



Meeting: Northwest Straits Commission
Location: Zoom Conference Call
Date: August 27, 2021
Time: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

To join the Zoom meeting, [CLICK HERE](#) Meeting ID: **836 7222 4871** Passcode: **246901**
For audio conference, dial: **253 215 8782**

We acknowledge the lands we're on today are the ancestral and current homelands of Indigenous Nations who have stewarded them since time immemorial. We respect their sovereignty, support their Treaty rights, their right to self-determination, and we honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. These Indigenous Nations include the Jamestown S'Klallam, Lower Elwha Klallam, Lummi, Makah, Nooksack, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Samish, Stillaguamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip Tribes.

10:00 – 10:10	Welcome and introductions Tribal acknowledgement Approval of July 2021 minutes	
10:10 – 10:20	Welcome remarks	Commissioner Mark Ozias, Clallam County
10:20 – 10:35	Committee reports Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee	
10:35 – 10:50	Shoreline Master Program (SMP) learning group	Barbara Bennett, Island MRC
10:50 – 11:05	Business Items Welcome Leah Robison (Lucas) Retreat updates (Lucas) Caroline Gibson Memorial-October 24, 4-7pm, Northwest Maritime Center, Port Townsend (Lucas) NW Straits Initiative Conference update (Leslie)	
11:05 – 11:10	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission/ Tribal update	Cecilia Gobin, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission



11:10 – 11:15	Puget Sound Partnership update	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
11:15 – 11:20	NWS Foundation update	Don Hunger, NWS Foundation
11:20 – 11:40	MRC Reports	MRC Representatives
11:40 – 11:50	MRC Updates and Action Items Identify key points and action items to report back to MRCs.	All
11:50 – 11:55	Roundtable	All
11:55 – 12:00	Public comment	All

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



Minutes

July 30, 2021 • 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Zoom – Conference call

Northwest Straits Commission meeting

Attendees:

Commission Members: Elsa Schwartz (Island-Chair), Tom Cowan (Vice Chair), Chris Castner, Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Alan Clark (Clallam), Tim Ellis (Snohomish), Pete Haase (Skagit), Christina Koons (San Juan), Julia Parrish, Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Nan McKay

Commission Staff: Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst, Dana Oster, Allie Simpson, Jonathan Hallenback, Leslie Perkins

Others in Attendance: Ginny Broadhurst (Salish Sea Institute), Don Hunger (Northwest Straits Foundation), Rebecca Paradis (Clallam MRC), Tim Cochnauer (Clallam MRC), Sarah Fiske (Jefferson-alternate)

Absent: Laura Blackmore, Cecilia Gobin (Tribal)

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Elsa Schwartz opened the meeting with introductions of attendees and the tribal acknowledgment. The Commission allowed some time for people to share their remembrances of Caroline Gibson's positive impact on people she met and her work protecting the environment. The Northwest Straits Foundation has established a marine conservation scholarship in her name.

Approval of Minutes

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

State of the Salish Sea

Ginny Broadhurst, Director of the Salish Sea Institute at Western Washington University presented the State of the Salish Sea report to the Commission. The State of the Salish Sea report synthesizes data on climate and human development stressors to the Salish Sea, waters shared by Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations, Canada, and the United States. This report is the first holistic scientific assessment since the Shared Waters Report in 1994. It focuses on ecosystem maps and scientific data, and is not restricted to political boundaries. Following the presentation, the Commission members discussed collaborative work among governments, promoting the report, and engaging in policy actions for identified strategies. The report is available at [Salish Sea Institute \(www.edu\)](http://www.salishseainstitute.edu).

Clallam MRC Presentation on Tumwater Creek intern project

Tim Cochnauer, chair of the Clallam MRC, along with Rebecca Paradis, Clallam MRC staff, presented information on the MRC's internship program, specifically the intern project at Tumwater Creek, which flows 20+ miles from the Olympic Mountains to the Port Angeles harbor. The intern works in cooperation with the Lower Elwha Tribe to capture and identify fish in a smolt trap in Tumwater Creek. The interns track the number of each species, habitat use and creek conditions. Tim explained that the internships last approximately three months (up to 80 paid hours) and each has an assigned mentor. Interns also are involved in MRC beach seining and oyster surveys. Commission members discussed the value of hands-on work for students and expressed interest in maximizing opportunities across all MRCs.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Tom Cowan updated the Commission on retreat plans for a virtual session on September 23, 2021, 1:00pm-3:30pm and in-person session on September 24, 2021, 10:30am-3:30pm at Padilla Bay. Feedback is being collected through a questionnaire on possible retreat topics of interest. The Commission is also



Minutes

evaluating whether to return to in-person Commission meetings in December/January. The Commission approved the MRC funding policy by consensus.

External Relations Committee – Chris Castner updated the Commission on the efforts for federal reauthorization of the Northwest Straits Initiative and clarified the purpose is to create more stability for the Initiative, including funding. Senator Murray’s office will have conversations with stakeholders over the August recess.

Science Advisory Committee – Julia Parrish informed the Commission on the committee updating the Request for Proposal process to streamline and clearly link to Actions to Impacts. The committee is discussing science project presentations at Commission meetings that might be of interest to MRC’s for local action.

Business items

In addition to the written update, staff provided the following business items:

- **2021-23 MRC grants:** A summary table of 2021-23 MRC project proposals for Northwest Straits funding was included in the meeting packet. Sasha Horst thanked MRCs, their staff and project leads for developing the project proposals. She noted that not all MRCs included year two projects. Those will be added through an amendment process in early 2022. The included budget figures are not final, and Commission staff will work with MRCs to finalize project budgets in the next month. The Commission approved the project funding with flexibility to adjust the budgets by consensus.
- **Forage fish program:** Pete Haase along with Dana Oster updated the Commission that WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife will continue assessing forage fish samples for the 2021-2022 state fiscal year. There is a desire to increase awareness of the value of this joint effort with local volunteers. An ad hoc committee formed with Pete Haase, Alan Clark, Tim Ellis, Jeff Taylor, Christina Koons, and Dana Oster to discuss communication messaging potential.

Northwest Straits Foundation: Don Hunger reported the Foundation is exploring opportunities to organize a centralized internship program. The Foundation board is recruiting for open member seats and he welcomes recommendations for candidates.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) update

No report was provided.

Puget Sound Partnership Update

No report was provided.

MRC Updates

MRCs provided full written reports that are available in the pre-meeting materials. Highlights are included below:

Clallam – Alan Clark

- As noted above, Chair Tim Cochnauer, gave an informative presentation on the Tumwater project internship program. Members would like to see how a broader internship program could be centralized for MRC opportunities.
- Three interns have been hired and are working with mentoring oversight on Tumwater smolt trap, outreach cards, and European Green Crab monitoring.



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- MRC members met the Kelp Expedition participants at Freshwater Bay for kelp monitoring activities on the water on the opening day July 15.

Island – Elsa Schwartz

- Volunteers are conducting surveys for the bull kelp monitoring season, recently adding the Hoypus Point site.
- Volunteers outreached on opening day of crabbing season with crabber materials and rot cord at Camano Island State Park, Cornet Bay Boat Launch, Langley Marina, and Oak Harbor Marina.
- Congratulations to MRC staff, Anna Toledo, who has given birth to baby boy Matias!

Jefferson – Jeff Taylor & Sarah Fisker

- Good visibility was reported during the underwater ROV testing on July 6. Detected lost crab pots could not be removed without obtaining proper permits.
- Volunteers installed a rain garden at the corner of Franklin and Adams Streets in Port Townsend on July 28.
- Members enjoyed the gathering and food at the Kelp Expedition event at Chetzemoka Park on July 17.
- Oyster monitoring at Discovery Bay resulted in better than expected results for mortality rates and recruitment success from last year's spread.

San Juan – Christina Koons

- Plastic Free Salish Sea initiative outreach is continuing through July.
- Volunteer Oates installed a Seabin floating aquatic filter at Deer Park Marina. This pilot project will be monitored by staff through the end of summer and will inform what plastics, foam and other debris are captured from the waterways.
- Congratulations to Dr. Frances Robertson on the birth of her new baby girl Ellery!

Skagit – Pete Haase

- Volunteers, the public, and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group participated in the successful work party at Bowman Bay on July 19. Work included weeding, watering, forage fish spawning surveys, hosting the forage fish interpretive station, and beach seining at the restoration site.
- Survey work is being done (by Paul Dinnel collaborating with researchers from WA, OR, and B.C.) in Fidalgo Bay to assess the impacts of the recent heat wave event. Results so far indicate some loss of Olympia Oysters at each site. Work continued to collect seed oysters to move into south Padilla Bay.
- Pete noted the March Point Heronry and monitoring concerns about nesting counts.

Snohomish – Tim Ellis

- Outreach efforts in Everett reached about 1,000 crabbers over 3 days and referred to the pictures of volunteers at work provided in the report
- Area politicians and advocates toured the Meadowdale Beach Park and Estuary Restoration Project on July 9th. Included on site were U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell, State Senator Marko Liias, Edmonds Mayor Mike Nelson, and Snohomish County Councilmember Megan Dunn. Tim reported notable progress has been made on the project in the past month.

Whatcom – Bob Cecile



Minutes

- The Whatcom County Council unanimously voted on July 27, 2021, as the first jurisdiction in the US to ban new fossil fuel infrastructure. This includes no new refinery improvements at Cherry Point. Read more at: [Washington state county is first in the US to ban new fossil fuel infrastructure - Digital Journal](#).
- The MRC is advertising for the open Conservation-Environmental seat vacated by Rachel Arnold.
- The speaker series hosted 25 attendees at Dr. Jen McIntyre's (Washington State University) presentation on the impacts to salmon from car tire contaminants.

Meeting highlights and action steps for MRCs

Members of the Commission generated a list of key highlights from the meeting to share with their MRCs, including:

- **State of the Salish Sea:** The State of the Salish Sea report is available for download access or print purchase at <https://wp.wvu.edu/salishsea/>.
- **2021-23 MRC grants:** The 2021-23 MRC projects proposals were approved by the Commission.
- **Forage fish sample processing update:** WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife will continue assessing samples for the 2021-2022 state fiscal year. There is a need to communicate the value of this joint effort. An ad hoc committee formed with Pete Haase, Alan Clark, Tim Ellis, Jeff Taylor, Christina Koons, and Dana Oster to discuss communication potential.
- **Internships:** There is interest in focusing on MRC internship program opportunities and discussing this as a topic at the upcoming retreat.
- The presentation on impacts to salmon from car tire contamination given by Dr. McIntyre to Whatcom's speaker series, was requested for the Commission's information. Staff will follow up.

Public comment

Pete Haase inquired about the list of included tribes in the recently adopted tribal acknowledgment, and why Upper Skagit and Sauk-Suiattle were not included in the list. Lucas Hart explained that the identification process was done in collaboration with Cecilia Gobin, who can provide additional insights.

*The next regular Commission meeting will be on Friday, August 27, 2021, via Zoom.



**Executive Committee Meeting Notes
August 16, 2021 • 11:00am-12:00pm
Video Conference Call**

Committee Members: Jude Apple, Chris Castner, Julia Parrish, Elsa Schwartz, Jeff Taylor

Commission Staff/Support: Lucas Hart, Sasha Horst, Leslie Perkins

Absent: Tom Cowan

Welcome: Northwest Straits Commission Director Lucas Hart began the meeting. Chair Tom Cowan previously notified staff that he would be absent.

2021 Retreat planning: Lucas provided an update on retreat planning details for the two-day hybrid event. A virtual session is planned for September 23, 1:00pm-3:30pm, with an in-person session to follow at Padilla Bay on Friday, September 24 10:30am-3:30pm. The reopening of Dept. of Ecology facilities has been delayed by one month. Members asked whether attendee vaccination status could be collected. Jude and Lucas explained that a policy will be established that works for the Northwest Straits Initiative and complies with Dept. of Ecology's rules.

The planning committee has a deadline of 8/26 to decide on the retreat's final format. In light of the surging Covid-19 Delta variant cases and meeting space limitations, an all virtual retreat may be considered.

2021 Conference Planning: Lucas updated the committee on conference possibilities. Feedback from attendees of the 2020 MRC symposium series reflect interest in a climate change focused symposium. Jeff Taylor reminded the group that it's important to highlight what is being learned from the local Marine Resources Committees' monitoring fieldwork and how it's actually making an impact, especially for the benefit of recent new members. He also was concerned that climate change is being used by other groups as a "catch all" excuse on issues instead of looking at other contributing factors. He expressed an interest in habitat loss and biodiversity.

Julia suggested the global topic of climate change could be narrowed down to Salish Sea issues and projects. Climate change, kelp, and forage fish results can be woven together to show the value of local citizens' support and work. The group posed the question of "What can Marine Resources Committees bring to the ground level to fit into, and fill in the gaps, in the bigger climate change issue?" Jeff agreed with this approach.

Jude added he would like to weigh in on the scale of what is being learned through Marine Resources Committees' work, compared to other programs and regions. For example, is kelp changing in similar patterns on a large geographic scale? Or is our situation unique? He stressed the value of building stewardship that goes beyond just data collection, in connecting people out in the marine environment.

Chris urged that more "sizzle" in plain language be put into conveying data results so it compels more non-scientific members. Lucas will bring all these ideas and comments to the retreat planning committee.



In-person meetings: Leslie provided an update on potential locations for future in-person Commission meetings, when desired. She contacted approximately ten venues for details and several were good options, but they have just recently delayed renting spaces for public groups due to Covid-19 concerns.

Hybrid meetings will probably be common in the future. Adequate A/V and internet access is key for effective hybrid meetings. Members were updated that Padilla Bay's and Ecology's regional office meeting spaces are being upgraded to support hybrid options.

Julia informed the committee about the "Meeting Owl" camera system used by University of Washington's College of the Environment for improved active audio and video capture. She believes there is an extra one that can be made available for testing by Northwest Straits Commission - staff will follow up and coordinate with her office.

The committee expressed concern as to whether enough people would attend in-person meetings to make them worthwhile and whether vaccination attestations should be required. The committee agreed to continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation and forthcoming state/agency guidance.

Communications plan: Lucas reminded the committee of the Northwest Straits Initiative communications plan created in the prior year. The goal is to resume the efforts by former staffer Katie Harris. Leslie is studying the plan and is crafting initial action ideas to submit to Lucas and Sasha for further discussion and next steps.

Open comments: Jeff shared a mock-up of a display poster Jefferson Marine Resources Committee would like to use to promote the NWS Foundation's Caroline Gibson marine conservation scholarship fund at the Wooden Boat Festival. Sasha will follow up with Monica Montgomery to make sure proper protocols are followed given the nature of the MRC's funding.

Lucas concluded the meeting by announcing the memorial scheduled to celebrate Caroline Gibson's life. It will be held October 24 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend from 4:00pm-7:00pm and attendees will be required to wear masks and be fully vaccinated for Covid-19.

Next meeting: September 20, 2021, 11:00am.



Commission staff highlights- [August 2021]

MRC Support

2019-21 Grants: With the payment requests and quarterly reporting from MRCs complete, the current two-year award period is in its final quarter. Commission staff is working with MRC staff to begin planning for budget and project completion at the end of September.

2021-23 Grants: Commission staff has prepared draft grant agreements for each MRC and sent to MRC staff for review and input. Over the next month those agreements will be finalized and begin processing for Ecology and County review.

MRC websites: Commission staff provided technical support for Clallam MRC to build a new outreach component on their website, to be launched concurrent with a set of printed materials that have a QR code linked to the site.

Regional Projects

Eelgrass: Commission staff led the monthly Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection Zone meeting with partners in BC and WA. The September meeting will be the last for 2021, and the group will resume in 2022.

Kelp: Commission staff are working with DNR staff to analyze MRC bull kelp monitoring data and create synthesis materials and reports as well as improve the QA/QC process. Volunteer bull kelp surveys continue for this kelp season. Commission staff developed and distributed an assessment of policy and science needs to help improve implementation of existing regulations. Dana met with Implementation strategy leads to discuss how to integrate the Kelp Plan into future implementation strategies that focus on marine vegetation.

Green Crab: An interagency agreement with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife is routing that will provide the Northwest Straits Commission with state funding to support green crab work over the next two years. A large-scale collaborative trapping effort will survey the entirety of Drayton Harbor simultaneously for green crabs in subtidal, intertidal and creek areas.

Operations

Staffing update: Welcome to Leah Robison, Ecosystem Projects Assistant and the Northwest Straits Commission's newest staff member. Leah's first day was August 23, and she will be primarily working on European green crab related tasks to begin with.

COVID-19 update: The Governor has mandated that all agency employees be fully vaccinated by October 18. Commission staff receives regular updates on agency facility reopening and other related guidance on use of masks, physical distancing and other measures.

Funding update: The interagency agreement with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife is routing for signature. The agreement will provide the Northwest Straits Commission with state funding to support green crab work over the next two years. Commission staff is coordinating with Ecology program and fiscal staff on planning for executing the various funding agreements.

Meetings attended:

Lucas attended: Executive Committee Meeting 8/16; Clallam MRC meeting 8/16; Kelp Management Advisory Team meeting 8/18; Kelp Mapping and Scoping meeting 8/24; External Relations 8/25; Retreat Planning Meeting 8/26

Dana attended: Jefferson MRC meeting 8/3; Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection Zone meeting 8/10; Skagit MRC meeting 8/12; ECB meeting 8/12; Island and Snohomish MRC Port Susan MSA planning meeting 8/17; MRC WCC forage fish presentation 8/24.

Allie attended: Skagit MRC meeting 8/12; Drayton Harbor Grid Survey planning meeting 8/4 & 8/16; Drayton Harbor Grid Survey trapping effort 8/23-26

Sasha attended: San Juan MRC meeting 8/5; Clallam MRC intern celebration and meeting 8/16; WCC Forage Fish presentation to MRCs 8/24; retreat planning meeting 8/26

Leslie attended: Whatcom MRC meeting 8/5; Dept. of Ecology Town Hall 8/12; Executive Committee meeting 8/16; Clallam MRC intern celebration and meeting 8/16; NWSI retreat planning meeting 8/26

Northwest Straits Foundation 2021 Work Updates

August 2021

Programs: Derelict Gear, Nearshore, and Shorefriendly

- **Restoration Projects:** Contracts are signed for construction at Clark's Point, Similk Bay, and Lummi Quarry (LIHT holds this contract). Still awaiting schedules from the contractors.
- **Clayton Beach Feasibility:** Connected with Washington State Parks staff to discuss a potential partnership for restoration at Clayton Beach, Larrabee State Park. The Park Manager and staff are excited about the opportunity to investigate restoration options across 1,300 linear feet of shoreline. The project would follow a current effort to develop a safe pedestrian access and improved trail to the beach. If feasible, the restoration could include removal of intertidal rock and pilings, revegetation of the backshore and slopes, and possible creation of clam gardens with area tribes. The location of the site straddles Whatcom and Skagit counties and both MRCs are interested in assisting in the project. Pre-project monitoring could begin this year or next using existing monitoring funds. We are looking for funding opportunities for a feasibility study.
- **ShoreFriendly Intern, Kate Chandler:** Kate has jumped into assisting with site visit scheduling. Site visits will continue in August and September mostly in Jefferson and Snohomish counties.
- **Monitoring:** The monitoring season is in full swing! This includes prepping, coordinating, surveying and data management. Surveys were conducted at Bowman Bay, Cornet Bay, Hidden Beach, and Similk Bay last month.



Jason Morgan measures a fish during Beach Seining.

Advancement/Other

- **Passport To Marine Adventure:** We have featured the Passport To Marine Adventure on our website again. We are also going to be sending out another Email and Social Media Marketing Campaign to get more individuals involved in the Passport's last two months for 2021. The 2021 Passport will cease in September. So far, we have had just over 80 sign-ups. We are hoping this second blast of marketing will get us over the 100-participant mark. In addition, we are creating a targeted fundraising campaign for the individuals who have played the travel game.
- **Dead Boats Society Campaign:** The Dead Boats Society Campaign continues to come together. In August, we have been working on both web design, donor page design and concepts for this campaign. We are on track to have the web page, donor page, one-pager and original online marketing materials released in September.
- **Caroline Gibson Scholarship in Marine Studies:** The Caroline Gibson Scholarship Fund now has its own web page on our website! The Scholarship supports the next generation of marine conservationists through applied academic scholarships in science, policy and management for sustaining the Salish Sea. The first scholarships will be awarded during the 2021-22 academic year. You can find the link on our homepage.
- **Board Recruitment:** We are still recruiting board members for a three-year term starting January 2022. We recruit board members from diverse disciplines, backgrounds, and skills with a passion for advancing marine conservation. In addition to the standard roles and responsibilities of a board member, our board actively advocates and acts as ambassadors for the organization. Our board is fully engaged in securing the financial resources and partnerships necessary for the Northwest Straits Foundation to advance its mission. From the nearshore to the deep waters, you can see the impact of our work. Please consider joining our board.



MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Clallam

Month/Year: August 2021

Submitted by: Rebecca Paradis

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

- Internship Celebration at monthly MRC meeting. Internships are now complete and each Intern presented a PowerPoint about their project virtually.
- MRC Chair Tim Cochnauer presented a Power Point presentation to NWSC about CMRC's internship program.

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):

Monthly MRC Meeting: was held August 16.

Funding updates (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments):
CMRC proposal was accepted and recommended for funding.

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

Intern Celebration at monthly MRC meeting was a success! Intern Laila Greene worked with Makah Marine Biologist Adrienne on European Green Crab (EGC) tracking and removal in Neah Bay. Laila gave a very captivating and informative Power Point on her mark recapture of EGC to try and estimate population in comparison to Dungeness Crabs. She also deployed and monitored EGC interactions via video camera. She ended her presentation with one of the video clips. Vita Olson presented on the Tumwater fence weir project and her observations/theories of why there are very few Coho smolts in Tumwater Creek. McKenzie Ginther was our Education/Outreach intern and she presented how she went about designing "Outreach cards" with CMRC projects to be distributed to locally.

Forage Fish sampling is going well. Clallam MRC continued to collect the monthly samples at Cline Spit and Ediz Hook and East Elwha Beach. The samples are being stored at the County until WDFW is ready to accept them. The last two months the samples from Cline Spit have contained lots of eggs. No eggs have been documented from Ediz Hook or Elwha beach.

Pigeon Guillemot surveys started the week of June 7th and are now past the minimum 10 week monitoring period. Most of the sites are still active with fish deliveries to burrows. Sites will continue to be monitored until there is no activity for 2 weeks. We have about 30 volunteers covering the various sites as primary monitors or substitutes. Two new 11x14 laminated signs were made to replace the sign that was vandalized.

Oil spill preparedness and response efforts continue as MRC member Ann Stafford has two tentative dates for Hazwoper training in December. Hoping to have the training in person but will have to wait and see what the Covid restrictions are. Several CMRC members have signed up for the virtual oiled marine mammal training scheduled for Sept. 23rd.

The Olympia oyster project has conducted several successful population and heat map surveys. Two CMRC members Tim Cochnauer and Ann Stafford, Intern McKenzie and Coordinator Rebecca went to Discovery Bay to help Jefferson MRC survey their Olympia oyster plot.

Kelp surveys have been a struggle this summer due to windy conditions. The team was able to get large Freshwater Bay bed done going back soon to do smaller bed and they hope to get out to Clallam Bay in the coming weeks. Motorized surveys are being planned as well.

A presentation was given by Tim Cochnauer to the NWSC on July 30th; this presentation was on CMRC's Internship program at the Tumwater Creek fence weir.

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.): Nothing at this time.

Photos (photos of recent projects or members—include project, photo credit and additional info): CMRC team that helped Jefferson MRC survey Discovery Bay Olympia oysters: Ann, McKenzie, Rebecca and Tim.



CLALLAM  COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE



TURN OVER to learn more about
Pigeon Guillemots

CLALLAM  COUNTY
MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE



TURN OVER to learn more about
Sea Otters



8-4 FINAL Text for
back of cards.pdf

Here is the back of the "Outreach cards"

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Island

Month/Year: August 2021

Submitted by: Ann Prusha

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

- **Outreach:** The Needs Assessment Overview document has been completed. It will be presented to Island County Commissioners at an upcoming work session and then distributed to interviewees. This document represents many hours of work conducting stakeholder interviews and analyzing take-a-ways, and will help drive future MRC decisions.
- **Dan Pederson:** Dan passed away recently. He was an important part of Island County MRC's history and was integral to a lot of past work, especially with communications. He will be missed.
- **Hoypus Point:** NWSF orchestrated and led a site visit for state and local entities involved in the permitting process.

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Anna Toledo is on maternity leave. Ann Prusha is the temporary point of contact, and will be taking on several of Anna's duties until she comes back.

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

Past Meetings/Events:

- August 3: MRC meeting. Topic: Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (COASST)

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- September 7: MRC meeting. Topic: Snohomish Conservation District

Funding updates (newly-awarded grants, in-kind support or other funding commitments): The Northwest Straits Commission is able to provide an additional \$8,000 to MRCs this upcoming grant year.

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

Monitoring – Forage Fish: Teams are continuing to monitor.

Monitoring – Kelp: Teams are continuing to monitor.

Outreach – Needs Assessment: The Needs Assessment Overview document has been completed. It will be presented to Island County Commissioners at an upcoming work session and then distributed to interviewees. This document represents many hours of work conducting stakeholder interviews and analyzing take-a-ways, and will help drive future MRC decisions.

Outreach – Port Susan MSA: Snohomish and Island MRCs are working together to update the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area Conservation Action Plan report card.

Restoration – Hoypus Point (partnership with NWSF): NWSF orchestrated and led a site visit for state and local entities involved in the permitting process.

Restoration – Cornet Bay Stewardship: Gwendolyn Hannam and Ann Prusha are watering and weeding bi-weekly throughout the summer months.

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

- At the August meeting, Island County MRC voted to adopt the Tribal Acknowledgement developed by NWSC. It will be spoken at the beginning of each meeting.

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: August 2021

Submitted by: Monica Montgomery

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

- JCMRC installed a new rain garden at the corner of Franklin and Adams Streets in Uptown Port Townsend, to treat stormwater that flows into Port Townsend Bay (into the eelgrass beds of one of our no-anchor zone sites). The MRC engaged 9 community volunteers (including 2 MRC members) in the installation and interacted with over a dozen pedestrians walking the neighborhood. The property owner is thrilled and committed to maintaining the rain garden.
- JCMRC monitored the Olympia oyster population at its Powerlines site at Discovery Bay on July 26th with the help of 11 volunteers, including 4 Clallam MRC affiliates. The oysters here fared surprisingly well through the July heatwave. Data analysis shows good recruitment from last year.
- JCMRC did its second kelp survey on July 23rd and third survey on August 20th. We'll consider an additional survey in September, otherwise will wrap up data entry for the season.

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

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

Past Events/Meetings

July 23 – Second kelp survey

July 26 – Oly oyster monitoring at Powerlines site, Discovery Bay

July 28 & August 4 – New rain garden installation, at the corner of Franklin and Adams Streets, PT

July 30 – NWSC meeting

August 3 – MRC meeting

August 6 – Olympia oyster meeting re: confirming plans for expanding the Powerlines Site

August 9 – Eelgrass/macroalgae survey at Discovery Bay, for permits to expand the Powerlines Site

August 10 – Salish Sea No-Anchor Zones meeting

August 11 – Education & Outreach meeting re: Wooden Boat Festival

August 12 – Forage fish survey at Dabob Bay

August 16 – Executive Committee meeting

August 20 – Third kelp survey

Upcoming Events/Meetings

Aug 24 – Forage fish: WCC presentation

Aug 24 – Education & Outreach meeting re: PT Marine Science Center (PTMSC) speaker series collaboration

Aug 27 – NWSC meeting

Sep 7 – MRC meeting: Tori Cantelow presenting on Fort Townsend forage fish survey results

Sep 10-12 – Education & Outreach: Wooden Boat Festival

Sep 14 – No-Anchors: Salish Sea No-Anchor Zones meeting

Sep 15/16 – Education & Outreach: PTMSC collab speaker event

Sep 18 – Education & Outreach: PTMSC collab beach clean-up event
Sep 21 – Executive Committee meeting
Sep 24 – NWSC meeting
Sep – Forage fish surveys at Dabob Bay and Adelma Beach

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:

- a. **Forage fish - Fort Townsend:** Project partner, Tori Cantelow with the Point No Point Treaty Council, will present summary findings from the MRC's last 5-6 years monitoring forage fish spawning at the Fort Townsend SP nearshore restoration site, at the Sep 7 meeting. Surveys will resume in October.
- b. **Forage fish - Adelma Beach (Index):** The project lead (Jeff) monitored on August 10th with one community volunteer.
- c. **Forage fish - Dabob Bay (Index):** The project lead (Sarah), MRC Coordinator and two community volunteers (including one new) monitored on August 12th.
- d. **Kelp:** Two MRC members (Brenda and Solenne), one resigned MRC member (Emily), and the MRC Coordinator conducted the second survey on July 23rd. Four MRC members (Bryan, Brenda, Betsy, Solenne), Emily, and the MRC Coordinator did the third survey on August 20th.

2. Rain Gardens:

- a. The MRC installed a new rain garden at the corner of Franklin and Adams Streets in Uptown Port Townsend on July 28th with the help of 8 community volunteers (including one MRC member, Janette), and finished planting and adding mulch on August 4th with the help of one MRC member (Brenda). The MRC engaged with over a dozen community members walking by, and the property owner is thrilled and committed to maintaining the rain garden.

3. Education & Outreach:

- a. *Wooden Boat Festival:* The subcommittee met on August 11th to discuss logistics, activities and boater targeted messaging for tabling the Wooden Boat Festival the weekend of September 10th-12th.
- b. *Speaker series:* The project lead (Brenda), one MRC member (Betsy), and the MRC Coordinator will meet with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center's (PTMSC) Program Director on August 24th to confirm needs for an upcoming talk and event in the collaborative speaker series. The first talk will feature a NOAA marine debris program speaker, Andrew Mason, on September 15th or 16th who will present virtually on the issue of marine debris, specifically microplastics. This talk will precede a beach clean-up event on September 18th in partnership with PTMSC and WA CoastSavers.
- c. *Climate change videos:* One MRC member (Jeff) continues to work on developing short climate change videos.

4. Olympia Oysters:

- a. Eleven volunteers - including 4 Jefferson MRC members, Gordon, Brenda, Janette, and Sarah, and 4 Clallam MRC affiliates – along with the project lead (Neil) and Jefferson MRC Coordinator monitored the Olympia oyster population at the Powerlines site in Discovery Bay on July 26th. The oyster population fared surprisingly well during the July heatwave – there was no

significant die-off as was expected. Data analysis shows good recruitment from the previous year.

- b. Two MRC members (Neil and Bryan) conducted an eelgrass survey on August 9th for permit applications to expand the Powerlines site, which the MRC Coordinator is working on.
- c. The subcommittee is also organizing another workday to spread 3 cubic feet of clean shell at the Powerlines site, perhaps in September.

5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:

- a. The MRC Coordinator continues to check on the status of the County's review of the dive safety manual, which was supposed to be completed by August 13th. Maintenance of the PT and Mystery Bay buoys is much needed.
- b. The MRC Coordinator monitored the Port Hadlock buoys on August 6th – all boaters were compliant, and the buoys were upright and clearly visible.
- c. One MRC member (Frank) continues to monitor and share photos of the PT buoys.

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.):

ROV Project: The MRC Coordinator helped edit conference presentation materials for the Sea Dragons team who will be presenting on the ROV project at an upcoming national conference. The Sea Dragons team is currently working on enhancing the ROV's navigational capabilities.

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

July 23 Second Kelp Survey – Photos by Monica Montgomery





July 26 Olympia Oyster Monitoring – Photos by Monica Montgomery







July 28 & August 4 Rain Garden Installation – Photos by Monica Montgomery





MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: San Juan County

Month/Year: August 2021

Submitted by: Sam Whitridge

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

- The SeaBin project is continuing at the Deer Harbor Marina through the summer. MRC volunteers check the SeaBin every day, and they catch between 4-30 lbs. of biomass daily, which after sorting results in about 2 lbs. of daily foam from micro-plastics.
- The MRC is piloting monitoring efforts for vessel usage/presence in areas with protection buoys installed or identified as locations of need and monitoring efforts are ongoing this summer. The Odlin County Park Eelgrass Protection Zone has been installed with the spar buoys installed earlier this spring. This is the MRC's first anchor out zone in the County. Boater safety and marine stewardship outreach signage will be displayed at Odlin for the remainder of the summer.

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

- Sam Whitridge is continuing to serve as interim MRC Coordinator while Frances Robertson is on maternity leave. Sam will serve in this role through September 2021.
- MRC Chair and Vice Chair positions were up for election in August. Christina Koons and Karin Roemers-Kleven were reelected as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

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

August events and meetings

- The MRC met on August 5th via Zoom for their monthly meeting. At this meeting we heard a presentation from MRC Member, Megan Dethier (Friday Harbor Labs) about the impact of the June heatwave on marine critters. The MRC also wrapped up the Salmon Recovery grant round at this meeting by agreeing to fund the McArdle Bay Conservation Easement proposal.

Upcoming events

- The next monthly MRC meeting will be held on September 2nd. After initially planning to return to quarterly in-person meetings beginning with the September meeting, the MRC has decided to continue with virtual meetings indefinitely due to rising COVID cases.
- On August 24th, MRC members will attend a virtual meeting where we'll hear from this year's Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) forage fish team as they share an overview of their experience in the last year working to collect and process forage fish samples from across the Sound and supporting other work to monitor forage fish in the state.
- On August 31st, MRC members will participate in a virtual SeaDoc Society workshop to discuss how the MRC can partner with SeaDoc by offering some science and conservation project support to local schools piloting the Heart of the Salish Sea curriculum this coming school year.

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

The MRC submitted its grant application for the 2021-2023 biennium. We learned at the July NWSC meeting that the 2021-23 MRC projects proposals were approved by the Commission.

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

Angela Broderick with San Juan County is supporting the whale flag project in Frances Robertson's absence. In July she sent out Be Whale Wise materials targeting charter companies and marinas. 192 flags were sent out in July with the majority going to larger boat-share companies.

The SeaBin project is continuing at the Deer Harbor Marina. MRC volunteers check the SeaBin every day, and they catch between 4-30 lbs. of biomass daily, which after sorting results in about 2 lbs. of daily foam from micro-plastics. Daily maintenance requires 1-2 volunteers, and it takes about 15 minutes to change out the bag, sort out plastics and toss critters back into sea. The plan is to eventually move the SeaBin to the West Sound Marina. The MRC is working on outreach around the SeaBin effort. Informational signage is being developed, which will move around with the SeaBin as it goes to additional marinas. The sign will have a QR code leading to a program page with more information.

The MRC monitoring efforts are ongoing this summer for vessel usage/presence in areas with protection buoys installed or identified as locations of need.

Marine Stewardship Area Plan update: Progress was made on the salmon/forage fish section. We are continuing planning for the next stages of the update.

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 recently voted to request that San Juan County Council submit comment letters on the following two items:

- 1) A letter requesting Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler support an underwriting policy to require the Trans Mountain Pipeline project to secure consent from Tribal Nations
- 2) A letter to Department of Ecology regarding their latest Net Pen Guidance

As of mid-August, County Council has sent comments to Ecology regarding the Net Pen Guidance. County Council is still considering whether to send comments regarding the underwriting policy for the Trans Mountain Pipeline.

The MRC adopted the Coast Salish acknowledgement crafted by NWSC as the acknowledgement we will use at future meetings.

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

SeaBin photos



Figure 1. SeaBin catchment from Aug 1 - Aug 2 2021, Deer Harbor

Weight of catchment + Weight of catchment bag = 21.28 lbs

Dry weight of catchment bag = 1.79 lbs

Total weight of daily catchment = 21.28 lbs - 1.79 lbs = 19.49 lbs

Amount of seawater filtered = 160,000 gallons

On this day we found all biomass, no critters were found in the catchment today. Did not see any of the usual foam in the catchment or any visible plastics. A clean day for Deer Harbor!



Figure 2. Aug 2 - Aug 3 2021, Deer Harbor

Weight of catchment + Weight of catchment bag = 10.42 lbs

Dry weight of catchment bag = 1.79 lbs

Total weight of daily catchment = 10.42 lbs - 1.79 lbs = 8.63 lbs

Amount of seawater filtered = 160,000 gallons

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Skagit

Month/Year: August/2021

Submitted by: Tracy/ Pete

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

- Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance/ Nearshore Monitoring Event - August 17: 31 volunteers, including students from the Salish Sea School, participated in small groups at the nearshore restoration event at Bowman Bay on August 17. Lisa Kaufman presented an overview of the restoration project to the volunteers and onlookers. Volunteer activities included weeding and mulching with compost over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoreline restoration area, picking up trash, forage fish spawning surveys, beach seining, and lots of great public interaction. The County water truck was used to apply 400 gallons of water over the nearshore plantings. This time there was no need to haul buckets of water! A few Surf smelt eggs were found during the forage fish surveys. Beach seining hauled in a bunch of adult surf smelt, a few post-larval surf smelt, one juvenile Chinook salmon, lots of perch, and a few greenlings.
- Forage Fish Survey Volunteers Participate in Washington Gear Up Program: Forage fish survey volunteers hosted an educational forage fish station at the Fidalgo Bay Resort for several small groups of Latinx kids from the Washington Gear Up Program in Burlington and Edison High School in Mount Vernon. It was part of a larger program that took place over the course of a three-week period with 7 or 8 different education stations that focused on the marine environment. Many of the kids have never even been to a beach before. The kids were very enthusiastic and eager to learn and had a great experience. The volunteers felt inspired just being a part of it.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys Article: Kimberly Cauvel, Environmental Reporter with the Skagit Valley Herald, joined the kelp team for a survey at Coffin Rocks on August 5th. She recently wrote an excellent article about the kayak kelp surveys on August 20th. Here is the [link to the article](#).

Membership/Leadership changes (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): No changes

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

- MRC Monthly Meeting- August 12 (via Microsoft Teams)- Allie Simpson and Dana Oster led the discussion regarding the Voluntary No Anchor Zone at Cap Sante Marina as a potential new Skagit MRC project. Lisa Kaufman presented the Clayton Beach (Larrabee State Park) Restoration as a potential new joint MRC project in partnership with the Northwest Straits Foundation, State Parks, and the Whatcom MRC. The meeting was attended by 16 people.
- Clayton Beach Site Visit- August 20th at 10am.
- Next MRC Monthly Meeting- September 9, 9am-11:00am via Microsoft Teams

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: A picnic was originally scheduled for **Saturday August 28, 2021** at Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (1 - 3pm). However, due to the lack of interest from the Salish Sea Stewards and the rising number of COVID cases, the Salish Sea Stewards Advisory Committee decided to cancel the picnic. Instead, the Committee and Padilla Bay are considering hosting a

virtual gathering in late September with a cool educational component. The Committee is in the process of developing a timeline template to help with program planning (registration, advertising, social media platforms, securing gear and scheduling speakers). The Committee is also working on a Communications Plan and developing a job description for a part-time Volunteer Coordinator. Next year's training is slated for a hybrid format, in-classroom at Padilla Bay are tentatively including several on-line Speaker experts from other areas.

- Fidalgo Bay Day: Since Fidalgo Bay Day was cancelled this year, the MRC Grant Funds will be used to update the MRC Display Booth. The Committee is working on developing a design and messaging.
- Bowman Bay Restoration: The first maintenance event was held July 19th and the second plant maintenance event was held August 17th from 10am-12pm to coincide with the nearshore monitoring at the Bowman Bay nearshore restoration site. 400 gallons of water from the County water truck was used to water the plants at the site. 31 volunteers, including students from the Salish Sea School, participated in small groups at the nearshore restoration event at Bowman Bay. Lisa Kaufman presented an overview of the restoration project to the volunteers and public onlookers. Volunteer activities included 2 hours of weeding (very few weeds to pull) and mulching with compost over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoreline restoration area, picking up trash, forage fish spawning surveys, and beach seining. The plants are looking a little dry and sun damaged but hanging in there. The watering has helped a lot. Soil testing at the restoration site indicated a lack of nitrogen so a compost mixture of cow manure and mulch was applied to add nitrogen back into the soil and to help retain moisture around the plants. The Beach seining resulted in one juvenile Chinook, a bunch of adult surf smelt, a handful of post larval surf smelt, and a couple of greenlings, and lots of great interactions with the public. Forage fish surveys found 1 surf smelt egg at two sites sampled. In addition, volunteers and students scooped up gravel at higher tide lines along the whole restored area about every 6 feet or so. They found 11 eggs, 9 dead and 2 well developed. The next event is September 8 and September 24. The MRC is considering partnering with the Northwest Straits Foundation to apply for funding to purchase additional plants, shrubs, and trees to plant at the site.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys: There are three kelp bed locations that are currently being surveyed by MRC volunteers including: Shannon Point (2 kelp beds east and west), Biz Point, and Coffin Rocks. On July 20th and August 20th, volunteers surveyed the Shannon Point east kelp bed (from the Shannon Point facility towards the ferry terminal). They also surveyed the Shannon Point west kelp bed (Washington Park to the navigational buoy) on the same day. Kimberly Cauvel, Environmental Reporter with the Skagit Valley Herald, recently wrote an excellent article about the kayak kelp surveys after participating in a survey with volunteers at Coffin Rocks on August 5. Here is the [link to the article](#). The Biz Point survey crew went out on July 11th. They did a very quick survey, but the waves were just too big and unsafe to complete the survey. The next survey is scheduled August 26th and September 16th. All kelp beds surveyed appear to be dense and healthy.
- Forage Fish Surveys: Forage fish surveys continue at our 3 MRC restoration sites and our 3 Forage Fish Index sites as well as the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve. The sampling schedule in August has been reduced a little bit to work around vacations and other obligations, etc. In July they found a few eggs in all their samples at Bowman Bay. They completed a more intensive survey at Bowman Bay in August and found 11 surf smelt eggs. Pete is working with Sara Brostrom to schedule a field trip in September to Fidalgo Bay with the Salish Sea Stewards class of 2021 to run through the forage fish sampling protocols. Forage fish survey volunteers hosted an educational forage fish station at the Fidalgo Bay Resort for several small groups of Latinx kids from the Washington Gear Up Program in Burlington and Edison High School in Mount Vernon. It was part of a larger program that took place over the course of a three-week period with 7 or 8 different education stations that focused the marine environment. In addition to forage fish, some of the different topics include tide pool exploration, marine mammals, boat-based research, kayaking, stormwater,

data analysis, report writing, presentations, etc. Many of the kids have never even been to a beach before. The kids were very enthusiastic and eager to learn and had a great experience. The volunteers felt inspired just being a part of it.

- Kids on the Beach: Nothing new to report. The 2021 Kids on the Beach Annual Report will be finalized in September. Padilla Bay staff are working on the fall line up for the Kids on the Beach program this fall.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: 2021 was a very good year for pinto abalone restoration. Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) was able to outplant twice as many abalone than originally anticipated. More abalone were found at a couple restoration sites that previously had really low numbers. PSRF is currently working on data analysis and the annual report. The 2021 Annual Pinto Abalone Report will be finalized in September.
- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Paul observed lots of oyster settlement on the ceramic tiles. There are several bags of oyster shell in Fidalgo Bay for collecting seed oysters to transplant to other areas such as Skagit Bay and Padilla Bay which will also likely have lots of settlement. Paul surveyed the impacts of the recent heat dome. It did not appear to impact the mussels, barnacles, or Pacific oysters. There was some mortality of Olympia oysters due to the heat wave of around 13.2% to 14.6%.

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):

Bowman Bay Nearshore Restoration Volunteer Event on August 19, 2021



Lots of learning opportunities for the public (above left) and Salish Sea School students (above right)



Educating the public about Surf Smelt caught in the beach seine

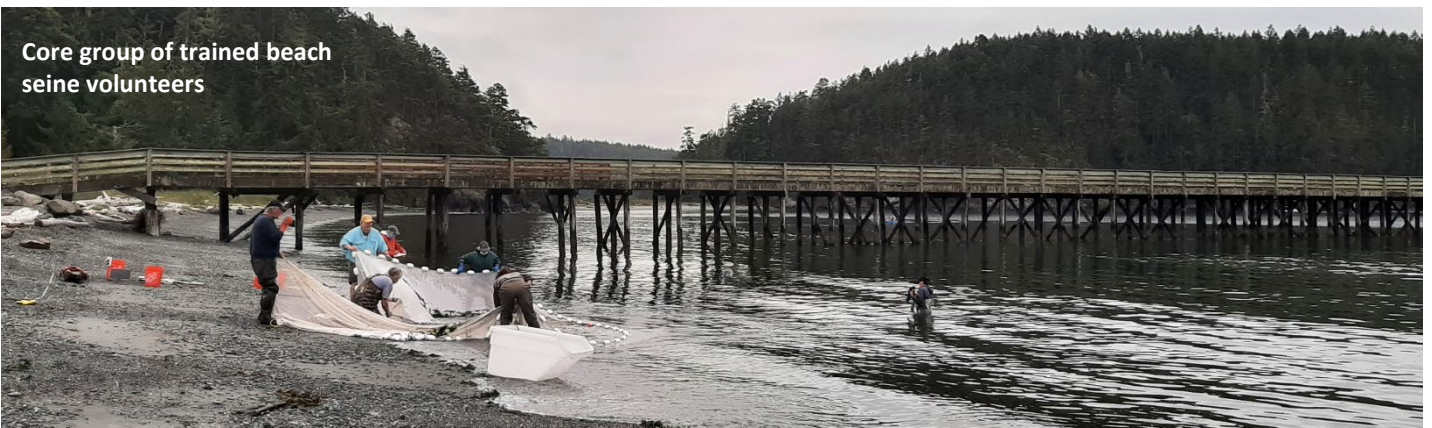
Salish Sea School student volunteers practicing good teamwork while mulching the restoration site



Happy hardworking volunteers



Core group of trained beach seine volunteers



MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Snohomish

Month/Year: August 2021

Submitted by: Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman

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

- On August 9, the Snohomish MRC Kelp Team was joined by County Council Member Megan Dunn and her Legislative Aide, Paula Rhyne, to monitor kelp at Edmonds.
- The MRC wrapped up the 2021 Kelp Monitoring Season after monitoring at Hat Island on August 10.
- The MRC will host a beach cleanup event on September 18, 2021 from 9AM-12PM at Kayak Point County Park for International Coastal Cleanup Day. This event is in coordination with the WSU Beach Watchers, WSU Waste Warriors, and Zero Waste Washington, and will utilize the Escaped Trash Assessment Protocol developed by the EPA.

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):

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson attended a meeting to discuss opportunities for effectiveness monitoring at the Meadowdale Beach and Estuary Restoration Project on July 27.

The MRC conducted forage fish monitoring at Picnic Point and Howarth Park on July 28. MRC Staff Alex Pittman assisted along with volunteers Phil Salditt, Betsy Newnum, and Ariana Winkler.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson participated in an interview panel for NWSC job applicants on July 28.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson hosted a contractor tour of derelict vessels to be removed on August 5.

The MRC conducted kelp monitoring at Edmonds on August 9. MRC Staff Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman assisted along with MRC Members Tom Doerge and Brie Townsend, and former MRC Member Traci Sanderson. The Kelp Team was also joined by Snohomish County Council Member Megan Dunn and her Legislative Aide, Paula Rhyne.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman, assisted by additional Surface Water Management staff, conducted kelp monitoring at Hat Island on August 10.

There was a conference call to discuss revisions to the draft Pilings Report produced by project consultant ESA on August 11. Participants included MRC Staff Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman, MRC Members Laura Gurley, Natasha Coumou, Mike Ehlebracht, and David Bain (Ex-Officio), and citizen volunteer Phil Salditt.

The MRC received contractor bids to remove 4 derelict vessels on August 12.

The Joint Snohomish-Island Port Susan Subcommittee held a conference call on August 17 to discuss final edits for Island MRC's application to the UW Evans School Student Consulting Lab and Snohomish MRC's preliminary scope of work for procuring consultant services.

The MRC held its annual August Potluck on August 18.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson and Alex Pittman posted legal notices for removal on 4 derelict vessels on August 18.

MRC Members attended the Washington State Oil Spill Webinar reviewing the Vessel Accident Module on August 18.

MRC Staff Elisa Dawson attended a meeting to discuss opportunities for effectiveness monitoring at the Meadowdale Beach and Estuary Restoration Project on August 19.

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: Project consultants provided a draft report and presentation at the July MRC Meeting. The MRC completed their review of the draft report and provided comments to the consultants in mid-August. The MRC is also seeking to hold additional meetings with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historical Preservation to discuss cultural resource considerations when working with pilings of unknown age and origin, as well as with DNR to seek additional clarity in finalizing the report and recommendations. The MRC is also preparing a web map, which will be made available to stakeholders and posted on the MRC website.

Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (proposed grant project for 2021-2022): The joint MRC Port Susan team of Island County and Snohomish County reviewed the Island MRC's draft application for the UW Evans School Student Consulting Lab and provided comments on the document. The Snohomish MRC created a draft scope of work for beginning the process of procuring a consultant. The joint team met on August 17 to discuss final revisions to both documents. The Evans School application is due August 31.

Derelict Vessels (NWSF funds): Snohomish County is preparing to remove four vessels in late summer 2021, with a target for removal of late September. Contractor bids to remove these vessels came in at approximately \$79,000 (under budget). MRC Staff are coordinating with project partners, including the City of Everett Police Department, to potentially use the remaining funds for this year to assist with the removal of two new derelict vessels which appeared at Howarth Park in July.

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

Forage Fish Monitoring: Forage fish samples continue to be taken once per month at Picnic Point and Howarth Park. The next sample date is August 25.

Meadowdale: Construction continues to move forward at the Meadowdale Beach and Estuary Restoration Project. The MRC has continued to engage in discussions about coordinating monitoring efforts on this project.

Marine Vegetation Monitoring: DNR is currently monitoring marine vegetation in Snohomish County from the south County line to south Everett. Monitoring will wrap up in September. Early draft data is expected this fall, with the final report due in January 2022.

MRC Outreach Subcommittee: The MRC is currently planning for another clean up event on September 18 from 9AM-12PM at Kayak Point County Park for International Coastal Cleanup Day. This event will be in coordination with the WSU Beach Watchers, WSU Waste Warriors, and Zero Waste Washington, and will utilize the Escaped Trash Assessment Protocol developed by the EPA.

Crabber Education: The MRC debriefed at the July MRC meeting about 2021 crabber education efforts and discussed opportunities for increasingly effective outreach moving forward.

Mussel Watch: Mariko Langness with WDFW will present at the September MRC meeting on recent findings of the program and in preparation for deployment in November.

Oil Spill: The oil spill subcommittee has been attending webinars on the Oil Spill Risk Model this summer and will meet in late August to discuss what they've learned and next steps. Information on the webinars can be found here: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills->

Cleanup/Spills/Oil-spill-prevention/Safety-of-Oil-Transportation-Act/Risk-model/Get-involved#UpcomingEvents

No current updates for

- Nearshore Beach Restoration at Howarth Park and Everett Nearshore Project

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

None.

Upcoming Events:

- Forage Fish Monitoring at Picnic Point & Howarth Park on August 25
- NOAA Derelict Vessels Webinar August 25
- Oil Spill Marine Mammal workshop September 8
- Next MRC meeting September 15
- Beach Cleanup at Kayak Point County Park for International Coastal Cleanup Day on September 18

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



On August 9, the Snohomish MRC Kelp Team was joined by County Council Member Megan Dunn and her Legislative Aide, Paula Rhyne, to monitor kelp at Edmonds. Left to Right: Megan Dunn, Paula Rhyne, Tom Doerge (MRC Member), Alex Pittman (MRC Staff), Traci Sanderson (Citizen Volunteer; Former MRC Member), Brie Townsend (MRC Member), Elisa Dawson (MRC Staff).

MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

County: Whatcom

Month/Year: AUGUST 2021

Submitted by: Austin Rose

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

- The MRC has a vacancy for a Conservation-Environmental seat. This vacancy is advertised on the MRC homepage <https://www.whatcomcountymrc.org/meetings-events/2021-mrc-vacancies/>

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

The MRC nominated Glen “Alex” Alexander to be the MRC Vice Chair through the end of 2021. Alex accepted the nomination at the August MRC meeting and was formally elected for that officer position.

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

- The MRC held their August meeting on August 5. Meeting topics included:
 - The MRC voted to use the Tribal acknowledgement shared by the Northwest Straits Commission with recognition of the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe. Committee members will contact Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Tribe to ensure their approval of its use, and discuss ways the MRC can establish a working relationship with those Tribes to honor and respect the commitment stated in the acknowledgement.
 - The [CoSMoS project](#) is funded by Whatcom County, City of Bellingham, and Port of Bellingham to examine future coastal changes. USGS and WSG will be presenting to the Whatcom MRC in September. The MRC is considering their monitoring work (i.e. forage fish, establishment of Olympia oysters) and interest in public access to the shoreline when developing specific questions about this model.
 - WDFW invited the MRC to participate in the 2021-22 Mussel Watch program. Four sites will be studied in Whatcom County: Chuckanut - Clark’s Point, Drayton Harbor, Locust Beach, and the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve near Conoco Phillips. Members voiced interest and availability to help.
 - A shoreline restoration opportunity has been identified at Clayton Beach in Larrabee State Park. Due to its location, this project would involve both Skagit and Whatcom MRCs. Members expressed interest in being involved and will work with the Northwest Straits Foundation to move the project forward.
 - WDFW is planning a large grid survey for European Green Crab (EGC) in Drayton Harbor and asked for outreach booth support from the MRC. A booth will be at the marina August 23-26. Members expressed interest in helping.
 -

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):

Education and Outreach

- The Public Speakers Series Committee (MRC/WWIN) is planning to host a marine research symposium. Originally, the focus was on marine research and recovery in WRIA 1 in a manner that combines and coordinates data and research and community interests and needs. The focus has now expanded to include research across the border – in particular the impacts from the Fraser River on the north Salish Sea. The WWU Salish Sea Research Institute is now included in the planning committee.
- Whatcom Water Week will occur September 12-19. The MRC will be partnering with ReSources, the Ocean Conservancy, Surfrider, and the Port of Bellingham to host beach cleanups at four locations: Cliffside, Locust Beach, I&J Waterway, and Marine Park. The cleanups will occur on September 18 in celebration of the International Coastal Cleanup. The MRC will host the cleanup and Locust Beach and Cliffside.

Monitoring

- Ceramic tiles that were placed in Chuckanut Bay for the majority of July were assessed for Olympia oyster larvae settlement. No evidence of larvae was found. Tiles will be assessed again in late August.
- North Chuckanut Bay water quality continues to show a decrease in bacteria levels.
- Kelp monitoring began in late July. The North Sound Stewards community science volunteer program has proven to provide a handful of experienced volunteers to help with the monitoring. The Aiston Preserve, SW Lummi Island, and Cherry Pt/Gulf Rd locations have been surveyed, and appear to be in good health and providing refuge for healthy looking critters (i.e. forage fish, sea cucumbers). Aerial photos of Alden Bank were taken on 08/10 and appeared smaller/thinner than previous years – though, the current was very strong and the kelp was at least 2' below surface. Pt. Whitehorn is scheduled to be surveyed on August 23. The new environmental report with the Bellingham Herald joined the Cherry Pt/Gulf Rd survey and interviewed Eleanor Hines. A report should be published in the Herald soon.

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.):

A North Sound Stewards – Beach Stewards contacted the MRC concerned about potential impacts to the eelgrass meadow at Larrabee state park as people are often observed driving over the eelgrass with trucks to use the boat ramp when the tide is very low. This topic will be discussed at the September MRC meeting to get input from other MRC members. Dana Oster began a discussion with the Northwest Straits Commission Science Advisory Committee to see if they have heard about this at other sites around the Sound and if there are studies they know of that discuss potential physical impacts to the eelgrass.

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



Eleanor Hines' kayak bull kep survey at SW Lummi Island.
Photo credit: Eleanor Hines.



Volunteers surveying kelp bed under T-Span at Aiston Preserve. Photo credit: Eleanor Hines



Truck driving over eelgrass bed at Larrabee State Park during low tide. Photo credit: Heather Pechtel