



Meeting: Northwest Straits Commission
Location: Zoom Conference Call
Date: December 11, 2020
Time: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

To join the Zoom meeting, [click here](#). Meeting ID: 854 5437 6778
For audio conference, dial: +1 253 215 8782

Passcode: 398521

10:00 – 10:05	Welcome and introductions Approval of October minutes	Alan Clark, Chair
10:05 – 10:35	Actions to Impacts	Dana Oster + Science Advisory Committee
10:35 – 10:50	Open discussion breakout groups What are you excited about for 2021?	All
10:50 – 11:00	Committee reports Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee	
11:00 – 11:15	Business Items Approval of the 2021 Meeting Schedule Eelgrass no anchor zone grant update Communications plan update Org chart Diversity, Equity and Inclusion guide	Lucas Hart Dana Oster Katie Harris Katie Harris Allie Simpson
11:15 – 11:20	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission/ Tribal update	Cecilia Gobin, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
11:20 – 11:25	Puget Sound Partnership update	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
11:25 – 11:30	NWS Foundation update	Don Hunger, NWS Foundation
11:30 – 11:50	MRC Reports	MRC Representatives



agenda

11:50 – 11:55	Roundtable	All
11:55 – 12:00	Public comment	All

30 minute post-meeting open discussion – join if you'd like.



October 29, 2020 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
Zoom – Conference call
Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Alan Clark (Clallam-Chair), Elsa Schwartz (Island-Vice Chair), Pete Haase (Skagit), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Sarah Brown (Snohomish), Phil Green (San Juan-Alternate), Tom Cowan, Ron Thom, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal), Nan McKay, Chris Castner, Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership)

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

Others in Attendance: Representative Debra Lekanoff, Sarah Fiske (Jefferson MRC- Alternate), Austin Rose (Whatcom MRC), Don Hunger (NW Straits Foundation), Caroline Gibson (NW Straits Foundation), Adrien Spidle (NWIFC), Ken Currens (NWIFC), Frances Robertson (San Juan MRC), Jenn Grimm (Puget Sound Partnership- Alternate)

Absent: Christina Koons (San Juan)

Welcome and Introductions

Alan opened the meeting and facilitated introductions.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the September Northwest Straits Commission meeting were approved by consensus.

Welcome from Representative Lekanoff

State Representative Debra Lekanoff thanked the NW Straits Commission for connecting local individuals to important science. Her legislative priorities are long-term salmon restoration, natural resources funding, climate change and resilience, and green infrastructure.

Rep. Lekanoff is working on two bills for the upcoming legislative session:

- Carbon tax bill that would support climate-resilient infrastructure, salmon recovery, and natural resource funding, and supporting underrepresented communities who need help with their utility bills.
- Green infrastructure legislation that would incentivize green building and green infrastructure.

NW Straits Commission Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Elsa reminded the Commission that they had decided at the September Commission meeting to give MRCs the opportunity to review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NW Straits Commission and NW Straits Foundation. MRC representatives reported that the MOU is acceptable as-is. The Commission adopted the MOU by consensus.



External Relations Committee

Tom Cowan reported that the committee is continuing to explore partnerships with NOAA. Tom said that Congressman Rick Larsen conducted site visits with all five MRCs in his district. Lucas and Tom are planning to meet with Representative Larsen's staff in November. Christina Koons and Tom met with San Juan County Council candidates, and educated them about the MRC. Tom reported that the committee provided input on the Northwest Straits Commission newsletter during the October committee meeting. Tom said that the committee will be paying attention to the upcoming state legislative session, which begins on January 11, 2021.

Science Advisory Committee

Ron Thom reported that the Committee did not meet over the last month. Ron announced that they will be advancing the Actions to Impacts diagram, and brainstorming some case studies to use in the diagram as examples.

Director's Report

2021-23 MRC Grant Timeline

Lucas presented the MRC grant timeline document. Lucas said that final grant submission deadline is in June, with Commission approval slated for July. Lucas encouraged people to direct their questions about MRC grants to Sasha.

Shorelands and Environmental Assistance (SEA) Program Awards

Allie Simpson and Dana Oster received Department of Ecology SEA Program awards.

Allie received the First Responder Award, which recognized her for her leadership in the European Green Crab response in Drayton Harbor.

Dana received the Outstanding Achievement Award for her leadership, determination, and successful completion of the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan, which outlines goals and action items to conserve important marine habitat.

Thank you, Ron Thom!

Lucas announced that the October NW Straits Commission meeting is Ron's last official meeting. Lucas thanked Ron for his deep commitment to the Commission's mission over the last five years. Ron will stay in his appointment until a replacement is announced by the governor. He will remain engaged in the Science Advisory Committee beyond his term on the Commission.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) update

Cecilia Gobin reported that NWIFC has concluded the 2020 [State of the Watersheds](#) report. This report shows trends in watershed habitat and related stressors. She said that the report summarizes indicators that directly relate to salmon productivity.



Cecilia reported that she is tracking two pieces of state legislation, an ecological benefits bill and carbon bill. Details are expected in the upcoming legislative session.

Cecilia said the Army Corps is taking action to renew all Nationwide Permits (NWP). The Army Corps is also proposing five new permits.

NWPs that NW Straits Commission may be interested in reviewing and commenting on:

- NWP 3, concerning maintenance of structures or fill in water or overwater (i.e. bulkheads, rip rap, docks etc.)
- NWP 13, concerning permitted bank stabilization activities
- NWP 10, concerning mooring buoys
- NWP 22, concerning removal of vessels
- Two NEW NWPs, concerning permitting activities of seaweed mariculture

Puget Sound Partnership Update

Laura Blackmore reported on the 2021 legislative session:

- Session begins January 11, 2021
- Legislature will adopt an operating budget for the 2021-2023 Biennium
- Legislature may adopt a capital budget, but it is not required
- State Dept. of Revenue aims to exempt habitat restoration grants from the Business & Occupation and retail sales and use taxes. This would need to be approved by the Governor and Office of Financial Management.

Laura provided the following Puget Sound Partnership updates:

- The Partnership is continuing the 2022-2026 Action Agenda update process. Commissioners are encouraged to participate. The next workshop is November 17.
- The Partnership has surrendered 15% of their state budget in light of the state budget difficulties this year. The Partnership will see the cuts in science, monitoring, and accountability departments.
- The Partnership received over 140 responses to a questionnaire regarding social marketing challenges. Results will inform how the Partnership supports partners with behavior change campaigns.
- The Partnership submitted two budget packages, one is for 1 full time position who will focus on diversity, equity and inclusion and environmental justice. The other position is related to Puget Sound Info data portal.

Northwest Straits Foundation Update

There was no update from the Northwest Straits Foundation.



Washington Hatcheries Presentation

Ken Currens and Adrian Spidle from Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission presented about Washington Hatcheries. Ken and Adrian explained the legal, regulatory and scientific aspects of hatcheries management, including how hatcheries plan for and manage genetic risks.

MRC Reports

Clallam –

Alan reported that Clallam MRC has two new members - Ann Stafford and Alisa Hasbrouck. Alisa participated in the September meeting and both came to the October meeting. Alan said that the MRC extended the fellowship contract with Alisa Taylor for seven months. Alan reported that MRC members approved their 2020-21 educational outreach plan.

Island –

Elsa reported that Congressman Larsen visited two restoration sites, Seahorse Siesta and Sunlight Shores, to learn about the MRC's work. The MRC presented a proclamation to the Board of Island County Commissioners regarding Orca Recovery Day. Island County Commissioners passed a resolution which proclaimed October 17, 2020 Orca Recovery Day in Island County. Elsa reported that Lisa Hillier from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will be conducting an on-the-beach training for new forage fish volunteers in November.

Jefferson –

Jeff Taylor reported that the MRC completed installation of the rain garden at Clay and Benton Streets in uptown Port Townsend. Jeff said that the no-anchor zone subcommittee replaced summer buoys in Port Townsend Bay to prepare for the winter conditions. Jeff reported that the MRC is establishing a new forage fish monitoring site in Dabob Bay.

San Juan –

Phil reported that MRC members met with Congressman Larsen on October 23 on San Juan Island. Phil said that planning is underway for the MRC's annual retreat. Phil reported that the San Juan County and MRC were successful in securing funding from Pew Charitable Trust to initiate a local Eelgrass Protection Initiative Consortium (EPIC) to increase the effectiveness of eelgrass protection and recovery. Phil reported that Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is seeking additional public feedback on [draft commercial whale watching rules](#). The public may submit written comments online through Dec. 5.

Skagit –

Sasha Horst reported that MRC members met with Congressman Larsen on October 14 at Padilla Bay to highlight the Kids on the Beach and Salish Sea Stewards programs. The Salish Sea Stewards held a virtual meeting on October 14.



minutes

Snohomish –

Sarah Brown reported that the MRC met with Congressman Larsen and shared information with him about the Snohomish Estuary Pilings project. She said that the MRC has started Phase 2 and is currently working on hiring a consultant. Sarah reported that the Oil Spill Subcommittee attended volunteer training and submitted comments on the North Central Puget Sound Geographic Response Plan. The MRC, in partnership with Washington Department of Natural Resources, completed removal of four derelict boats which are now being processed for disposal.

Whatcom –

Bob Cecile reported that the MRC met with Congressman Larsen and Whatcom County Executive Satal Sidhu, representatives of Lummi Island Heritage Trust, and Northwest Straits Commission for a tour of the Aiston Preserve restoration site on Lummi Island. Bob reported that two 2020-21 MRC interns were hired as part time temporary Whatcom County employees. Bob said that Maya Garber-Yonts is the Forage Fish Survey intern and Mary Kirkpatrick-Waite is the North Sound Stewards Volunteer Coordinator intern.

Public comment

There was no public comment.

* The next regular Commission meeting will be on **Friday, December 11.***



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

Committee Members: Elsa Schwartz, Ron Thom, Alan Clark, Tom Cowan, Jude Apple

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

Proposed 2021 Meeting Schedule

Lucas presented the proposed meeting schedule for 2021. He reported that the Oct. 29 meeting is tentative depending on what happens with the 2021 Conference. Similar to recent years, Commission meetings are scheduled for the last Friday of each month. The committee recommended approval of the 2021 schedule.

Executive Committee meeting dates

The committee decided to move their meetings to the third Monday of the month. This change will start in Jan 2021.

- Next step: Katie will send out an Executive Committee meeting schedule for 2021.

Project pursuits

Lucas reported that Commission staff are working on four project funding avenues. They include:

- PEW Charitable Trust is interested in funding the NWSC to coordinate workshops related to kelp policy. Dana and Lucas are drafting a work plan to be considered by PEW.
- Coastal Watershed Grant (through Restore America's Estuary) for Eelgrass protection zone expansion. The Commission is partnering with NWSF and several MRCs, as well as Friends of San Juans. Funding decision will be made December 2020, with funding available starting January 2021.
- Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership grant for green crab management in Drayton Harbor. The Commission won't know about funding decisions until June / July 2021.
- Legislative ask with Sea Grant to fund community based organizations (like the Commission) to lead green crab trapping. Request is for 2 FTE.

Committee members were supportive of the project pursuits and said that each project aligns with the Commission's mission.

Kelp next steps

Lucas and Dana gave a presentation to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Commission Habitat Subcommittee. The Subcommittee wanted to know what could be done at the policy level at WDFW to protect/restore kelp. Lucas and Dana will meet with the WDFW Habitat Section Director in November.

Dana presented the Kelp Plan to the PSP Ecosystem Coordination Board. Lucas said that kelp will be a vital sign in the Puget Sound Partnership's 2022-26 Action Agenda. Lucas said that the Kelp Plan is well situated to serve as a blueprint from which the Partnership could craft an implementation strategy.

Commission-Foundation MOU

Lucas reminded the Committee that the Commission approved the Commission-Foundation MOU at the October Commission Meeting. Lucas said the next step was to have Alan sign the document. Lucas and Don will present the MOU to the MRCs.

Filling the open Commission seat

Lucas said that two people have applied for Ron's seat on the Commission, but there has not been an update from the Governor's office about who will be selected.



Hatcheries presentation

Committee members agreed that they were satisfied with the hatcheries presentation that was given by NW Indian Fisheries Commission staff at the October Commission meeting.

NW Straits Commission Birthday Party – Nov. 20

Lucas reported that Commission staff are organizing a virtual casual social gathering to celebrate the 22nd Anniversary of the Initiative. The event will be a chance to talk with each other and reconnect. The event will be held via Zoom on November 20 from 4-5 pm.

MRC project evaluation and funding decisions

Lucas explained that Commission staff are looking for guidance regarding how to provide useful direction to MRCs on building measures of success into education and outreach projects. Committee members provided the following insight:

- Science Advisory Member Kathy Wolf is a resource within the Commission in regards to measuring impact of social marketing and outreach efforts.
- The Commission has the responsibility to make sure the grant money is being spent responsibly. Staff have a responsibility to support the MRCs in strengthening their project proposals by the time the project receives funding.
- It is important that the project selection process reflects the bottom-up values of the Initiative, and that MRCs are empowered to choose their priority projects.

Committee members want to have more discussion about this topic.

- Next step: Katie will put this agenda item on the December Executive Committee Meeting
- Next step: Sasha and Lucas will compile a few project examples to walk through with the Committee

Next Executive Committee Meeting: December 7, 2020, 11 am -12 pm



Commission staff highlights- [Dec. 2020]

MRC Grants: Year one of MRC grants is complete, with invoicing and reporting submitted and reviewed by Commission staff and Ecology fiscal staff. Commission staff is now focused on providing support to MRCs entering the planning phase for the 2021-23 grant cycle, and working on a draft request for proposals that will be issued in late winter/early spring 2021.

MRC Lead Staff Meeting: Commission staff hosted a second meeting of MRC lead staff on November 4, covering some follow up topics from the October meeting, along with a discussion on engaging with the NW Straits Foundation, and MRC education and outreach.

MRC Chairs Meeting: Commission staff hosted a meeting of MRC chairs and vice chairs on November 6, discussing member engagement, mentoring and onboarding strategies, and project collaboration.

Gubernatorial Appointee Meeting: Commission staff attended a meeting of the gubernatorial appointees to the Commission, facilitated by Chris Castner, to discuss their roles and responsibilities as members of the Commission.

Northwest Straits anniversary event: A celebration of the Northwest Straits Initiative's 22nd anniversary was held November 22 from 4-5pm. Around 50 people joined in the Zoom event featuring highlights of the MRC's accomplishments for the year, regional successes and presentation of the Environmental Leadership Award to Caroline Gibson for her role in elevating the focus on kelp in Puget Sound.

Communications plan: The contract with Maul, Foster & Alongi was completed as of November 30. Staff will provide an overview of the Communications Plan at the December Commission meeting. Improvements to Commission internal and external communication will be implemented in the coming months.

Green Crab: Trapping efforts have ended for the season with 253 green crabs captured in Drayton Harbor and 1 green crab captured in Birch Bay.

Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan: Making Waves, a Puget Sound Partnership newsletter, featured the Kelp Plan. That coverage led to additional publicity for the Kelp Plan including a radio interview and online post on KIRO: [Puget Sound kelp need your help; kelp beds disappearing throughout area \(mynorthwest.com\)](#) and three news segments on Q13: [Our kelp forests are disappearing \(q13fox.com\)](#). Dana and Lucas held a number of meetings to develop strategies to carry actions of the Kelp Plan forward focusing on implementing existing regulations and protections for kelp more effectively by leading agency coordination and connecting science to policy.

Meetings Attended:



Commission staff highlights- [Dec. 2020]

Dana attended: Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection meeting 11/10 & 12/8; Skagit MRC 11/12; Kelp policy meetings 11/9, 11/10, 11/12, 11/13, 11/16 Clallam MRC; MRC Symposium Oil Spills 11/19; NWSI celebration 11/20; Jefferson MRC 12/1; San Juan MRC 12/3; Kelp Highway planning meeting 12/4.

Sasha attended: NWSC Gubernatorial 11/2; MRC Lead Staff 11/4; Whatcom MRC 11/5; MRC Chairs/Vice Chairs 11/6; Communications Plan 11/6; MRC Symposium Oil Spills 11/19; NW Straits anniversary celebration 11/20

Lucas attended: NWSC Gubernatorial meeting 11/2; MRC Lead Staff 11/4; Island MRC 11/3; MRC Chairs 11/6; Kelp policy 11/9, 11/10, 11/12, 11/13, 11/24; Communications plan 11/9, 11/18; Eelgrass no anchor 11/10; Skagit MRC 11/12; MRC oil spill symposium 11/19; NWS anniversary 11/20;

Katie attended: NWSC Gubernatorial 11/2; MRC Lead Staff 11/4; Whatcom MRC 11/5; MRC Chairs/Vice Chairs 11/6; Communications Plan 11/6, 11/18; MRC Symposium Oil Spills 11/19; NW Straits anniversary celebration 11/20; Whatcom MRC 12/3; Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection meeting 11/10 & 12/8

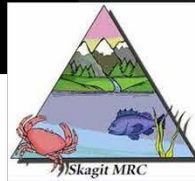
Allie attended: Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection meeting 11/10 & 12/8; MRC Lead Staff 11/4; MRC Symposium Oil Spills 11/19; NW Straits anniversary celebration 11/20; Island MRC 12/1



Commission staff highlights- [Dec. 2020]



ISLAND COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES
COMMITTEE



CLALLAM COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE



Northwest
Straits
COMMISSION

partners in marine conservation

Screenshot taken by Frances Robertson of the November 20 anniversary Zoom event

Draft



**Northwest
Straits**
COMMISSION

2021 Meeting Schedule

JANUARY

29

FEBRUARY

26

MARCH

26

APRIL

30

MAY

28

JUNE

25

JULY

30

AUGUST

27

SEPTEMBER

24

OCTOBER

29

***MEETING ONLY
HELD IF NO
CONFERENCE***

NOVEMBER

19-20

***TENTATIVE*
NWSI
CONFERENCE**

DECEMBER

10

Agendas and materials are posted in advance of the meeting:
<https://nwstraits.org/get-involved/events/>



NORTHWEST STRAITS COMMISSION

The mission of the Northwest Straits Commission is to protect and restore the marine waters, habitats and species of the Northwest Straits region to achieve ecosystem health and sustainable resource use.

NORTHWEST STRAITS COMMISSION

The Northwest Straits Commission serves as a board of directors that works by consensus and is comprised of representatives from each of the seven Marine Resources Committees (MRCs) in the Northwest Straits region, five representatives appointed by the governor, one of whom represents the **Puget Sound Partnership**, and one **appointee representing tribes**.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SCIENCE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

EXTERNAL RELATIONS
COMMITTEE

The NW Straits Commission has six staff members to support the board of directors and MRCs.

DIRECTOR

DR. LUCAS HART

ECOSYSTEM
PROJECT
COORDINATOR

ALLIE SIMPSON

MARINE
PROGRAM
MANAGER

DANA OSTER

COMMS AND
OUTREACH
SPECIALIST

KATIE HARRIS

OPERATIONS
MANAGER

SASHA HORST

GIS SPECIALIST

SUZANNE SHULL

Northwest Straits Foundation Updates

December, 2020

Projects

- Monitoring
 - November was a lot of consolidating the season's monitoring data and uploading to the appropriate databases. Also working on NOAA proposal for crab pot removal and prevention project.
 - December is:
 - Finalizing and submitting NOAA proposal;
 - Presenting and facilitating for the virtual NOAA Marine Debris Action Plan Workshop;
 - Working on monitoring reporting with UW; and
 - Begin planning out 2021 monitoring activities.
 - Monitoring Crewmembers

Due to COVID 19 and our limits on volunteers staff are part of the monitoring crew. In 2020 we regularly monitored large woody debris, beach slope and beach wrack. In 2021, we will continue with these processes in addition to a beach seining.
- Nearshore
 - Completed and distributed Episode 2: Shore Friendly Living – Bulkheads or Natural Shorelines
 - Continued permitting process for Lummi Quarry restoration
 - Finalized salmon recovery funding agreements for design and permitting: Hoypus Point Restoration (Cornet Bay-Final phase) and Polnell Point armor removal (NAS Whidbey)
 - Upcoming:
 - Planning for virtual landowner workshop in January
 - Adding content to Episode 3 of Shore Friendly Living video series
 - RFP for Polnell Point engineering consultants

Administrative

- Communications and correspondence with funders, MRC members and NWSC staff.
- Reviewing contracts and community projects.
- This month's emphasis is on:
 - Funder prospecting in the rapidly changing philanthropic landscape of Covid-19

- Puget Sound Grantmaker Association workshop *Storytelling for funders and your community*
- Grant closeouts/budget tracking
- Exploring virtual forums 2021, partnership with Salish Sea Institute

Advancement

- Upcoming Events and Activities
 - Northwest Straits Virtual Holiday Fundraiser December 17.
This event will feature two musical performances, three scientific interviews and clips from the NWSF board and staff.
 - Passport To Marine Adventure – explorer series for friends and families
Creating a virtual PDF scavenger hunt, the "Passport to Marine Adventure", will release in 2021. It is an inventive way to get the public to visit restored sites in all seven counties.
 - Shore Friendly Promotion, Social Media and Email Campaign
Continued work promoting the Shore Friendly Living program and its new video series. Episode 2 just released!
 - GIS Story Map w/ Samish Indian Nation to be released in 2021.
Worked with Samish Indian Nation on creating a Story Map in ArcGIS that illustrates the NWSF work with partners in the Straits.

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Clallam MRC

Month/Year: November – December 2020

Submitted by: Helle Andersen

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- The members approved the 2020-21 workplan
- Clallam MRC will be working with Tom Mumford on a kelp 101 webinar
- The climate change subcommittee plans to meet with DCD Director Winborn, Karen Affeld at NODC, and meet with Rich Meier at the County.

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): none

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

The Clallam MRC November meeting was held Monday Nov. 16th; the December meeting was cancelled. Alan Clark, Jeff Ward and Alisa Taylor provided a summary of the first motorized kelp surveys performed using the NWSC new protocol and Jeff Ward led a discussion of hosting a kelp webinar series. Other topics included member discussion and approval of the Clallam MRC workplan 2020-21, participation in a virtual Dungeness River Festival, climate change subcommittee update, forage fish sampling and a discussion of purchasing a tablet for the project, and NWSC update. Under Good of the Order the members discussed possible collaboration with Innerspace exploration on an educational outreach project associated with crab pot removal in Sequim Bay. The members approved a letter in support of stable funding of the CCEH Onsite Septic System Program to be submitted to CC Board of Health.

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 Sampling: Sampling was conducted at Cline Spit Nov. 10th and at Ediz Hook Nov. 11th; Sampling in Dec. is scheduled for Dec. 9th at Ediz Hook and Dec. 11th at Cline Spit..

Climate Change Subcommittee: In the coming months the climate subcommittee plans to 1) Meet with DCD Director Winborn to get her input and ask what else we can do beside the SoundIQ training; 2) Reach out to Karen Affeld at NODC re climate action planning grant; 3) Respond to DNR; and 4) Meet with Rich Meier to clarify GHG inventory tools being considered by County staff.

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): None

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Island

Month/Year: November 2020

Submitted by: Anna Toledo

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- **Forage fish training:** Lisa Hillier from WDFW conducted an on-the-beach training for nine new forage fish volunteers, including an introduction to the online form system.
- **Seahorse Siesta restoration:** The MRC is partnering with the NWSF on nearshore restoration at Seahorse Siesta. The project, which is currently underway, involves removing an old barge and bulkhead from the base of a feeder bluff.
- **Volunteer monitoring activities suspended:** Due to increased COVID-19 restrictions, the MRC has been directed to suspend volunteer monitoring activities until further notice.

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Matt Kukuk and Mike Bianchi will be stepping down from the MRC at the end of their terms on December 31, 2020. Matt will continue to be involved with the forage fish program. Mike will continue to serve as a non-voting technical advisor. Three new applicants have applied for three open seats. The applicants will be considered for appointment by the Board of Island County Commissioners in January.

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

Past Meetings/Events:

- November 3: MRC meeting via Zoom. Topics: Oak Harbor Marina Restoration Feasibility report
- December 1: MRC meeting via Zoom. Topics: project brainstorming

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- January 5: MRC meeting via Zoom. Topics: Election of officers, project planning
- February 2: MRC meeting via Zoom.
- February 6: Sound Waters University. MRC will have virtual exhibit.

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: Volunteer monitoring activities were suspended November 17 in response to increased COVID-19 restrictions. Ann Prusha and Jason Morgan will continue to monitor sites monthly, as possible. Prior to the expanded restrictions, the MRC hosted an on-the-beach training with Lisa Hillier (WDFW) for new volunteers.

Outreach – Needs Assessment: The needs assessment subcommittee has finalized the list of interview contacts and questionnaire. Interviews will be scheduled for December and January.

Outreach – Eelgrass Storymap: Ann Prusha met with the eelgrass monitoring team to gather information about the eelgrass program and start developing the eelgrass storymap.

Restoration – Hoypus Point (partnership with NWSF): The NWSF has contracted with Blue Coast Engineering to complete the restoration design at Hoypus Point. A kickoff meeting will be scheduled in December.

Restoration – Seahorse Siesta (partnership with NWSF): Restoration work is underway at Seahorse Siesta. The project includes the removal of an old barge and bulkhead at the base of a feeder bluff.

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):



Seahorse Siesta Restoration: Left: Material from old barge. Credit: Lisa Kaufman. Right: Material being removed. Credit: Anna Toledo.

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Jefferson

Month/Year: November-December 2020

Submitted by: Monica Montgomery

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- As of November, we began the fifth year of post-restoration forage fish monitoring at Fort Townsend State Park. After this season, we'll work on preparing a summary of this restoration project.
- Voted on Executive Committee officers and will be seeking new MRC members (see below).
- Currently focused on project planning (2021 annual plan & 2021-2023 RFP).

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

The MRC voted on Executive Committee officers at the Dec 1 meeting:

Chair – Neil Harrington

Vice Chair – Brenda Johnson

NWSC Rep – Jeff Taylor

NWSC Rep Alt – Sarah Fisker

The MRC formed a new member selection subcommittee (Neil Harrington, Sarah Fisker, and Bryan DeCaterina) and will be advertising positions for: District 1, District 1 Alt, and District 3 Alt.

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

Past Events/Meetings

- Oct 26 – Forage fish sampling at Dabob
- Oct 29 – NWSC Meeting
- Nov 2 – Executive Committee meeting – re: project planning
- Nov 10 – MRC monthly meeting
- Nov 13 – Forage fish sampling at Fort Townsend
- Nov 19 – MRC symposium – re: oil spills
- Nov 20 – Executive Committee meeting
- Nov 25 – Forage fish sampling at Dabob
- Nov – Forage fish sampling at Adelma
- Dec 1 – MRC monthly meeting

Upcoming Events/Meetings

- Dec 11 – NWSC meeting
- Dec 15 – Executive Committee meeting
- Dec – Forage fish sampling at Adelma
- Dec – Forage fish sampling at Dabob

- Jan – Forage fish sampling at Fort Townsend

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

Nothing to report.

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

1. Monitoring:

- Forage fish - Fort Townsend:** The MRC Coordinator and 4 volunteers (Brenda Johnson, Sarah Fiskien, Troy McKelvey, and Gregg Patton) monitored on November 13th, starting off the fifth season of post-restoration monitoring. Our partner at Point No Point Treaty Council who processes the lab samples is willing to continue to do so going forward. MRC members are discussing continuing to monitor this site annually versus wrapping up monitoring after this fifth year and following up the seventh (2022-23) and tenth (2025-26) years.
- Forage fish - Adelma Beach (Index):** One MRC member sampled on November 15th with the help of one volunteer.
- Forage fish - Dabob Bay (Index):** One MRC member will be sampling on November 25th with the help of one volunteer.
- Kelp:** The MRC appointed a new Project Lead, Betsy Carlson, for the 2021 monitoring season. We are planning to organize a training session with the previous Project Lead and some of the active kelp subcommittee members to address any transitional needs before she moves away.

2. Rain Gardens:

- The MRC was approached by Quilcene School, where we installed one rain garden last year, to install a second rain garden on the other end of their parking lot. Plans to install the rain garden in December have been stalled due to the surge in COVID-19 cases nationwide and restrictions on gathering.
- Bob Simmons worked on maintenance needs at the rain garden located at Chetzamoka Park with three volunteers (including two Master Gardeners). They did some weeding, added some new plants and mulch.

3. Education & Outreach:

- Along with creating the 2021 Outreach Plan, the subcommittee will be focusing on three priorities: (1) Increase public awareness of climate change, (2) Reach out to stakeholders in rural areas of the County, and (3) Develop a lecture series/expert speakers bureau. Members have also expressed interest in having the MRC function as a repository of educational materials on various topics for the public, including but not limited to climate change, aquaculture (shellfish, seaweed, finfish), and microplastics, likely through the website and potentially in partnership with local libraries for access to scientific publications.

4. Olympia Oysters:

- Nothing to report.

5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:

- a. A previous MRC volunteer reported on Nov 3rd that three buoys are missing from Mystery Bay – two from the MRC and one of the two State Park buoys. The MRC has been aware of this and has set the Mystery Bay buoy field as a high priority in early 2021, once liability concerns are sorted with MRC volunteers. The MRC Coordinator is getting back to working on drafting a dive safety manual and procedures for the MRC that are in compliance with L&I and DOSH, in collaboration with the subcommittee and specifically one of our members who works as a Dive Safety Officer in his profession. The Coordinator is also following up on whether the MRC can fit under the umbrella of UW's or WWU's dive safety programs. Subcommittee members will be reaching out to commercial shellfish operators in Port Hadlock and Mystery Bay to partner on maintenance needs as well.

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.):

PT Sewer Outfall: Nothing to report.

Jefferson County SMP Review: Ongoing. The County Planner tasked with the review gave a presentation to the MRC at the November 10 meeting.

City of Port Townsend SMP Review: Ongoing. The City Planner tasked with the review gave a presentation to the MRC at the November 10 meeting.

Shoreline Landowner Outreach (NWSF): The MRC Coordinator and Project Lead gave feedback on promotional postcards/fliers for the upcoming webinar, now tentatively scheduled for January.

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

Forage fish monitoring at Dabob Bay – photo by Monica Montgomery



Forage fish monitoring at Fort Townsend State Park – photo by Monica Montgomery



MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: San Juan County

Month/Year: November 2020

Submitted by: Frances Robertson

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- The MRC Retreat was held December 3rd via Zoom
- PFSS monthly meetings continue with new components being added to the website.

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

There were no changes to the membership or leadership during the month of November

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

- November MRC meeting: November 5, 2020 via Zoom
- LIO meeting: November 5, 2020 via Zoom – Attended by Phil Green and Frances Robertson
- NWSI Happy Hour celebration: November 20, 2020 – Attended by Phil Green, Cathleen Burns and Frances Robertson.
- Stewardship Network meeting: November 4, and December 2, 2020 via Zoom – Attended by Frances Robertson
- MRC Annual Retreat: December 3, 2020

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):

MSA Plan: Biodiversity targets continue to be updated and drafted.

PFSS: The PFSS subcommittee continues to meet once per month. Updates to the website continue and a new adopt a beach and adopt a road component has been developed. MRC members are assisting with the creation of the beach database. This function of the website should be ready to use early in 2021. The design and implementation of these new website components were made possible with support from San Juan County's Solid Waste Program.

Member of PFSS and the MRC also continue to participate in monthly beach clean-ups.

SRKW Vessel Disturbance and education: Efforts for the SRKW are currently on hold until the New Year. Due to COVID there will be no Seattle Boat Show in 2021. Another delay to the MRC programming related to the SRKW this year due to COVID is in scheduling Killer Whale Tales for the elementary schools in each of the County's school districts. We will re-evaluate if we can schedule the regular in

person sessions or fall back on the remote learning options offered by Killer Whale Tales in the New Year, working in conjunction with the School Districts.

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 MRC discussed the proposed Rules for the States Commercial Whale Watch Licensing System but were unable to reach any consensus for specific recommendations. However, the committee's discussion and comments assisted County staff in their recommendations to Council.

The San Juan MRC would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Caroline Gibson for her well earned Environmental Leadership Award. And also, to thank all at the Northwest Straits Initiative for their partnership and support. Here's to another 22 years!

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



A composite screenshot of all who attended the NWSI 22nd Anniversary celebration on November 20.

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Skagit

Month/Year: Nov-Dec/2020

Submitted by: Tracy/Pete

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- The 2021 Salish Stewards Training will be held Tuesdays, 1pm-5pm starting February 23- May 25. The training will be based on a hybrid model with virtual and in-person beach experiences for small groups.
- The 2021 Fidalgo Bay Day event date has been tentatively set for Saturday, August 28, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort in Anacortes.

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Skagit MRC voted to make the recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to appoint Lynne Wenberg-Davidson to the MRC. Lynne will replace Phyllis Bravinder as the new MRC Project Lead for the kelp surveys.

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

- **MRC Monthly Meeting- Nov 12, 2020:** 20 people attended the Skagit MRC virtual meeting on Nov 12. Matthew Colston with the Island County Natural Resources Department presented information about the harbor porpoise study in Burrows Pass. Katie Harris walked through the Northwest Straits Initiative's Communications Plan Fact Sheet.
- **Next MRC Monthly Meeting- December 10, 9am-11:00am** (GoToMeeting)

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

No updates.

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

- **Salish Sea Stewards:** The 2021 Salish Sea Stewards training will start February 23- May 25. The training will be based on a hybrid model with virtual and in-person beach experiences for small groups. 10 virtual classes will be held Tuesdays from 1pm to 3:30pm and 3 field sessions will be held 1pm -5pm. Sara Brostrom is working on securing speakers. The 11 member SSS Advisory Committee updated the publicity flyer and the registration form which are now posted on the MRC website. The Committee is exploring the possibility of recruiting volunteers to take on some of the tasks of a Volunteer Coordinator, to keep the larger group of Salish Sea Stewards informed, engaged, and connected.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The 2021 Fidalgo Bay Day event date has been tentatively set for Saturday, August 28, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort in Anacortes. It is still unclear what the coronavirus situation might be, so we will also be considering a variety of scenarios, options, and alternatives for this event.
- **Bowman Bay Restoration:** Plant maintenance at the Bowman Bay restoration site is done for the season. We will need to try to recruit and train one or two lead volunteer stewards to maintain the site in 2021. It is yet to be determined whether or not a contract will be needed

next year. The Puget Sound Partnership just released a new video and article about the Bowman Bay restoration project in their new online magazine "[Making Waves](#)" this week.

- Forage Fish Surveys: Forage fish surveys continue at all of our restoration sites and 3 index sites with a smaller number of volunteers and using COVID-19 safety protocols. Four new Salish Sea Stewards have been out a few times to help with the forage fish surveys this year. Spawning season is really starting to wind down for surf smelt at our survey sites. On October 17, the Salish Sea School students learned all about forage fish from the volunteers at the Fidalgo Bay resort. Craig Olsen brought his microscope with the giant screen for kids to get a close look at the surf smelt eggs. Some were freshly hatched larvae and others were right at the stage of hatching! Here is a [link to a short video](#) with the Salish Sea School kids.
- Kids on the Beach: Planning is underway for the 2020/2021 Kids on the Beach program. Under the current circumstances, it has been difficult to get teachers and students actively engaged in the KOTB program materials. Instead of trying to get the KOTB program into the schools this fall, Annie will focus on implementing the KOTB program next spring. Annie has also been working closely with coordinators of the Swinomish "Between Two Worlds" program on a bridged learning opportunity where Tribal youth will serve as mentors for middle school students during the late fall, winter, and spring forage fish KOTB investigations.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: Field work is finished for the season and won't start up again until February 2021. The Sub-Award Agreement with Puget Sound Restoration Fund has been signed.
- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Field work is finished for the season. The data has been collected and processed. Overall, oyster settlement appears to be pretty average for the year. Paul wrote an article for the Skagit County Clean Water electronic newsletter that currently has over 800 subscribers.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys: Kelp surveys are now finished for the season. The data is currently being processed. Surveys won't start up again until June 2021. Lynne Wenberg-Davidson will replace Phyllis Bravinder as the new MRC Project Lead for the kelp surveys.

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):

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Snohomish

Month/Year: November 2020

Submitted by: Elisa Dawson

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Snohomish County SWM hired Alex Pittman, a planner who will be assisting the MRC.
- MRC Piling Grant: The MRC has hired ESA consultant to assist with Phase 2 of the MRC Pilings Grant.
- The MRC derelict boat and pilings work was featured in the Everett Herald.
<https://www.heraldnet.com/news/crews-remove-three-more-junk-boats-from-the-snohomish-river/>

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

Snohomish County SWM hired Alex Pittman, a planner who will be assisting the MRC and Senior Planner Elisa Dawson.

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

The MRC Pilings Subcommittee conducted interviews for the Phase 2 project on October 26 and 27.

The MRC Executive team met on November 3rd for retreat planning and coordination.

Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman attended the Lead Staff meeting on November 4

Elisa Dawson, Alex Pittman, and Anna Toledo met to discuss Port Susan work for the 2021-2022 MRC Grant on November 6.

The MRC Conducted Forage Fish sampling on November 12 and 13. WDFW joined the MRC on November 13 to check in on sampling practices and new site locations.

The MRC held a virtual retreat on November 18.

Elisa Dawson and Susan Tarpley attended the MRC Symposium on oil spills on November 19.

Elisa Dawson and Tim Ellis attended the Northwest Straits anniversary event on November 20.

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):

MRC Grant 2019-2020 Task 2: The MRC has started Phase 2 and has hired ESA consultant to assist with Phase 2 of the MRC Pilings Grant.

Nearshore Beach Restoration at Howarth Park and Everett Nearshore Project (Opportunity Fund Project): Bob Hillmann is working on getting the signs from this project installed. After signs are installed, the grant will be closed out.

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

Derelict Vessels: The MRC completed removal of 4 derelict boats for a cost of just under \$40,000. The MRC is now working with DNR to get 90% reimbursement for the costs.

Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area: There will be a Snohomish County-Island County Port Susan joint subcommittee meeting on December 15. The group continues to discuss the scope of work for the MRC grant for 2021-2022, which will focus on Port Susan.

Meadowdale: The MRC continues to participate in a cross-agency effort to do pre-project monitoring at Meadowdale Beach in anticipation of the restoration work there. The MRC will monitor for forage fish and do grain size analysis.

Forage Fish: forage fish samples will be taken at Meadowdale, Picnic Point, and Howarth Park once per month. Samples were taken by staff and volunteers on November 12 and 13.

Snohomish Railroad Grade Beach Nourishment Study Complete

From 2011-2020 researchers from the University of Washington, Snohomish County, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife surveyed target sites along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad grade to better understand the effectiveness of using dredge material for beach nourishment in the Puget Sound. In 2016, dredge material from the Snohomish River was used for the ESRP Snohomish County Beach Nourishment Project. Detailed beach monitoring was conducted both within the beach nourishment region and south of the region, where no nourishment has been done. Changes among years at the non-nourished sites have been compared to changes within the nourished region to help evaluate the short- and long-term effects of sediment addition on numerous shoreline functional responses. The full study and conclusions of the project are summarized in a [final report](#). Overall, the study found that dredge material sediment nourishment along the BNSF railroad can improve some structural and functional aspects of shorelines, but these improvements are unlikely to persist for longer than a few years if they are limited in scale or solely rely on re-use

of finer, clean dredged material. The group presented their findings in a webinar on November 9 2020 and a recording can be found [here](#).

No current updates for

- MRC Outreach Subcommittee
- Oil Spill
- Kelp Project
- Mussel Watch
- Crabber Education
- MyCoast

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.):

Upcoming Events:

- Northwest Straits 101 December 15
- MRC Holiday Social Hour December 16
- Forage Fish sample December 21 and 22

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



The SnoCo MRC takes a forage fish sample at Picnic Point. Photo by Elisa Dawson.

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Whatcom

Month/Year: November 2020

Submitted by: Austin Rose

Key items (two or three) for verbal report-out by MRC rep:

- Two MRC vacancies (Scientific Expertise and Conservation/Environmental) will be advertised through the Whatcom County Executive's office, MRC website, partner listservs, and the Bellingham Herald, in early December.
- A MRC virtual retreat will be held in late January/early February. The retreat will be facilitated by Hilary Wilkinson, VEDA Environmental. Planning meetings will begin in early December.

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

- Elizabeth Kilanowski will complete her second term on the MRC on Jan 31, 2021 and will no longer be able to serve on the MRC. Ryan McLaughlin is moving out of state and will be departing from the MRC at the end of 2020. These two MRC vacancies (Conservation/Environmental and Scientific) will be advertised by the Whatcom County Executive's office, MRC website, and local newspapers, in early December.

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

- The MRC held their general meeting on November 5. Nominations were held for MRC Officer positions. Elections will be held at the December meeting (December 3).
 - Officer (MRC Chair, MRC Vice Chair, MRC NWSC rep, MRC NWSC alternate rep.) nominations were conducted.
 - The MRC tried zoom breakout rooms to help facilitate the side conversations most MRC members miss from meeting in person. Breakout rooms will continue for future meetings.
 - The committee is planning to work with BP on an interpretive sign project at Pt. Whitehorn.
 - Katie Harris (NWSC) will be joining the December MRC meeting to help the MRC develop an elevator pitch.
- The North Sound Stewards will host a virtual event on Jan 13 (5:00pm-6:30pm) to wrap up the 2020 season and kick off the 2021 program. The event will include presentations on MRC and ReSources projects, including highlights from 2020.
- The MRC entered into a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with Hilary Wilkinson (VEDA Environmental) to facilitate a retreat for the MRC. The MRC retreat is anticipated to occur in late January or early February 2021. An ad-hoc planning committee will work with Hilary to identify desired retreat outcomes and draft an agenda.
- The MRC will host Lee First (Twin Harbors Waterkeeper) and Liz Schotman (Surfrider Foundation) at the January 7 general meeting. Lee and Liz will present information on seabed mining and the work towards getting it banned in the state waters zone of the WA Coast.

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):

- Eleanor is working to put together a small video for the North Sound Stewards, highlighting the 2020 year. This video will be useful for showing MRC accomplishments to County Council in addition to MRC members and volunteers.
- Maya Garber-Yonts (MRC Forage Fish Intern) is taking a strong lead on the monthly forage fish spawning surveys. Collecting data on the tablet, using iforms, seems to be going smoothly.
- Water quality in N. Chuckanut Bay continues to have very low fecal coliform counts. Sampling is currently being done by Whatcom County Staff and MRC Staff. Involving volunteers in field work is currently put on hold due to the Governor's recent COVID advisory.
- The Public Speakers Series Committee plan to send out a survey in early December to the community through the WWIN and MRC mailing list to gain input on speaker series topics of interest, format for presentations, and time of day/week preferences.

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 MRC worked to provide comment on the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan update which included an amendment to include a chapter addressing Marine Resources Lands. However, the MRC could not come to a consensus on a comment letter. The MRC will continue to explore what current policies and regulations exist in Whatcom County and how they could be more efficient at protecting and restoring marine resources.

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