, and that "It takes a village" to achieve resilience. Besides helping salmon, she likes hiking, cycling, snowboarding, and enjoys supporting the vibrant local music and art scene.

Sara Maxwell is an Assistant Professor at University of Washington Bothell in the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, and a resident of Snohomish County. Originally from the Gulf Coast of Florida, Sara attended University of Florida and earned a degree in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. She earned a PhD in Ocean Sciences from UC Santa Cruz, and considers herself a 'marine sustainability ecologist. At UW Bothell, she teaches courses related to environmental science, marine biology and geographic information systems (mapping). Her research focuses on the development of science-based solutions to sustainability issues in the ocean, and her expertise is in the application of spatial tools, such as satellite tracking and habitat modeling. She uses these tools to understanding the distribution of large marine predators, how these predators interact with ocean processes, and how this knowledge can be applied to managing predator populations, human activities and ocean resources. She is excited to be a part of the MRC and hopes to further engage students at UW Bothell with the activities of the MRC.

**Events/Meetings** (including upcoming events/meetings and/or information on meetings/events from past month such as number of participants or highlights):

MRC forage fish sample and Nearshore Restoration Sites was done on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Bob Hillmann, Natasha Coumou, and Kip Killbrew completed the sampling event.

The MRC Grant Pilings Project Subcommittee met via conference call on February 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss project progress.

Elisa Dawson met with Snohomish County Communications staff on February 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the MRC Annual Report.

Elisa Dawson attended a webinar on the Shoreline Monitoring Database on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

The MRC had their monthly meeting February 19<sup>th</sup>. MRC Members Mike Ehlebracht, Susan Tarpley, Bob Hillmann, Sarah Brown, Tom Doerge, Paul Clampitt, Laura Gurley, Tim Ellis, Kip Killebrew, Julie Schlenger, and Sara Maxwell attended the meeting. Staff Elisa Dawson attended. Mike Sadler and Natasha Coumou were excused from the meeting. The MRC has a presentation from Lisa Kaufman with the Northwest straits Foundation on her shoreline armor removal work. Additionally, the MRC discussed their projects, and members finalized their 2020 subcommittee list.

MRC Members Mike Ehlebracht, Sarah Brown, Tom Doerge, Susan Tarpley, Bob Hillmann, and Laura Gurley met via conference call on February 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss questions posed to the MRC for the Northwest Straits Commission Annual Retreat. Tom Doerge will be Snohomish MRC's representative at this retreat.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

No updates at this time.

**Project Updates** (progress from past month on existing project or any new projects identified):

MRC Grant 2019-2020 Task 2: The MRC has finalized the contract with ESA, and work is proceeding on developing a draft prioritization framework to be presented at the March MRC meeting. Below is a timeline for this project:

Task	Completion Date
Task 1. Compile Piling Information and Assemble GIS Database	January 31, 2020
Task 2. Develop Draft Prioritization Framework	February 28, 2020
Task 3. Field Verification of Pilings	May 31, 2020
Task 4. Conduct Prioritization and Prepare Project Report	
• Draft report	July 7, 2020
• Presentation of draft findings to Snohomish MRC	July 15, 2020
• Final report	August 31, 2020

Nearshore Beach Restoration at Howarth Park and Everett Nearshore Project (Opportunity Fund Project): The primary goal for this project is to evaluate the feasibility of replacing the culvert for Pigeon Creek #2 under the BNSF railroad at Howarth Park in Everett with a larger box culvert or small span bridge and restoration of the lower creek and adjacent floodplain. Kathy Ketteridge has finished a draft of the report, and the MRC is currently reviewing and making comments to the draft. Kathy will present the final document at the March MRC meeting. Additionally, signage for the grant project site has been printed, and will be installed soon.

Nearshore Restoration Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program (ESRP) Learning Grant and Forage Fish Monitoring: Forage fish monitoring dates have been scheduled for the 2019-2020 season and are listed below. The MRC conducted their monthly forage fish monitoring on January 30<sup>th</sup>. These samples are processed for forage fish eggs by Dan Penttila using the Opportunity Fund.

Below are the rest of the 2019-2020 forage fish dates:

- February 25th, 2020 (February 26th held as back up date)

Below projects are other projects of the MRC funded by SWM fees:

Crabber Education: The MRC has secured a spot at the county campus to display how to properly rig a crab pot from June 29<sup>th</sup> – July 11<sup>th</sup>.

MyCoast: Elisa Dawson and Mike Ehlebracht were at Sound Waters University 2020, and the MRC booth on MyCoast was up at the event. MyCoast was also mentioned by DNR partners in their session.

Derelict Vessels: No updates at this time.

MRC Outreach Subcommittee: The MRC is planning for their Earth Day 2020 outreach. The MRC will table at UW Bothell's Earth Day Fair on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Snohomish County Earth Day event on April 25<sup>th</sup>, and the Imagine Children's Museum event on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Oil Spill: There are no updates for the oil spill work at this time.

Meadowdale: Logan Daniels will come discuss updated to the MRC at the April MRC Meeting. At this time, construction for the project is scheduled for 2021.

Kelp Project: Snohomish MRC representatives will take part in the March 6<sup>th</sup> conference call to discuss 2019 results.

Mussel Watch: The MRC has retrieved the mussel cages on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and all data was given to WDFW.

Port Susan and shoreline landowners: Elisa, Lisa (NWSF), and Terry (Snohomish County PDS), and planning a conference call in early March to discuss contacts that were made as a result of the December 2019 mailing.

**Upcoming Events:**

- Forage Fish Sample February 25<sup>th</sup> (26<sup>th</sup> held as back up)
- SnoCo WSU BeachWatchers Training 2020: Fridays March 6<sup>th</sup> – May.
- 2019 Kelp Review Call March 6<sup>th</sup>
- MRC Meeting March 18<sup>th</sup>
- Snohomish LIO Implementation Committee Meeting March 19<sup>th</sup>
- MRC Symposium April 3<sup>rd</sup>



**County:** WHATCOM

**Month/Year:** February 2020

**Submitted by:** Austin Rose

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff):

Mr. Jim Hansen resigned from the MRC on January 16 in order to serve on another advisory committee. The MRC recommended the appointment of Mr. Daniel Sulak to fill his position (Recreational Interest). Mr. Sulak was officially appointed on February 11.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events):

The February 6 MRC meeting featured a presentation from Lisa Kaufman, NWSF about the Shore Friendly Program and ways the MRC might get involved this year. Lisa also discussed the potential to host an Orca Forum - similar to what other MRC's have hosted - at the beginning of the boating season.

The MRC met with staff from BP and DNR to discuss the development and installation of interpretive sign at the Point Whitehorn Marine Reserve. BP has donated funding for this project. The group will develop four signs to be installed at the lookout area.

The Public Speaker Series subcommittee met to continue developing the 2019 calendar of speakers. The MRC has confirmed speakers for April, May and June. Topics include: the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Climate Action Task Force, brief update on the status of sea stars in our area and provide some information about recent efforts to better assess (and possibly protect) sunflower star populations as well as respond to marine disease events in general, and tsunami outreach and research from Washington Sea Grant.

MRC attended the Drayton Harbor European Green Crab (EGC) Management Planning meeting. 38 EGC have been detected in Drayton Harbor and WDFW and WA Sea Grant are conducting management planning with input from some of the larger stakeholders. It is likely that effective removal trapping will require more resources that WDFW and WA Sea Grant can bring to Drayton Harbor specifically.

**Funding updates** (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified):

- Lisa Hillier (WDFW) will be attending a forage fish survey with the Whatcom MRC on April 25. Lisa will also be providing training on staging and the electronic data entry system.
- 44 people have registered for the 2020 North Sound Stewards Program

**Other** (anything not covered above, including local issues of interest to the regional group, advisory actions the MRC is taking, questions to the Commission, etc.):

**Photos** (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info):