



**Meeting:** Northwest Straits Commission  
**Location:** Zoom Virtual Meeting  
**Date:** July 29, 2022  
**Time:** 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

To join the Zoom meeting, [CLICK HERE](#) Meeting ID: 873 3389 3733 Passcode: 98273  
For audio conference, dial: 253-215-8782 or [click here](#) to find your local number.

*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	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> Tribal acknowledgement Approval of June 2022 meeting minutes	Tom Cowan
10:10 – 10:20	<b>Remembering Terry Williams</b>	Tom Cowan
10:20 – 10:35	<b>Committee reports</b> Executive Committee Science Advisory Committee External Relations Committee	Tom Cowan Julia Parrish Chris Castner
10:35 – 10:50	<b>Business items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forage fish training report out (Leah)</li><li>• Green crab catch update (Leah/Jeff)</li><li>• Salish Sea eelgrass no-anchor zone meeting update (Allie)</li><li>• Collaborative Conservation Workshop – September 16 (Nathan)</li><li>• Congressional funding update (Lucas)</li></ul>	Staff



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- Derelict vessel removal update (Lucas)

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10:50 – 10:55	<b>Puget Sound Partnership update</b>	Jennifer Grimm, Puget Sound Partnership
10:55 – 11:00	<b>NWS Foundation update</b>	Don Hunger, NW Straits Foundation
11:00 – 11:30	<b>MRC Reports</b>	MRC Representatives
11:30 – 11:40	<b>Meeting highlights and action items</b> Identify key points and action items from this meeting for MRC reps to report back to their MRCs	All
11:40 – 12:00	<b>Public comment</b>	All

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



# Minutes

**June 24, 2022 10:00 AM-12:00PM**  
**Zoom - Virtual meeting**  
**Northwest Straits Commission meeting**

## **Attendees:**

**Commission Members:** Elsa Schwartz (Island-Chair), Tom Cowan (Vice Chair), Jeff Taylor (Jefferson), Bob Cecile (Whatcom), Tim Ellis (Snohomish), Chris Castner, Phil Green (San Juan-alternate)

**Commission Staff:** Lucas Hart, Dana Oster, Leah Robison, Jeff Whitty, Nathan Woods, Sasha Horst, Allie Simpson, Antonio Jones

**Others in Attendance:** Troy McKelvey (Jefferson MRC), Phil Salditt (NW Straits Foundation), Don Hunger (NW Straits Foundation), Jay Lind, Bob Margulis, Austin Rose (Whatcom), Frances Robertson (San Juan), Rebecca Mahan (Clallam)

**Absent:** Christina Koons (San Juan), Diane Hennebert (Skagit), Julia Parrish, Laura Blackmore (Puget Sound Partnership), Cecilia Gobin (Tribal) Nan McKay, Alan Clark (Clallam)

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Due to technical issues, Chair Elsa Schwartz joined the meeting late, so Vice Chair Tom Cowan opened the meeting with introductions of attendees and the tribal acknowledgment. The Commission approved the minutes from the May 27 meeting as written by consensus.

## **Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee:** Tom Cowan reported on the June 13 Executive Committee meeting, noting that the group focused on discussion of the budget for the Congressionally Directed Funds including Marine Resource Committee's project proposals, approaches to address diversity, equity and inclusion, derelict vessels, and tribal projects. The Commission approved the budget for the Congressionally Directed Funds from NOAA by consensus.

**Science Advisory Committee:** Dana Oster shared an update from the Science Advisory Committees June meeting where the Committee reviewed an overview of the Voluntary No-Anchor Zone project and discussed possible eelgrass monitoring strategies to assess efficacy of this approach to eelgrass conservation. Dana also reported that the Science Advisory Committee is discussing how the current draft Articles of Association outline the role of the Science Advisory Committee and its support of the Northwest Straits Initiative.

**External Relations Committee:** Lucas reported that the Northwest Straits Commission is awaiting an update from Senator Murray's staff regarding the draft NW Straits Initiative reauthorization bill.

## **Business items**



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- Welcome Nathan – Lucas introduced Nathan Woods to the Northwest Straits Commission. Nathan is excited to join the team as Program Coordinator.
- Kelp Plan Project/Program Inventory Survey – Jeff reported on the progress of the Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan Project/Program Inventory Survey that was sent out to kelp stakeholders throughout Puget Sound to gather information about what groups are involved in kelp conservation and restoration in the area, and to better understand what actions of the Kelp Plan are being undertaken. The survey is still active, and Jeff has asked for people to share the [kelp survey](#) link to anyone involved with kelp in Puget Sound. People have been asked to submit their responses by July 15, 2022.
- Conference update – Lucas reported on the feedback from MRCs on holding an in-person event in November. Based on that feedback, the recommendation is to hold an outdoor Collaborative Conservation Workshop on September 16 at Padilla Bay Reserve. Planning committee members met and discussed agenda items and created a tentative timeline for the event. The Commission approved the proposed Northwest Straits Collaborative Conservation Workshop by consensus.
- No-anchor zone funding update – Dana reported that the Commission was awarded \$66,874 in funding for the voluntary no-anchor zones project from US Fish and Wildlife Service. The funds will be used to support the program in 2023-2024. Around half of the award will be contracted to the Northwest Straits Foundation to carry out components of the project. Current work on the project includes a site selection process, finding independent contractors for diving operations, and completing permit applications.
- Pew kelp project update – Dana reported the first of two kelp workshops and focus groups occurred during May of this year, and the second is scheduled for August. The goal of this project is to bridge science, policy, and management practices to more effectively conserve kelp forests in Puget Sound.
- Veterans Conservation Corps – Allie welcomed back Antonio Jones to the Northwest Straits Commission as a full-time intern for his second summer season working on the European green crab trapping and removal program. In response to a question about how volunteers can engage in green crab efforts, Allie said MRC's should check with Washington Sea Grant about green crab monitoring by contacting [Emily Grayson](#) or visiting the [Washington Crab Team](#) or the [Washington Green Crab Map](#) website.
- Forage Fish training schedule update – Nathan reported on behalf of Leah that forage fish training is scheduled for July 13 in Port Townsend, with the virtual presentation on the July 12. Everyone who is signed up for the training event received an email from Leah with details, and interested parties can reach out to [Leah](#) with questions or concerns.

### Congressional Funding Update

- Lucas reminded the group that preparations for this funding began six months ago and thanked MRC's for their help in the preliminary planning process. A final proposal will be submitted to



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NOAA by July 5 and is already routing at the Dept of Ecology for review. After NOAA approval of the budget and workplan, the next steps will be to work with MRCs beginning in August to create grant agreements for the award to start in January of 2023.

- Lucas discussed the budget breakdown, including funding allocated to MRC's and funding for the WA Department of Natural Resources to conduct derelict vessel removal operations as prioritized by MRCs and tribal partners.
- The Northwest Straits Commission will work collaboratively with the Northwest Straits Foundation on several projects, including the voluntary no-anchor zones project and Clayton Beach restoration.
- Lucas also addressed the Northwest Straits Commission and MRC's desire to move forward with DEI assessment, and a new communications position that is planned to help support the work of MRCs and the Commission.

## Partner updates

**Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission:** Cecilia Gobin was not in attendance.

**Puget Sound Partnership:** Jennifer Grimm was not in attendance.

**Northwest Straits Foundation:** Don Hunger stated that a written report of the Northwest Straits Foundations current projects was provided in pre-meeting materials. Don noted that the Northwest Straits Foundation is recruiting two new board members for 2023. Don reported that the Northwest Straits Foundation's [Passport to Marine Adventure app](#) is live and available for download. The app connects the public to restoration work by providing incentives to the public, in the form of credits, for visiting restoration sites. The credits can be applied at participating businesses for discounts on purchases. Don Hunger encouraged MRC's to raise awareness of the app among their members and the public and contact him with any restoration sites that MRC's would like included in the app. Don also reported that three Caroline Gibson's Scholars scholarships have recently been granted to students.

## MRC Updates

MRCs provided full written reports that are available in the [pre-meeting materials](#). Highlights are included below:

### **Clallam – Rebecca Mahan**

- Summer intern interviews 6/13.
- Tumwater Trap is fishing.
- Continued Forage Fish sampling on three beaches.



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- Pigeon guillemot surveys have started.

### **Island – Elsa Schwartz**

- Cornet Bay Stewardship – Weeding for Whales. The MRC's restoration at Cornet Bay received some additional care on May 24th and June 10th. There are a lot of weeds to remove. The MRC will be holding another event on July 8th to start spreading 40 yards of hog fuel to help smother the weeds and provide a moisture barrier for the plants and trees.
- Marine Debris/ Plastics Classes with the Swinomish. In collaboration with the Sound Water Stewards, the MRC was honored to assist in teaching a couple of classes for Swinomish youth called "Between Two Worlds." This program helps students learn about science from a western and indigenous perspective.
- Oak Harbor AP BIO Class – Marine Debris Survey. The final weeks of the school year, the MRC were worked with the 12th grade AP Biology students from Oak Harbor to set up an initial marine debris survey site at Fort Casey State Park. The site will then be monitored by students in the future. This is in collaboration with WA State Parks, Sound Water Stewards and NOAA.

### **Jefferson – Jeff Taylor**

- The MRC tabled its first in-person community event since the pandemic started, at Shrimpfest in Brinnon on May 28 and 29. We made 266 direct contacts over the weekend and had lots of positive interactions and public members (local and visiting) particularly interested in the green crab invasion (the first one in Hood Canal was detected just the week prior).
- The first ROV survey to locate and remove derelict crab pots from the Cape George and Adelma Beach areas of Discovery Bay was conducted on June 14. The team faced a number of challenges (strong currents, low visibility, fishing line and seaweed plugging up the ROV propellers, etc.) and was unable to locate pots. With some lessons learned and ideas for improving the ROV setup, the team will continue to pilot this effort.
- The MRC had an Olympia oyster workday on June 17, with 5 MRC members and 5 community volunteers helping to spread shell (16 half barrels) at the Lagoon Site.

### **San Juan – Phil Green**

- Vessel monitoring efforts at eelgrass protection sites around the county began for the season. MRC staff and an MRC member began visitor assessments at False Bay, they are trying to recruit more members to help with this effort.
- County staffing of the MRC is undergoing restructuring to make better use of staff time and skill sets.

### **Skagit – Jay Lind attended on behalf of Skagit MRC.**



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- Olympia oyster cultch bags recently collected by volunteers indicated that 2021 had the second highest rate of oyster settlement recorded in Fidalgo Bay!
- Surf smelt spawning activity is really starting to ramp up now after a quiet winter.
- Kelp monitoring is now underway. The first surveys of the season took place at our 3 survey sites on June 3, June 12, and June 25. Five new kayaker volunteers are helping with the surveys this year.

### **Snohomish – Tim Ellis**

- Snohomish MRC hosted an introductory stakeholder meeting on May 25 for the Port Susan Conservation Action Plan (CAP) Update Project to present the project to the Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO), Island LIO, and other interested partners. The MRC is currently planning for two additional stakeholder meetings, which will focus directly on topics identified as high priorities by partners, including a meeting to focus on plan implementation and a meeting to discuss the Objectives & Strategic Actions of the CAP, with focus on areas identified by partners as in need of updating, such as climate change, invasive species, and human, social, and cultural wellbeing.
- Snohomish County's contractor is planning to begin removing the first of four derelict vessels from the Snohomish Estuary the week of June 27, starting with the vessel on Jetty Island.
- The Crabber Education subcommittee is planning to coordinate in-person outreach at the 10th Street Boat Launch in Everett on July 1st, 2nd, 8th, and 9th, pending final details about opening day from WDFW. Depending on volunteer interest, in-person outreach may expand to additional sites.

### **Whatcom – Bob Cecile**

- The MRC has a vacancy for an Economic interest position interest position. This vacancy is advertised on the MRC homepage <https://www.whatcomcountymrc.org/>
- The MRC's Beach Seine with Schools program was highlighted in the [Cascadia Daily News](#).

### **Meeting highlights and action steps for MRCs**

The Commission identified the following key highlights, which staff will share as a separate document to MRC staff and the Commission:

- **Save the date:** In lieu of the November conference, Northwest Straits will hold an outdoor in-person Collaborative Conservation Workshop on Friday September 16 from 11am-4pm at Padilla Bay Reserve. All MRC members and staff, NW Straits Commission staff and Commissioners, NW Straits Foundation Board and staff are invited and encouraged to attend. A schedule and timeline



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of events is in development. Additional information and registration details will be sent directly to all MRC members.

- **Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS):** NW Straits Commission staff submitted the budget and project outlines for the 2022 Congressional funds. The planned timeline for the funds is January 1, 2023-December 31, 2023. The timeline and workplan are awaiting approval from NOAA.
- **Passport to Marine Adventure:** The NW Straits Foundation's [Passport to Marine Adventure app](#) is live and available for download. The app connects the public to restoration work by providing incentives to the public, in the form of credits, for visiting restoration sites. The credits can be applied at participating businesses for discounts on purchases. Don Hunger encouraged MRC's to raise awareness of the app among their members and the public and contact him with any restoration sites that MRC's would like included in the app.

### Public comment

There was no public comment.

July 29, 2022 - The next Northwest Straits Commission meeting: 10am-12pm via Zoom. More information can be found [on our website](#).





## Commission staff highlights - [July 2022]

### MRC Support

**2021-23 Grants:** Commission staff is working with MRC staff and county fiscal staff to review and process payment requests and deliverables for the April-June period and close out the state fiscal year for the first year of the biennium.

**Congressionally directed spending:** Commission staff is waiting on the application for funding from NOAA to be finalized. Once complete, we'll begin the process to develop an application for MRCs in EAGL for the funds, which are anticipated to begin January 1, 2023.

### Regional Projects

**Eelgrass:** An eelgrass survey of North Chuckanut Bay (a potential no-anchor zone site) is planned for this summer. The NW Straits Foundation contracted with Confluence to survey using towed underwater video for the full area and a small dive survey to document eelgrass condition and impacts from vessel scour. Commission staff hosted a transboundary Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection Zone meeting with partners in WA and BC to coordinate on shared approaches and messaging for the voluntary no-anchor zones.

**Kelp Plan:** The Kelp Plan Project Inventory/Action Progress survey was sent out on July 15 to collect information on what projects/programs are involved with kelp in the Puget Sound. As of July 20, we have received 64 entries! Staff are also now designing follow-up workshops to further discuss this information in greater detail to determine what Kelp Plan actions are being addressed and which ones need attention.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Volunteers continue to monitor kelp beds in their respective counties. Surveys are likely to continue through September but July and August are especially busy as it is peak kelp season. Staff from WA Department of Natural Resources are joining survey teams to better understand the kelp kayak monitoring project.

**Green Crab:** Commission staff prepared and submitted the deliverables and interim report required for the WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife Green Crab funding. Commission staff along with the WCC crew, Antonio Jones (VCC intern), and volunteers keep chugging along with green crab trapping. Although they saw a dip in captures in Samish Bay, captures in Drayton Harbor greatly increased, catching 29 green crabs between June 27 and July 10, doubling the number captured since April! Commission staff also met with staff from Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve, WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife, WA Sea Grant, and Padilla Bay Reserve to discuss a collaborative effort to trap green crab in Fidalgo Bay in late



## Commission staff highlights - [July 2022]

August. Staff from Samish Indian Nation and Swinomish Indian Tribal Community were also invited but were not able to attend. Finally, NWSC staff are also planning collaborative trapping events with the Upper Skagit Tribe south of Larrabee State Park, and with the NWSF at Larrabee State Park.

**Forage Fish:** WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, with the support of their WCC Crew, provided a training to over 20 volunteers on how to conduct the forage fish spawn beach surveys. The training included a lecture with background on the project as well as detailed information on the standardized protocols. Volunteers were able to get hands-on practice collecting samples on the beach in outside of the Port Townsend NW Maritime Center. After collecting samples, the group processed the sediment using the blue-bowl vortex method and were able to look at their samples and forage fish eggs under the microscope.

**Derelict Vessels:** NWSC staff are working with DNR, tribal partners and MRCs to plan derelict vessel removals and pilot a derelict vessel turn in event. If approved by NOAA, congressional funds awarded to the NWSC will be used to fund this work in 2023.

### Operations

**Collaborative Conservation Workshop update:** NW Straits Commission staff are working on logistics and will share an agenda soon. Please register for the event if you have not done so already. Event scheduled for September 16, from 11am-4pm at the Padilla Bay Reserve.

### Meetings Attended

Nathan attended: Commission/Foundation staff meeting 7/7; Collaborative Conservation Workshop planning meeting 7/7; Skagit MRC meeting 7/14

Sasha attended: WA State DEI Summit 6/28; Tribal/NWSC Derelict Vessel meeting 6/30; San Juan MRC meeting 7/7; Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection 7/7; forage fish training 7/12; DNR/NWSC Derelict Vessel meeting 7/21

Dana attended: Tribal/NWSC Derelict Vessel meeting 6/30; Port Susan Conservation Action Plan - Strategic Actions & Implementation Workshops 6/30 & 7/6; Shallow Bay No-Anchor Zone meeting 6/30; Watmough Bay No-Anchor Zone meeting 7/1; Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection 7/7; forage fish training 7/12; Skagit MRC meeting 7/14; Squaxin Island Kelp Bed discussion 7/20; Forage fish PSEMP 7/20; SIL Investment Plan Webinar 7/21;



## Commission staff highlights - [July 2022]

DNR/NWSC Derelict Vessel meeting 7/21; Science supporting nutrient management series 7/26; Kelp policy advisory committee 7/27

Lucas attended: WA State DEI Summit 6/28; Presentation to Ecology Spills Program 6/29; San Juan MRC 7/7; Commission/Foundation staff meeting 7/7; Strategic Initiative Leads Investment Plan webinar 7/21; Derelict Vessel Removal planning meeting 7/21

Allie attended: WA State DEI Summit 6/28; Shallow Bay No-Anchor Zone meeting 6/30; Commission/Foundation staff meeting 7/7; Salish Sea Eelgrass Protection 7/7; Skagit MRC meeting 7/14; Fidalgo Bay Green Crab meeting 7/20

Jeff attended: WA State DEI Summit 6/28; Commission/Foundation staff meeting 7/7; Fidalgo Bay Green Crab meeting 7/20; Squaxin Island Kelp Bed discussion 7/20; Kelp policy advisory committee 7/27

Leah attended: Commission/Foundation staff meeting 7/7; Forage fish training 7/12 & 7/13; Fidalgo Bay Green Crab meeting 7/20

## Northwest Straits Foundation June 2022 Program Updates

**Mission Statement** - *To protect and restore the health of the marine ecosystem by promoting and implementing science-based restoration and stewardship, enhancing collaboration and attracting resources for the work of the Northwest Straits Initiative*



### Catch More Crab:

Catch More Crab rack cards and posters have been distributed to MRC's, harbormasters, Washington State Ferries, and other partners. This year the rack cards will be contained in waterproof containers at participating marinas all around the Northwest Straits counties.

The Catch More Crab social media campaign has been running since June 20th and has been spectacular. Four Videos are on our Facebook and Instagram pages and have reached 126,273 people. Our ads have brought new traffic to our [catchmorecrab.org](http://www.catchmorecrab.org) website; having 403 people re-routed to our website via the ads.

Finally, the Virtual Crabber Workshop on June 30, 2022, was a great success! The workshop was hosted by Foundation Program Manager, Jason Morgan, and Daniel Sund and Katelyn Bosley from WDFW. Daniel is the commercial crustacean fishery manager for Puget Sound and Katelyn is the lead Puget Sound crustacean biologist for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. They both presented on Puget Sound crab management and demonstrated how to gear up your crab pot for success and how to ensure it meets federal regulations.

To watch the 2022 Virtual Crabber Workshop, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ChHBKpheiY>



Clayton Beach at low tide

**Nearshore Restoration:**

Clayton Beach: USFWS Puget Sound Coastal Program informed us that we will be awarded \$75,000 towards the feasibility and design of the project. The award process is underway.

Polnell Point: An award of \$50,000 is in process from the Pacific Marine Estuarine Program to support the design and implementation of armor removal and restoration at this site on US Navy property on Whidbey Island.

**Monitoring:**

The last seining of the 2022 season was completed at Cornet Bay on June 22nd. Now that the data collection is wrapped up, Jason Morgan and Environmental Technician, Haley Sherman, are creating a summary report of this year's findings.

**Shore Friendly:**

17 site visits with landowners were held in June including three neighborhood beach walks to discuss Shore Friendly methods for living along the shoreline. Director of Programs, Lisa Kaufman, discussed coastal processes, drainage and increasing the use of native vegetation to reduce the impacts of erosion. At least three sites we visited have potential for removing shoreline armor and the landowners are interested in pursuing next steps.

**Passport to Marine Adventure:**

The Passport to Marine Adventure App is up and running with 21 exploration sites throughout the seven counties and 5 reward sites. We are working on adding additional coastal sites that showcase the Salish Sea's beautiful and biodiverse beaches and also connect people to the work of the Initiative and its partners. We are developing content for each exploration site based on the Passport's goals of getting folks outdoors and providing an educational opportunity to engage with the region's shorelines. Concurrently, we are expanding the reward sites section of the app by introducing the Passport to select local businesses in the seven counties.

[Click here to download the Passport to Marine Adventure](#)



## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Clallam

**Month/Year:** July 2022

**Submitted by:** Rebecca Mahan

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

- Continued Forage Fish sampling on three beaches.
- Pigeon Guillemot surveys are in full swing.

**Membership/Leadership changes** (new/departing members, changes to chair/vice-chair, NWSC representative/alternate, staff): Ann Soule, City of Sequim representative has retired and Meggan Uecker is the new City of Sequim representative.

**Events/Meetings** (events/meetings from past month with any noteworthy highlights and information on upcoming events): Rebecca Mahan, MRC Coordinator along with Jefferson County MRC Coordinator Monica Montgomery and Jefferson MRC Member staffed booths at [StreamFest](#). StreamFest was held at Peninsula College on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

July Clallam MRC meeting was July 18<sup>th</sup> 2022.

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

**Project Updates** (project activities and highlights from the past month, any new projects identified): Olympia oyster surveys have concluded in Sequim Bay with Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and data is being interpreted.

Forage Fish sampling is going well. Clallam MRC continued to collect the monthly samples at Cline Spit and Ediz Hook and Elwha beaches East and West. Pigeon Guillemot project is monitoring boroughs with approximately 40 volunteers.

Shellfish Biotoxin monitoring: CMRC member Bob Vreeland and Coleman Byrnes volunteer continue to sample Freshwater Bay and Pillar Point

**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):

Photos from StreamFest below: 1<sup>st</sup> one is Frank (Jeffco MRC) and Rebecca Mahan. Photo taken by Monica Montgomery. 2<sup>nd</sup> photo is Monica and Frank (JeffCo MRC) phot taken by Rebecca Mahan.



## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Island

**Month/Year:** July / 2022

**Submitted by:** Kelly Zupich

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

- **Cornet Bay Stewardship – Weeding for Whales**
- **Bull Kelp Monitoring**

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

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

- June 22: DEI discussion with NWSC
- June 23: MRC Executive Committee
- June 30: Port Susan Conservation Action Plan - Strategic Actions Workshop 1:00
- July 5: MRC Meeting 3:00 – 5:00 (Cancelled due to low attendance)
- July 6: Port Susan Conservation Action Plan - Implementation Workshop 1:00
- July 8: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-3:00
- July 11: Meeting at Keystone Property w/ Whidbey Camano Land Trust

### Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- July 21: MRC Executive Committee
- July 21: Cornet Bay Watering
- Aug 2: MRC Meeting 3:00-5:00pm Deception Pass West Beach Shelter
- Aug 6: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00
- Aug 17: MRC Picnic
- Aug 19: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00
- Aug 20: Family Outdoor Discovery Day
- Aug 25: MRC Executive Committee
- Sept 2: Cornet Bay Stewardship 10:00-2:00

**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):

Cornet Bay Stewardship: We held another event on July 8<sup>th</sup> to start spreading 40 yards of hog fuel to help smother the weeds and provide a moisture barrier for the plants and trees. Our dedicated volunteers made it about 1/3 of the way through the pile of hog fuel. Our plan is to host at least 3 more events this year to keep on top of the weeds and continue spreading the mulch. We are very grateful to have volunteers joining us from Sound Water Stewards, IC MRC, and the Navy.

Monitoring – Forage Fish: Our work monitoring for Forage fish eggs continues at most of our sites year-round. Teams continue to monitor monthly at Hoypus Point, Cornet Bay, Sunlight Shores, Maple Grove,



Hidden Beach, Glendale. This month many of our continuing and new volunteers attended the training in Port Townsend.

Seining: The seining team has concluded its surveys for the year. Volunteer, Barbara Bennett, was thrilled to see the largest Gunnel she had ever seen at the final seining!

Bull Kelp Surveys: Surveys on both islands began mid-June and will continue through to the Fall. Volunteers are enjoying themselves and getting back into the rhythm.

Outreach – Port Susan MSA: The Snohomish MRC and ESA hosted 2 stakeholder meetings to come up with a plan of how to best use this information and get it out to our partners and relevant communities. Multiple Island County staff and volunteers attended these sessions.

Outreach – Crabber Ed: We are working with Sound Water Steward volunteers to get Catch more crab education materials distributed to local boat launches, marinas, stores, etc.

**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.):

- Island MRC could use any help with how to incorporate D.E.I. into our activities and operations.
- We also are looking for any resources on how to measure the impact of our work.

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



After Weeding and Mulching at  
Cornet Bay Restoration

photo by Kelly Zupich



Ocean Spray blooming at the Cornet Bay Restoration

photo by volunteer Lachlan Pope



Meeting w/ WCLT Director

photo by Kelly Zupich

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Jefferson

**Month/Year:** July 2022

**Submitted by:** Monica Montgomery

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

- The Sea Dragons team continued with ROV surveys on June 19 (practice), 20, and 21, successfully locating 6 derelict crab pots (with coordinates from the recent side scan sonar surveys). Three pots were covered in plumose anemones and seemed to no longer be fishing and instead functioning as artificial reef so were left alone, two pots were successfully recovered, and we began to recover the last pot but due to changing weather conditions and safety considerations, we had to leave it. The MRC hopes to continue to work with the Sea Dragons to locate and recover derelict crab pots in East Jefferson County.
- In partnership with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center, the MRC co-hosted a virtual panel on Dungeness crab research and management efforts (featuring Emily Buckner-PSRF/PCRG, Katelyn Bosley-WDFW, and Liz Tobin-JST) on June 21 (27 attendees) coupled with a live larval crab monitoring demonstration on June 22 (23 attendees).
- The MRC tabled the Forever Streamfest community event in Port Angeles on June 25 alongside the Clallam MRC Coordinator.

**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

June 19, 20 & 21 – ROV surveys @ Adelma  
June 21 – Executive Committee meeting  
June 21 – Education & Outreach virtual speaker event: PNW Crab Research Group  
June 22 – Education & Outreach coupled hands-on activity: light trap sampling  
June 24 – NWSC monthly meeting  
June 25 – First kelp survey  
June 25 – Education & Outreach: tabling Forever Streamfest (with Clallam MRC)  
June 30 – NWSF crabber workshop  
June 30 – Forage fish survey at Adelma  
July 7 – Rain garden maintenance at Franklin & Adams St  
July 7 – Salish Sea No-Anchor Zones meeting  
July 12 – WDFW forage fish virtual training  
July 13 – WDFW forage fish in-person training  
July 15 – Olympia oyster population survey @ North Powerlines Site  
July 19 – Executive Committee meeting  
June 15 – Forage fish survey at Dabob  
June 30 – Forage fish survey at Adelma

### Upcoming Events/Meetings

July 27 – Second kelp survey  
July 29 – NWSC monthly meeting  
July 29 – Rain garden work party  
July – Forage fish survey at Dabob  
July – Forage fish survey at Adelma  
August 2 – MRC monthly meeting

**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:** Nothing to report.
- **Forage fish - Adelma Beach (Index):** The Project Lead (Jeff) and one volunteer (Cindy) surveyed on June 30.
- **Forage fish - Dabob Bay (Index):** The Project Lead (Sarah) is planning to survey later this month.
- The MRC Coordinator, three MRC members (Joanie, Sarah, Troy) and two community volunteers (Gregg, Anne) attended the WDFW index site forage fish survey training on July 13 in Port Townsend.
- **Kelp:** One MRC member (Solenne) and two community volunteers (Yewah, Declan) conducted the first survey of 2022 on June 25. Feather boa was the dominant kelp species in the June survey.

#### 2. Rain Gardens:

- On July 6 and 7, Bob (WSU Extension partner), the MRC Coordinator, and two MRC members (Brent, Troy) helped remove a thick batch of thistle, dandelions, and various grasses going to seed at the Franklin and Adams St. rain garden. The MRC plans to supplement this rain garden with more water tolerant plants.
- The rain garden subcommittee is promoting [an upcoming workday on July 29](#) to continue addressing maintenance needs of established rain gardens across Port Townsend.
- Bob (WSU Extension partner) is still helping to plan the next rain garden to be installed in September.

#### 3. Education & Outreach:

- The subcommittee co-hosted a third coupled presentation and in-person event in partnership with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center, on June 21 and 22. The virtual presentation ([recording here](#)) was focused on the PNW Crab Research Group's work studying Dungeness crab as well as state and Tribal management efforts (featuring Emily Buckner from PSRF, Katelyn Bosley from WDFW, and Liz Tobin from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe). The virtual presentation had 29 attendees (including three MRC members – Brenda, Troy, Frank) with a lively Q&A. The coupled live light trap monitoring demonstration at the marine science center the following morning had 25 attendees, including one MRC member (Troy), the PTMSC summer camp students, and many of the attendees from the previous night's presentation. Led by Ali Redman from PTMSC and Emily, attendees helped to separate out and count crab larvae in the megalopa stage that were brought up from the light trap sample as part of the Pacific Northwest Crab Research Group's research efforts.
- The Crabber Outreach subcommittee promoted the NWS Foundation virtual crabber workshop that took place on June 30.

- The MRC Coordinator and one MRC member (Frank) tabled Forever Streamfest (in Port Angeles) alongside the Clallam MRC Coordinator (Rebecca) on June 25, reaching 87 direct contacts with education on sustainable crabbing (and promoting the June 30 workshop), rain gardens for mitigating stormwater impacts, shoreline living, etc.

4. Olympia Oysters:

- The MRC conducted an Olympia oyster population survey at the North Powerlines Site (original site established in 2014) on July 15 with the help of the MRC Coordinator, Project Lead (Neil), two MRC members (Brenda, Gordon), and 6 community volunteers (Ella, Nathaniel, Everest, Logan, Kurt, Mark). The data hasn't been analyzed yet, but we are excited to see new recruitment with numerous small Olympias, some as small as 2mm in length.

5. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones:

- The MRC is contracting Marine Resources Consultants to conduct an underwater video tow survey for submerged aquatic vegetation (namely *Zostera marina*) along the Port Townsend waterfront (the last surveys here were in 2014 and 2015). Tentative on-the-water dates are July 25-29.

6. Mapping Lost Crab Pots:

- **ROV:** The Sea Dragons team (Ella, Logan, Nathaniel, Riley) continued ROV surveys through June 19-21. June 19<sup>th</sup> was a practice day for locating derelict pots using coordinates from the recent side scan sonar survey. The team located 3 pots, however, opted not to remove them since they appeared to no longer be fishing and were covered in plumose anemones, seeming to be functioning as artificial reef. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, the team located and recovered two derelict pots – the first with live and dead Dungeness crabs and the second with a live red rock crab (and other invertebrates). In the short amount of time the team was on the water on June 21<sup>st</sup>, we located one derelict pot but could not recover it due to changing weather conditions and prioritizing safety on the water. Having proved the concept of using ROVs as a relatively low-cost method of removing derelict pots, the MRC hopes to continue growing this partnership with the Sea Dragons to remove pots across East Jefferson County and possibly educating other communities interested in adopting these methods. [The Leader published an article on the project here.](#)

**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 to report.

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



June 14 ROV survey @ Adelma Beach (Jeff, Logan, Riley, Nathaniel, Ella, Monica) – Photo by Gabi Ashford



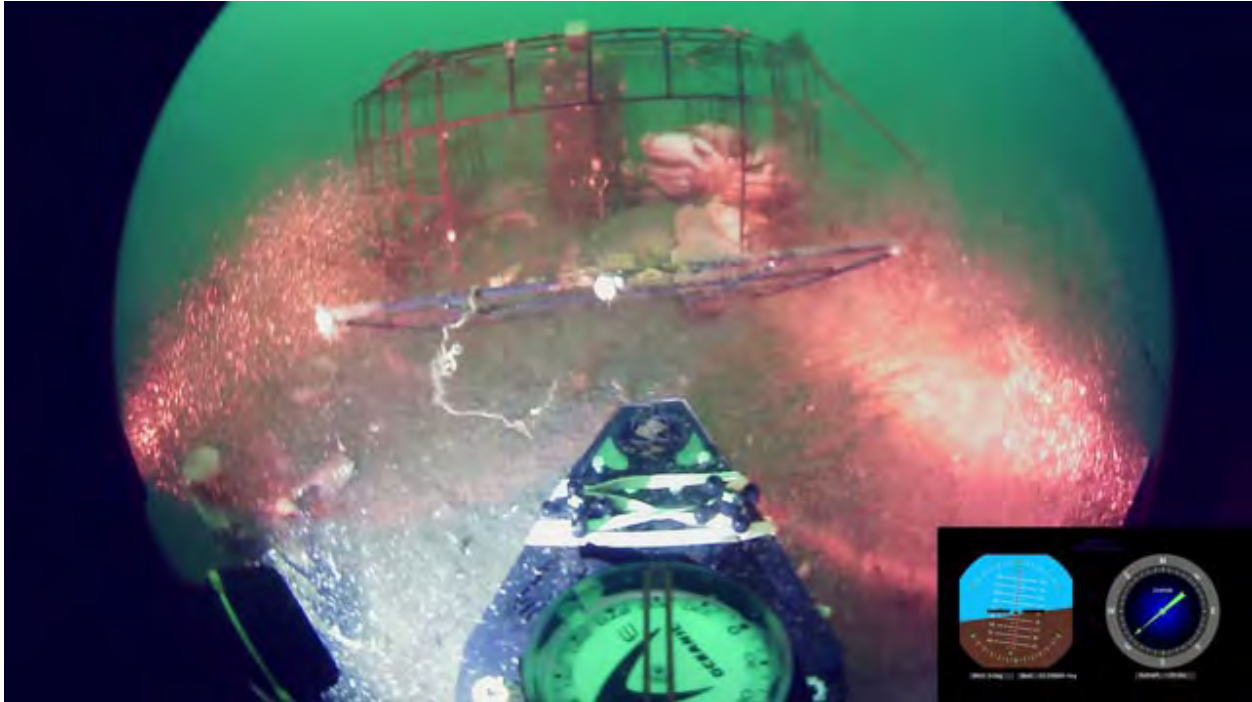
June 19, 20 & 21 ROV surveys @ Adelma Beach in Discovery Bay

Image from the ROV of derelict pots left in place that are functioning as artificial reefs





Image from the ROV of a derelict pot that was recovered with live crabs inside



June 20 ROV surveys @ Adelma – first crab pot successfully located and removed using the ROV (Logan, Ella, Jeff) – Photo by Monica





Sea Dragons team (Ella, Riley, Logan, Nathaniel) with the ROV and two recovered crab pots – Photo by Monica



June 22 Education & Outreach coupled hands-on activity: larval crab monitoring demonstration led by Emily Buckner (PSRF/PCRG) and Ali Redman (PTMSC) – Photos by Monica











Megalopae collected from the PCRG light trap at PTMSC



June 25 First kelp survey (community volunteer: Declan) – Photo by Solenne Walker



June 25 – Education & Outreach: tabling Forever Streamfest with Clallam MRC



Frank and Monica – Photo by Rebecca





Frank and Rebecca – Photo by Monica

July 13 WDFW-NWSI forage fish in-person training – Photos by Monica







Joanie examining surf smelt eggs















## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** San Juan County

**Month/Year:** July 2022

**Submitted by:** Sam Whitridge

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

- We have implemented our new County Marine Program staffing structure, which is designed to make better use of staff time and skill sets.
- We have over 45 visitor assessments completed at False Bay and *Ulva Sp.* sampling is now well underway

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

In July we implemented significant changes to the San Juan County Marine Program staff. Tyler Davis was hired as the new Marine Project Coordinator. Tyler will support grant administration for the Marine Program and will also work on planning, outreach, event coordination and committee coordination. Frances Robertson is now the Marine Project Manager and is responsible for the development and implementation of capital and non-capital marine focused projects. Sam Whitridge is now serving in the role of Marine Program Coordinator and will represent the Marine Program through communications, meetings, and conferences and will serve as County liaison to funders.

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

- Joint MRC-LIO meeting-July 7<sup>th</sup>
- Lopez Island Indigenous Celebration- July 9<sup>th</sup>
- Plastic Free Salish Sea subcommittee meeting- July 12<sup>th</sup>
- MSA Subcommittee meeting- July 12<sup>th</sup>

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

Nothing new to report this month.

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

The MRC completed its scoring of the 2022 Salmon Recovery Grant Proposals at the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. There are a total of 10 proposals in San Juan County this year requesting over \$1.9 Million in funding. The MRC will adopt the final ranked project list at the August meeting. The annual scoring and ranking of these proposals is an important part of the MRC annual work plan.

Both *Ulva spp.* Surveys and visitor outreach is ongoing at False Bay in June. We have over 45 visitor assessments completed, and sampling is now well underway (see images below). Most visitor outreach is focused on the weekends during the low tide period. So far visitor numbers are much lower than 2020 when outreach was last undertaken at the False Bay.

The MSA Plan Strategic Action Review is complete and in draft format. The August MRC meeting will focus on review of the actions described in the draft.

The SeaBin was installed at the Friday Harbor Marina, but upon installation it was discovered to need a new pump. The new pump will be installed and the SeaBin will soon be up and running.

Plastic Free July is underway and we are putting out outreach materials on facebook to raise awareness of the importance of reducing plastic consumption.

MRC members on each of the main islands are undertaking vessel surveys at anchor out sites and eelgrass restoration sites. This year data collection is aided by an online data collection form created for the NWSC and MRCs.

**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.):

July was our 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting implementing the new Marine Advisory Committee structure, which was designed to increase efficiency and create better opportunities for collaboration between the MRC, CAG and LIO. As part of the structure, committees are operating separately and will maintain their autonomy, but by combining the work of these committees into one meeting that is shorter in duration than the previous meeting structure, we hope to greatly increase cross pollination between the committees.

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

False Bay Sampling photos:









## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Skagit

**Month/Year:** July/2022

**Submitted by:** Tracy/ Diane

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

- The Salish Sea Stewards picnic was held at Padilla Bay on Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> with 54 attendees! Lunch was provided by Friends of Skagit Beaches and Ecology. The event included a tour of the Padilla Bay labs, algae pressing, a mudflat walk, and research displays presented by students from Shannon Point Marine Center. The event was well received.
- Forage fish survey volunteers hosted an educational forage fish survey station at the Fidalgo Bay Resort for several small groups of Latinx kids from the Washington State's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP). The kids were very enthusiastic and eager to learn. It was inspirational to be a part of it.

**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):

- **July 14-** Skagit MRC Monthly Meeting (9am-11am). 21 people in attendance. The MRC-Salish Sea School Interns were introduced and provided an update on their forage fish project. Lisa Kaufman provided an update on the Northwest Straits Foundation's work in Skagit County.
- **July 18-** Fidalgo Bay Day Planning Committee Meeting (10am-11:30am) via Microsoft Teams. The next meeting will be held **August 8<sup>th</sup>** at 11am.
- **July 20-** Salish Sea Stewards Advisory Committee Meeting (11am-1pm) via Zoom. Meetings occur on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month.
- **Aug 8-** Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance Work Party.
- **August 20-** Fidalgo Bay Day, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort.

**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:** This year's Salish Sea Stewards Training ran from March 1 – March 24. 24 of the original 26 new trainees graduated this year. The Salish Sea Stewards picnic was held at Padilla Bay on Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> with 54 attendees! Lunch was provided by Friends of Skagit Beaches and Ecology. The event included a tour of the Padilla Bay labs, algae pressing, a mudflat safari, and research displays presented by students from Shannon Point Marine Center. The event was well received. The 5- member Advisory Committee meetings occur the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month from 11am to 1pm via Zoom. They are actively recruiting new members to join. The Committee works continually to keep volunteers informed of current volunteer opportunities available through the SSS electronic news bulletin, "The Wave" and Facebook.
- **Fidalgo Bay Day:** The event will be held **Saturday, August 20, 2022**, 11am-3pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. 18 organizations confirmed participation this year. Activities will include the Friends of Skagit Beaches Passport Activity & Children's Art Contest, the Shannon Point Marine Center touch tank, beach seining demonstration, educational booths, kids craft activities, a no host-salmon BBQ, and hopefully Taylors Shellfish oysters & clams/blue mussels

to grill. Volunteers are still working on getting chowder donations. The FBD Planning Committee met virtually on July 18. The next meeting will be held August 8<sup>th</sup> at 11am. The Committee consists of 4 MRC members, 3 veteran volunteers, and 4 Salish Sea Stewards recent graduates.

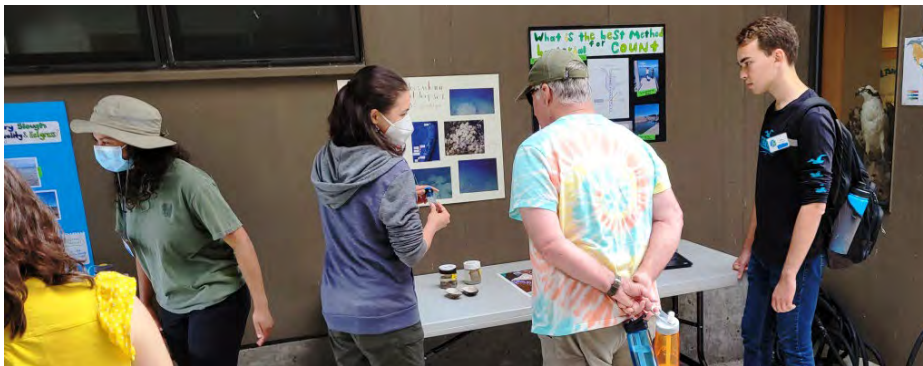
- Forage Fish Surveys: Monthly forage fish surveys continue. Survey sites include: Fidalgo Bay, March Point, Bowman Bay, Kukatali Preserve, and our 3 index sites. The survey crew continues to recruit new volunteers to help fill the gaps when volunteers get sick, go on vacation, or move out of town, etc. They are also rethinking the current survey sites and are considering possibly adding new sites. They have not seen any new spawning at the Fidalgo Bay survey sites in the last couple of weeks which is extremely unusual. Normally this time of year they see tons of spawning. The NWSC hosted a forage fish training with WDFW on July 13 in Port Townsend. Forage fish survey volunteers recently hosted an educational forage fish survey station at the Fidalgo Bay Resort for several small groups of Latinx High School students from the Washington State's Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). 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. One of the curious campers at the RV Park asked if she could join the students to learn about forage fish. Pete said the volunteers felt inspired just being a part of it. The students will be giving presentations at the end of the program. MRC members and volunteers will be invited to attend.
- MRC- Salish Sea School Intern: We contracted with the Salish Sea School to hire an intern, Trevor Derier to carry out a forage fish study at Marchs Point for the MRC that started in February. Trevor is mentoring Julia Schielke, a young 7<sup>th</sup> grader participating in the "Students Training as Research Scientists" (STaRS) program with the Salish Sea School. Monitoring occurs monthly at different locations. They were introduced at the July MRC meeting and presented an update on their project. Julia will be giving her final presentation in January along with the other STaRS participants.
- Kids on the Beach: The KOTB program is now done for the year. Four schools participated in the spring KOTB program this year with 360 students: Sedro-Wooley, Conway, Concrete, and Anacortes middle schools. A report will be finalized in September. Planning is now underway for the fall KOTB program.
- Kayak Kelp Surveys: Monthly kayak kelp surveys continue June-Sept. We currently survey three sites: Shannon Point, Bowman Bay - Coffin Rocks, and Biz Point. Brad Smith who leads the kelp surveys at Shannon Point recently moved to the east coast. Lynne Wenberg-Davidson will be taking over as lead for the rest of this season until they can find a new replacement. Five new kayakers have joined the three kelp survey teams. There appears to be slow growth at all three kelp bed sites this year.
- Bowman Bay Restoration: The Bowman Bay Plant Maintenance project is focused on enhancing existing vegetation, interplanting with trees and shrubs, expanding ground cover and increasing structural diversity and reducing erosion in shoreline restoration area. Four monthly work parties were scheduled this season which coincide with the forage fish surveys as a public outreach opportunity. The last one will take place August 8<sup>th</sup>. Plant maintenance included weeding, watering, and mulching with compost. The plants at the site look pretty good, but there has been some erosion. The site still needs more shrubs and trees to protect the understory. Soil tests indicate the soil is low in nitrogen. September 30<sup>th</sup> is the final walkthrough with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG) staff and the MRC. Adam Airolidi, the SFEG Riparian Restoration Manager accepted a new position with State Parks and has been replaced by Nathan White.
- Pinto Abalone Recovery: Field work is now complete. The data analysis and annual report will be finalized in September.

- Olympia Oyster Restoration: Field work is now complete. Data indicates 2021 had the second highest rate of oyster settlement recorded in Fidalgo Bay.
- Sharpes Corner Stormwater Sampling: No 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.): NA

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

*Photos by Pete Haase: Salish Sea Stewards picnic and research displays at Padilla Bay on July 16<sup>th</sup>.*



## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Snohomish

**Month/Year:** July 2022

**Submitted by:** Elisa Dawson

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

- Snohomish MRC hosted an the follow up stakeholder meetings for the Port Susan Conservation Action Plan (CAP) Update Project on June 30 and July 6. These meetings focused directly on topics identified as high priorities by partners, including a meeting to focus on plan implementation and a meeting to discuss the Objectives & Strategic Actions of the CAP, with focus on areas identified by partners as in need of updating, such as climate change, invasive species, and human, social, and cultural wellbeing.
- Snohomish County's derelict vessel contractor has removed 2 of the 4 derelict vessels in the Snohomish Estuary. The other two vessels will require additional work to be done for removal.
- The Crabber Education subcommittee conducted in-person outreach at the 10th Street Boat Launch in Everett on July 1st, 2nd, 8th, and 9<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers spoke to over 350 crabbers over the 4 days.

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

Alex Pittman has accepted a new position at Snohomish County and left his position with the MRC effective July 1. SWM Planner Joycelyn Blue will be stepping in to support the MRC.

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

Elisa Dawson met with ESA staff to discuss the Port Susan Project on June 27.

Elisa Dawson met with WSU Beach Watcher staff on July 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the first half of the 2022 contract.

Elisa Dawson met with DNR staff on July 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the 2022 marine vegetation monitoring contract for Port Susan and Hat Island.

Elisa Dawson and Joycelyn Blue met with WSU Beach Watchers of July 18 to discuss an upcoming beach cleanup in partnership with Zero Waste WA in September 2022.

Elisa Dawson met with Snohomish County Parks staff on July 19 to discuss progress on the Meadowdale Restoration Project.

Elisa Dawson met with SWM staff to discuss a webpage for Meadowdale on July 20<sup>th</sup>.

The MRC Meeting for July 20<sup>th</sup> was cancelled this year due to vacations and lack of capacity. The next MRC event will be the August social picnic.

Elisa Dawson attended the Northwest Straits Commission workshop for the upcoming Collaborative Conservation Workshop.

**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):

**Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (MRC grant project for 2021-2022):** Snohomish MRC hosted an the follow up stakeholder meetings for the Port Susan Conservation Action Plan (CAP) Update Project on June 30 and July 6. These meetings focused directly on topics identified as high priorities by partners, including a meeting to focus on plan implementation and a meeting to discuss the Objectives & Strategic Actions of the CAP, with focus on areas identified by partners as in need of updating, such as climate change, invasive species, and human, social, and cultural wellbeing.

**Derelict Vessels (NWSF funds):** Snohomish County's derelict vessel contractor has removed 2 of the 4 derelict vessels in the Snohomish Estuary. The other two vessels will require additional work to be done for removal.

**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. Sampling at Meadowdale is now on hold with beach access closed on for construction of the Meadowdale Beach & Estuary Restoration Project. July sampling at Picnic Point and Howarth Park is scheduled for July 25.

**Nearshore Restoration:** MRC staff have continue to work with project consultant ESA to finalize the Meadowdale Monitoring Plan. Next steps include the creation of a Meadowdale Monitoring webpage.

**Marine Vegetation Monitoring:** Kelp Monitoring dates have been scheduled for July and August. Edmonds and Mukilteo were monitored in July. Possible dates are July 11 and 13. Edmonds will be monitored a second time in August and Meadowdale will also be monitored in August. Possible dates are August 10 & 12. SWM Staff will monitor Hat Island in August. Possible dates are August 11 & 25.



**Crabber Education:** The Crabber Education subcommittee conducted in-person outreach at the 10th Street Boat Launch in Everett on July 1st, 2nd, 8th, and 9<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers spoke to over 350 crabbers over the 4 days.

**No updates for:**

- Snohomish Estuary Pilings Project
- Oil Spills
- Stormwater (formerly Mussel Watch)
- Outreach

**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 – July 25
- Crabber Outreach – July 1, 2, 8 & 9
- Kelp Kayak Monitoring – August 10, 11, 12 and 25
- MRC Picnic in August – date TBD

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



MRC Volunteers (L-R) Brie Townsend, Susan Tarpley, and Phil Salditt at crabber outreach in Everett.

## MRC Monthly Report to the Northwest Straits Commission

**County:** Whatcom

**Month/Year:** JUNE 2022

**Submitted by:** Austin Rose

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

- The MRC has a vacancy for an Economic interest position interest position. This vacancy is advertised on the MRC homepage <https://www.whatcomcountymrc.org/>

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

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

- The MRC did not hold a July meeting due to the holiday and summer vacations. The next meeting is scheduled for August 4.
- The SW Lummi Island Beach Cleanup occurred on July 14. 18 volunteers from Bellingham and Lummi Island participated. A final garbage removal weights has not been determined. Overall, there was significantly less garbage washed ashore. Fishing and aquaculture gear was primarily found.

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

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

#### Education and Outreach

- Whatcom Water Week will be held September 10 -18. The MRC will likely partner with the Ocean Conservancy, Surfrider Foundation, and Re Sources for the International Coastal Cleanup scheduled for September 17 10:00am – noon, tentatively occurring at Locust Beach.

#### Monitoring

**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:**





Photo credit: Dan Nietzel, Specialized Marine Transport landing craft



Photo Credit: Stephen Hullin, Whatcom MRC members with debris removed from SW Lummi Island