

San Juan County MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE



2008 Annual Report

2008 San Juan County Marine Resources Committee

Laura Arnold	Planning Consultant / Friday Harbor Planning Commission / Artist <i>San Juan Island</i>
Kelley Balcomb-Bartok	Friday Harbor Town Council Member / Whale Researcher / Marine Photographer <i>San Juan Island</i>
Michael Durland	Marina Owner-Operator / Captain / Recreational Boater <i>Orcas Island</i>
Jack Giard	Commercial Fisherman / Member Pacific Salmon Commission / President of the Washington Reefnet Owner's Association <i>Lopez Island</i>
Ron Henrickson	San Juan County Community Development and Planning Director <i>San Juan Island</i>
Andy Holman	Outdoorsman and Conservationist / Founding Member of the Puget Sound Anglers SJI Chapter / Coastal Conservation Association <i>San Juan Island</i>
Johannes Krieger	Owner - Crystal Seas Kayaking / Volunteer in Local Schools <i>San Juan Island</i>
David Loyd	Water Freight Service Operator / Teacher / Sustenance Fisherman <i>Waldron Island</i>
Barbara Marrett	Port of Friday Harbor Commissioner / Captain / Recreational Boater <i>San Juan Island</i>
Mary Masters	Retired Environmental Engineer / Wildlife Researcher / Sea Kayaker <i>Orcas Island</i>
Kit Rawson	Fisheries Biologist / Tribal Representative / Puget Sound Recovery Implementation Technical Team <i>San Juan Island</i>
Ken Sebens	Director of the Friday Harbor Marine Labs / Marine Biologist / Professor <i>San Juan Island</i>
Joy Sevier	Communications Business Owner / San Juan Chamber of Commerce Member <i>San Juan Island</i>
Jim Slocomb	Recreational Boater / GIS Mapping Specialist / Marine Mechanic <i>San Juan Island</i>
Richard Strathmann	Marine Biologist / Professor - Friday Harbor Marine Labs <i>San Juan Island</i>
Jonathan White	Custom Home Builder / Author / Captain <i>Orcas Island</i>
Tina Whitman	Forage Fish Specialist / Staff Scientist for the Friends of the San Juans <i>Orcas Island</i>

2008 Marine Resources Committee Staff

Mary Knackstedt	San Juan County Marine Resources Committee Coordinator <i>Lopez Island</i>
Barbara Rosenkotter	San Juan County Salmon Recovery Lead Entity Coordinator <i>Orcas Island</i>
Jeff Hanson	Ecosystems Education Coordinator / San Juan County <i>Orcas Island</i>
Helen Venada	Minute Taker <i>San Juan Island</i>

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The MRC

A Citizen-Based Advisory Committee

The San Juan Marine Resources Committee (MRC) was started in 1996 as a grassroots effort to establish local management of marine resources. It was the prototype for the creation of a federally sponsored network of seven MRCs working in northern Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The MRCs are supported by federal funding through the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative, created by Senator Murray and the late Congressman Metcalf and nationally recognized as an innovative approach for bringing marine science and policy to communities through grass-roots citizen involvement.

During the course of 2008, seventeen citizens served on the San Juan MRC, contributing over 2,000 hours of work to protect marine resources. Representatives from the Port of Friday Harbor, commercial and recreational fishing, the University of Washington’s Friday Harbor Labs, local businesses, environmental organizations, long-term residents, San Juan County and Tribal governments bring a diversity of perspectives and expertise to the MRC. *MRC members and staff are listed on the back cover.*

Our Marine Stewardship Area
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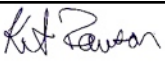
Outreach
Fostering a Stewardship Ethic
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Science
Assessing Marine Health
Page 4

Policy
Improving Management of Marine Resources
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Finance Report
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Message from the Chair



2008 was another productive year for the San Juan County Marine Resources Committee. We achieved significant progress in building community capacity to protect the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area in three areas of endeavor: outreach, science, and policy advice.

With the help of Department of Ecology funding, we launched the Pollution Prevention program providing technical assistance to help local businesses keep hazardous chemicals out of the environment. This is just one example of outreach that gets the community directly involved in stewardship. We created a database of local and regional monitoring activity and created a blueprint for how to increase our understanding of the islands’ marine environment. The goal is to collect data that will inform decision making to help protect species, habitats and the ecosystem processes that support them. We developed or found the science to help address community concerns about rockfish, polluted runoff, and fish farms. Our members took on leadership roles to ensure that marine issues were well represented in the update of the Critical Areas Ordinance and the recommendations of San Juan Initiative. We directed federal resources in the county through the Northwest Straits Commission and assured that the county’s needs are represented in the state’s Puget Sound Action Agenda.

We continued to strengthen and broaden partnerships with local groups and regional marine managers and are directing this synergy to carry out programs to foster stewardship in the community. As we prepare to go through tough times with fewer financial resources, the MRC faces the challenge of setting priorities and letting go of some projects. Working with our partners to leverage limited funding for outreach and monitoring as well as identifying and offering a forum to discuss the most pressing marine issues and policies is more important than ever.

Although there is less money this year, the incredible human resources of our members, staff and partner organizations remain strong. It is a pleasure to work with so many great people to protect the islands we all love.

- Kit Rawson MRC Chair

2008 Finance Report

Overview
The MRC receives most of its operating funds from a federal grant that is co-administered by the Northwest Straits Commission and the Washington Department of Ecology. In 2008 we also successfully applied for funds from the Department of Ecology’s Local Source Control Program to develop a Pollution Prevention program in San Juan County. In 2007 and 2008, San Juan County provided nearly \$50,000 per year to support the MRC.

Funding Sources and 2008 Expenditures

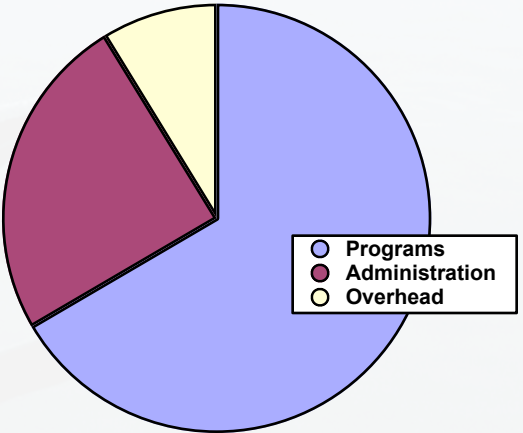
Source	Expenditures
NW Straits Commission	\$84,532
Department of Ecology: Local Source Control Program	\$103,280
San Juan County	\$44,749
TOTAL	\$232,561

Programs: \$154,835
Most revenues go to support programs that carry out the protection strategies from the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area Plan. In addition to enabling the MRC to carry out programs for marine protection, these federal and state funds support jobs in the community.

Administration: \$57,351
This portion is used to meet our grant requirements. Staff salary and benefits, grant and contract management, website maintenance, meeting expenses, speakers, training, travel, office supplies and equipment come from this fund.

Overhead: \$20,375
25% of the Department of Ecology LSC grant went to San Juan County for overhead to provide office space and technology, supplies, accounting services and personnel administration.

Looking Ahead: County Funding for 2009
Funding for the MRC and Salmon Recovery programs are not included in the 2009 San Juan County budget. The County will continue to support these programs for a charge of 15% of grant revenues for overhead.



Because marine protection will only succeed through the efforts of many people, a top strategy for protecting our Marine Stewardship Area is to foster a stewardship ethic in residents and visitors. In 2008, the MRC hosted experts to present at MRC meetings, published three newsletters and a stewardship guide, helped coordinate and financially supported the work of local educational and citizen volunteer organizations, and provided training and guidance for the technical skills needed to carry out effective stewardship.

Citizen Science and Engagement

Effective stewardship of marine resources will only occur through broad participation of citizens who understand and embrace their capacity to shape a sustainable path into the future. Through expert speakers, training opportunities and regional connections, the MRC offers opportunities for its members and other citizens to learn, grow and apply their knowledge. In 2008, the MRC had resources that enabled us to provide coordination and financial support for several local organizations that offer outstanding mentorship for citizen science and engagement, including WSU Beach Watchers, Soundwatch, the San Juan Nature Institute and Kwiaht.

2008 Outreach Projects

Stewardship Connections
Newsletter

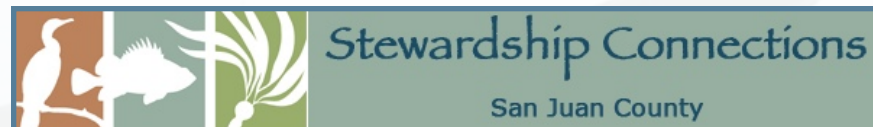
Caring For Our Natural Resources
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Stewardship Summit and
Good Steward Awards

Pollution Prevention
Program

Low Impact Development
Workshop

Citizen Science and
Volunteer Opportunities



Stewardship Publications

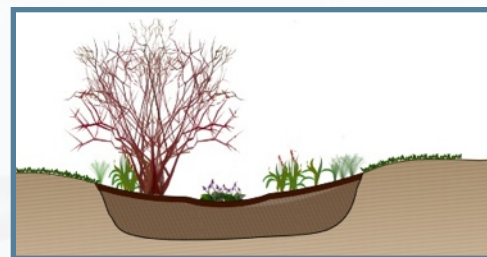
Stewardship Connections is an electronic newsletter with articles about marine issues and tips for protecting the marine environment. Three issues were distributed directly and via links on various websites.

The MRC published *Caring for our Natural Resources*, a newspaper insert that went to over 6,000 households.

Technical Assistance

With funding and technical guidance from the Washington Department of Ecology, we joined a regional network of counties and cities and launched the Pollution Prevention Program in San Juan County.

The Pollution Prevention Specialist provided site visits to over 100 businesses, offering advice on how to better manage hazardous materials to reduce harm to the environment.



In September, we partnered with the American Civil Engineers Association, Public Works, and the Conservation District to hold a full day workshop on Low Impact Development for almost 40 county staff and building professionals. The workshop provided technical information on pervious pavement, bioretention, and other methods to infiltrate stormwater and prevent runoff.

As our community grows, we need a way to measure the impacts of growth and the programs we've invested in that manage those impacts. Conducting stewardship work without monitoring is like driving a car without a fuel gauge or keeping a person healthy without tracking weight, blood pressure and other vital signs. Fortunately, this is an area where we have access to some of the best resources to be found so we've managed to accomplish a lot on a shoestring budget.

MSA Monitoring

The San Juan Islands' rich biodiversity has elevated them as a priority area for research and conservation in the scientific community for many years. To mine this wealth, University of Washington Friday Harbor Labs has evolved as a world class marine research facility. The MRC tapped the considerable scientific expertise on the committee and in the community to compile and catalogue existing research and to create a monitoring plan for the Marine Stewardship Area that will help us understand the ecosystem and guide our stewardship efforts. As one of the few communities in the region that has developed a monitoring plan, we are well positioned to coordinate and pursue resources to carry it out.

Runoff and Toxicology Studies

The MRC invests in talented local volunteers to reap big benefits. When the animals in the public aquarium at the Spring Street dock died, it was a sign that something was wrong. The MRC paid for water quality test equipment so Mike Kaill, a retired marine biologist could conduct detective work on stormwater discharging into Friday Harbor. After finding detergents in the water samples, he worked with the Town of Friday Harbor to track down and repair illegal sink discharges into the storm drain system. Kwiaht, a community research organization, uses lab equipment purchased by the MRC to work with students to analyze toxin levels in sediment from several sites. These projects help "red flag" sites where more detective work is needed to track down and deal with pollutant sources.



Rockfish Recovery

After finding that the voluntary bottomfish "no-take" zones haven't worked to stop rockfish declines, the MRC began coordinating with an advisory group and The SeaDoc Society to create a report on the status of rockfish which lays out management options for their recovery. When the report is released in early 2009, the MRC will work with the community to select recommendations to bring to local and regional decision makers.

LiDAR

The MRC has agreed to contribute funds to help San Juan County complete its LiDAR survey of the County. LiDAR is a remote sensing system which can document topographic, hydrologic and vegetation data.

2008 Science Projects

MSA Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Database

Rockfish Status Report

Stormwater Runoff and
Toxicology Studies

LiDAR

Best Available Marine
Science for the Critical
Areas Ordinance Update

The MRC network is founded on the wisdom that it takes the entire community, working together, guided by a shared vision of stewardship, informed by sound science and grassroots knowledge of local resources to achieve success. Policies that emerge out of this shared vision will succeed.

There are no quick fixes here. Education and volunteerism, fostering a group of well informed, influential community leaders and building capacity in our academic, governmental and community organizations is the long term path the MRC has chosen to achieve this goal.



2008 Advisory Areas

Critical Areas Ordinance
Update

The San Juan Initiative

Northwest Straits
Commission

Puget Sound Partnership
Core Team

Salmon Recovery Project
Selections

Marine Managers
Workshop

Collaborative Efforts to Provide Effective Advice

In 2008, our members assumed leadership roles in several areas:

- Provided the best available marine science and served on the committee that is updating the County's critical areas ordinance.
- Guided the process that crafted recommendations for the San Juan Initiative
- Provided leadership on the Northwest Straits Commission for regional marine initiatives.
- Worked with a team to produce the San Juan Action Agenda for the Puget Sound Partnership
- Encouraged collaborative stewardship by hosting the fourth annual marine managers workshop bringing together local, academic, state, federal and tribal groups that have management responsibilities in the San Juan Islands.

Providing Advice on Current Issues and Concerns

The MRC also responds to concerns from the County and the San Juan community by providing information on stormwater management, eelgrass protection, desalinization plants, crab harvest management and other issues that affect the future of our marine resources.

"The San Juans are fortunate in having some of the best organizations in Puget Sound for protecting the marine environment. But, we're much more effective when we work together. It's outside the scope of most organizations to take the lead on coordination. The community relies on the MRC to play this role. With coordination we become more than the sum of our parts."

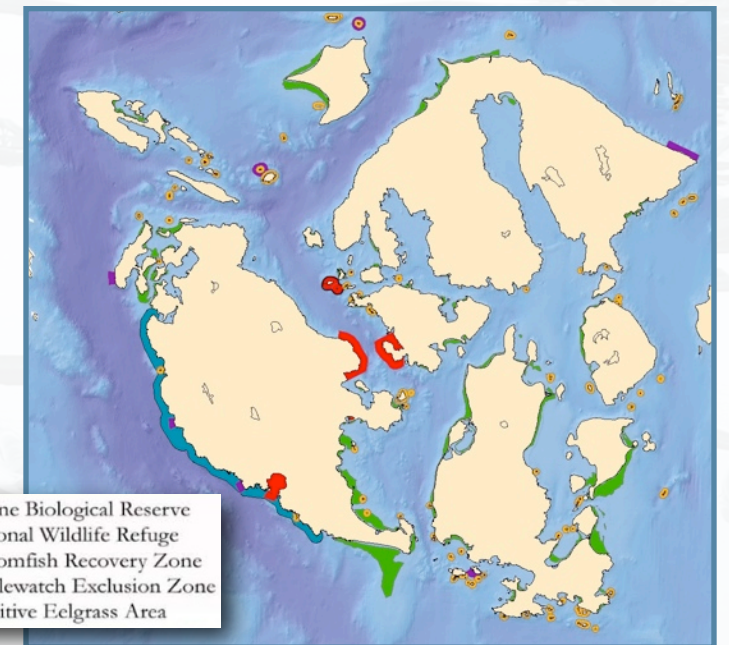
~ Kari Koski, Whale Museum Soundwatch Program

The San Juan County MSA



Long recognized as a biological treasure, the San Juan Islands have sites devoted to research, education, recreation and conservation. The unique marine ecosystem draws visitors from all over the world and is key to the islands' economy and quality of life. In 2004, the San Juan Board of County Commissioners created the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) and asked the MRC to work with scientists and community leaders to create a management plan that would achieve a healthy marine ecosystem in balance with human use and enjoyment.

The County Council adopted the San Juan Marine Stewardship Area plan in 2007. At community meetings held throughout the Islands, locals chose six protection strategies from the plan they felt were most important. In 2008, the MRC focused federal and state resources, provided coordination and launched programs to build local capacity for implementing these top strategies:



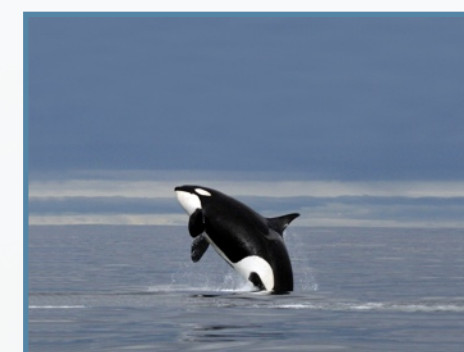
Foster a marine stewardship ethic in residents and visitors



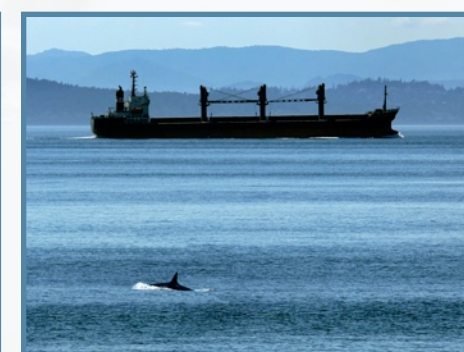
Manage upland and nearshore activities to reduce harm to marine habitat and water quality



Recover rockfish populations



Reduce bioaccumulative toxins in the marine environment



Reduce the risk of large oil spills to San Juan County waters



Preserve and manage public access to shorelines and marine views, coupled with a strong stewardship message and compatible behavior expectations