



**Meeting:** Northwest Straits Commission  
**Location:** WebEx Conference Call  
**Date:** March 27, 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: 804 093 623

10:00-10:05	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> Approval of February minutes	Alan Clark, Chair
10:05-10:15	<b>NWSC Director's Report</b> Commission operations in the face of COVID-19 (Lucas) Retreat update (Lucas) Ecosystem Coordinator hiring (Lucas)	Lucas Hart
10:15 – 10:25	<b>NWSC committee reports</b> Executive Committee External Relations Committee Science Advisory Committee Ad hoc Communications Committee	Lucas Hart
10:25-10:35	<b>NWIFC/Tribal update</b>	Cecilia Gobin
10:35-10:40	<b>Business items</b> MRC grants (Sasha) NWSI Conference – new date November 13-14 (Katie)	Staff
10:40-10:50	<b>NWS Foundation update</b>	Don Hunger, NWS Foundation
10:50-11:00	<b>Puget Sound Partnership update</b>	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
11:00-11:20	<b>Kelp Plan update</b>	Dana Oster, Northwest Straits Commission
11:20-11:50	<b>MRC reports</b>	MRC Representatives



## agenda

---

11:50-11:55

**Round table**

All

---

11:55-12:00

**Public comment**

All



**February 28, 2020 • 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), Pete Haase (Skagit), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Sarah Brown (Snohomish), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Tom Cowan, Ron Thom, Chris Castner, Jennifer Grimm (Puget Sound Partnership - alternate), Sarah Fiskén (Jefferson - alternate), Nan McKay, Christina Koons (San Juan)

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

**Others in Attendance:** Caroline Gibson (Northwest Straits Foundation), Emily Grason (Washington Sea Grant)

**Absent:** Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership)

**Welcome and Introductions**

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

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

**NWS Commission - committee reports**

**Executive Committee**

The committee discussed partnership opportunities with NOAA and other updates on recent topics such as the retreat.

**External Relations Committee**

External Relations Committee gave an update on the [Derelict Vessel Bill](#), which is moving forward in the Washington State Senate, and a bill regarding bulkhead replacement with soft shore techniques (SB6147). Lucas and Chris Castner met with NOAA and discussed opportunities for coordination and collaboration. Lucas will be in Washington, DC for Puget Sound Day on the Hill on April 28-29.

- Action: Caroline and Lucas will share the report with the assessment regarding bulkhead permitting.
  - [Net Change in Permitted Shoreline Armor](#), WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, October 2019.

**Science Advisory Committee**

The committee will meet in person in Tacoma on March 23 to plan their activities for the coming year. There are numerous conferences that might be of interest or relate to the Northwest Straits Initiative:

- [Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference](#) in Vancouver, B.C. April 19-22.
- [Columbia River Estuary Conference](#) in Astoria, OR. April 28-30.



- [National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration](#) in Portland, OR, August 2-6.
- [National Coastal and Estuarine Summit](#), Providence, RI. October 4-8, 2020.

### **Ad hoc Communications Committee**

The committee reported that the Request for Qualifications and Quotations for a communications audit and plan creation closes on March 4.

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

There was no Tribal update at the meeting.

### **Business items**

#### **Retreat planning**

The Northwest Straits Initiative Retreat will be on March 26-27 at Padilla Bay. Staff will distribute the full agenda by March 20 or March 23. Lucas sent questions to MRCs that will help guide a conversation about support needs, techniques for engaging volunteer leaders, and several other topics that relate to action items in the NWSC strategic plan. The deadline for responses is March 16. A few other agenda topics being considered by the planning committee include Northwest Straits Initiative role in climate change topics, innovative ideas on community engagement, and elected official engagement.

#### **Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference sessions**

Multiple MRCs will present their work or speak on panels during the conference. Northwest Straits Commission and Foundation will also present. The program with session abstracts is available online at <https://ssec.confex.com/ssec/2020/meetingapp.cgi>.

#### **Ecosystem Coordinator hiring**

NWS Commission staff are in the final stages of hiring for a temporary Ecosystem Project Coordinator position. That person is anticipated to begin in mid-March or early April. One of their tasks will be to coordinate the European Green Crab response in Drayton Harbor during Spring/Summer 2020.

#### **Northwest Straits Initiative Conference: November 6-7**

The Northwest Straits Initiative will hold our annual conference at Fort Worden on November 6-7, 2020. Please save the date!

#### **Kelp Monitoring- Certification needs**

NWS Commission staff are developing a more robust safety protocol for kelp monitoring work. Dana is working with Don and Caroline and others to find strategic partnerships for kayak trainings or certifications. If you have other ideas for ways Northwest Straits Initiative can provide trainings, or you know groups of people who have those certifications, reach out to Dana.

#### **Kelp WebEx**



The March 6 Kelp WebEx will focus on summarizing 2019 kelp data and MRCs reporting on their surveys. NWS Commission staff will also host an all-day workshop on May 6 to plan for the 2020 kelp survey season, discuss project goals, and hear updates from project partners. The Puget Sound Partnership's vital sign revision includes a proposed marine vegetation vital sign (that includes eelgrass and kelp) and the MRC data would contribute to the kelp canopy area indicator.

### **MRC Symposium**

The Commission and Foundation will host an MRC Symposium at Padilla Bay on April 3. MRCs will have an opportunity to share projects they are working on and discuss how to strengthen or replicate projects with other MRCs.

### **Database development**

Volunteer Richard Austin is continuing his work in developing the database. Richard has provided prototypes and staff provided feedback.

### **MRC contract amendments**

The due date for MRC year two project proposals is April 10. Contact Sasha Horst for more information.

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

Caroline Gibson provided an update:

- The call for applications for the Opportunity Fund will be open soon. The application period will be open for 60 days. Contact Caroline Gibson for more information. This round of funding has \$20,000 total.
- Lisa Kaufman visited many MRCs and presented on the Shore Friendly Program.
- A new Director of Advancement is expected to start at the Foundation in March.
- Don Hunger is serving on the planning committee for the Northwest Straits Initiative Retreat.

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

Jennifer Grimm provided the following Partnership update:

- Puget Sound Day on the Hill is April 28-29 in Washington, DC.
- The EPA approved \$50,000 to Northwest Straits Commission via Puget Sound Partnership, which will support the Ecosystem Project Coordinator position's time coordinating the European Green Crab emergency response in Drayton Harbor during Spring/Summer 2020.

### **Green Crab Update**

Emily Grason from Washington Sea Grant presented on their European Green Crab monitoring and management program. Acting early on Green Crab gives the best chance for efficient and effective management. Washington Sea Grant is working closely with various management agencies and is aiming to manage green crab while the population is still in "prevent and eradication" stages.



### **Puget Sound Partnership alternate for Laura Blackmore: Jennifer Grimm**

The Commission moved and approved by consensus to appoint Jennifer Grimm as the alternate for Laura Blackmore of the Puget Sound Partnership.

### **MRC reports**

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

#### **Clallam**

Alan said that City Councilmember Trisha Suggs is the new city representative on the MRC. There are still seats open on the MRC. Emily Grason from Washington Sea Grant presented on European green crab. The deadline for the spring internship program is March 9. The MRC will also have a video intern from Port Angeles High School, who will highlight the work of the MRC.

#### **Island-**

Elsa said that Hoypus Point and Possession Point restoration feasibility assessment is moving along. The MRC participated in the Great Northwest Glass Quest. Island MRC held a strategic planning retreat this month. Elsa urged other MRCs to take NWS Commission staff up on the offer to present the "Northwest Straits 101" presentation to their MRC.

#### **Jefferson-**

Jeff said that the MRC is adding a new index site for forage fish monitoring. Monica Montgomery is the new MRC lead staff member. WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife staff will train MRC members on new procedures with automated tools. The City of Port Townsend will update MRC on latest update on the sewer outflow project.

#### **San Juan-**

Christina said that the MRC is planning for the marine managers' workshop on March 10-11. There is one open position on the MRC. Karin presented at Sound Waters University regarding Plastic Free Salish Sea. The MRC gave away 60 whale warning flags at the Seattle Boat Show. Phil Green will serve as alternate to the Commission. The county has formed a subcommittee to explore alternative funding strategies for their county marine program. Christina sits on that committee.

#### **Skagit**

Pete said the MRC has given feedback to the retreat and symposium. The Salish Sea Stewards class begins March 10. Fidalgo Bay Day will be on August 29. The MRC will resume plant maintenance at Bowman Bay in the spring. The MRC is hosting a joint event at Bowman Bay as part of Skagit Water Week.

#### **Snohomish**

Sarah said the MRC has six new members, with a broad range of expertise. The MRC is identifying and prioritizing creosote pilings. The MRC co-hosted a starlight beach walk.



## minutes

### **Whatcom**

Bob said the MRC has new members. Lisa Kaufman came to the February meeting to talk about the Shore Friendly program. The MRC has been working with BP Cherry Point and Department of Natural Resources to put in more interpretive signs at Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve. MRC members attended a meeting led by Washington SeaGrant and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to set up a management group to handle green crab in Drayton Harbor.

### **Round table**

- Lucas mentioned that the Puget Sound Partnership is scoping several strategies for raising additional funds for Puget Sound recovery. This is part of their mobilizing funding campaign.

### **Public comment**

There was no public comment.

- \* The next regular Commission meeting will be on April 24 by WebEx. The Northwest Straits Initiative Retreat is on March 26-27 at Padilla Bay.\*



**Executive Committee Meeting Notes**  
**March 2, 2020 • 11:00am-12:00pm**  
**Conference Call**

**Present:** Jude Apple, Elsa Schwartz, Tom Cowan, Alan Clark

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

**Absent:** Ron Thom

**Billy Frank Jr. Coalition Update -**

Lucas gathered additional information from Coalition members and staff and presented it to the committee. The committee discussed the goals of the Coalition and how they align or do not align with the Northwest Straits Initiative.

Next step:

- Lucas to follow up with Cecilia Gobin who extended the original invitation, to discuss how the Commission might best engage with the Coalition moving forward.

**Retreat -**

Lucas sent questions to MRCs that will help guide a conversation about MRC support needs and other topics related to the NWSC strategic plan. The deadline for responses is March 16. Staff are refining the agenda with Hilary Wilkinson's guidance (facilitator). A few other agenda topics being considered by the planning committee include Northwest Straits Initiative role in climate change topics, innovative ideas on community engagement, and elected official engagement.

**NOAA Collaboration -**

Lucas is following up on a previous meeting with NOAA to explore collaborative opportunities. One example includes training offered by NOAA on various topics. Another collaborative opportunity is the NOAA Veterans' Corps, which places veteran interns with host organizations to work on a project for 6 months to a year.

Next Steps:

- Lucas will have an internal discussion with NWS Commission staff to explore projects, opportunities
- Elsa will talk to partners at the American Littoral Society who work with Veterans' Corps for more information
- Katie will explore NOAA trainings and interest level among staff/MRCs

**EPA funding -**

EPA is providing an additional \$50,000 to the NWS Commission this year. This should not be expected in future years. EPA hopes the funding will help support the Green Crab response in Drayton Harbor.

**Ecosystem Coordinator and Green Crab Response -**

The Ecosystem Coordinator position posting closed on January 27. This is a short-term position that is likely to end around September 30. Lucas and Dana are interviewing candidates. A green crab crisis exists in Drayton Harbor, however, there has been no coordinated effort to address it so with the additional funding noted above, half of this employee's time will help coordinate the community response effort with WDFW in 2020.

**Commission Chair and Vice Chair nominations -**

On the February Executive Committee call, the group discussed whether the current chair and vice chair may continue for another year. Commission rules of procedure do not explicitly prohibit this. Positions are elected in April by the Commission. Elsa noted that both she and Alan were willing to serve another year, and that there is a benefit to continuing once they've gotten up to speed on the role in this first year.

Recommendation:





- Committee recommends that Alan Clark be nominated to serve another year as Chair and Elsa Schwartz be nominated to serve another year as Vice-Chair.

Next step:

- Goes on commission agenda for April meeting.

**Next Meeting: April 6<sup>th</sup>**



## Commission staff highlights- [March 2020]

**Commission operations during pandemic** – Commission staff are teleworking until further notice. Day to day operations continue and staff are shifting meetings to a webinar format where possible. MRC Symposium is postponed until a later date.

**2020 Retreat** – The retreat has been postponed until further notice. The planning committee is considering which agenda topics should be addressed in the near term via webinar. Don and Lucas will reassess whether to cancel the retreat on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**MRC Kelp Monitoring** – Over 30 participants from MRC members, project volunteers, and project partners joined a WebEx meeting March 6<sup>th</sup> to review the 2019 kelp survey season, discuss preliminary findings, how each site is progressing, and methods testing. The data is starting to show trends after 4-5 years of routine surveys! The next meeting is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup> to kick off the 2020 survey season. Location is TBD (in person or remote) depending on safety circumstances.

**Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan** – The plan is nearly complete and will be released the last week of March/first week of April. A roll out plan includes email announcements, social media posts, and a press release. The team drafted a vision statement and are pursuing signatures from Governor Inslee, Commissioner Franz, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, and the NOAA NMFS West Coast Administrator.

**Project database** – Richard Austin, our volunteer database developer, generated new prototype versions of our project database for staff to test. A check in meeting was held by WebEx on March 19 to review and discuss for ongoing improvements.

**Communications** – An evaluation committee reviewed and scored bids for a contract for communications support. The original schedule is delayed but we continue to make forward progress. Monthly newsletters continue and Commission staff is working on updating the MRC member highlights and the project area of the website.

**Hiring** – The Northwest Straits Commission hired Alexandra Simpson as the new Ecosystem Project Coordinator. Allie will be coordinating a green crab response in Drayton Harbor half time through September while also working on a variety of other NWS Commission projects. Her start date is April 1<sup>st</sup> with a planned duration through August 2021.

**Meeting attendance** –

Lucas attended the Puget Sound Day on the Hill planning meeting on March 10.



## Commission staff highlights- [March 2020]

Dana attended the San Juan MRC marine managers' workshop on March 10 and 11.

Sasha and Lucas attended the Clallam MRC meeting on March 16.

Dana attended the Snohomish MRC skype meeting March 18.

Lucas and Dana attended a green crab response meeting on March 19.

Dana attended the Puget Sound Partnership Vital Sign revision remote workshop March 20.

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Clallam

**Month/Year:** March, 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. These 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 March meeting was held March 16<sup>th</sup> as a WebEx meeting with a reduced agenda because of COVID-19. The agenda for the in-person meeting included a presentation by Lisa Kaufmann about NWSF's Shore Friendly program. This presentation is postponed to a later date. Topics on the reduced meeting agenda include: an amendment to the 2019-20 budget, review of current projects for the 2020-21 grant, NWSC updates, project updates and good of the order.

Alan Clark participated in the NWSC Kelp Workshop March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**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 March 3<sup>rd</sup> and at Ediz Hook February 17<sup>th</sup>.

2020 Internship Program: Three candidates were interviewed for the video internship March 11<sup>th</sup> and they were all well qualified. Two of the candidates advocated a team approach instead of a single intern. After the interviews it was decided that Helle Andersen should reach out to Patric McInnes to get his opinion on the following three questions: do you agree that the production of the 2-3 videos would be better if it is carried out by a team of two students? We do not have the funds to pay two students for 150 hours each but we do have funds for paying two students for 100 hours each – would that be enough for making 2-3 videos? Finally, who of the three students would make a better team of two? Based on answers provided by Patric the subcommittee decided to hire two interns. On March 25<sup>th</sup> four candidates will be interviewed for the Green Crab Internship with the Makah Tribe and on April 2<sup>nd</sup> two candidates will be interviewed for the Smolt Trap Internship with the Lower Elwha Tribe.

Climate Change Subcommittee: Ann Soule gave an update on the effort to reach out to the three county commissioners. The subcommittee has developed a set of good talking points based on the 2015 Climate Change Preparedness Plan which provides a variety of recommendations on how to address climate change on the peninsula. Three-four MRC members will meet with Mark Ozias first to discuss the talking points, but also to talk about how he can approach the two other commissioners to promote county-wide activities. The meeting was tentatively set for the week of March 16<sup>th</sup> (the meeting was later postponed).

**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.): The Clallam MRC launched their Facebook page in March.

**Photos:** none

## **MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission**

**County:** Island

**Month/Year:** March 2020

**Submitted by:** Anna Toledo

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Jodi Crimmins stepped down as a voting MRC member, but will remain as a technical advisor to help the MRC stay connected to the local school system. We have two open seats on the MRC.

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

Past Meetings/Events:

- March 1: Camano 101 – The event drew over 130 attendees. The MRC had booth, along with other organizations offering information and volunteer opportunities for Camano residents.
- March 3: MRC meeting – project planning

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- The Board of Island County Commissioners is suspending citizen advisory committees until further notice to ensure all staff are available to address needs for the COVID-19 response. Due to this announcement, upcoming MRC meetings and events are suspended until further notice.

**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: MRC monitoring activities have been suspended at this time to ensure all staff are available to address needs for the COVID-19 response.

Seining: Seining at Cornet Bay has been suspended at this time, due to COVID-19 precautions.

Hoypus Point and Possession Point Restoration Feasibility: Blue Coast Engineering has conducted initial site characterization at Hoypus Point and Possession Point. The project partners – MRC, NWSF, and WA State Parks – met with Blue Coast to discuss site conditions.

Outreach: Kelly Zupich is helping coordinate with MRC and SWS to offer online marine education resources to local students who have been sent home due to school closures.

**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.): MRC staff sit within Island County Public Health, and may be requested to dedicate some or all of their time to the COVID-19 response. As such, there may be some delays in response. Any MRC activities requiring decision-making from supervisors or County Commissioners are suspended at this time. Thanks for your patience!

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

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Jefferson

**Month/Year:** March 2020

**Submitted by:** Monica Montgomery

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

No changes at this time.

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

### Past Events/Meetings

- Feb 27 – FT forage fish sampling
- Feb 28 – Strait ERN winter quarterly meeting
- Mar 3 – MRC monthly meeting: 15 members/staff and 1 guest attended; Meeting focused on discussions about the MRC (NWSI retreat questions & symposium agenda), new potential projects, appointing leads for remaining projects/subcommittees in need, and newer members expressed questions about their role in the MRC and needs for more training/better onboarding processes; Dave Peterson (Interim Public Works Director for the City of PT) provided a brief update on the sewer outfall alternatives analysis and is willing to return for a full presentation
- Mar 6 – MRC kelp data review via WebEx

### Upcoming Events/Meetings

- Mar 24 – Exec Committee meeting via Zoom
- Mar 25 – Q&A with previous Coordinator via Zoom for interested newer (and current) members to help with the onboarding process
- Apr 7 – MRC monthly meeting (to be canceled or meet via Zoom)
- Postponed until further notice:
  - March 18 – WDFW forage fish survey training & assessment of a new potential survey site at Dabob Bay (tentatively rescheduled for May)
  - March 24 & 31 – Professional rain garden training workshops (with installation) at Cape George (tentatively rescheduled for June)
  - April 3 – MRC Symposium

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

Nothing to report for the Commission (Stream Stewards received funding through the Strait ERN LIO NEP allocation).

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

1. Monitoring:
  - a. **Fort Townsend:** Forage fish sampling was done on Feb 27. Lab results found eggs in samples 3 and 5. The next survey was planned for March 26 and has been canceled.

- b. **Adelma Beach:** Forage fish sampling was done on March 18 by the couple who own the property (volunteer group was canceled). The couple plan to continue sampling at this site on a monthly basis.
  - c. **Kelp:** Nothing to report.
- 2. **Rain Gardens:** Worked with the Port Townsend city engineer to generate a list of potential rain garden sites to collaborate on. MRC project lead will help select the 2 sites for installation later this year.
- 3. **Education & Outreach:** The MRC recently appointed a project lead. MRC expressed great interest in organizing 1-2 Digging for Dinner events, for which the WDFW speaker is committed to setting dates once more is known with COVID-19. Payment is being processed for a 10x10 booth at the Wooden Boat Festival scheduled for September. Currently looking into virtual opportunities to engage the broader public.
- 4. **Olympia Oysters:** Still planning to spread shell at Discovery Bay this year, though later than originally intended (hopefully May or June, possibly July or even August). At the moment, Taylor Shellfish can't guarantee they'll have shell to provide.
- 5. **Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:** Working on consolidating and updating permits for all 3 sites.

**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.):

Update on NW Straits Foundation projects:

**NWSF Opportunity Fund:** The rain garden training for landscape professionals and high-level volunteers scheduled for March 24 and March 31 at the Cape George Clubhouse have been postponed until further notice (potentially looking to June).

**Shoreline Landowner Outreach:** Coordinator and project lead met with Lisa Kaufman and Melanie del Rosario on March 11 regarding 2020 plans for shoreline landowner outreach. Currently working to identify stretches of shoreline/communities to target for workshops in late Summer (Aug-Sept).

**Crabber Outreach:** Coordinator and crabber outreach team met with Jason on March 13 regarding 2020 plans for crabber outreach efforts. Currently working to schedule speakers for workshops in June, reserve workshop locations, list distribution locations for outreach materials, and determine number of materials needed.

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

## **MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission**

**County:** San Juan County

**Month/Year:** March 2020

**Submitted by:** Frances Robertson

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

No changes to membership or leadership

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

March MRC meeting – Thursday March 5<sup>th</sup>

PFSS subcommittee meeting – Tuesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>

Marine Managers Workshop – March 10-11, Friday Harbor Labs. Details provided below.

Due to the cancellation of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference the MRC will not be presenting their work in Vancouver in April.

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

No funding updates

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

SRKW outreach and education – Spring and summer outreach plans are being discussed and will include partnering with Be Whale Wise for the Anacortes Boat Show in May. MRC member Kailey Genther and MRC administrator Frances Robertson also met with the local elementary school on San Juan Island to arrange to bring the environmental education and storytelling program, Killer Whale Tales to the school district. A preliminary date of May 18<sup>th</sup> has been arranged for this to happen.

However, given the current circumstances in person outreach efforts are temporarily on hold, and introducing Killer Whale Tales may have to be delayed into the fall. Once Be Whale Wise has received updates regarding Canada's vessel management efforts for 2020 and updated outreach material the MRC will continue to distribute to neighboring MRCS and will install signage around the County where required.

Plastic Free Salish Sea – Shew Design of Bellingham are being contracted to produce the PFSS website after completing the design and branding in 2019. The PFSS consortium continues to work at the messaging, and materials for the site and hire a temporary researcher to assist with the production of their PFSS tool kits. Going into the third quarter much of this work can be accomplished remotely so we do not anticipate any delays due to the current restrictions put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Marine Stewardship Plan Revision – The great accomplishment of this month was the Marine Managers Workshop. This was conducted at the Friday Harbor Labs on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of March (just in the nick of time!). Approximately 45 people attended representing federal, state, local, tribal and non-profit



agencies and organizations. While a few attendees did have to cancel we were able to accommodate remote presentations. The workshop provided an opportunity for those present to determine data trends, emerging threats and knowledge gaps related to the core biodiversity and socio-cultural targets that were identified in the original plan. Participants were also asked to identify their top three threats and knowledge gaps for each target to provide the subcommittee a means to ranking the new information gleaned from the workshop. In addition to the data collected, important connections were made between agencies, tribes, non-profits and the MRC. During the next month the subcommittee will be collating all the information and data collected during the workshop and working on the next steps of the MSA Plan revision. The agenda for the workshop is attached and more information can be found on the workshop website here: <https://marinemanagersworkshop.weebly.com/>

**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):



A pile of name tags ready for the Marine Managers Workshop.



MRC member and Interim Director of the Friday Harbor Labs, Dr. Megan Dethier leading the Intertidal and Nearshore target discussion. Photo: Frances Robertson, San Juan County

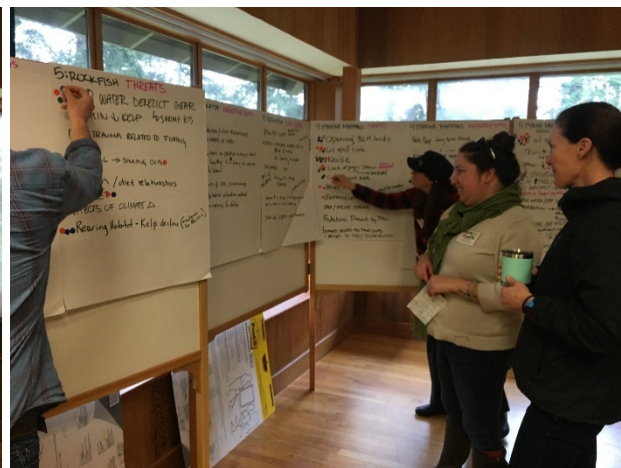




Dr. Hank Carson of Washington Fish and Wildlife presenting latest knowledge and data trends for the Subtidal target session. Photo: Frances Robertson, San Juan County



Jacques White, Executive Director for Long Live the Kings presenting the latest knowledge and data trends for the Pacific Salmon target session. Photo: Frances Robertson, San Juan County



Workshop participants, including MRC members Laura Jo Severson and Christina Koons reviewing the data and identifying the threats and knowledge gaps they determine to be of greatest priority. Photos: Dana Oster, NWSC



Remote presenter Sara Thompson from Ecology shared the agencies work related to oil spill, risk, prevention and preparedness. Here San Juan County LIO coordinator Marta Green shares the County's efforts with the group. Photo: Dana Oster, NWSC

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Skagit

**Month/Year:** March/2020

**Submitted by:** Tracy/Pete

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Nothing new to report.

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

- **MRC Monthly Meeting- March 12:** Skagit MRC's March 12 meeting was cancelled due to COVID 19 health concerns.
- **Skagit Water Weeks (May 1 – May 31<sup>st</sup>):** Skagit MRC will be co-hosting an event with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group on **Friday, May 29, 10am – 1pm** at Bowman Bay Deception Pass State Park for a plant maintenance work party and forage fish survey demo as part of Skagit Water Weeks. However, this event could be cancelled depending on the COVID-19 situation.
- **Mount Vernon High School Science Night – April 30, CANCELLED!** This very popular event was canceled due to COVID-19 health concerns. Skagit MRC was planning on hosting a table and activity at this event.

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

Lisa Kaufman, with the Northwest Straits Foundation, is currently waiting for an update from the County on the permit and SEPA status for the nearshore restoration project in Similk Bay. Construction is supposed take place this fall.

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

- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The date for this year's event has been set for Saturday, August 29, 2020 at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. Skagit County's new intern, Aida Miller, is coordinating Fidalgo Bay Day this year. Jay Lind is the MRC Event Chair. The Fidalgo Bay Day Planning Subcommittee held a meeting on March 2 to get an update on task assignments. We are still in need of volunteers to take the lead in planning and coordinating the chowders and kids craft activities. A ½ page ad was placed in the 2020 Skagit Valley spring/summer Recreation & Activity Guide that will go out in the Anacortes American, Skagit Valley Herald, and at [www.goskagit.com](http://www.goskagit.com) in April and run through August. The Shannon Point Touch tank will be available for the event this year, but we will need to recruit students or volunteers to help with the activity. Diver Laura confirmed that she will host her virtual reality diving experience. Rosie Cayou's no-host salmon BBQ lunch and fry bread has also been confirmed. The Friends of Skagit Beaches will once again be sponsoring and coordinating the Discovery Passport activity.
- **Salish Sea Stewards:** 2020 Salish Sea Stewards Training Schedule is now available on the MRC website [here](#). Classes start March 10<sup>th</sup>! There are currently 26 registered for the Salish Sea Stewards training. Three of the 26 registered participants were unable to attend the first class, but plan to attend the rest of the classes. Susan Wood and Jude Apple did an excellent job putting this training together. Clay Mazur with WWU presented an Introduction to the Salish Sea and provided a fun table top ice breaker activity on estuaries. Sasha Horst and Pete Haase presented an overview of the NWSI and Salish Sea Stewards. Brad Smith, a Salish Sea Steward graduate presented on the geology of our region and engaged the class in a fun "kelp stretch"

and a walk out to the overlook. All of the speakers and topics were top notch and well received. The participants were very enthusiastic and asked a lot of great questions. Five volunteers from previous Salish Sea Stewards classes helped set up and brought snacks for this first day and then class members signed up for future ones. We will have a couple volunteers at each one to make coffee and set out the coffee/tea/water, etc. Everybody jumped in to rearrange the room and clean up. Unfortunately, due to COVID 19 health concerns, the next two classes on March 17 and March 24 will need to be cancelled or rescheduled, depending on the availability of speakers. Future classes might need to be cancelled or rescheduled as well.

- **Forage Fish Surveys:** Forage fish surveys have been canceled until further notice due to COVID-19 health concerns.
- **Kids on the Beach:** The first Kids on the Beach classroom visit this spring is currently planned for April 16/17, but that will likely change depending on the situation with COVID-19.
- **Bowman Bay Restoration:** Beach seining and forage fish surveys at the restoration site have been canceled until further notice due to COVID-19 health concerns. The next plant maintenance party is scheduled for May 29<sup>th</sup> but that might need to be cancelled as well.
- **Pinto Abalone Restoration:** Field work for the 2020 season is underway.
- **Olympia Oyster Restoration:** Paul Dinnel is preparing presentations for the Salish Sea Stewards and the North Sound Stewards classes in April, unless those classes are canceled due to COVID-19.
- **Kelp Surveys:** MRC kelp Webex was held March 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:30am to 11:30am. The Kelp Workshop will be held May 6<sup>th</sup>. Skagit kelp surveys will likely start 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.):

- **Padilla Bay NERR Letter of Support:** Skagit MRC sent a letter of support for Padilla Bay NERR to our three key Washington elected officials: Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray, and Representative Rick Larsen
- **City of Anacortes 2020 Stormwater Management Plan Public Comment Period- March 6th:** Individual MRC members had the opportunity to review and comment on the City of Anacortes 2020 Stormwater Management Plan. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for the MRC to draft a group response.

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



Salish Sea Stewards Estuary Ice Breaker Activity



Photo Credit: Pete Haase

Salish Sea Stewards doing the "kelp stretch"



Photo Credit: Pete Haase

Sasha Horst Presenting to the Salish Sea Stewards



Photo Credit: Pete Haase

**MRC Monthly Report****County:** Snohomish**Month/Year:** March 2020**Submitted by:** Elisa Dawson

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

Elisa Dawson has been hired to fill Kathleen Pozarycki's Senior Planner / MRC lead staff position. After being interim for 4 months, Elisa officially started this position on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**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 February 25<sup>th</sup>. Bob Hillmann, Natasha Coumou, Sara Maxwell, Tim Ellis and Kip Killbrew completed the sampling event.

Snohomish MRC Member Tom Doerge and Staff Elisa Dawson participated in the Northwest Straits Commission Kelp Call on March 6 to discuss results from 2019.

Elisa Dawson attended Snohomish County Beach Watcher Training on March 6<sup>th</sup>. There are 16 Beach Watchers in the 2020 class.

The Pilings Subcommittee met via conference call on March 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss the draft prioritization framework. The framework will be further discussed at the March 18<sup>th</sup> MRC Meeting.

Staff Elisa Dawson hosted Tim Ellis, Sara Maxwell, Mike Sadler, and Kip Killbrew for a new member orientation on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Staff Elisa Dawson hosted Julie Schlenger and Natasha Coumou for a new member orientation on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Staff Elisa Dawson met with DNR staff via conference call on March 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss the DNR strategy for the Snohomish Watershed. The group also talked about environmental justice strategies, and how to ensure resources are given to people who may be living on derelict vessels.

The MRC had their monthly meeting March 18<sup>th</sup> via conference call. MRC Members Susan Tarpley, Bob Hillmann, Tom Doerge, Paul Clappitt, Laura Gurley, Mike Sadler, Natasha Coumou Tim Ellis, Kip Killbrew, Julie Schlenger, and Sara Maxwell attended the meeting. Staff Elisa Dawson attended. Sarah Brown and Mike Ehlebracht were excused from the meeting. The MRC Pilings subcommittee presented the draft prioritization framework and solicited feedback from the MRC and other stakeholders. Additionally, the MRC discussed their next grant, the 2019 annual report, and results from the forage fish 2019-2020 sampling season.

**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 and ESA have drafted a prioritization framework. After receiving feedback from partners, the MRC and ESA is updating the framework. While the project is currently on-track, fieldwork may be delayed due to COVID-19.

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 she has provided feedback. Kathy is expected to finish the report within the week. Kathy will present the final document at the April MRC Meeting.

Nearshore Restoration Estuary and Salmon Recovery Program (ESRP) Learning Grant and Forage Fish Monitoring: Forage fish monitoring is complete for the 2019-2020 season. Dan Pentilla has analyzed the data. Now, Dan will work on a summary of the season and recommendations for future work. Work with Dan has been done using the Opportunity Fund.

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: Many new reports on derelict boats have come up in Snohomish County. The MRC continues to work with DNR. Recently, the Argosy was removed by DNR in Snohomish County.

Derelict Vessels: See above.

MRC Outreach Subcommittee: All Earth Day events have been cancelled at this time.

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 an MRC Meeting in late spring. At this time, construction for the project is scheduled for 2021.

Kelp Project: Snohomish MRC representatives Elisa Dawson and Tom Doerge took part in the March 6<sup>th</sup> conference call to discuss 2019 results. In 2019, there were 3 kelp beds found and 12.2 acres of kelp total.

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), discussed contacts that were made as a result of the December 2019 mailing. Lisa reported that several site visits happened, and Terri reported that they haven't seen much response in PDS. They will continue to monitor results.

**Upcoming Events:**

- Snohomish LIO Implementation Committee Meeting via conference call March 19<sup>th</sup>
- MRC Meeting April 15<sup>th</sup>
- All Earth Day events have been cancelled at this time.

## **MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission**

**County:** WHATCOM

**Month/Year:** MARCH 2020

**Submitted by:** AUSTIN ROSE

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

- MRC alternate (Scientific Interest) will be participating on the 2020 WRIA 1 Combined Review Team, which reviews and ranks local salmon recovery projects proposed for funding by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

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

- The MRC held their general meeting on March 5. The meeting featured presentations by the WWU marine conservation students that MRC members were working with to complete project proposals, a class requirement. Groups completed project proposals related to current MRC projects, giving MRC members ideas for additions or changes to their projects.
- Two MRC members and MRC staff participated in the 2019 Kelp Review conference call on March 6. The Whatcom MRC left that call with ideas for how they would like to approach the kelp surveys this year, particularly, focusing on one or two sites, and surveying other sites every other year. The MRC project champion is continuing to talk with project partners and Commission staff about the 2020 surveys.
- The MRC is preparing to host their April MRC meeting via zoom.

**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):

- Forage fish surveys are continuing on a monthly basis with the MRC intern and a MRC member.
- Chuckanut sampling is continuing on a monthly basis with a MRC members and a County employee.
- No outside volunteers are participating in field work and this time.
- Presentations are scheduled for the North Sound Stewards program via Zoom or WebEx. Dr. Brooke Love will be presenting her research on O.A. on March 24<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. Lisa Hillier (WDFW) will be providing a presentation on monitoring forage fish in the Salish Sea on April 20 via zoom. Information is posted on the MRC website.
- The MRC will be involved with the Drayton Harbor green crab emergency response. The MRC North Sound Stewards intern is filling in to take the lead at the established Drayton Harbor site. Additional sites are unknown at this time.

**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):