

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# January 6, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Stan Walsh, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting) **ABSENT:** Ed Halloran (conflicting meeting), Bill Larsen, Tim Lawrence (travel), Ruth Richards (travel), Elsa Schwartz (teaching conflict), Todd Zackey

**VISITORS:** Ginny Broadhurst, Dick Toft, Christine Goodwin, Ken Urstad, Joe Hillers, Debra Paros, Dawn Pucci, Peg Urstad, Keith Higman, Jill Johnson

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. Lori Clark introduced herself as the new Department of Natural Resources Manager, and will now be sitting at the table as DNR's ex-officio member.

**QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations **MINUTES:** Toledo noted a correction to the December 16 minutes from Sasha Horst on Joan Drinkwin's update from the NWSF, that the Initiative's strategic plan was formally adopted in September 2014. Walsh moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on December 16, 2014 with Toledo's correction. Rhodes seconded. The corrected minutes were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Correspondence will be covered under Letters of Support in Continuing Business.

### **RECOGNITION OF INCOMING AND OUTGOING MEMBERS:**

**Introduction of New Members (Toledo):** Toledo introduced the three new MRC members: Ed Adams, Elsa Schwartz, and Ruth Richards. Ed Adams is a PhD from Oak Harbor, with extensive experience in agriculture and natural resource management, and wishes to represent agriculture on the MRC. Elsa Schwartz and Ruth Richards have conflicts in January, but will be attending starting in February.

**Appreciation of Outgoing Members (Wood):** Wood thanked the outgoing members for their service on the MRC, highlighting a few of their many contributions: Dick Toft, who has represented the Navy and recreational fishing, participated in the Pigeon Guillemot study, and served on the executive committee; Joe Hillers, who has represented agriculture and managed the phytoremediation project, and upgraded the display; Ken Urstad, who has conducted eelgrass surveys using his boat, participated in Cornet Bay beach seining, and reported on creosote log

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removals; Christine Goodwin, who has helped prioritize future restoration projects. Wood also thanked Jill Johnson for her service on the committee, asking good questions, and helping the MRC move forward. Broadhurst thanked the outgoing members for their service, and acknowledged their contributions. Wood also welcomed Helen Price Johnson as the incoming ex-officio member of the Board of Island County Commissioners.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS:

**Election of Officers (Wood):** Wood reported that she and Rhodes have agreed to serve again as Chair and Vice-Chair. Wood welcomed further nominations. No further nominations were given. Corin will continue as a representative for NWS. Dickson moved to have the proposed candidates recommended. Walsh seconded. The motion passed.

Wood proposed the executive committee for this year be comprised of: Chair, Vice-Chair, NWS Representative, and one At-Large Member. Wood had asked Matlock to serve as the At-Large Member on the executive committee; Matlock agreed. Rhodes moved to establish the proposed executive committee. Walsh seconded. The motion passed.

**Letter of Support (Wood):** Toledo reported that Joan Drinkwin had sent a request to each MRC for a letter of support for funding from NOAA Marine Debris Prevention through Education and Outreach Grant Program. Toledo read the letter. Walsh requested that “non-target species” be changed to “target and non-target species”. The MRC voted unanimously to approve the letter with Walsh’s change. Wood will sign the letter and it will be sent to Drinkwin.

**Coordinator’s Update (Toledo):** Toledo noted that in addition to the newly appointed members, the following members have been reappointed: Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, and Ed Halloran. Toledo sent around a sheet for MRC members to note their volunteer hours, and reminded members who haven’t reported their hours for October – December to get that to her by Friday.

The educational speaker for next meeting will be Birdie Davenport from DNR who will be talking about their projects, focusing on the Smith and Minor Aquatic Reserve. Toledo encouraged members to invite interested friends and contacts.

Toledo announced that Sound Waters registration is open. The MRC will have a table there. Toledo will bring the display to the event, and requested that a couple volunteers help staff the table during the breaks between classes.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Eelgrass/Seining Monitoring (Urstad):** Urstad reported that seining starts February 27, and they will conduct two every month until June. Pucci and Toledo are working on permitting and reporting. Rhodes mentioned that Eric Beamer may be interested in looking at the data that have been collected over the years.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood):** Wood reported that they are conducting off-season population counts at many sites around the island to see where birds are and are not during the winter, as well as when they move into alternate and breeding plumage. The hot spot is the

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Keystone offshore structure; numbers from 30-81 birds have been reported. More activity is expected in March. They were also interested in seeing if there is a relation between the tide and the numbers of birds and delivery of fish. A volunteer has been crunching the data, and cannot find a relationship.

## **OTHER REPORTS:**

**Northwest Straits Initiative (Broadhurst/Corin):** Broadhurst thanked all who went to the conference and responded to survey. The NW Straits Commission (NWSC) has two new GPS units, and Caroline Gibson will be interested in connecting with the MRC to discuss kelp surveys. They would like to continue to work with the MRC to host a community forum on ocean acidification. NWSC would line up the speakers, and the MRC would help spread the word. It could also serve as an opportunity to educate the community about MRC at that time.

There is currently no time frame setup yet. Goodwin suggested working with Norma Smith's schedule, and working from there. Price Johnson offered to help any way she can.

The next NWSC meeting will be held on January 30<sup>th</sup> at the Pacific Rim Institute from 10am-3pm. MRC members are welcome and encouraged to drop in. There will be an MRC staff meeting on January 13<sup>th</sup> which Toledo will be attending. Broadhurst thanked Wood for giving a presentation on Pigeon Guillemot to the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program's Birds and Mammals work group.

Corin noted that Northwest Straits Initiative annual 2-day retreat will be held at Padilla Bay on March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Corin reminded all that any additions to the Strategic Plan need to be submitted by the end of the month. They held a conference call regarding the search for a new executive director. No decisions were made. They are looking into the option of hiring a head-hunter.

Corin reported that they have selected the engineering firm PND Engineers for work at Cornet Bay. They will be developing a scope of work in the next couple weeks. The working group includes Corin, representing the MRC, Lisa Kaufman representing the NWSF, and one or two representatives from State Parks which will hear the PND presentation.

Adams asked for clarification among the Northwest Straits Foundation, Commission, and Initiative. Broadhurst explained that the Initiative includes the Foundation, Commission, and all the MRCs. The Commission is a governmental organization. The Foundation is a non-profit organization. They have a separate board and separate executive directors, but work together to pursue the goals of the Initiative.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** No report given.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Rhodes/Clark):** Clark reported that there is a meeting coming up for NWSF and partners. The Island County contract is partially executed, and expected to be fully executed this week. Clark expects project implementation to be in full swing by March. The work will be conducted partly by a consultant, and partly by a County employee. The tasks for the County part will include coordinating with the MRC, as well as with the NWSF's project, and working with the planning department and real estate agents to get information distributed. The

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consultant would focus on the social marketing piece. The contract runs through September 2016.

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** No additional report.

**County Lead:** No additional report.

**County Commissioners:** Price Johnson reported that she will be one of the presenters at Sound Waters, and will be talking about County programs that impact Puget Sound. She noted that she sits on the Salmon Recovery Council for the Puget Sound Partnership, and is the Chair of the Local Implementing Organization for the Puget Sound Partnership. She also sits on the Coastal Caucus, which is a subgroup of the legislative steering committee of the Association of Counties. They meet during session and in off-season to talk about issues that impact counties with coastal waters. She will be in Olympia twice a month, and if there are issues or bills being tracked, she is happy to setup appointments with key legislators. She plans to report back to the Board of Island County Commissions on a monthly basis about what's going on at the MRC.

Wood noted that the MRC can provide science background for issues, because the MRC is an advisory committee to the County Commissioners. Corin noted that it is most appropriate for Price Johnson to make the request, in order for the MRC to respond. Rhodes noted that she previously gave a presentation to the group about aquaculture net pens in Washington State, and seemed to be an effective way to respond to requests by the Commissioners for objective information.

Goodwin asked for an update on net pens and approval of the County Shoreline Management update by Department of Ecology. Price Johnson reported that there has been no movement. Wood noted that it might be helpful to have Rhodes give her net pens presentation again. Clark suggested they could include the Planning Department to increase awareness.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Pucci reported that she has been working on adding projects to Habitat Work Schedule, which is an online tool for tracking projects. She has added MRC projects, and will be adding LIO projects. In July, they will have a meeting to look at all the work that is going on to strategize to see where we can collaborate with funding sources.

Goodwin suggested that the MRC may want to take on monitoring purple varnish clams in Holmes Harbor, as well as educational outreach, as the shift in dominance from manila clams to purple varnish clams may happen more quickly than expected. She suggested putting forth the idea that clammers be allowed to destroy the varnish clams. There is some evidence that purple varnish clams can accumulate and retain higher levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning toxins than manila clams.

Clark reported that WDFW came to present to the Board, and will be presenting at the February 3<sup>rd</sup> joint MRC/WRAC meeting, and they are very transparent about the problem of the manila clams being displaced by the purple varnish clam. They are doing a pilot study to find out why, are doing a seeding, and are conducting education and outreach. Clark has asked the Oak Harbor

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High School Broadcast team to video the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, so it can be made available online. Dickson suggested that the MRC's involvement with the issue could be to help with signage.

Rhodes asked for clarification from Broadhurst on whether the ocean acidification forum will address the larger problem of OA, or be focused on Puget Sound. While modeling studies have shown that marine influence in Puget Sound is very strong, the strong drop in pH from summer to autumn suggests there is a significant biological component to ocean acidification in Puget Sound. Broadhurst responded that they will work with the local MRC on what they want, and suggested it would be most effective to tell the larger story, then bring it down to the local level. The goal is to increase general understanding of ocean acidification and give people action ideas for addressing the issue.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:08pm.

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# January 20, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Anna Toledo, MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lenny Corin (travel), Bill Larsen, Ruth Richards (travel), Elsa Schwartz (teaching conflict), Stan Walsh (conflict), Frances Wood (conflict), Todd Zackey, Helen Price Johnson Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting)

**VISITORS:** Dawn Pucci, Birdie Davenport, Debra Paros, Joe Hillers, Sarah Schmidt, Rick Baker, Barbara Bennett, Suzanna Stoike

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was not declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. **MINUTES:** The minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on January 6, 2015 could not be approved as a quorum was not declared. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence received.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: STEWARDSHIP FOR THE SMITH AND MINOR AQUATIC RESERVE**

Powerpoint presentation is available.

Rhodes introduced Birdie Davenport, Aquatic Reserve Manager for Washington State Department of Natural Resources and Rick Baker, Executive Director of Whidbey Watershed Stewards.

Davenport reviewed the role of DNR and the Aquatic Resources Division. The Smith and Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve management actions include supporting MRC intertidal sampling and eelgrass mapping efforts, researching the effects of the recreational harvest of kelp and other macro-algae, partnering with efforts of local environmental education stewards, and supporting signage efforts. Davenport sees the MRC being able to help with the kelp outreach and monitoring. They have also been supporting derelict gear removal, Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (COASST) surveys, and kelp trawl surveys.

Baker reported that they conducted forage fish sampling for three years and did not find many eggs, so they decided to shift focus and work on a kelp harvesting project, to see what effect the harvesting is having on the habitat. Baker met with Dickson and mapped out a simple project to

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answer the question: what percentage of algae are harvesters removing? The goal is to gather some baseline data by finding out how many people are harvesting and how much algae is being removed from the beach. Harvesting occurs three months out of the year – May, June, and July – at low tides.

Davenport distributed informational flyers on kelp harvesting that they are looking into updating. Lawrence asked what unsustainable practices have been going on. Dickson replied that the harvesters are taking the whole plant, so it cannot regrow, which is unsustainable and against the law.

Halloran asked if there were statistical data on commercial harvesting. Baker responded that there is no commercial harvesting permitted in the Sound, and they are not sure how big the individual harvesting impact is, which is part of why they are interested in getting some baseline data.

Halloran asked if the reduction in kelp is a natural phenomenon. Dickson replied that it is hard to know, as kelp beds change. Halloran noted that this is why it would be important to gather data to see what the change is from year to year. Davenport noted that bull kelp has shown a marked reduction in area.

Dickson suggested that the brochure should be updated and distributed to every licensing agent in the state. Most people he has encountered know they need to have a license, but don't know what the harvesting limits are. Davenport mentioned that she would like to have a stewardship program to have people out educating the harvesters. Baker suggested that having a tripod with a scale on the beach, and asking harvesters to help with the monitoring program by weighing their buckets could also open up discussion about proper harvesting.

Rhodes noted that, thinking strategically, signage has been a productive part of MRC, and this is something the MRC could think about incorporating into the next grant cycle. Davenport mentioned that they would also like to be invited to any MRC events, to help with their outreach.

Baker would like to hold a volunteer training in late April. Sarah Schmidt asked for clarification on how the scientific protocol of data gathering will be developed. Dickson replied that Caroline Gibson has been in touch with several professionals from around the Sound to form the Salish Sea International Kelp Alliance. They will be organizing a workshop in spring to determine what the protocol needs to be. There will be at least one member representing every MRC at the workshop.

Barbara Bennett noted that if they would like to recruit volunteers through Beach Watchers, they would need to have a conversation ahead of time about how to classify the project and make sure they have time to vet it through their system. Baker noted that they will be putting together a plan in the next few weeks.

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reported that she attended the MRC staff meeting in Padilla Bay. The meeting was a helpful time to review grant requirements and logistics, share best practices, and hear about what the other MRCs are doing. The Northwest Straits

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Commission (NWSC) is always interested in news articles and photos. Toledo encouraged members to take photos while they are out in the field and submit them to her.

Toledo informed that Scott Chase's agreement to organize the Oil Spill Preparedness Workshop had ended, so she will finish coordinating the logistical details with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF).

Toledo reminded any interested members to register for Sound Waters. Registration closes January 31<sup>st</sup>, and classes fill up quickly. Debra Paros commented that she is helping to put together a 3D art project commemorating the 20 years of Sound Waters, and encouraged people to visit it while at Sound Waters.

Toledo noted that she will be going out of town, and they can contact Lori Clark for any questions in the meantime. She will not be at the next meeting, which is the joint MRC/WRAC meeting. That meeting will be held at the regular MRC meeting time and place.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring (Matlock)** – Matlock reported that he is working with Toledo on a list of equipment to be bought with the budgeted money. They are also working on contracting Dan Penttila to help develop a monitoring plan. Monitoring cannot start until it is determined where monitoring should occur.

Matlock reported that he received a message from Caroline Gibson that they are working with WDFW to develop a comprehensive monitoring plan for surf smelt and sand lance. Gibson had reported that over 20,000 points had been identified in the Northwest Straits counties. Matlock provided Gibson with some feedback in regards to make the sampling simpler and less extensive, as practically they can only expect to monitor a few spots.

Rhodes asked if Cornet Bay will be included in the monitoring plan, as it would be good to maintain continuity of sampling at Cornet Bay. Matlock confirmed that one of the points he will be working on with Dan Penttila is to include monitoring at Cornet Bay in the plan.

Adams inquired about the forage fish sampling process. Matlock explained that they scrape beach sand, run it through a set of soil sieves, and then the eggs are visible with the naked eye. Matlock invited anyone who is interested in going out on a forage fish spawning trip, to let him know.

**Estuary Seining** – Rhodes reminded all that seining starts in February.

**Cornet Bay Restoration** – No updates.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Kelp Monitoring Report (Dickson)** – Dickson reported that he has agreed to serve on the Kelp Alliance. They plan to convene a workshop sometime in mid-spring to make sure everyone is using the same protocols. The work will run from July to September, with one monitoring date per month. The plan is to identify the kelp beds and to measure the square area of the chosen kelp bed once a month during the height of the growing season. This needs to be done at high



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tide so the kelp is floating. He will be looking for volunteers, and either interested volunteers with kayaks or people who can loan kayaks. Volunteers will work in pairs, and there needs to be at least one pair per county. They will use GPS units that the NWSC will supply. The process will be to have the volunteers circumnavigate the chosen kelp bed 2-3 times, and return to measure the same kelp bed each month for 3 months. They may also be able to count the bulbs in the area.

**Northwest Straits Initiative** – Toledo reported that the NWSC is planning two more ocean acidification forums, one to be held in Island County, and one in Skagit. They would like to coordinate with the MRCs. Toledo noted that Holly is staffing the PSEMP Forage Fish and Food Webs workgroup, and will give update at next Commission meeting, which will be held at the Pacific Rim Institute on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Any MRC members are welcome to attend for part or all of the meeting.

Toledo reported that she and Lori Clark met with Lisa Kaufman about the Shoreline Armoring Reduction Project. The NWSF will be organizing two landowner workshops in Island County – one in the spring and one in the fall. April 18<sup>th</sup> is the proposed spring date. They would like the MRC to be involved by forming a steering committee to help identify and prioritize target areas and communities. The workshops can also serve as an opportunity for the MRC to present itself and its work to the community.

**Salmon TAG (Matlock / Zackey)** – Matlock reported that they are going into a new grant round for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funding, and project sponsors that are going to be submitting proposals have been asked to send a letter of intent ahead of time. Money has been returned from projects that have closed, including Dugualla Heights. The Waterman project under the sponsorship of Whidbey Camano Land Trust got a million dollar grant approved from WDFW to buy the property. The project was very highly regarded by the TAG.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report given.

**County Lead:** No report given.

**County Commissioners:** No report given.

## COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:

Debra Paros inquired regarding the Waterman project if the part of the beach where there was creosote will be cleaned up. Matlock replied that there is money lined up for that removal. Paros also stated that Matlock's concern about forage fish sampling protocols gave her the impression that the protocols needed to be "dumbed down". Matlock explained that he does not wish to dumb down anything, but rather to simplify procedures, as there are often different groups of volunteers each time, and he is concerned about consistency. He stated that he does not underestimate the skills and knowledge of the volunteers involved, but there has to be a process that is easy to implement.

Baker noted that he is also on the Salmon TAG and the Waterman project is a great accomplishment.

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**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:33.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# February 3, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Helen Price Johnson Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), **ABSENT:** Bill Larsen, Tim Lawrence, Stan Walsh, Frances Wood (travel), Todd Zackey, Anna Toledo, MRC Coordinator (travel)

**VISITORS:** Dick Toft, Suzanna Stoike, Dawn Pucci, Keith Higman, Maribeth Crandell, Jill Wood, Rick Baker, Christine Goodwin, Debra Paros, Bob Schoening, Camille Speck, Liz Maier, Heather Roberts, Robert Lindquist, Linda Kast Meehan, Barbara Bennett, Barbara Brock, Carol Gillespie, Gary Ehrenfeld, John Lovie, Bob Boehm, Al Williams, Russ Holmes, Dave Thomas, Don Lee, Julius Budos, Grant Heiken

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. **MINUTES:** Dickson moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meetings held on January 6, 2015 and January 20, 2015. Corin seconded. The minutes from both meetings were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Pucci reported that correspondence was received from Island County Planning regarding net pens. Rhodes responded that this will be discussed later as not to disrupt the presentation.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION & GROUP DISCUSSION: SOUTH HOLMES HARBOR SHELLFISH HARVESTING**

Powerpoint presentation is available.

Clark introduced Camille Speck, Fish & Wildlife Biologist, Puget Sound Shellfish Unit with the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife and Liz Maier, Recreational Shellfish Lead with the Department of Health.

Speck explained that her core function is to estimate sport harvest of clams and oysters and estimate biomass. Of the available biomass, there are set harvest rates that are set out in their management plan. For manila clams, this rate is 33% of the legal-sized stock, and 25% for native littlenecks. The quotas and seasons are based on the manila and native littleneck populations.

Recreational efforts are estimated through fly-overs, by counting harvesters during low tide over a span of around 50 flights per year. Harvesters are also interviewed as they are leaving the

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beach to gather information on weight and types of clams harvested. In Puget Sound Bivalve Region 4, WDFW as well as the Swinomish Tribal Community, Tulalip Tribes, and Upper Skagit Tribes conduct these surveys. Beach surveys are also conducted to gather information on the density of clams per square foot, the size frequency distribution, and the weight of the clams.

At Freeland County Park, the manila clam biomass was measured in 2014 and was found to have dropped to about a 1/3 of the manila biomass surveyed in 2008. It is unclear what has caused this drop. There was an increase in varnish clams, but it does not appear to have been the cause in the manila drop, as the area that is barren of manila clams is also barren of varnish clams. They found no signs of harvest since 2008 and no sign of massive die-off. They will be looking at this every year to get a better idea of what's going on.

In 2006, the sport season was closed at Freeland County Park due to poor water quality. For 2015, the proposed reopening of the clamming season is from April 1 through May 15.

Historically, they have seeded with manilas in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2004. This is an option that could be used again, but they are hesitant to implement an aggressive seeding program while they are unsure why the manilas have shown such a decrease. The current plan is to do some small test spots of about 1 acre, by planting in enclosures that will remain undisturbed during the summer feeding period, and then go back in to test the survival rate the following spring.

Maier spoke on her role with the Recreational Shellfish Program at the Department of Health. She coordinates with the biotoxin program, which has a monitoring program for various types of marine biotoxins. They have mussel cages around Puget Sound, and samplers collect shellfish tissue for testing at their Public Health Lab. In Holmes Harbor, they have gotten help from the local health department to work with volunteers to sample in Freeland County Park starting at the end of April/early May and continuing through the summertime.

Butter clams and varnish clams tend to retain toxins for longer, so they may put up warning signs on the beach or implement closures for just those two species. Mussels are used as an early indicator as they are the fastest in taking up the toxins. When that is observed, they will conduct a recreational shellfish closure for all species of filter-feeding shellfish, and will continue to monitor the toxin levels in the butter and varnish clams to determine when those are safe to eat. There have not been any recent toxin issues in Island County, though there have been blooms in the past. There is a map on their website, which is updated at least daily, to show where the closures are: <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/maps/biotoxin/biotoxin.html>

Maier noted that in addition to monitoring biotoxins, they also regulate the safety of shellfish growing, both commercial as well as recreational. They classify shellfish growing areas and recreational beaches based on water quality using fecal coliform indicator bacteria. They also conduct shoreline surveys to identify potential sources of pollution to shellfish beds, and take into account tides and currents, and point sources such as marinas and waste water treatment plants. In the winter of 2005/2006 they conducted a shoreline survey in Holmes Harbor and detected high bacteria counts in some freshwater drainage that came out in South Holmes Harbor and Freeland County Park. Because of those elevated counts, they downgraded the recreational shellfish beach from open to closed. The commercial growing area was classified as prohibited. That triggered the formation of a shellfish protection district, and a lot of work has been done in

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the watershed in reaching out to septic system owners, working on farm plans, and educating the community about picking up pet waste. Over time the water quality has improved, and this past December their office upgraded Freeland County Park's classification and the surrounding shellfish growing area to conditionally open/approved. In this instance, the conditions are a seasonal closure in the months of June, July, and August. This is due to the marine water quality. The Washington BEACH Program monitors a different fecal indicator: enterococci. They saw elevated levels in the nearshore environment in the summertime. The Department of Health worked with Island County and the BEACH Program to conduct a study in 2012 and 2013, collecting about a year's worth of data in the nearshore at Freeland County Park on enterococci and fecal coliform, and found elevated bacteria in the summertime, which is the rationale for having a seasonal closure during the summer months.

Speck explained that the Department of Fish and Wildlife is able to close beaches and make it a ticketable offense to harvest there. In contrast, the Department of Health closures are harvest advisories, so someone can harvest at their own risk. The two organizations partner together, and in 2007, DFW closed the Freeland County Park at the request of the Department of Health.

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

**Net Pens:** Rhodes reported that the MRC had received correspondence from Brad Johnson at Island County Planning in regards to net pens. The Island County Department of Planning and Community Development were giving a presentation to the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) on the update to the Shoreline Master Program and where it stands with the Department of Ecology. It was recommended to him that he get involvement from the Department of Natural Resources and the MRC to get some feedback and additional information to take back to the BICC.

Rhodes expressed concern that there is not a process in place within the MRC to provide advice to the Commissioners or the Planning Department. However, she is comfortable with the idea of the MRC conducting a literature search to provide scientific information on both sides of the issue.

Price Johnson noted that Jefferson County changed their ordinance to allow for conditional use permits. Whatcom and Kitsap Counties' plans were approved with a ban, but Department of Ecology stated that no one else can be approved with a ban, and the bans in those counties will be corrected in the next update.

Barbara Bennett explained that the Department of Ecology has a strong legal ladder of regulations that create the boundaries that they're working within. The Shoreline Management Act is an initiative applied to Washington State which decided to allow localities to define the uses of their marine resources. In addition to that, the Department of Ecology is charged to protect the natural resources of the marine environment and also to encourage water-based uses. Aquaculture is defined as a preferred water-based use. Bennett believes there may be a federal mandate in this process that could be appealed to as a way to raise the discussion beyond the regulatory applications in the state.

Corin noted that he testified before the BICC two years ago, addressing a lot of the same issues. He stated that raising finfish is not necessarily a water-dependent activity, as there are examples

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of raising finfish upland very successfully. He stated that Jefferson County had taken this stance, but doesn't know how their plan ended up. In Alaska, aquaculture is banned, but mariculture is promoted, so no finfish are raised in the waters of Alaska.

Price Johnson acknowledged that it may be difficult for the MRC to give answers to those questions which do not ask for quantifiable data; however it would be helpful if the MRC could do research on those aspects that are quantifiable.

Pucci stated that Brad Johnson would like to go before the BICC on February 18<sup>th</sup> with an update on what the MRC will do, such as create a white paper, but does not need an answer to all the questions by that time.

Halloran stated that given the makeup of the committee and the nature of the questions, some of which ask for opinions, the executive committee of the MRC should consolidate opinions into one response, rather than sending off several individual opinions.

Bennett noted that it is possible for the MRC to speak regarding a policy matter, as well as provide scientific data.

Price Johnson stated that this was the one issue in the Shoreline update where there was no controversy. Everyone who spoke to this issue wanted it to be banned outright.

Rhodes noted that in her net pens presentation, one of her slides shows a website from Jack Rensel, which displays a modeling software to site net pens. She wondered if a conditional use permit could be setup to use a couple different modeling softwares to vet a potential location.

Adams suggested that Corin's testimony and Rhodes's presentation could be a good basis to start answering Brad Johnson's question, and also posed the question of whether anything new has come out to add to the discussion.

Pucci suggested that she will put together a framework of topics, which she will forward to the MRC for them to fill in the gaps with information and citations. Rhodes stated that it would be good to have at least a month. Price Johnson stated that what Brad Johnson is looking for is whether the MRC would like to take this on, and what that would look like. The MRC would then have time to research this at their own pace. Price Johnson sees this as an opportunity for the MRC to help the BICC understand the science of this important marine issue in order to make good policy.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:30.

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# February 17, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Helen Price Johnson Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo, MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lenny Corin (travel), Stan Walsh (conflict), Frances Wood (travel), Todd Zackey

**VISITORS:** Dawn Pucci, Jim Somers, Matt Zupich

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. Matlock moved to approve the agenda. Adams seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Dickson moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on February 3, 2015. Halloran seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence received.

### **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

**Net Pens (Pucci / Rhodes):** Rhodes invited an open discussion about how best to move forward on providing information about net pens to the County Commissioners. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was tasked along with the MRC to put together an approach to provide advice to the Planning Department and the Commissioners.

Price Johnson stated that within the legislative record they need to build a case around the science. There was substantial input from the public, but the scientific references were not adopted by the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) as part of the legislative record for their decision. There is now a window of opportunity to put forward a response to the issues that the Department of Ecology has raised and take formal action to adopt a bibliography or other information in respect to the scientific aspect.

Clark added that the request came from Brad Johnson, so the MRC can present the information to DNR, who will pass it along to Brad, and he will present that to the Commissioners.

Rhodes stated that it is important to present both sides of the argument. There is a lot of literature that emphasizes the impact of net pens on the ecosystem, but it is also important to present the side that indicates how the industry has improved its practices and how the impacts can be reduced.

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Price Johnson brought up another suggestion, that Island County has a number of physical and geographic constraints, and this could be a concrete way to address the issue. For example, considering areas of commercial and recreational fishing interests.

Halloran expressed concern that a report that is just a compilation of pros and cons does not show the person reading the report what the Island County's position is.

Rhodes clarified that it is possible to take a position, but it is important to show that you have considered both sides. She is asking for a balanced literature search.

Pucci noted that there are two different steps. First, the MRC should present a balanced literature search to Planning, which they can take to the Commissioners. Then once the Commissioners make a decision, they can come back to the MRC if they so choose, and ask for justification on the decision.

Adams stated that the MRC can give information on where the kelp beds, eelgrass beds, and other key areas are. It would also be good to know what the parameters are for siting a net pen.

Rhodes stated that the MRC can present what is known about siting, and what is known about the Island, and make some inferences about which areas may be appropriate or inappropriate.

Adams noted that there is a book that is referenced in the Department of Ecology's documentation about siting net pens, which lists a few example locations which would be appropriate or inappropriate for siting: *The Recommended Interim Siting Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Net-Pen Culture in Puget Sound*:  
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/8705.pdf>

Pucci noted that the Planning Department needs to have a plan to be able to present to the BICC about how to address this issue. It is not necessary to have a bibliography for tomorrow's work session, but Brad would like to know if that is the direction the MRC is planning to take. Brad likely already has a good grasp on the pros and cons that have been presented during the public comment. It would be helpful to fill in the gaps with a bibliography of recent updates.

Price Johnson noted that the Department of Ecology's comments on the prohibition were that they wanted it deleted because it is without adequate rationale. The BICC is trying to determine what would constitute adequate rationale. The MRC could produce a map of eelgrass beds, kelp beds, boat launches, state parks, and other sensitive areas, then look at the remaining areas and see if there are reasons to allow or disallow net pens in those areas.

Rhodes stated that the difficult aspect is that the Department of Ecology's primary criterion for introducing an activity is that it does not reduce ecological function, which is difficult to measure.

Price Johnson noted that the BICC has to address all the priorities of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP), including public access and recreation.



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Matlock noted that there is an aesthetic component to net pens as well, including auditory impacts, since they run generators 24 hours/day. Jim Somers confirmed that there is an aesthetic and noise issue which he has noted from the work he has done in Cypress Island and Secret Harbor.

Halloran stated that it might be good to take a map and start circling those areas that don't meet the criteria for siting a pen, which would make a strong case graphically, and then supplement that with a written explanation on the reasons. It might end up showing that there aren't many good places in Island County to site net pens.

Price Johnson stated that she really appreciates the support of the MRC in gathering all this information, and sees the potential for the MRC to provide this type of balanced scientific research for future issues as well. She stated that the SMP and related documents are available online: <http://www.islandcounty.net/planning/shorelines.htm>, including maps showing shore designations.

Rhodes stated that it would be important to link the scientific information with what is known specifically about Island County's marine resources, and how they need to be protected, including restoration projects. She stated that it would be good to take a topical approach to the document the MRC presents to the Planning Department. Rhodes called for a motion to assemble a document to give the planning department.

Adams moved that the MRC prepare a bibliography of updated citations for the Department of Natural Resources and a map or series of maps containing as up-to-date information as we have on areas that would cause potential conflicts for siting finfish net pens in Island County.

Schwartz stated that the first step is to circle the areas of potential conflict and provide justifications for the conflict, see what's left, and then provide additional information on those remaining areas.

Rhodes amended Adams' motion: The MRC will assemble an advisory document for DNR in their effort to inform the Department of Planning and the Board of Island County Commissioners regarding the net pen prohibition in the Shoreline Management Plan. Schwartz seconded.

Dickson stated that for additional reference, there is a 2012 book entitled *Responsible Marine Aquaculture*. In that book there is a paper entitled "*Environmental Effects Associated with Marine Netpen Waste with Emphasis on Salmon Farming in the Pacific Northwest*". The paper reviews all the scientific evidence against net pens in this part of Puget Sound.

Schwartz handed out a copy of the handouts that NOAA and Department of Ecology provided at their Sound Waters presentation, in an effort to provide a balanced presentation.

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Richards noted that it seems like in the Shoreline Management Act, the priorities are often incompatible. Any document that the MRC produces has to address all the priorities, not just the hard science.

Rhodes stated that she envisions a document with topics where you could plug in the different priorities.

Rhodes called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Rhodes offered to start drafting the framework for the document. Toledo will get a file sharing system setup, and will let the Planning Department know that the MRC will be creating this document.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reminded everyone about the Oil Spill Preparedness workshop which will be held on Thursday, February 26 from 1:00pm - 4:00pm at the Coupeville Rec Hall. All MRC members are invited to attend.

Toledo also reminded all of a Noxious Weed Coordination Meeting to be held on Thursday, February 19, from 10:00am - 12:00pm. Information was sent out via email. The location has been changed to the Pacific Rim Institute. All are invited to attend, and should RSVP to Janet Stein.

Toledo distributed an updated contact list of all MRC members. Toledo informed that they held a new member orientation earlier in the day, and reminded all that anyone who has not filled out volunteer forms should do so.

Toledo informed that Caroline Gibson will be presenting at the March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, giving an update on kelp and forage fish. Toledo distributed copies of the MRC grant timeline, and noted that they will start talking about workplan development at upcoming meetings.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Eelgrass/Seining Monitoring:** Toledo reported that Pucci, in coordination with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) and Anna Kagley from NOAA Fisheries held a volunteer training for beach seining held on Friday. 50 people from 3 counties received training. The first seining for data will be held on Friday, February 27 at 11am at Cornet Bay.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey:** Richards reported that the monthly winter monitoring has shown that there are 3 sites where the birds are starting to show up: Double Bluff, Shore Meadows, and east of the Coupeville treatment plant.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Initiative:** Toledo reported that the Northwest Straits Initiative (NWSI) retreat is scheduled for March 12-13. The Northwest Straits Commission's External Relations Committee is working to make sure that the county commissioners are informed about the work the MRC is doing, and understand the MRC's relationship to the NWSI.

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The Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) has formed a new Science Advisory Committee which will help review the proposed MRC projects.

The NWSI Strategic Plan was adopted. MRCs are encouraged to review the plan throughout the year and develop future projects aligned with the goals laid out in the Strategic Plan.

Adams reported that he attended the NWSC meeting, and is interested in taking a more active role with the NWSC. Toledo will help make sure that process is formalized.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** Barbara Bennett reported that there were 635 registrants at Sound Waters, and about 70 presenters. The feedback has been very positive. Bennett commended Brad Johnson of the Island County Planning Department for his great job talking about the SMP. The Beach Watcher training is going to start in mid-March. They have 15 applicants from Whidbey and 2 from Camano.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Clark/Toledo):** Clark reminded members that there are two shoreline armoring grants. One is with the NWSF, and is called Shoreline Armoring Reduction Project (SHARP). SHARP is focused on removing armoring, and Toledo is subcontracted on that grant. Island County DNR has a complementary grant from the same funding source to prevent armoring. Island County's grant is called Incentives to Reduce Armor in Island County, and the funding period goes through Sept 2016. Toledo will be managing the project for the MRC. The MRC's role would largely be with the education and outreach component, as well as following the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP) discussions on shoreline armoring. The MRC may also be able to assist by reviewing applications for shoreline technical site visits.

Clark's grant includes a social marketing campaign, called Shore Friendly, which will focus on making softshore protection the social norm. The grant is split into two segments: Toledo's role and coordination with the MRC, and a consultant who will be hired for social marketing pieces. The financial incentives include free technical site visits and free permitting for softshore permits.

Another component is educating real estate agents to get them aware of what options are available, so they can inform new residents. There will also be trainings for contractors who install bulkheads. Island County cannot promote any particular contractors, but can list whether a contractor has received the training. There will also be a component with the Planning Department to work on coming up with a streamlined permitting process.

Toledo reported that the NWSF's SHARP landowner workshop in Island County is scheduled for April 18. The MRC's involvement will include forming a steering committee to help identify landowners to target. Rhodes has been involved on the project, and Toledo invited any other interested members to contact her.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

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**County Lead:** Clark reported that they have hired a new staff member, Matt Zupich, who will be doing water quality monitoring.

**County Commissioners:** Price Johnson reported that the County is going through a Comprehensive Plan update process. They have a website and are soliciting input: <http://islandcounty2036.org/>. Price Johnson urged all to check it out and share with friends and neighbors. The County took action this morning to adopt an interim control ordinance for critical areas and agricultural lands. The public hearing for that will be March 24<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in Commissioner's Hearing Room. The ordinance is available online, and anyone can submit comments at any time to the BICC.

## **COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:**

Pucci reported that she received letters of intent for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board process, and 7 projects have been nominated.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:20pm.

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# March 3, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, John Carr, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Curt Gordon, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Stan Walsh, Helen Price Johnson Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo, MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Elsa Schwartz (work conflict), Todd Zackey

**VISITORS:** Rick Baker, Barbara Bennett, Debra Paros

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. John Carr was presented as the new representative from the Port of Coupeville. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. Rhodes moved to approve the agenda. Dickson seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Richards requested the following corrections to the agenda: On the second page, in the 8<sup>th</sup> paragraph, change “he” to “Brad” and “ruing” to “during”. Dickson moved to approve the corrected minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on February 17, 2015. Adams seconded. The minutes as corrected were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence received.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: NEARSHORE HABITAT RECOVERY: PROGRESS IN 2015:**

PowerPoint presentation is available.

Wood introduced Caroline Gibson, Marine Program Manager for the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC). Gibson stated that the goal of her presentation is to give an update on monitoring nearshore habitats. She had just attended a symposium in Nanaimo on nearshore habitat.

All seven MRCs have prioritized habitat protection, eelgrass and kelp monitoring, and forage fish monitoring. The goals that the NWSC has identified for forage fish include: expanding the linear extent of beaches surveyed and getting the data into the state and county systems.

The Forage Fish and Food Webs Work Group was established 2 years ago. It is run by Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP), and is 1 of 12 technical working groups that they established for figuring out ecosystem monitoring plans. Gibson staffed the work group for the first year. Holly Faulstich with the NWSC took over coordination of the workgroup, so Gibson now represents the NWSC in the work group. Meetings are open to anyone interested.

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This spring the NWSC is planning to conduct forage fish training workshops in Skagit and Island counties, most likely in late April to mid-May. The training would be about 4.5 hours, and is open first to MRC members, and then to other interested volunteers.

The American Fisheries Society Symposium will be held this year in Portland, Oregon in August. Gibson will be co-chairing a day-long symposium on forage fish. The deadline for abstracts is March 13<sup>th</sup>. Presentations and posters will be accepted.

As a legislative update, companion bills were introduced through Senators Rolfes and Ranker which would mandate a comprehensive Sound-wide survey of spawning of forage fish by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). The other piece of the bill would require a license for the recreational harvest of smelt.

The NWSC has worked with DFW to develop a comprehensive forage fish monitoring plan. All 7 counties have been mapped, including sites that were not previous included, where Dan Pentilla and MRC members have found eggs. The monitoring plan timeframe allows for about 1.5 years to conduct intense surveys. Gibson noted that Matlock had pointed out that the methodology that DFW has developed is more rigorous than the methodology the volunteers have been using. Once the comprehensive Sound-wide survey is complete, the plan is to develop a habitat suitability model, which would be used to help protect beaches.

Every restoration project that is done by an MRC includes a monitoring plan for pre and post restoration.

In 2011, the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) adopted a goal of a 20% increase in the extent of eelgrass by 2020. Gibson and Ginny Broadhurst served as alternates on a state recovery team for eelgrass to represent the Northwest Straits Initiative (NWSI). This group was put together last May by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and PSP to address the goal of a 20% increase in the extent of eelgrass. The group identified 5 goals:

- Conserve existing eelgrass habitats
- Reduce environmental stressors to support natural expansion
- Restore and enhance degraded or declining eelgrass beds
- Identify eelgrass research priorities
- Expand outreach and education

At the symposium in Nanaimo, Gibson highlighted the work that the Island and Jefferson MRCs have done on eelgrass monitoring. The Jefferson MRC included an ad about their eelgrass project to run in their local movie theater.

The symposium was held by the Seagrass Conservation Working Group, whose mission is “conserving and restoring the ecological integrity of seagrass and other nearshore ecosystems by promoting research, inventories, communication and partnerships.” The working group consists of people who are working in some way on seagrass in British Columbia. Their website is: [www.seagrassconservation.org](http://www.seagrassconservation.org).

Some of the projects that were highlighted at the Nanaimo symposium included:

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- Sea star wasting: There are places where the sea star population has been wiped out and the urchin population has boomed, since sea stars eat urchins. Urchins eat kelp, and once they run out of kelp, they turn to eelgrass beds.
- Upland land use: An oceanographer, Maycira Costa, in British Columbia is using satellite imagery for monitoring. She is using historical data in BC from 1972 forward on upland land development in places where there has been catastrophic loss of eelgrass.
- Disaster preparedness: It is important to monitor beforehand, so you can know how much has been lost in the event of an oil spill or other disaster.

The NWSC wants to bring kelp to the same level of attention as eelgrass in Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Restoration Fund is the only group doing kelp restoration work. Currently, it is not understood why there is a loss of kelp in Puget Sound, so it is important to do a lot of monitoring, information gathering, and public outreach at the moment. There are many ways for the MRCs to get involved, including dive surveys, satellite surveys, boat surveys, and monitoring turbidity.

The bulk of the loss of bull kelp has been in the south Sound. The bull kelp around Whidbey has been fairly stable.

Tom Mumford, in collaboration with the Puget Sound Partnership, developed a technical report on kelp and eelgrass in Puget Sound, available here:

[http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical\\_papers/kelp.pdf](http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical_papers/kelp.pdf)

The NWSC hosted an intern, Emily Bishop, over the summer to help develop a new bull kelp surveying protocol. Bishop worked with Dickson and other MRC members to develop a monitoring protocol.

The Salish Sea Kelp Alliance is a group of scientists and others who are supporting citizen science for monitoring kelp populations in British Columbia and Washington. All MRCs have representation on the Alliance. The NWSC has reinstated a Science Advisory Committee. Ron Thom and Tom Mumford are on the committee and can advise MRCs and review proposals.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS:

**Net Pens (Rhodes):** Rhodes reported that Toledo setup a Google Drive to share resources to contribute to the netpen discussion. Rhodes started an outline based on the 1987 interim guidelines for netpen siting. The goal is to put together a bibliography to give to the Department of Natural Resources, who will take that information to the Planning Department, who will in turn advise the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) on how to approach the netpen prohibition in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP).

The strategy is to find documentation that is specific for Island County that identifies areas, habitats, or species that may be considered part of the Department of Ecology's siting information. There are several resources available, including an interactive map by WDFW, which Rhodes has been using to locate relevant information. Pucci is working on a map to accompany the outline and bibliography Rhodes is developing.

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Corin asked if the MRC will be providing any information on recreational uses or aesthetics. Clark noted that it is important to represent those aspects, and the Planning Department may have the ability to add that.

Price Johnson asked if the recreational and commercial fishing locations will be included. Rhodes responded that there are not many commercial fishing locations, but there are some tribal areas. Walsh stated that the entire waters of Whidbey Island are within usual and custom fishing grounds. He does not recommend relying on the tribe's response to a netpen proposal, as that would be a separate response from Island County's process.

Adams noted that Rhodes's outline is based on 1987 guidelines, and the guidance allows for more up-to-date studies. For instance, the original study mentioned a buffer of 300 feet, while further studies have suggested that 300 meters is appropriate. Rhodes stated that the MRC should identify critical or susceptible areas, not necessarily all the distances. Clark noted that buffer areas can be depicted on the map.

Rhodes will be continuing to fill out the outline she has been developing, and invited anyone to make contributions. She has also been working on a table of impacts, including references, which is on the Google Drive as well.

**Work Plan Development (Toledo):** Toledo reported that the focus of the next meeting will be to work on a draft of the 2015-2016 work plan. MRC members should come to the next meeting with ideas for future projects and partnerships. The projects should fit under the Northwest Straits Initiative (NWSI) Strategic Plan goals. Toledo handed out a sheet of the NWSI Strategic Plan goals, highlighting the projects or actions that apply to this MRC. She encouraged all to review this document, and see where their project ideas might fit.

Current project leads should come prepared with any adjustments they envision for the upcoming grant cycle, and whether the budget will change.

Wood reminded all that projects do not have to be limited to the scope of the grant budget, as the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) is a potential source of funding for additional projects.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reported that the Oil Spill Preparedness Workshop was held on February 26, and had about 20 in attendance. Corin acknowledged that the workshop went very well, and the attendance was a good mix of key figures for oil spill response. Rhodes noted that it was interesting that the majority of the oil spill issues in Puget Sound are caused by small, recreational boats. Double-hull tankers are now in effect as of January 1, including foreign-flagged fleets. Corin noted that Puget Sound is extremely low in terms of actual spill events. Department of Ecology is setting up a registry for interested volunteers:  
<http://www.oilspills101.wa.gov/go/doc/5779/1793639/>

Toledo reported that she attended an MRC forum in Olympia with the goal of building connection between the Northwest Straits MRCs and Coastal MRCs, and identifying common priorities. The Surfrider Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, NWSC, NWSF, MRCs, and



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legislators were in attendance. The Coastal MRCs reported on their projects, including several cleanup projects, as well as education and outreach. More information can be found at the WDFW website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/volunteer/mrc/index.html>

The group identified a few key issues where the MRCs can work together, including ocean acidification, marine debris, and improving communication, including invitations to each other's summits and conferences.

Toledo stated that all MRC members and volunteers who work on MRC projects must complete a 20-30 minute county volunteer training. She has setup two trainings: Friday, March 13 at the Deception Pass Park office at 9:30am, and Tuesday, March 17 at the County offices at 2:45pm before the next MRC meeting. Participants only need to attend one training, and only need to attend if they have not previously attended a county training.

Toledo noted that she has a new office phone number: 360-678-2349.

Toledo reported that the SHARP landowner workshop date will be moved from the tentative date of April 18<sup>th</sup>, so as not to coincide with the Welcome the Whales celebration in Langley. May 30<sup>th</sup> has been proposed as a potential new date. The MRC did not see any potential conflict. Price Johnson suggested visiting [www.whidbeycamanoislands.com](http://www.whidbeycamanoislands.com) to check the calendar.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring (Matlock):** Matlock reported that Dan Penttila will be working on a report to provide guidance for forage fish sampling. They are also in the process of acquiring equipment for the egg sampling. Matlock encouraged anyone who is interested to participate in the training sessions that Gibson will be setting up. Matlock reported that Richards has expressed interest in becoming involved with the project. Gibson noted that they have a set of sieves available for MRCs to check out. Toledo has checked out 2 GPS units from the NWSF.

**Estuary Seining:** No update.

**Cornet Bay Restoration (Corin):** Corin reported that they have hired the engineering and design firm PND. The kickoff meeting for the marine maintenance pier upgrade will be held this Thursday at their office in Seattle. They have already done some preliminary work, and it is going well.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Kelp Monitoring Report (Dickson):** Dickson reported that he is searching for anyone interested in doing the initial kelp surveys. Dickson has also been in touch with Rick Baker to get Whidbey Watershed Stewards involved in kelp monitoring.

Baker reported that they are in the process of developing a program to assess the environmental impact to the kelp at Smith and Minor Island Aquatic Reserve by harvesters in May-July, when they do the majority of their harvesting. They are trying to assess how much harvestable kelp there is as well as how much kelp is leaving the reserve during those 3 months. They want to provide outreach by creating a presence on the beach, and offering information on proper harvesting technique and the effect that poor harvesting technique has on the ecosystem.

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**Northwest Straits Initiative (Corin):** Corin reported that the NWSI retreat is next Thursday-Friday (March 12-13). He is looking for a short-list of messages to carry forward from the MRC to the retreat, and asked for members to send any feedback to him before March 12. This could include something the MRC would like to do, specific challenges the MRC faces, something the MRC would like to be a part of, or other comments.

The NWSF is still working on finding an Executive Director. They will have a conference call on Friday with a head hunting group in Pt. Townsend, and will probably hire this group to assist in the search for an Executive Director. The firm has experience working with non-profits. If anybody knows someone who would be good candidate, they should let Corin know.

**Salmon TAG (Matlock/Zackey):** Matlock reported that money had come back from projects that closed last year. TAG recommended to the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) that those funds go to the Waterman project, which is a property acquisition. For this upcoming round, there were 7 projects that submitted letters of intent; 2 withdrew. It looks like there is money available to fully fund all 5 of the remaining projects.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** Wood reported that Adams has offered to take on the position as the Alternate to the NWSC. Wood designated Adams as Alternate in her position to the NWSC.

Wood noted that she will be looking for candidates for a paid internship for the Pigeon Guillemot project this summer, if anybody knows someone who would be interested.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Price Johnson reported that she has been following an oil spill legislation. Currently there is no fee collected on any of the oil that comes into or out of the state by rail or truck. The only resources available to respond to oil spills are generated by fees on barrels that come in by water. This legislation addresses that issue, and Price Johnson has written a letter in support of the legislation.

Price Johnson reported that she is part of a Coastal Caucus. They have signed a letter in support of a new funding model for the PSP that allocates more at local level rather than state. There is other legislation that she has not taken a stand on, regarding fish consumption and water quality in Puget Sound. The Governor has put forward legislation that looks at what chemicals go into the system, and if there are reasonable alternatives for the industry to use.

## COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:36 pm.



# Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

## March 17, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes, Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Stan Walsh, Todd Zackey, Helen Price Johnson Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo, MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** John Carr, Tim Lawrence (conflicting meeting), Elsa Schwartz (work conflict), Frances Wood (travel)

**VISITORS:** Cheryl Lowe, Dawn Pucci, Ken Urstad, Janet Hall, Matt Zupich, Barbara Bennett, Rick Baker, Suzanna Stoike

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. Walsh moved to approve the agenda. Matlock seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Halloran moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on March 3, 2015. Corin seconded. The minutes were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Toledo presented a draft letter from the MRC to Kurt Fresh to thank Anna Kagley, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Biologist, for her assistance with a beach seining training that was held on February 13, 2015. Corin moved to have the MRC Vice-Chair sign the letter, in the Chair's absence. Adams seconded. The motion passed. Rhodes offered to hand-deliver the signed letter.

Rhodes sent around a card to sign to thank Bill Larsen for his time on the MRC.

Corin sent around a card to sign for Robyn du Pre's husband, Dan, to express condolence on Robyn's passing.

### **WSU EXTENSION CREOSOTE LOG / LARGE MARINE DEBRIS REMOVAL PROJECT:**

Rhodes presented Janet Hall, Waste Wise Coordinator for WSU Island County Extension. Hall explained that they have a Community Clean Litter Program through a grant from the Department of Ecology. The funding comes from a small tax on fast food, and is typically used to clean up litter on highways. Hall had proposed using the funds for litter pickup on beaches instead, and was given approval. Stinger Anderson coordinates volunteer crews to pick up litter on the beaches every Friday.

Due to the nature of the grant, the funding does not allow for pickup of creosote logs. However, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has a program setup to remove creosote logs and

large marine debris from public beaches, as well as private beaches, with permission. Chris Robertson at DNR is the point of contact, and they are ready to respond to calls regarding removal of creosote logs and large debris. Hall suggested that this is an opportunity for the MRC to partner with DNR on this program.

### **WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT:**

**Review of 2014-2015 Work Plan (Toledo):** Toledo handed out a spreadsheet providing a budget update. In the first quarter of the grant (October-December 2014), \$10,952.19 was spent in Task 1: MRC Operations. This task includes expenses for salaries and benefits, overhead/indirect, conferences, training, travel, and other operational expenses.

No expenses were processed in October-December for Task 2: Monitoring Projects. Toledo reviewed expenses that have been approved or are planned for Task 2. \$1,372 has been approved for equipment for forage fish sampling. \$2,400 has been approved for Dan Penttila's services to develop a forage fish survey plan. This leaves \$2,228 for the forage fish project. Suggested uses include quality assurance, training, and additional surf smelt sampling at Cornet Bay.

\$2,600 was spent for the phytoremediation project for metals analysis of water samples conducted in December 2014. This is \$400 over the originally planned \$2,200. Since the funding for the monitoring projects is not specifically allocated by project in the grant agreement, moving around funds between monitoring projects does not require an amendment of the agreement. All expenses must still be pre-approved by the county.

The seining project has \$1,000. Dawn Pucci had recommended these funds be used towards data analysis. Pucci will be speaking with Leska Fore with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) on possibilities for data analysis with the seining data.

The pigeon guillemot project has \$3,500 which is planned for the summer intern.

The eelgrass project has \$2,000. It is expected that these funds will go towards boat fuel and equipment needs. Gregg Ridder will be attending the next MRC meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup>, and presenting his 2014 findings. At that time, he will also solicit input for upcoming monitoring sites, and discuss how these funds might be used.

Corin suggested covering the \$400 that was spent over the original phytoremediation budget by lowering the forage fish budget by \$200 to \$2,028 and the eelgrass budget by \$200 to \$1,800.

Toledo reviewed the 2014-2015 work plan that is currently in place, going over which key action steps have been completed. Goal 1 addresses the forage fish monitoring project. The sampling plan is currently being developed by Dan Penttila. Matlock asked if there would be assistance in creating the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Toledo responded that she can work with Matlock in developing the QAPP, and they can look at incorporating pre-established protocols where relevant.

Goal 2 addresses the pigeon guillemot survey project. The 2014 data has been collected and analyzed, and the findings were reported to the MRC.

Goal 3 addresses the phytoremediation project. The final set of water samples from the phyto boxes were sent for lab analysis at the end of 2014. The final report will be ready by June 2015.

Goal 4 addresses the kelp monitoring project. The protocol for surveying bull kelp by boat was developed by Emily Bishop, and the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) has established the Salish Sea International Kelp Alliance.

Goal 5 addresses the eelgrass monitoring project. The 2014 video and spreadsheets have been analyzed, and the results will be presented to the MRC at the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Goal 6 addresses the beach seining project. The beach seining season is in progress. Pucci noted that the MRC needs to put forward a point of contact for this project, as there are a lot of data to be entered for analysis, and other minor tasks to assist with.

Goal 7 addresses operational goals. An initial draft for the project selection process has been developed. A new membership orientation manual has been developed and implemented with new members. The MRC will continue to address marine policy issues as they are brought forward by the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC). Representatives from the MRC continue to attend and participate in meetings with the Salmon Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO) and ECO Net. Matlock and Zackey attend Salmon TAG meetings. Toledo attends ILIO and ECO Net meetings. Other MRC members are welcome and encouraged to step up as representatives to the ILIO or ECO Net.

**Development of 2015-2016 Work Plan (Toledo and all MRC):** Toledo reminded all that projects should fall under the Northwest Straits Initiative (NWSI) goals as presented in their strategic plan. Price Johnson noted that it is important to show how the MRC projects align with the PSP Action Agenda.

Toledo explained that the work plan is an overall guiding document for the MRC, and that the proposal for funding from the NWSC comes out of this discussion, however the work plan can include projects that the MRC wishes to engage in but will not receive NWSC funding, as there may be opportunities for additional funding outside the annual grant agreement with the NWSC.

Toledo presented potential project ideas on a spreadsheet, and invited members to add their suggestions.

Adams proposed a continuation of the phytoremediation project, which would include coordinating with the City of Coupeville and the Whidbey Island Conservation District to design a water filtration system for storm water runoff which could be installed at Engle Road and/or Madrona Way.

Corin reported that within goal 3 in the NWSI strategic plan, the Clallam and Snohomish MRCs are scheduled to work with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) to implement programs to address the issue of crab pot loss, with the idea of having other MRCs contribute efforts in the upcoming years. Joan Drinkwin came across a request for proposals to support outreach efforts to reduce the impact of derelict fishing gear. Corin suggested that the MRC has an opportunity to work with the NWSF to address this issue in the upcoming work plan cycle. Drinkwin will be

organizing a conference call to discuss this opportunity with interested MRCs. Rhodes and Halloran expressed interest in participating in the call and being involved in the resulting project.

Toledo noted that she placed the shoreline armoring reduction project on the work plan, as the MRC will be partnering on this project through education and outreach, and there may be opportunities for monitoring and additional involvement. The forage fish, pigeon guillemot, eelgrass, and seining projects are listed on the work plan, and Toledo will be working with the project leads to include any proposed changes for the 2015-2016 cycle.

Rhodes noted that there are two kelp projects. One is a monitoring project that would be based on Emily Bishop's protocol. The other is Rick Baker's kelp harvest assessment project, which would be focused on outreach and education. Baker suggested that the MRC could assist with developing signage and outreach materials.

Pucci suggested that the MRC could make all their signs accessible online, where one could locate the sign on an online map, then zoom in to read its contents. This could also be tied into placing geocaches at the sign locations. Rhodes suggested that this would be a good project to involve students and an opportunity to partner with the ECO Net.

Zackey reported that he finished the small streams and watershed characterization study, and has been in contact with Suzanne Shull about getting the information on SoundIQ. He was told that SoundIQ is reserved for projects that fall within NWSI priorities, and wondered if there would be an appropriate place to include his project within an MRC project. Rhodes stated that she will talk with Sasha Horst about getting data on SoundIQ, and suggested that it would be relevant to include this information with the Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) project.

Corin noted that one of the activities under the NWSI strategic plan goal 4 is to update geographic response plans (GRP), which help guide oil spill response. Two other counties are working on this, and it is something this MRC could work on as well, by taking an initial look at the GRP to see its status and determine if there is additional information that needs to be added or updated.

Toledo will send out the 2015-2016 project development spreadsheet, including the contributions from today's meeting, and encouraged members to provide feedback on the projects presented.

### **NWSC GRANT REPORTS:**

**Eelgrass/Seining Monitoring:** Pucci handed out a spreadsheet showing cumulative chinook counts at Cornet Bay since 2009. They have already reached 119 chinook so far this season in two seining sessions. The permit limit is 150 chinook. Pucci reported that she emailed NOAA about getting an extension on the limit.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood):** Toledo reported that there is the pigeon guillemot survey training scheduled for Wednesday, May 27 at 7:30pm at the Unitarian Church in Freeland. Anyone is welcome to attend, especially new members who may be interested in learning about the project. The Pigeon Guillemot Appreciation Days are scheduled for June 26-27, and will include a gathering at Ott & Murphy Wines, as well as field trips to the beach. They are also

looking for someone to help develop a database system to assist with data collection and analysis, and invited anyone who knows a potential candidate to contact Wood. Zackey noted that there is a bird database for FileMaker Pro, though it would likely need to be customized for their needs.

### **OTHER REPORTS:**

**Northwest Straits Initiative (Corin):** Corin handed out a Port Susan MSA Progress Report brochure from the Snohomish MRC which reviews the status of action items at Port Susan, and highlights accomplishments. The NWSI retreat went well. The focus was on the implementation of the strategic plan. Corin will provide a copy of the summary notes when he receives them.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** Bennett reported that Beach Watcher training starts tomorrow on both islands. They have a class of 29 (22 on Whidbey, 7 on Camano). They are also in the discussion stage of a grant from NOAA Office of Education for increasing public literacy to reduce risk related to extreme storm events. It would be a multi-year project, and could utilize the Beach Watcher infrastructure for educational outreach.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo/Rhodes):** Toledo reported that there are two upcoming workshops for the NWSF Shoreline Armoring Reduction Project grant. The two workshops include the same content, but are being offered in different locations. One will be held in Stanwood on March 28 from 10am-3pm, and would be appropriate for Camano residents. The other will be held on April 4 from 10am-3pm at South Whidbey High School. Toledo will be sending out promotional materials, and encouraged the MRC to distribute to any listservs or community groups.

Toledo mentioned that she received an email from Caroline Gibson regarding dates for a forage fish survey training. The two date options are Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> before the MRC meeting or Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. Either date would run about 10am-3:00pm. The general consensus was for April 21<sup>st</sup>. Toledo will communicate that wish to Gibson.

### **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** Clark reported that the Planning Department will be discussing the topic of net pens with the BICC at their work session on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Department of Ecology and representatives from NOAA and NMFS will be making a presentation to the BICC at their work session on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend.

**County Commissioners:** No further reports.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

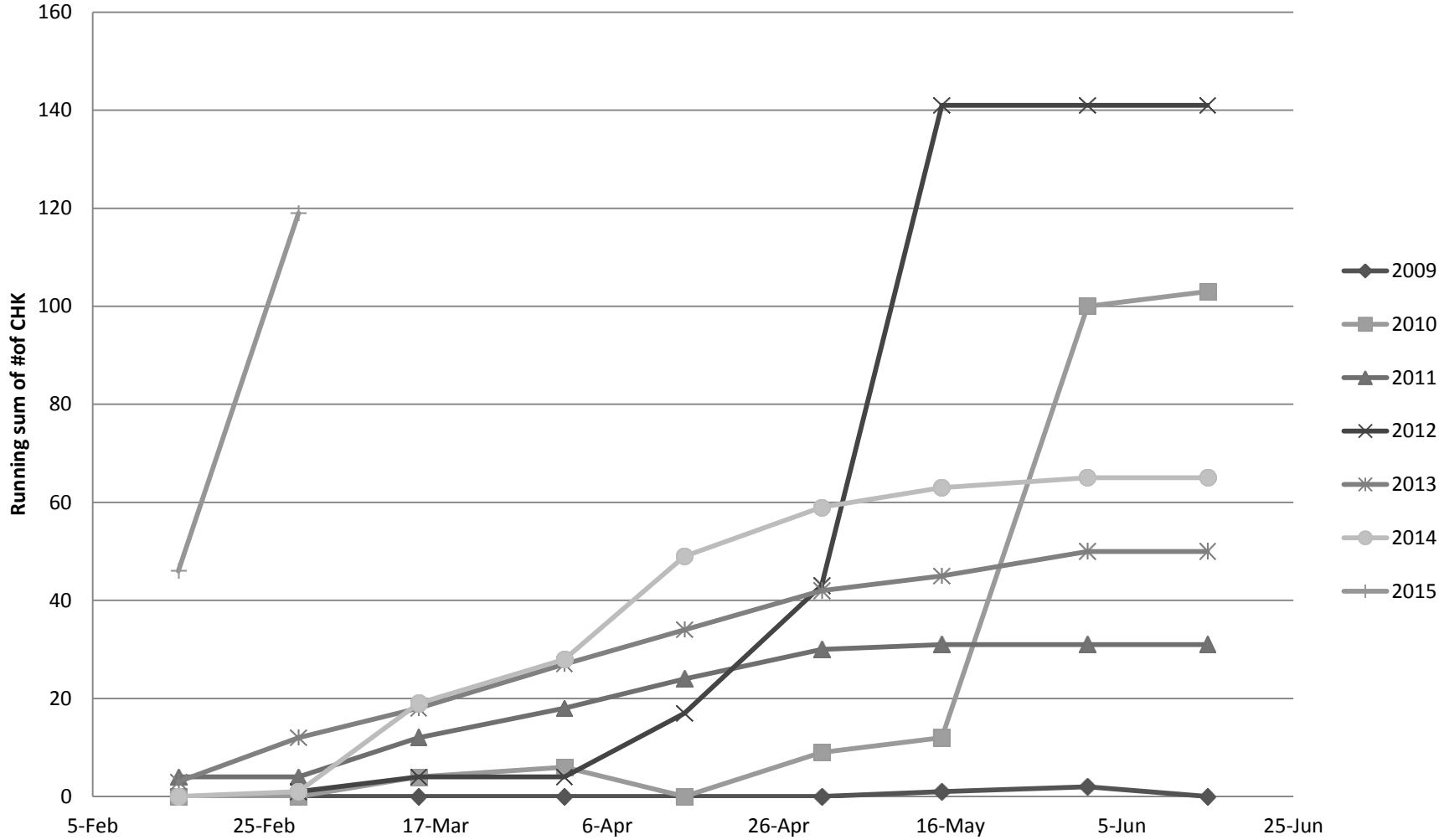
**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm.

**Budget Update: October-December 2014**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>Committed</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Remaining (after Committed Expenses)</b>	<b>Proposed Changes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>MRC Operations</b>	<b>\$ 58,300.00</b>	<b>\$ 10,952.19</b>	<b>\$ 47,347.81</b>				
<b>2</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>	<b>\$ 14,700.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 14,700.00</b>			<b>\$ 3,828.00</b>	
2.1	Forage Fish	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 1,372.00	Supplies	\$ 2,228.00	\$ 2,000.00
					\$ 2,400.00	Dan Penttila's services to write sampling plan		
2.2	Phytoremediation	\$ 2,200.00	\$ -	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,600.00	Water samples in December	\$ (400.00)	\$ -
2.3	Seining	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	Proposed for data analysis	\$ -	
2.4	Pigeon Guillemots	\$ 3,500.00	\$ -	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	Summer intern	\$ -	
2.5	Eelgrass	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00		Equipment needs - TBD	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,800.00



# Cornet Chinook



# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# April 7, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, John Carr, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Stan Walsh, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff), Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting) **ABSENT:** Todd Zackey, Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting)

**VISITORS:** Ken Urstad, Peg Urstad, Tom Vos, Gregg Ridder, Linda Ridder, Barbara Bennett, Jessica Cote, Traci Sanderson, Neal Clark

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. Walsh moved to approve the agenda. Schwartz seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Toledo noted a correction from Jim Somers under the Eelgrass/Seining Monitoring report that the permit limit should read 150 chinook, not 119. Halloran moved to approve the corrected minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on March 17, 2015. Richards seconded. The minutes as corrected were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence presented.

### 2014 EELGRASS REPORT AND 2015 PLANNING:

Powerpoint presentation available.

Wood introduced Gregg Ridder as long-time island volunteer, Beach Watcher, and lead on the eelgrass project.

Ridder reported that this is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of reporting eelgrass results. Eelgrass is one of 7 indicator species of shoreline health in Puget Sound. The loss of eelgrass in Holmes Harbor in 2007 provided the impetus for this project.

A report came out last month from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on the Puget Sound Submerged Vegetation Monitoring Project, which documents their progress towards the Puget Sound Partnership's goal of increasing eelgrass bed area by 20% by 2020. It appears that it may be difficult to effectively demonstrate progress as the standard deviation shows a fair amount of uncertainty.

This eelgrass project includes 3 components: 1. Looking at plant characteristics. This was started in 2007 at Holmes Harbor. A sufficient amount of baseline data has been gathered at this point. 2. Aerial photography. 3. Underwater videography.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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The project measures presence or absence of eelgrass. They are looking for *Zostera marina* and *Phyllospadix*. *Phyllospadix* is surfgrass, and had not been seen until this year. They do not count *Zostera japonica*, which is an invasive species.

DNR has identified 300 sites in Island County. The capacity for monitoring is about 10 sites per year by boat. The aerial photography can cover all of Whidbey and Camano Islands.

The monitoring process has several steps: identify a site and get transect point coordinates from DNR, collect underwater video, edit the video to match the transects, create a spreadsheet using the GPS tracklog and video, clip the spreadsheets to find relevant information, match the video to the transects, superimpose aerial photographs.

The sites monitored by boat in previous years include:

2009: Established core monitoring sites at Holmes Harbor, Penn Cove, and Cornet Bay. Studied Holmes Harbor in greater detail.

2010: Studied Penn Cove in greater detail.

2011: Studied sites around the south end of Whidbey.

2012: Repeated Holmes Harbor in greater detail.

2013: Repeated Penn Cove in greater detail.

2014: Studied a variety of sites around the island.

In 2014 the data gathered by plane covered the majority of Whidbey and Camano Islands.

The results at the core sites indicate that Cornet Bay has remained pretty consistent. They have noticed that in Cornet Bay there is fairly significant damage from propellers and anchors. Signage and no-anchor zones might help. At Monroe Landing, there is no statistical significance in the trend line, but it is showing a decrease. In Penn Cove there is very little eelgrass. Freeland Park has not shown a specific trend.

Updates on several sites were presented in greater detail:

- Ala Spit: They did a reconnaissance run and found some eelgrass.
- Monroe Landing: In 2010 there was eelgrass present. In the last three years, the eelgrass seems to have disappeared. 2014 data showed that one area might be increasing. They are now seeing sea urchins instead of eelgrass. A paper entitled "[Changes in Eelgrass Habitat and Faunal Assemblages Associated with Coastal Development in Juneau, Alaska](#)" suggests that sea urchins may be part of the cause of loss of eelgrass.
- Freeland Park: Not much has changed here. One area has grown back.
- North of Brooks Hill Road: Has shown increase from 2011-2013. Photos indicate damage from shrimping.
- West Langley: Has shown increase from 2011-2013.
- Langley Marina: Has shown increase from 2011-2014.
- Camp Diana (Camano): Have begun studying at this site at the request of DNR.

Ridder has also been involved with kelp monitoring. In 2014, he took a composite of 50-60 images to look at Smith and Minor Islands to see if there was eelgrass, and saw kelp.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Consequently, Ridder took pictures along western Whidbey to look for an overview of kelp presence. Dickson can use this information for determining sites for kelp studies.

For sites in 2015, Ridder would like input from the MRC, and will also be receiving input from DNR. They plan on going back to the Holmes Harbor sites. Urstad had suggested Possession Sound on the Waterman Property. Corin mentioned that he has kayaked in the Oak Harbor area, and noted that the developed areas are pretty devoid of eelgrass, but the rest has some nicely developed beds. Rhodes asked if they plan to keep tracking at Robinson, and whether DNR has interest in surfgrass. Ridder responded that DNR hasn't seen these results yet.

Toledo asked what the plans are for using the funds – whether there are any equipment repairs needed. Ridder responded that they should know before June what equipment needs to be repaired or updated.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS:

**Work Plan (Toledo):** Toledo noted that the next meeting will be largely dedicated to revisiting the draft work plan outline, and working out any remaining details. Toledo will be reaching out to project leads for more detailed information on their proposed projects before the next meeting. A representative from the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) and the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) plan to attend the next meeting to help provide input and feedback.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reported that she attended two Shoreline Armoring Reduction Project (SHARP) shoreline landowner workshops held in partnership with the NWSF: one in Stanwood, in partnership with the Snohomish MRC, to make connections with Camano landowners. The second workshop was held in Langley, drew 42 attendees, and included a beach walk on Mutiny Bay of a softshore protection project.

Toledo attended the Marine Managers' Workshop, held by the San Juan MRC, the focus of which was on understanding risks of marine vessel traffic around San Juan and Gulf Islands. The outcomes from the brainstorming session included the importance of being geographically focused, spreading awareness about recreational boating issues, the need to collect baseline data, and tracking relevant legislature. House Bill 1449 is a piece of legislation which would increase barrel tax from \$.04 to \$.08.

Steve Hinton from the Skagit River System Cooperative had reached out for a letter of support from the MRC regarding a Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) proposal for feasibility and preliminary design to reconnect the lagoon at Camano Island State Park. He will be presenting at the next MRC meeting, and a draft letter of support will be circulated prior to the meeting.

Toledo reminded all about two upcoming trainings. One is a forage fish training held by the NWSC and WDFW. The training will be held April 21, from 10:30am-3pm in the Law & Justice Room 131 on the county campus. The training is free and will include a beach trip. It is open first to MRC members and volunteers interested in participating in forage fish surveys.

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The second training is a presentation skills workshop hosted by WA Coastal Training Program and NWSC. The training is a 2-part workshop, which will be held on June 4 and June 18 from 9am-4pm at Padilla Bay Reserve. The workshop is free, and open to MRC staff and members.

Caroline Gibson from NWSC has been organizing a forum on ocean health. It will be held May 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm-8:00pm at South Whidbey High School. Toledo will send out the promotional materials once they're ready, and encouraged all to spread the word.

Toledo reminded all to send her their volunteer hours for January through March 2015 if they haven't already.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring (Matlock):** Matlock reported that they just received Dan Penttila's forage fish survey summary. It includes maps and data from prior surveys. Matlock would like to provide a more extensive update to the whole MRC once they have a better idea of the project scope. Dan Penttila has made himself available pro-bono to discuss recommendations on project design. Matlock hopes to have Dan Penttila complete surf smelt surveys in Cornet Bay this summer. Matlock and Richards will be meeting with Pete Haase on Monday for advice on how to work with citizen science groups. Ultimately they will need to get collecting permit. They will also need to work on a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the project. Jason Morgan from NWSF is working on one based on Pete Haase's Skagit county work, and will send a copy to Matlock to use as guidance.

**Estuary Seining:** Wood reported that Rhodes has stepped in as the MRC point of contact for the seining project. Toledo reported that they have not reached the permit limit yet, but the NWSF has offered to let the MRC work under the NWSF permit if the permit limits are reached.

**Beach Watchers:** Wood gave Barbara Bennett space to provide an update. Bennett reported on a grant proposal that she and Eric Brooks had been working on in response to an RFP from NOAA Office of Education on an ocean literacy and risk literacy grant proposal. Bennett and Brooks worked aggressively in the past few weeks, but decided not to submit a proposal at this point. They have setup a good framework for future work and grant opportunities. The work would look at helping local residents assess their own risk using available known data, and make informed decisions about mitigating risk. Brooks has started to conduct interviews with people who have been victims of such events. They will use this to begin to provide people with information through events like Sound Waters.

**Cornet Bay Restoration (Corin):** Corin reported that they received estimates from PND for the state dock renovation which turned out to be a lot higher than expected. They will have a conference call on Thursday to discuss where to go from here.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Kelp Monitoring Report (Dickson):** Dickson reported that the International Kelp Alliance will be having a conference call tomorrow. They are working on a monitoring protocol that will be consistent from one group to the next. Dickson has identified 3 areas in Island County that meet

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the criteria to study kelp beds. The criteria are: 1. Accessibility, 2. Safety, and 3. The kelp bed being big enough. Dickson has 6 volunteers so far, and is continuing to recruit additional volunteers.

**Northwest Straits Initiative (Corin):** Corin reported that the NWSF had been in discussions with a group that was going to assist in locating a new executive director. However, they decided to go forward on their own to initiate the search. The position information is available on the NWSF website. The position is open until filled, though applications received before May 4<sup>th</sup> will be given priority. Corin is part of the search committee, and encouraged anybody to refer interested individuals to the NWSF website to apply. The next NWSF meeting is April 16<sup>th</sup>. The next NWSC meeting is April 24<sup>th</sup> by WebEx. Corin will not be available for that call, so Adams will stand in as Alternate.

**Salmon TAG (Matlock / Zackey):** Matlock reported that he and others from the Salmon TAG will be attending site visits tomorrow for the proposals that are requesting funding from the SRFB. They will be using a scoring rubric to rank the projects. The total amount of requested funding falls within the amount available.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson reported that the legislative session is underway. House Bill 1868 is a piece of legislation for counties made up of islands to be able to use a part of their road levy fund for infrastructure for navigational purposes. The Glendale Acquisition is on the Capital Funding List. It is a joint project between Whidbey Camano Land Trust and Island County to allow for public access along Glendale Road.

The Department of Ecology will be coming to speak with the County Commissioners on April 15<sup>th</sup> about finfish netpens and the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update. Commissioner Price Johnson expressed her extreme gratitude for the report from the MRC, and passed along thanks from all the Commissioners for the MRC's hard work on that document.

Commissioner Price Johnson encouraged all to check out <http://www.whidbeyearthday.org/> for Whidbey Earth & Ocean Month events throughout April.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# April 21, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, John Carr, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting) Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Lenny Corin (travel), Leal Dickson, Tim Lawrence, Linda Rhodes (travel), Stan Walsh (travel)

**VISITORS:** Sasha Horst, Dawn Pucci, Eric Mickelson, Jamie Hartley, Joan Drinkwin, Bob Schoening

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Wood noted that Eric Mickelson will be presenting instead of Steve Hinton. Halloran moved to approve the agenda as corrected. Schwartz seconded. The agenda as corrected was approved. **MINUTES:** Schwartz moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on April 7, 2015. Matlock seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence presented.

### CAMANO ISLAND STATE PARK PROPOSAL AND REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT

Powerpoint presentation is available.

Toledo introduced Eric Mickelson, Restoration Ecologist with the Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC). Mickelson presented a project that was submitted for funding from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) regarding a feasibility and preliminary design proposal for reconnecting the lagoon at Camano Island State Park.

The project was first identified from a study by the SRSC to look at historic pocket estuary sites along Saratoga passage. The proposed funds would be used to complete a more detailed feasibility study, preliminary design, and public outreach. The project had been initially proposed during the 2011 SRFB grant round, but due to public concern over perceived impacts of the project, it was withdrawn from consideration in favor of a more detailed public outreach process.

A comparison analysis to nearby pocket estuaries suggests that this area would be used by juvenile chinook and chum salmon from February through June, with other species present year-round. Historic maps show salt marsh habitat at the site, but they are at a coarse scale, and do not show any inlet. SRSC has consulted with coastal geomorphologists who agree that there was a salt marsh lagoon at this site.

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SRSC contracted with Battelle to conduct hydrodynamic modelling to look at the potential sustainability of the site over time. The results of the modelling suggest that the channel is likely to sustain itself. Due to the outcomes of this study, SRSC believes it would be worthwhile to pursue additional detailed feasibility studies, which would be achieved through the proposed SRFB funding.

The benefits of implementing a restoration project would include restoration of up to 4.4 acres of pocket estuary habitat, providing an excellent educational opportunity, and the potential to incorporate native vegetation. Considerations include the importance of maintaining the operation of the boat launch, parking for boats and vehicles, and space for picnicking and other recreational activities.

The public is highly vested in the park, and the project includes a robust public outreach process to be facilitated by an outside consultant. The proposal is for a site-level feasibility and preliminary design project, which would include an assessment of the sustainability of the outlet channel by an engineer, specifics about the design, and potentially additional modeling. If the assessment shows that the habitat goals cannot be reconciled with current park use, the project design would not be implemented.

Matlock noted that there are two positive aspects to the proposal. One is that the proposed area to be flooded is among the least used parts of the park because it is low and holds water during the winter. Secondly, having a successful restoration project in this park would show that it is possible to have recreation, public access, and restoration in a way that can be complementary.

Toledo distributed copies of a draft letter of support for this project. Wood asked for feedback or questions on the letter. Adams moved to approve the letter of support as written. Schwartz seconded. The letter of support was approved. Wood signed the letter and gave to Mickelson.

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

**Work Plan (Toledo):** Toledo reviewed the project ideas for the 2015-2016 work plan, including proposed budgets and action steps for projects. Toledo reported that the budget for projects will likely be around \$22,000. Sasha Horst reminded all that the budgets do not have to be exact at this point.

The forage fish project would include developing a survey strategy and sampling schedule, and then conducting the surveys with volunteers. The proposed budget of \$3000 would be for permits, equipment, analysis, and QA/QC.

The kelp monitoring project would implement the monitoring protocols developed by Emily Bishop. Caroline Gibson had recommended that MRCs budget between \$500-\$2000 for equipment, analysis, and potential travel expenses to present at the Salish Sea Conference.

The eelgrass project would be a continuation of the current eelgrass monitoring project. The proposed budget of \$2000 would be for boat fuel and equipment maintenance.



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The seining project would be a continuation of the current seining project, with a possible expansion to Glendale. The proposed budget of \$2000 would be for permits, data analysis, and possibly fuel.

The Cornet Bay project would include coordinating with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG) to continue restoration and monitoring efforts. SFEG would install native vegetation in areas 1 & 3 and perform vegetation maintenance in areas 4, 5, & 6. The NWSF would conduct a monitoring plan to include photo points, large woody debris, beach elevations, beach wrack, and intertidal surveys. The proposed budget of \$8000 would be for the vegetation planting, maintenance, and monitoring.

The phytoremediation project would involve coordinating with the Whidbey Island Conservation District and town of Coupeville to identify areas to install storm water filtration systems using soil and root combinations. The proposed budget of \$1000 would be for water sampling.

The pigeon guillemot project would be a continuation of the current survey project. The proposed budget of \$4200 would be for the summer intern and associated administrative costs.

The kelp outreach project would involve coordinating with Whidbey Watershed Stewards on their kelp harvest assessment. The proposed budget of \$4000 would be for developing signage or other outreach materials.

Projects that are not requesting funding from the NWSC grant but would be included in the work plan are:

- Shoreline Armoring Reduction – The MRC would coordinate with Island County Dept. of Natural Resources grant on landowner incentives to reduce shoreline armoring.
- Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area – Schwartz would coordinate with Snohomish MRC to ensure Island MRC's continued support and involvement.
- Derelict Gear and Creosote Removal – Corin would coordinate with Beach Watchers and WA DNR to identify potential beach clean-up sites and increase public outreach.
- Educational Signage on Ferries – The MRC would coordinate with Jefferson MRC to explore the potential of developing education signage to be displayed on the Coupeville-Port Townsend route
- Reduced Impact of Crab Pot Loss – Halloran would coordinate with the NWSF on outreach efforts for reducing crab pot loss.
- MRC Signage Map and Geocaching – The MRC would coordinate with students or other groups to develop an online map showing the locations and content of MRC signs, and place geocaches at sign locations.
- Marine Resource Advisory Role – The MRC would respond to requests from the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) to research marine issues.

Toledo will compile this information into a draft work plan to be presented to the MRC.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reminded the MRC of the community forum on ocean health, in partnership with the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) that will be held on May 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm-8pm at the South Whidbey High School in Langley. Toledo also announced that

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she will be bringing the MRC trifold to the Greenbank Farm Earth Day Festival on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 1pm-6pm, and encouraged any interested members or public to attend.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Eelgrass Monitoring (Wood):** Wood noted that Gregg Ridder presented his 2014 findings at the last meeting. There are no new reports.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood):** Wood reported that the pigeon guillemot group will be celebrating Guillemot Appreciation Days on Friday, June 26 and Saturday, June 27. On June 26, there will be a happy hour from 3pm-5pm at Ott & Murphy Winery. On June 27, they will be holding field trips to guillemot colonies. Anybody who is interested can meet at the Freeland Park & Ride at 8am. Wood asked if the MRC would be willing to be an event sponsor. This would not include any financial commitment, but would mean that the MRC would be included in the list of sponsors showing their support of the pigeon guillemot project. Matlock moved to have the MRC support Guillemot Appreciation Days. Halloran seconded. The motion passed.

The guillemot group is in the process of developing an online data input system, which is being funded by the National Audubon Society. Wood will be attending the seabird working group of the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program. She will also be attending a seabird symposium on Orcas Island in May.

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, there will be a training for volunteers interested in helping with the pigeon guillemot survey. Emily Bishop is signed up as the summer intern for this year.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Initiative:** Adams reported that he will be attending the NWSC WebEx call on Friday. Toledo reported that the NWSC has published their 2014 annual report, and passed around a copy. The report is also available online at <http://www.nwstraits.org/media/1502/2014-nwstraits-annualrpt.pdf>

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** No report

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo / Rhodes):** Toledo reported that the NWSF has received 25 requests for site visits from Island County. The sites in armored feeder bluff parcels will be prioritized, but they are also working on a ranking for the other site visits.

For the county's shoreline armoring reduction grant, they are in the process of getting a contract signed to work with the consultant C + C who will be in charge of implementing the Shore Friendly social marketing plan.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** Clark reported that the LIO is working on developing Near Term Actions (NTA) for the next biennium. The new EPA funding model provides direct allocation of funding for NTAs. At the end of the planning process in September they would come up with a prioritized list of projects in Island County that would be eligible for grant funding. The 3 implementation

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strategies are shellfish beds, estuaries, and chinook. The MRC's role is integral to the planning process by helping to identify what to monitor. Clark encouraged all MRC members to stay involved by communicating with Toledo or attending LIO meetings. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 29 from 1-3pm at the Coupeville library.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson thanked the MRC for the report regarding the netpen prohibition in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) and their continued support. Commissioner Price Johnson reported that Department of Ecology attended the BICC work session on Wednesday. Ecology held firm to their stance that netpens are required to be allowed because they are a water-dependent use, but Island County made a compelling case, and presented the fact that there has been no input from the industry requesting an accommodation for netpens. Ecology suggested that there may be a way to adopt an interim SMP to allow the County to continue with the Comprehensive Plan update process while allowing for time to work out the netpen issue. It is apparent that Ecology is looking for documentation of competing uses. Commissioner Price Johnson asked Ecology for updated information for siting of netpens.

The Action Agenda for the Puget Sound Partnership is being updated. Commissioner Price Johnson attended a meeting in Seattle to discuss how best to move that forward. EPA will be providing funding for each LIO to implement their action plan.

Commissioner Price Johnson reported that the transportation bill to allow counties made up of islands to use their road levy funding for infrastructure for navigational purposes has passed and is at the governor's desk.

## **COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:**

Bob Schoening announced that on March 16<sup>th</sup> a new free worldwide database of introduced and invasive alien marine species was launched. Schoening provided an article announcing the database launch: <http://www.marinespecies.org/news.php?p=show&id=4104>

Jamie Hartley stated that he attended the presentation by Ecology at the BICC work session, and found it interesting that Ecology's head SMP planner acknowledged that Ecology receives a large grant from NOAA, and believes that Ecology may be showing interest in the netpen issue because one of their major funders thinks it is a good idea. Hartley suggested it might be helpful for citizens to contact their representatives about this issue.

Adams stated that he attended the BICC work session and was very impressed with the Commissioners and the wonderful job they did stating their thoughts and concerns to Ecology.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:32 pm.

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# May 5, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** John Carr (travel), Stan Walsh, Todd Zackey, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting)

**VISITORS:** Ken Urstad, Joe Hillers, Christine Goodwin, Traci Sanderson, Rick Baker, Martha Baskin, Ian Jefferds, Laura Newcomb, Maribeth Crandell, Matt Zupich

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Adams moved to approve the agenda. Matlock seconded. The agenda was approved. Frances mentioned that she will try to end the meeting by 5pm to allow for time to get to the forum on ocean health. **MINUTES:** Rhodes moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on April 21, 2015. Halloran seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Toledo presented three items of correspondence. The first was a letter from the Board of County Commissioners to the MRC members in honor of National Volunteer Week to thank the members for their service on the MRC. The second was a letter from the Department of Health regarding Washington's shellfish growing areas advising that no areas in Island County have been threatened with classification downgrades, however there is concern with water quality at a station in Point Partridge. More information is available at [www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Shellfish/GrowingAreas/AnnualReports.aspx](http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Shellfish/GrowingAreas/AnnualReports.aspx). The third was a notice from the City of Oak Harbor regarding an application for grading. The SEPA environmental checklist is available online at [http://www.oakharbor.org/get\\_document.cfm?document=4169](http://www.oakharbor.org/get_document.cfm?document=4169)

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: MONITORING FOR POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF OCEAN ACIDIFICATION AND TEMPERATURE STRESS ON FARMED MUSSELS IN PENN COVE**

PowerPoint presentations are available.

Wood introduced Ian Jefferds, owner of Penn Cove Shellfish and Laura Newcomb, graduate student at University of Washington.

Jefferds reported that the effects of ocean acidification on shellfish initially gained national attention when shellfish hatchery operators in Oregon started having troubles with the survival of oyster larvae populations.

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Research has shown a correlation between rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide and rising levels of carbon dioxide in nearby marine waters. As oceanic carbon dioxide increases, pH decreases. The research also suggests that this process has been accelerated by human inputs of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The chemical reactions of carbon dioxide in the water determine the level of calcium in the water available to precipitate out in the form of calcium carbonate. Aragonite, which is one of the forms of calcium carbonate, is used by many calcifiers, including pteropods and shellfish to initiate their structure. With lower pH, less aragonite is formed, which makes it more difficult for shellfish to form their shell.

Penn Cove Shellfish has become involved with this issue by teaming up with the University of Washington on a research project to see if the byssal threads of mussels are affected by lower pH. They have also installed telemetry gear to track water quality, which is connected to NOAA's Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS) site. They have also teamed up with the California Current Acidification Network (C-CAN), and taken this issue before state and federal agencies and government. Additionally, they are working with Joe Hillers on a phytoremediation system to treat waste water outfall from the treatment plant to reduce nitrogen loads entering Penn Cove.

Laura Newcomb presented on the research project she has been working on with mussels in Penn Cove. Newcomb explained that mussels attach to mussel lines with byssal threads. Mussel fall-off occurs naturally, and possible factors include pH, temperature, mussel condition, food availability, salinity, and presence of parasites. Newcomb's research project focuses on pH and temperature.

A study by O'Donnell et al found that mussels in controlled laboratory conditions became about 40% weaker below a pH of 7.6. Newcomb's project found that mussels in the lab became about 60% weaker at temperatures above 18°C.

Newcomb partnered with Jefferds to test the effects of pH and temperature on mussel attachment in the natural environment. She observed that from August 2014 – February 2015 the pH did fall below 7.6, and that the average daily temperature got close to 18°C, and some individual maximum temperatures exceeded 18°C.

Newcomb looked at mussel tenacity in relation to temperature and observed that mussel attachment is stronger in colder temperatures, and weaker in warmer temperatures.

The study is still ongoing, but the current conclusions are that in the lab elevated temperature and lower pH weaken mussel attachment. In the field, the mussel's environment reached the temperature and pH thresholds. There is a correlation with weaker mussel attachment and warmer temperature at 1m. Temperature and pH do not explain all the observed patterns of mussel attachment, and they are also looking at chlorophyll, salinity, and dissolved oxygen.

**Award Announcement:** Wood announced that Ruth Richards had briefly stepped away from the meeting to receive the Whidbey Island Conservation District Resource Conservation Project of the Year Award. Richards explained that she installed two 550-gal tanks to collect water off her

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roof and use for her lawn and garden. Her project was chosen as a notable above-ground project for this year. The MRC expressed their congratulations.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring (Matlock):** Matlock reported that the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) hosted a forage fish survey training workshop two weeks ago, where they learned about the updated protocol. Matlock and Richards will meet with Dan Penttila to narrow down possible sampling sites. In his summary report, Penttila highlighted access to private beaches as a potential sampling impediment. Wood noted that the pigeon guillemot study has received permission from several landowners for private beach access, and may be able to assist Matlock in providing some contacts for gaining access to certain private beaches.

**Seining (Rhodes):** Rhodes reported that Jim Somers is still interested in being a representative for the seining project even though he's not an MRC member. The sampling is still occurring on schedule and all data sheets are being sent to Toledo. It has been a good year in terms of size and number of chum and chinook, and the number of seining volunteers has been outstanding.

**Cornet Bay Restoration (Corin):** Corin reported that the retrofit for the State Marine Maintenance Pier is on hold as the proposed cost from PND Engineers came in much higher than expected. Lisa Kaufman is going to talk to PND to see what options they may have. Halloran suggested that it might be good to go back to the bid responses and look at other contractors.

The areas to the west of the State Pier, which include Restoration Areas 1 & 3, have their restoration permits in progress. The design and specifications should be finalized this summer, with construction to begin in the fall.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Kelp Monitoring (Dickson):** Dickson reported that they will be monitoring at 3 sites on Whidbey this summer, and he has volunteers for those 3 groups. One of the sites will be selected to match one that Whidbey Watershed Stewards is going to be monitoring for their harvest assessment project. The monitoring will occur in July, August, and September. Sometime in early June, Dickson will organize an initial run-through for the volunteers. Gregg Ridder will also do a fly-over of these sites.

Rick Baker reported that they will be conducting a training tomorrow, as well as another in two weeks for their harvest assessment project.

**Northwest Straits Initiative (Corin):** Corin reported that there were 24 applicants for the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) Executive Director position. The selection team will have a conference call on Friday to figure out how many candidates will be invited to respond to a questionnaire and then an interview, and finally an interview before the entire board and a meet-and-greet with the NWSF staff. They are hoping to have a selection by June.

The next NWSC meeting is May 29<sup>th</sup> at Padilla Bay, and each MRC will give a presentation on a project that is being proposed in their grant proposal.

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**Salmon TAG (Matlock / Zackey):** Matlock reported that the TAG is in the midst of reviewing the Salmon Recovery Funding Board project proposals. The project scores are due this weekend. There will be a presentation by all the project sponsors to the WRAC on Thursday at the Heller Rd Fire Station from 2:30pm-6:00pm. The public is welcome.

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**WSU Extension:** Lawrence reported that Island County Beach Watchers will be forming their own separate 501(c)3 and will be separated from WSU as of January 1, 2016.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# May 19, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood Chair, presiding, John Carr, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Stan Walsh, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting) Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Ed Adams (conflicting meeting), Todd Zackey

**VISITORS:** Barbara Bennett, Jim Somers, Derek Pritchard, Linda Ridder, Dawn Pucci, Matt Zupich

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Wood shifted Commissioner Price Johnson's update to after the Beach Watchers Change on the agenda to accommodate Commissioner Price Johnson's schedule. Schwartz moved to approve the revised agenda. Halloran seconded. The agenda as revised was approved. **MINUTES:** Richards moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on May 5, 2015. Rhodes seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### BEACH WATCHERS CHANGE

Barbara Bennett, Program Coordinator for WSU Island County Beach Watchers (ICBW) introduced Derek Pritchard, President of Beach Watchers Advisory Council (BWAC) and Linda Ridder, Chair of the Beach Watchers Organizational Change Committee.

Pritchard reported that BWAC is an advisory council to the Island County WSU Extension County Director. Both BWAC and the University have been going through planning processes, during which BWAC was asked what it wanted from the University. Pritchard discovered that the majority of ICBW members wanted independence and ownership of the organization. The University advisors put forth three options which ICBW might want to pursue, one of which included becoming an independent organization. BWAC setup an Organizational Change Committee, chaired by Linda Ridder, to explore structural and organizational improvements.

The Organizational Change Committee is working on developing an independent non-profit organization. It is their intention to work with existing partnerships and develop new partnerships as well. They are still working out what their relationship will be with the University and other organizations, but they are optimistic about this planning process.

Ridder added that the Change Committee includes past presidents of BWAC and members from both Whidbey and Camano. They are working hard and expect the transition to happen at the end



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of December 2015. They have begun conversations to continue under the fiscal umbrella of Lighthouse Environmental Program (LEP). The intent is to come up with legal documents and develop a board of directors as soon as possible. They are exploring different names, though the mission will remain pretty similar. They want to keep existing partnerships with organizations, and explore new partnership opportunities. The projects and training are expected to continue as before.

Lawrence noted that WSU is committed to working with ICBW and the Organizational Change Committee, and believes this is a good move for the organization. There are some ICBW funds in WSU accounts and they are working to spend those funds by January 1, 2016.

Bennett thanked the MRC for the time to speak about this change, and noted that there is a lot of energy and momentum around ICBW, and looks forward to continuing the great work that has been going on for 25 years.

Ridder mentioned that they are definitely interested in maintaining a close relationship with the MRC, and she would be happy to receive feedback from the MRC about how to connect to ICBW. Their website and blog is available at <http://beachwatchers.net/change/>, and she invited the MRC to provide input by contacting her or other members of the Change Committee.

Commissioner Price Johnson stated that this is an exciting change. ICBW is a well-loved and respected organization, and she offered to help any way she can, including helping to communicate this change.

Corin noted that as the MRC's representative to the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC), he will convey this message to them at their next meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

**County Commissioner:** Commissioner Price Johnson offered her congratulations to the MRC on the Community Forum on Ocean Health, and thought the presenters were great and the audience was engaged. She is interested to hear of additional opportunities for community education and engagement on this topic.

The Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO) Executive Committee is meeting next week to discuss the Near-Term Action process and criteria.

Commissioner Price Johnson has been hearing positive chatter from Department of Ecology about finding a workable solution to the finfish net pen concerns. They haven't received any official communication yet.

The county is moving forward with a non-motorized trail plan update for which they have received some grant funding. This is a required planning document for the county which goes through the Department of Public Works, and includes biking and hiking trails. This update will include beach access, as they look at marine trails.

Corin noted that if there will be signage at these marine trail locations it could also be an opportunity to have educational signage identifying the ecological values of those areas, and that might be an area where the MRC could assist.

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Halloran noted that the Port of South Whidbey has worked with Island Beach Access on financing signage at public beach access points.

Commissioner Price Johnson reported that a grant has been approved to support the Snohomish County Conservation District to do outreach with landowners in the Kristoferson Creek watershed about water quality.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS

**Work Plan (Toledo):** Toledo mentioned that the Executive Committee had discussed the proposed 2015-2016 work plan and had made a few minor edits. Toledo invited any additional feedback from the rest of the MRC. Schwartz moved to approve the work plan with the Executive Committee's edits. Corin seconded. The edited work plan was approved.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo distributed an updated contact list, and will send an electronic version as well. Toledo reminded project leads of the importance of gathering volunteer hours, which should be reported to her quarterly. Toledo is available to assist project leads in developing an effective method of tracking volunteer hours.

Toledo mentioned that Lori Clark and Keith Higman have been working on the liability parameters for volunteers who utilize boats for MRC work, and they have a liability release form that all MRC volunteers who work or sample from watercraft need to sign and return to Toledo. The form includes a requirement for wearing a US Coast Guard approved flotation device when risks of drowning are present. Toledo will distribute the form to project leads, and any questions about the form can be directed to Higman.

The NWSC received a lot of positive feedback from the Community Forum on Ocean Health. Approximately 70 people attended and 46 responded to a post-event survey. Those who responded to the survey ranked their overall increase in understanding about the presentation topics as:

- 61% for the science of OA;
- 76% for the policy/ opportunities to engage; and
- 67% for local involvement by the shellfish industry

Toledo reported that she has been coordinating with the Snohomish MRC to host a joint meeting at Clinton Beach Park on one of the dates when the Snohomish MRC usually meets. July 15, August 19, and September 16 were brought forward as potential dates. September 16 was the preferred date, and Toledo will convey that to the Snohomish MRC.

Toledo reminded all about the MRC conference save-the-date and the online survey soliciting input on presenter topics. The conference will be held on November 6-7 in Bellingham, and the survey response is due on June 1

Toledo mentioned that the MRC is moving into its summer schedule where they will hold one meeting per month on the first Tuesday. At the next meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Suzanne Shull from the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve will be presenting on SoundIQ and new functions that have been added. Toledo encouraged all to attend and let others know about this

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presentation, and also asked members to let her know if they have particular topics they would like to see presented at future MRC meetings.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Eelgrass Monitoring (Wood):** Linda Ridder reported that the eelgrass team met today to plan their monitoring for this year. They want to retain their relationship as an MRC project, and don't anticipate any major changes to the project. They have chosen 10 sites for monitoring, and will start in June.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey (Wood):** Wood reported that there will be a training for volunteers interested in the pigeon guillemot project on May 27<sup>th</sup> from 7:30pm-9:00pm at the Unitarian Church in Freeland. The activities during the Guillemot Appreciation Days include a happy hour at Ott & Murphy winery on June 26 and a beach field trip group meeting at the Freeland Park & Ride at 8:00am on June 27.

The monitoring survey will be starting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in June. They have a prototype of an online data input system, which has been funded by the Washington Audubon and Whidbey Audubon Societies. Wood attended the International Seabird Symposium on Orcas Island as part of the Orcas Island BirdFest and was invited to represent the guillemot project.

**Phytoremediation (Adams):** No report.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Initiative (Corin):** Corin reported that the next NWSC meeting will be on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from each MRC will be presenting a project they're including in their upcoming grant proposal. Ed Adams will be presenting on the phytoremediation project for the Island MRC.

Corin is on the Executive Director Search Committee for the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF). They started with 26 applicants, sent questionnaires to 12, and will interview 8 candidates. The plan is to bring the top 4 candidates to the NWSF Board of Directors on June 9<sup>th</sup>, and hope to have someone on board by early July.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** No further reports.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo / Rhodes):** Toledo reported that she is working with the consulting firm C + C on the Shore Friendly grant. They will be scheduling workshops with the planning department to develop a streamlined process for soft shore protection projects. Toledo has been asked to give a presentation in June at St. Augustine's in-the-Woods Episcopal Church on the restoration work at Cornet Bay and what Island County is doing for soft shore protection.

**Port Susan MSA (Schwartz):** Schwartz reported that she has been connecting with the Snohomish MRC to reestablish the relationship of the Island MRC to the Port Susan MSA project. Schwartz will be attending the Snohomish MRC meeting in Everett tomorrow. A Port Susan MSA progress report came out earlier this year that highlights the progress that has been made on the Port Susan conservation action plan since 2012.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Schwartz announced a workshop about Green Shores for Homes, which is a credit system for shoreline properties. Schwartz plans to attend the workshop which will be held at Padilla Bay on June 11<sup>th</sup> from 12:00pm-5:00pm, and invited other MRC members to attend. The workshop will also be held in Edmonds on June 12<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am-2:30pm.

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** Clark reported that she attended a meeting to discuss bringing more connection between ECO Networks and LIOs. The ILIO shares the Whidbey and Snohomish ECO Net, and would like to see more collaboration. Port Susan could be a great opportunity for collaboration. The ECO Network can also be a tool for the MRC as they can assist with outreach events.

Clark noted that it would be good for the MRC to look at where they might tie into the ILIO because it is likely those projects which are identified and prioritized will get funding. The ILIO technical committee met today and finalized the targets. Toledo will send out the list of targets and potential projects. Additional project ideas can be submitted until June 5<sup>th</sup> for FY 2016.

On Tuesday, June 16 at the Coupeville Rec Hall from 9am-3pm, the ILIO will hold a meeting to prioritize the identified projects based on feasibility and impact. MRC members are invited to attend.

**County Commissioners:** Reported earlier.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Dawn Pucci reported that Jason Morgan and Joan Drinkwin would like to do round-up of seining data from Island MRC and other counties to get status and trends information on the data. Pucci will be attending site visits with Hugh Shipman from Department of Ecology and a couple academic guests from east coast universities to look at armor removal and nearshore restoration sites, including Ala Spit, Cornet Bay, Bowman Bay, and others.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# June 2, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Lenny Corin NWSC Rep, presiding, Ed Adams, Leal Dickson, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Ed Halloran (travel), John Carr (travel), Tim Lawrence, Frances Wood (travel), Linda Rhodes (work conflict), Dan Matlock (conflict), Stan Walsh (work conflict), Todd Zackey, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting)

**VISITORS:** Suzanne Shull, Paul Bigelow, Kes Tautvydas, Linda Kast Meehan, Debra Paros, Rick Baker, Don Meehan

**CALL TO ORDER:** Corin called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was not declared. **AGENDA:** No alterations were made. **MINUTES:** The minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on May 19, 2015 could not be approved as a quorum was not declared.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Toledo presented a letter from Lenny Corin announcing his resignation as the representative to the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) effective July 2015. Corin announced that Adams has offered to serve as the representative. The MRC can present a motion at the next meeting to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) that Adams be appointed the representative to the NWSC.

Toledo handed out Save-the-Date postcards for the MRC Conference in Bellingham on November 6-7.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: THE NEW SOUNDIQ**

PowerPoint presentation is available.

Toledo introduced Suzanne Shull, GIS Specialist at Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Shull presented SoundIQ (<http://www.iqmap.org/SoundIQ>), an online mapping system to make data easily accessible. SoundIQ started with the Island MRC, and has grown to include data from San Juan, Jefferson, and Snohomish MRCs, and the plan is to incorporate data from all MRCs by the end of 2015.

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Shull had approached the City of Bellingham to develop SoundIQ based on their existing CityIQ online map system. Updates have been made to SoundIQ to provide a more user-friendly interface and make it available on mobile devices.

Shull demonstrated several features, including how to generate a beach report, which provided a unique location-based document with a map, information on beach access, and links to related documents and reports. Shull also demonstrated how to explore the map, customize the visible features, turn on and off layers, and interact with an existing Story Map on marine debris in Puget Sound.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reported that the Snohomish MRC is available for a joint meeting and potluck on Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, and had suggested a mid-afternoon meeting time. The meeting would be held at Clinton Beach Park, and would be an opportunity to discuss the Port Susan MSA project. The MRC discussed that they are flexible, but suggested that closer to dinnertime might work better. Toledo will coordinate with the Snohomish MRC to finalize the details.

Toledo mentioned that the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) June newsletter featured an interview with Jim Somers about monitoring and an article highlighting Gregg Ridder's work on the eelgrass project, and encouraged all to read the newsletter (<http://www.nwstraitsfoundation.org/Foundation/Newsletter/NWSF-June-2015-newsletter.aspx>), and sign up to receive the monthly newsletter electronically.

Toledo reported that she is looking for a couple volunteers who would like to help test the Shore Friendly website that is being developed to inform shoreline property owners about soft shore protection and opportunities for action. Anybody who is interested in testing the website and providing feedback to make it informative and user-friendly should contact Toledo.

Toledo announced that the NWSC is hosting an ocean health forum with the Skagit MRC on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm-8:00pm at the Fidalgo Bay Resort. All are welcome to attend.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** Richards reported that she and Matlock met with Dan Penttila to discuss the basis for site selection. Penttila helped identify 4 sites on Whidbey and 2 on Camano. The surveys would occur at least once per month, and sometimes twice monthly. They would like to coordinate with any restoration projects that are being planned to include a pre-restoration forage fish spawn survey, as well as during and post-restoration surveys.

Senate Bill 5166 passed, which requires WDFW and DNR to survey locations for forage fish both on the beach and at a variety of water depths. This is a 2-year funded project.

Richards has started working on the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Richards has also been working on the paperwork to submit this project to Beach Watchers to have it listed as an approved project that Beach Watchers volunteers can get involved with. The equipment acquisition is almost complete and surveying will start late summer to early fall.

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**Seining:** Toledo reported that the last seining for the season is scheduled for this Friday, June 5. Jim Somers would like to present on the findings in the fall. Jason Morgan from the NWSF has shared a database with Toledo and Dawn Pucci to input seining data and allow for data analysis.

**Cornet Bay Restoration:** Corin reported that they are still waiting on permits for the work in Restoration Areas 1 & 3, and hope to have them by the end of this month. They plan on meeting to discuss next steps for the State Pier, as the estimate for the work there came in much higher than expected.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Initiative:** Corin reported that final interviews with 4 candidates for the NWSF Executive Director will be conducted next Tuesday. The NWSF Board will then discuss the candidates, determine which one(s) to pursue, and the Board President, Jeff Ward, will enter into negotiations.

The NWSC meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup> was focused on presentations from each MRC on projects that will be proposed in the upcoming grant proposal. Adams presented on the proposed phytoremediation project.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Dickson reported that they just held a volunteer orientation meeting. There are 3 groups of volunteers, and 3 sites have been identified. The first is at the end of Hastie Lake Rd just off the county parking area. The second is Point Partridge. The third is a large kelp bed off Ebey's Landing. They need to determine whether they will monitor at high tide slack or low tide slack, and Dickson will connect with Tom Mumford to seek input. The trial runs in the field will be conducted June 12-16, and the actual measurement is set for July-September.

**Salmon TAG:** Rick Baker reported that the TAG has ranked the proposed Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SFRB) projects, and will present their rankings to the WRAC.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Schwartz invited all to a sea star monitoring event at Camano Island State Park on Friday at 11:30am. Schwartz also extended an invitation to a Port Susan Recreation Area Brand Strategy Workshop at Cama Beach State Park on Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> from 3-4:30pm hosted by the City of Stanwood and Snohomish County Parks. Toledo will send out an email announcement with more details on these and all upcoming events.

Rick Baker reminded everyone that they will be on the beach at the end of Libbey Rd tomorrow to conduct kelp harvesting research. They are working with DNR to look at how much kelp is being harvested, how much is being harvested unsustainably, and using quadrats to measure

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growth rates and biomass. They are also collecting data on the overall number of harvesters by doing quick counts of harvesters at 5 spots along the Smith & Minor Islands Aquatic Reserve.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.



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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# July 7, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, John Carr, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Stan Walsh, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff)  
**ABSENT:** Tim Lawrence, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz (sick), Todd Zackey

**VISITORS:** Tom Mumford, Cheryl Lowe, Ken Urstad, Annika Fain, Vernon Brisley, Debra Paros, Emily Bishop, Rick Baker, Gregg Ridder, Linda Kast Meehan

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alternations were made. Walsh moved to approve the agenda. Halloran seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Rhodes moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on May 19, 2015. Adams seconded. The minutes were approved. Corin moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on June 2, 2015. Dickson seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Wood announced that correspondence will be addressed in the Coordinator's Update.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: KELP: WHY IT MATTERS, WHY IT MATTERS TO ISLAND COUNTY AND THE MRC**

PowerPoint presentation is available.

Rhodes introduced the presentation topic as particularly relevant to the MRC, as they gear up for two kelp projects. One project was brought up by Rick Baker from Whidbey Watershed Stewards, who was working with DNR on a kelp and macroalgae harvest assessment. The MRC plans to assist with an education and outreach component on this project. The second project is implementing the boat-based kelp survey protocol that Emily Bishop developed last summer. Four MRCs, including Island, will be involved in conducting these assessments.

Rhodes introduced Mumford, who holds a PhD in botany from the University of Washington, worked for 35 years with the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and now runs his own consulting business and teaches a macroalgae class at Friday Harbor Labs.

Mumford presented an overview of types of seaweeds. Kelp is a type of seaweed in the order Laminariales. While a lot of research has been done on kelp in its sporophyte stage – the stage most commonly pictured when talking about kelp, little is known about kelp in its microscopic gametophyte stage in the life cycle, and what factors affect their reproductive success.

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Kelp holds a lot of ecological importance. As a carbon fixer, it has a high level of primary productivity. The bulk of the carbon comes out as particulate organic matter (POM) detritus, which is then taken up by benthic filter feeders, bacteria, protozoa, and plankton. A portion is also released as dissolved organic matter (DOM), which is absorbed by bacteria. A very small portion is eaten as a live plant by herbivores.

Kelp presence has been documented on historical maps, including topographic sheets at Pt. Partridge going back to 1871. A federal project inventoried kelp as part of an assessment of potential fertilizer resources in 1911-1912. More recently, an aerial survey including kelp presence was conducted in the early 2000s.

The potential multi-faceted effects of climate change on kelp are not well understood. On the one hand, warming will favor calcified herbivores that feed on kelp, which will negatively impact kelp forests. On the other hand, increase in ocean acidification will negatively impact the calcified herbivores that feed on kelp, positively affecting kelp forests.

Walsh asked how long it takes to get long-term trends. Mumford responded that it can take a good while. They have been using the same methodology since 1989, and feel like they are just now getting a good picture of what's happening.

Corin asked if Mumford has seen much on the east side of Whidbey. Mumford replied that he doesn't know of much bull kelp on the east side, but there is likely understory kelp.

Rhodes asked if it is more important to get an assessment of the extent of kelp beds over the long-term or conduct focused studies of specific areas. Mumford replied that it's easier to get a broader picture of the extent of floating kelp, but that for non-floating kelp, it would be best to choose a few specific areas.

Gregg Ridder asked if it would be helpful to examine their aerial eelgrass photos for kelp, and when would be the best time to take aerial photography. Mumford replied that around the end of August/early September, before the first big storm, and to aim for a 0 tide.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS

**Budget Update (Toledo):** Toledo distributed a spreadsheet detailing the MRC's expenditures through March, as well committed and expected expenses for the remainder of the grant cycle. There is expected to be about \$5,000 left in the Task 1 Operations budget. Toledo presented 3 options on how to proceed with these unspent funds:

1. Utilize the funds for work within the scope of the current monitoring projects.
2. Make an amendment to use the funds for work that is not currently in the scope of the grant. An amendment may be more time-consuming.
3. Let the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) use the funds to move the MRC website to a new platform. The current platform is no longer supported, and the website needs to be moved to an updated platform, which will also improve the mobile usability of the website.

Wood stated that the pigeon guillemot project could use additional funding. They have 3 needs:

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1. Edit and update the draft article summarizing the project and results to submit for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.
2. Extend the project to conduct preliminary surveys on Camano Island.
3. Update and reprint educational brochures.

Wood proposed \$2000 be allocated to the pigeon guillemot project, \$2000 be allocated to the NWSC for the website move, and \$1000 be held in the monitoring task until further discussion can determine the best use.

Dickson stated that the work on the pigeon guillemot project has been stellar, and supports the suggestion to use the additional funding for that work. Corin stated that he also supports the use of the additional funding for the pigeon guillemot project, and he could also look into potential needs for the restoration project at Cornet Bay.

Price Johnson suggested that a decision for the use of funding either be made at a regular meeting session, or that the MRC take action to authorize the executive committee to decide how it will be spent, to ensure transparency in the decision of funding use.

Rhodes stated that she supports the use of the additional funding for the pigeon guillemot project, and that of the three options Wood mentioned, the priority should be to get the results of the pigeon guillemot project published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Walsh moved to authorize the Executive Committee to decide how to use the remaining \$5,000, taking a look first at the needs of the current MRC programs and operations, and then look at delegating any remaining funding to the NWSC for use on the website. Adams seconded. The motion passed.

**GPS Usage (Toledo):** Toledo reminded the MRC of the GPS unit that was purchased last year, and that they need to develop a plan for the current and future use of the GPS. Some potential uses include: conducting transects in Ala Spit in preparation for restoration construction and monitoring, water quality PIC source ID, wetland monitoring, ground-truthing the shoreline armoring GIS layer and vegetation overhang. Toledo invited discussion on needs within MRC projects for the GPS, and suggested that the unit could also be made available for projects within Island County that could support or inform current or future MRC work.

Dickson noted that the kelp project decided to use the Garmin GPS units borrowed from the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) rather than the MRC's GPS to ensure consistency in each team's monitoring equipment. Debra Paros noted that she could write up a report for how it might be used for the bull kelp study.

Rhodes stated that considering the accuracy of the GPS and looking at the list of MRC projects, the pigeon guillemot project looks like a very good application because the nests are located fairly closely to each other. Wood added it would be especially useful if they expand to Camano either this year or in the future.

Price Johnson noted that the need to conduct the transects at Ala Spit is imminent, and it would be great to have the GPS available for that use. Rhodes noted that this would tie into future seining work at Ala Spit.

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Rhodes moved to make the Trimble GPS unit available to Island County Department of Natural Resources in support of projects that the MRC supports as well. Dickson seconded. The motion passed.

**Coordinator's Update (Toledo):** Toledo reported that the joint meeting and potluck with the Snohomish and Island MRCs has been set for Wednesday, September 16 at 4:00pm at the Clinton Beach Park. This meeting will be held in lieu of the September 15 meeting.

Toledo reminded all to send her their volunteer hours by Friday. She also noted that from a risk management perspective, it is important for volunteers to track the specific times volunteered, such as 10am-1pm on June 20, rather than just 3 hours on June 20. This added detail does not need to be reported to Toledo, but is important for each volunteer to keep a record of the time period when they were working on an MRC project, to be able to provide a record that they were volunteering in case an injury is sustained during volunteer work.

Toledo noted that during last meeting Corin submitted a letter of resignation as the MRC Representative to the NWSC, and that Adams has offered to serve in this role. Toledo invited additional discussion on recommending Adams as the new representative, and presented a draft letter from the MRC to the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) recommending that Ed Adams be appointed as the new MRC Representative to the NWSC. Halloran moved for Wood to sign the letter. Rhodes seconded. The motion passed.

Toledo will present to the BICC at their July 15<sup>th</sup> work session to present this recommendation from the MRC to appoint Ed Adams as the new MRC Representative to the NWSC.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Eelgrass Monitoring:** Gregg Ridder reported that the eelgrass team has finished 6 of the 10 underwater video sites, and will complete the remaining sites before the end of July. Ridder has taken aerial photographs of the entire eastern shore of Whidbey and about half of the western shore.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey:** Wood reported that they have launched an online data input system thanks to Connie and Neal Clark. The survey volunteers started using the system on Monday, and in addition to easing the process for data entry, it will be useful for sharing and analyzing the data. Wood also reported that they are very pleased to have Emily Bishop working as the summer intern this year.

**Phytoremediation:** Adams reported that the phytoremediation project at the Coupeville water treatment facility is completed, and the phytoboxes are being removed. Joe Hillers is completing the report for the project.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Initiative:** Wood thanked Corin for serving as the Representative to the NWSC and presented a card signed by the MRC. Wood acknowledged that Corin has put in many hours over the years, and has done an excellent job representing the MRC.

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Corin reported that Department of Ecology will be giving a presentation on finfish net pens at the July NWSC meeting. The meeting will be held on Friday, July 31 at the Snohomish County Campus in Everett, and MRC members are welcome to attend.

Corin reported that the NWSF held an election of officers. Corin was elected as President, and will start on October 1. Jay Lind with the Skagit MRC was elected as Vice President. Greg Ayers from Orcas Island was reelected as Treasurer. Shannon Davis was elected as Secretary. One Board member has resigned, and another member has not been very active due to personal circumstances. If anyone knows of individuals who might serve well on the Board, let Corin know. They are particularly in need of tribal representation.

In regards to the Executive Director position for the NWSF, they are in serious conversations on compensation packages with two of the final candidates, and expect to know the final decision within the next few weeks.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** No updates.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo / Rhodes):** Toledo reported that for the Shore Friendly grant they have scheduled a series of 4 workshops with the Planning department to develop a streamlined permitting process. The first workshop will be held at the end of this month.

Toledo mentioned that WDFW is working on developing a regional Shore Friendly website, and is in need of volunteers to provide feedback on the website. Anyone who is interested should contact Toledo.

**Port Susan MSA (Schwartz):** No updates.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson reported that the BICC is meeting with County staff on the 14<sup>th</sup> to get update on the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). They have heard back from Department of Ecology who will make a proposal to the BICC on the 29<sup>th</sup> that recognizes the unique nature of Island's SMP, and the fact that there were no applications for any finfish net pens, nor any public comments requesting that they be allowed. The proposal would allow Island County to prevent any permitting of finfish net pens until the next SMP update at which time Department of Ecology would have come up with new criteria for citing finfish net pens and associated requirements. Commissioner Price Johnson is expecting to receive an official letter from Department of Ecology by the end of the month. If anyone is interested, they can attend or listen to the recording of the meetings on July 14<sup>th</sup> and July 29<sup>th</sup>. Agendas, minutes, and recordings are available online:  
<http://islandcounty.net/commissioners/worksessions/2015/>

Commissioner Price Johnson reminded all that the Deception Pass bridge is going to be closed each night starting July 12<sup>th</sup> through July 17<sup>th</sup> from 7pm to 5:30am. There are additional sailings

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planned for the Clinton-Mukilteo ferry. The work is weather-dependent, and may have to be postponed. Additional and up-to-date information is available online:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr20/frostadsharpespaving>

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:32 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# August 4, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** John Carr, Stan Walsh, Todd Zackey, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting) **VISITORS:** Shannon Phillips, Michael Joseph, Emily Bishop, Annika Fain, Debra Paros, Vernon Brisley

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** No alternations were made. Halloran moved to approve the agenda. Matlock seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Adams moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on July 7, 2015. Halloran seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: SEA STAR WASTING AT PORT TOWNSEND MARINE SCIENCE CENTER: THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG CITIZEN SCIENCE TO A TIMELY RESPONSE**

PowerPoint presentation is available.

Toledo introduced Shannon Phillips, AmeriCorps Marine Exhibit Environmental Educator at the Port Townsend Marine Science Center (PTMSC).

Phillips provided an overview of citizen science at PTMSC. One of their citizen science programs has been to monitor sea star wasting disease, a program that was developed shortly after sea star wasting was observed in their exhibit tanks. Their program includes weekly monitoring in the exhibit tanks as well as conducting intertidal monitoring.

The results of the both the intertidal and tank monitoring showed a dramatic drop off in the sea star population from May to July in 2014, with a slow growth in numbers in the following months. The tank monitoring also showed two wasting events – one at the start of 2014, and a second in the summer of 2014. They have not observed any wasting since September 2014. The summer 2015 study will be conducted at the end of August, and the results will be available on the PTMSC blog: <http://blog.ptmsc.org/>

Corin asked if they are monitoring the further ecological impacts on other species. Phillips responded that University of California, Santa Cruz has a marine intertidal monitoring project that is looking at the impacts of sea star wasting in the broader ecological environment.

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Annika Fain asked if they are looking at how temperature relates to presence of wasting. Phillips responded that their YSI meter has varied in its accuracy, so they are not confident in using those data.

Rhodes asked if they are monitoring at the time when they might expect recruitment. Phillips responded that they monitor seasonally, 4 times a year, and typically see the most during the spring. They only monitor adults because juveniles usually occupy zones deeper within the rocks, and they only monitor sea stars that can be observed without flipping over any rocks.

Lawrence asked if they know why the virus which was first observed 73 years ago is now causing wasting disease. Phillips responded that scientists are still researching this question, primarily looking at environmental factors. Rhodes noted that the scientific findings show a correlation between the virus and the wasting disease, not causation.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Pigeon guillemot update and letter:** Wood presented a draft letter from the MRC to the Mutiny Sands Community to thank them for allowing volunteers and the summer intern on the pigeon guillemot project to access their community property to conduct research.

MRC members provided feedback on the letter, including clarifying how many volunteers access the site, emphasizing that this project started thanks to the encouragement of the community, and including a website link to find out more information or get involved with the project.

Lawrence moved that Wood send the letter as amended. Schwartz seconded. The motion carried.

Wood provided an update on the pigeon guillemot survey. They have observed that activity has started earlier this year, and consequently might end earlier too. There have been reports of juveniles, and Emily Bishop, the summer intern, observed a squid being delivered to a young.

Corin asked if it is possible to compare data on pigeon guillemot activity with seasonality to evaluate if their behavior is connected to the temperature. Wood replied that they haven't evaluated the data to explore that potential relationship, but they might be able to look into that.

**Coordinator's Update:** Toledo reminded the MRC of the Northwest Straits Initiative's Derelict Gear Celebration on Thursday, August 13. All are invited, and the MRC will have a table at the event. Wood will bring the MRC display.

Toledo provided an update on the 2014-2015 budget. At the last MRC meeting, the MRC approved that Executive Committee determine how best to utilize the remaining approximately \$5000 in the 2014-2015 budget. Taking into consideration the suggestions brought up during the meeting, the Executive Committee recommended \$2,817.50 be allocated to allow Emily Bishop to expand her work on the pigeon guillemot project to edit an article for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Around \$575 is planned for printing educational brochures on the pigeon guillemot project, pending exact quotes from vendors. \$76 was recommended for use in coordination with the Island Local Integrating Organization and Lead Entity to purchase a 1-year subscription to WebEx to enhance the ability for interested individuals to attend and participate in MRC meetings remotely, and facilitate sub-committee and project meetings. This leaves about



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\$1,500 remaining. The Executive Committee discussed identifying any further project needs with the remaining funds, and letting Sasha Horst at the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) know about how much leftover funding to expect after the September meeting.

Toledo announced that the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) is planning for their fall shoreline landowner workshops through the Shoreline Armoring Reduction Project (SHARP). Toledo asked for input on whether a weekend workshop or a weekday evening workshop would be better received by the community. As these workshops will be held in the fall, due to the uncertainty of the weather, they may not include a site visit. Halloran and Rhodes suggested that an evening meeting would likely be better attended.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** Matlock reported that he has been working with Richards and Toledo to draft a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). All the equipment has been ordered and they will be able to conduct surveys with the new blue bowl technique as well as hand winnowing. Richards worked with Beach Watchers to get the project listed as an approved project, and has lined up some volunteers who are interested in participating.

Matlock reported that the opportunity arose to conduct surveys at Ala Spit in conjunction with the restoration construction that is scheduled to begin at the end of the month. While he sees this as a great application of the team's knowledge and equipment in the future, he is concerned the group is not quite ready yet. Matlock suggested that the additional MRC funding might be used to have Dan Penttila conduct the surveys with him and Richards observing as a continuation of their training. The Executive Committee approved the allocation of the funds for this work.

**Seining:** Toledo reported that they have contracted with Tina Mirabile from Advanced Environmental Solutions to complete the 2014 and 2015 seining reports, as well as prepare the necessary permits for 2016. Jim Somers will report to the MRC on the findings after the written report is complete.

**Cornet Bay Restoration:** Corin reported that they had expected to have all the permits for the restoration work in Areas 1 & 3 in hand by the end of June, but they still do not have them. There was an administrative delay with the state permit, which has been resolved, and they are hopeful that work can still begin in September as originally planned.

Corin noted that there is a potential restoration project by Hoypus Point. There is an old ferry landing there with about 75 yards of cemented large rock. It sounds like the Park would be agreeable to have that removed. Corin will be having conversations with Jack Hartt and the NWSF about this as a potential project. Rhodes recommended that Corin talk with the Skagit Coop because that is a collection point for juvenile salmonids coming out of the Skagit. Matlock noted that Dan Penttila has reported heavy surf smelt spawning in that area.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:** Adams reported that he attended his first NWSC meeting. The NWSC is working on a sustainability plan to diversify its funding sources, as well as a communications plan.

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Department of Ecology presented at the meeting on net pen policy in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update process, and what progress has been made in various counties. Ecology is planning a process for updating their net pen policy and siting guidelines, starting with a public forum in October at the University of Washington, more details to come. The process will also involve developing a set of scientific recommendations followed by a process for developing the rules and regulations. This is projected to be completed 2 years before the next SMP update.

Corin reported that the NWSF still does not have an Executive Director, but they hope to hear back from the final candidates for a final decision in the next couple weeks.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Dickson reported that he had asked Rhodes to serve as the MRC lead on the kelp project. Rhodes reported that 3 teams of 2 people each started conducting trial runs in June using the boat-based survey protocol that Emily Bishop developed last year. The goal has been to test out and refine the protocol. There have been some safety questions, as the window to complete the surveys can be very narrow. The kelp team has discussed vetting volunteers at certain sites based on their ability to handle certain conditions.

They have started collecting data at their three selected sites. Two sites are located from Partridge Point up to the Hastie Lake boat landing. The third site is in Admiralty Inlet. All three sites have shown kelp presence for a long time, and it might be interesting to look at a couple transient sites as well.

**Salmon TAG:** Matlock reported that the opportunity has come up for a 6<sup>th</sup> project through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRF B) which allows Lead Entities to spend up to 10% of their budget for monitoring with a \$24,000 limit. Eric Beamer from Skagit River System Cooperative has submitted a proposal to do pocket estuary surveys using aerial data to look at extent, habitat type, and connectivity.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** Clark reported that the Department of Ecology participated in a Work Session with the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC). The Commissioners passed along compliments for the MRC in working with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on this issue. Ecology was complimentary of all the work and coordination that was done with the MRC, DNR, Planning Department, and the Commissioners to spark a conversation that has gone up to the state level about updating the guidelines for finfish net pens.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# September 1, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes, Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz (via WebEx), Stan Walsh, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** John Carr (travel), Leal Dickson, Tim Lawrence, Frances Wood (travel), Todd Zackey, Lori Clark, Helen Price Johnson **VISITORS:** Dawn Pucci, Barbara Bennett, Jim Somers, Gregg Ridder

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:34 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Corin requested to give an update on Cornet Bay under "Other Reports." Walsh moved to approve the agenda as revised. Halloran seconded. The agenda as revised was approved. **MINUTES:** Corin moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on August 4, 2015. Halloran seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: UPDATE ON SALMON RECOVERY IN ISLAND COUNTY

PowerPoint presentation is available.

Rhodes introduced Dawn Pucci, who works in Island County Department of Natural Resources as the Lead Entity Coordinator for Salmon Recovery in WRIA 6.

Pucci provided an overview of the ranking for the 2015 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) project proposals. The Salmon TAG scored the projects, which were sent to the WRAC to finalize. The WRAC did not revise the ranking as it was recommended to them by the TAG.

The 2015 projects are as follows:

1. Kristoferson Barrier Correction – Location: Kristoferson Creek by Triangle Cove on Camano Island. This is a construction project to build culverts at two locations along Kristoferson Creek that are current fish passage barriers.
2. Iverson Stakeholder Integration – Location: Iverson Preserve on east side of Camano Island. This project is aimed to bring stakeholders together to develop potential solutions to the various concerns about habitat and water quality. This builds upon earlier work done on flood risk assessment and a salt water intrusion study.
3. Camano Island State Park – Location: Lowell Point on southwest shoreline of Camano Island. This project is a feasibility study to evaluate the potential for tidal inundation to allow for fish access. There is evidence that suggests there was a pocket estuary at this location which was either filled in naturally or through human influence. The project includes a significant outreach component.

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4. Greenbank Issues Assessment – Location: Greenbank Marsh in central Whidbey Island. An old pocket estuary here has been sealed off by a tidegate with outfall that frequently gets plugged by shore drift. The project will look at the potential and feasibility of solutions to restore tidal connectivity.
5. Culvert List for Area 2 – Location: Streams that enter the marine environment on the east side of Whidbey and the west side of Camano. This project aims to identify and prioritize culverts in Area 2 to provide information on fish barriers that would have an impact on fish passage if replaced.

The Salmon Recovery Plan will be going through an update process in the next year and a half, which will look at what has been accomplished since 2005, what has changed, and where plans should head in the future. This process will involve several groups including the Lead Entities, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP), TAG, WRAC, and Commissioners.

A monitoring plan will be developed, which will look at how to use results from monitoring to feedback into strategies and actions. Beach seining is planned for Ala Spit and Cornet Bay. Pucci is coordinating with Jason Morgan at the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) and some fantastic volunteers to do status and trends analysis of the seining data from Cornet Bay.

Ala Spit restoration is underway. The rock groin, which was blocking sediment drift to be deposited on the spit, has been removed. There is a smaller wave break placed lower down which is meant to slow the wave action. Portions of the bulkhead have been removed. Material will be added the neck of the spit, the exact size of which was modeled for the wave energy of this site.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Joint Snohomish/Island Meeting:** Toledo reminded the MRC that their next meeting will be a joint meeting and potluck with the Snohomish MRC at Clinton Beach Park on Wednesday, September 4pm-6pm. Topics will include Port Susan and common projects such as kelp and forage fish surveys.

**Grant and Budget Updates:** Toledo noted that there were no further recommendations for specific uses of the remaining 2014-2015 grant funding, so any leftover funding will be returned to the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) after September 30. The NWSC has a couple months to use the returned funding.

The 2015-2016 grant has been drafted, and Sasha has a few final comments and questions which Toledo will be addressing. The NWSC is waiting for their agreement to be signed with PSP before the grant can be put forward for signature. Toledo will guide the grant through the signature process at the county.

**Coordinator's Update:** Toledo noted that the MRC conference is coming up on November 6-7 in Bellingham. There will be a space for MRCs to have a display. If any members have display ideas or would like to work on the MRC trifold, please contact Toledo.

Toledo reminded MRC members to send her their volunteer hours for July-September.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

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**Eelgrass Monitoring:** Gregg Ridder reported that he completed the 2014 report. The 2015 data has been collected. 10 underwater videography sites were completed by early August. Ridder completed aerial photography of the entire shoreline of Whidbey Island and some of Camano. WA DNR revised how they conduct their data analysis for underwater videography data. They reran the MRC's data from 2010-2013, which provided essentially the same results.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey:** Rhodes reported that the summer monitoring season has ended. She has reviewed the manuscript summarizing the study that Emily Bishop has been working on, and has provided feedback.

**Phytoremediation:** Adams reported that Joe Hillers has been working with Toledo to finalize the summary report. Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) is working on a grant to produce pre-designs for phytoremediation projects that could be installed at Ebey's Landing. In the upcoming year the MRC is tasked to review WICD's pre-designs and provide input.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Cornet Bay:** Corin reported that they have received the permits for Areas 1&3. Lisa Kaufman is working on getting out an RFP to get the work completed as quickly as possible. Congressman Rick Larsen will be conducting a tour of Cornet Bay on Thursday, September 3.

Corin noted that he communicated with Jack Hartt at Deception Pass State Park on the potential restoration project at Hoypus Point to remove the large cemented rock. Hartt forwarded the information to State Parks, and they are waiting to hear back on whether this project is a possibility.

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation (Adams/Corin):** Adams reported that the NWSC met last week via WebEx. Ginny Broadhurst was invited to give a presentation in South Korea on the work and collaboration of the NWSC and MRCs. Marc Daily from PSP reported during the meeting that PSP would like to conduct MRC site visits with legislators this year. Grant projects from MRCs were presented during the WebEx, and were all approved by the NWSC.

Corin reported that Holly Faulstich left the NWSC. Caroline Gibson was selected as the Executive Director for the NWSF, and will assume the position around the time of the MRC conference. Corin is involved with the transition team to make this process as smooth as possible. Jill Clark with the NWSF has resigned, effective October 31. This position may not be advertised or filled immediately as the staffing structure will be re-evaluated under Gibson's new leadership.

The NWSF received a resignation from Board member Andy Clay. The Board now has 8 members, and should have between 9-15. MRC members are encouraged to recommend potential Board members to Corin.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** Barbara Bennett reported that the organizational transition is moving along as planned. A new name and board are expected in October, with the expectation that the new organization will be functioning by the end of the year. Sound Waters is planned for the first Saturday in February: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The keynote speaker will be Brian Atwater who will be discussing the Cascadia Fault. All activities are expected to continue as

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before. There are 29 Beach Watcher trainees in the class that will be graduating at the end of October.

Beach Watchers has been asked to become involved with two citizen science programs: The first is with WA Sea Grant on invasive green crab deployment and retrieval of cages. The second is Mussel Watch. Beach Watchers will help with bagging thousands of Penn Cove mussels for monitoring.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction (Toledo/Rhodes):** Toledo noted that she is helping coordinate the second SHARP landowner workshop, which is scheduled for the evening of October 29<sup>th</sup> on Camano. Toledo sought input from the MRC for workshop timing either at 6-8:30pm or 6:30-9pm. Preference was for the earlier time frame.

Rhodes reported that she participated in a SHARP update conference call on Monday. Four design projects are underway, including three in Island County: Seahorse Siesta – a community project, Maylor’s Point – a project with the Navy, and the Waterman property, which is in the design planning stages.

**Port Susan MSA (Schwartz):** Schwartz shared the following link to a video by the Snohomish MRC about Port Susan, and encouraged members to watch it prior to the joint meeting:  
<https://vimeo.com/111137828>

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Corin mentioned that registration for the MRC conference opens today. Toledo reminded MRC members to let her know if they will be attending the conference, as there is money in the budget to cover travel and lodging expenses, but she needs to know in advance how many to expect.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:28 pm.

# Snohomish and Island County Marine Resources Advisory Committee Meeting Meeting Summary

**September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015 4:00-6:00PM  
Clinton Beach Park, Whidbey Island**

<p><b>Snohomish MRC Members Present</b> Lincoln Loehr Paul Schlenger Paul Clampitt Franchesca Perez Simon Geerlofs Susan Tarpley Sarah Brown</p> <p><b>Island MRC Members Present</b> Frances Wood Linda Rhodes Lenny Corin Ed Adams Elsa Schwartz Leal Dickson Ed Halloran Dan Matlock</p>	<p><b>Staff, Presenters, and Others</b> Anna Toledo, Island County MRC Coordinator Alyson Rae, Snohomish County Communications Specialist Taylor McDowell, Snohomish County MRC Program Assistant Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner Angie Mozer, Executive Director, Port of South Whidbey</p>
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**Welcome and Introductions**

Frances Wood opened the joint Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting with a quorum for both MRCs at 4:11 pm. Attendees from both MRCs introduced themselves.

**Port Susan Armor Removal Assessment Update**

Paul Schlenger and Alyson Rae of the Snohomish County MRC presented an overview of the Port Susan Armor Removal Assessment. Snohomish MRC contracted Anchor QEA and Coastal Geological Services (CGS) to assess shoreline parcels along Port Susan in Snohomish County for armor removal feasibility and protection priorities. CGS determined armor removal feasibility for each parcel by estimating background erosion rates and sufficient building setback distances. CGS eliminated parcels from the study that had structures potentially at risk of shoreline erosion.

CGS scored the remaining armored and unarmored parcels using a series of ecological benefits criteria. The criteria represent benefits to nearshore habitat if armor was removed or unarmored parcels were protected. CGS scored each parcel and assigned it a rank of Moderate, High or Top. The Snohomish MRC can use these parcel rankings to inform restoration or protection priorities.

The Snohomish MRC used the results of the assessment to direct outreach efforts to schedule site visits by a CGS geomorphologist. MRC staff mailed a letter and brochure to landowners along armored shorelines prioritized for restoration. The MRC received five responses from interested landowners, and scheduled site visits on three of the properties. Jim Johannessen of CGS performed the site visits on September 15<sup>th</sup> and will submit summaries of the visits to the MRC.

### **Island County MRC Port Susan Update**

Anna Toledo updated the MRCs on an ongoing Island County grant project in Island County, including Port Susan. Anna is working closely with Island County Planning Department to streamline the permitting process for replacing armor with softshore protection. In addition to this, she is working on a social marketing campaign to educate the public, contractors, and real estate agents on shoreline processes and the benefits of utilizing softshore protection. The goal of this project is to promote alternatives to hard armoring in favor of “shore friendly” options. The project team is considering incorporating site visits for realtors to help educate them on shoreline processes.

### **Common Projects Update**

Dan Matlock of Island County MRC updated the group on Island MRC forage fish spawning surveys. Island MRC hasn't conducted many surveys in recent years, but is in the process of developing a forage fish survey program. Dan explained that MRC members have taken training courses through Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. Island MRC is in the process of identifying surveys sites and recruiting volunteers. Dan hopes to align the forage fish surveys with beach restoration or armor removal projects to determine how nearshore restoration influences forage fish spawning behavior.

Francesca Perez explained that the Snohomish MRC has conducted forage fish spawning surveys for the past five years. These surveys are associated with the Nearshore Beach Restoration Project—which involves restoration and beach nourishment at multiple sites. The Snohomish MRC will conduct post-restoration monitoring to answer questions on the relationship of nearshore restoration and forage fish spawning.

Lincoln Loehr addressed the group on Snohomish MRC kelp surveys. The Snohomish MRC surveyed bull kelp (*Nereocystis luetkeana*) at three sites in Snohomish County. They identified 14 kelp beds, most of which have extra low densities of bulbs. The Snohomish MRC surveyed one large kelp bed in Edmonds that exceeded 15 acres in area and had a medium density. Additionally, the Snohomish MRC and Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) received press coverage for their efforts. The Everett Herald published an article on July 30<sup>th</sup> describing the project and what the NWSC and MRCs are doing to monitor bull kelp.

Linda Rhodes updated the group on Island MRC kelp surveys. Island MRC has monitored three kelp beds in the county, two of which are along western Whidbey Island. They have monitored each bed in June, July and August. They discovered that the size of each kelp bed increased with each month over the summer, but the bulb density remained static. They also experimented with the protocol by surveying at 0' and 5' tides to determine how tide height influences the results of the surveys. They found that the size of the kelp bed remains the same when monitored at different tides, but the bulb density at a 5' tide is approximately 50-percent of bulb densities at 0' tide. Island MRC hopes to survey more beds throughout the county in coming seasons.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.**



# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# October 6, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Leal Dickson, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Stan Walsh, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Ed Adams (conflicting meeting), John Carr, Lenny Corin (travel), Dan Matlock (travel), Todd Zackey **VISITORS:** Joe Hillers, Ginny Broadhurst, Scott Chase, Phyllis Kind, Govinda Rosling, Susan Bennett, Dick Toft, Debra Paros, Barbara Bennett

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Wood noted that Ginny Broadhurst will give an update on the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) in “Other Reports.” Schwartz moved to approve the agenda as revised. Halloran seconded. The agenda as revised was approved. **MINUTES:** Rhodes moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on September 1, 2015. Walsh seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Toledo passed around a letter for MRC members to sign thanking the Port of South Whidbey for their help at the Island-Snohomish joint meeting at Clinton Beach Park. Toledo announced that she had received an email from Jim Hansen from the Whatcom MRC to make the Island MRC aware of a project by the Lagoon Point Community Association for replacement of a private bridge.

### SHORE STEWARDS UPDATE

Wood introduced Scott Chase, Shore Stewards Coordinator at WSU Extension. Chase provided an update on the Shore Stewards program.

Shore Stewards has updated and rewritten their booklet, “Guide for Shoreline Living,” also available online: [http://shorestewards.cw.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/11/GuideforShorelineLiving\\_Update\\_4-15\\_P3-1.pdf](http://shorestewards.cw.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/11/GuideforShorelineLiving_Update_4-15_P3-1.pdf). The updated booklet includes an added emphasis on clean water, lakes and streams.

The website has also been updated: <http://shorestewards.cw.wsu.edu/>, including information on each guideline, with educational spotlights and links to additional resources. The website also includes a series of videos, many of which are also available on the updated Shoreline Living DVD for shoreline property owners.

### EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: 2015 Pigeon Guillemot Survey Report

PowerPoint presentation is available.

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Wood introduced Emily Bishop, 2015 intern for the pigeon guillemot project. Bishop reviewed the project goals and methods. Her work focused on gathering in-depth data at 2 colonies: Mutiny Sands and Pratt's Bluff.

Data from Mutiny Sands indicated 3 likely fledging events and 2 possible fledging events. Pratt's Bluff showed 2 likely and 4 possible fledging events.

Prey composition and selectivity were studied. The most common prey categories were gunnel/prickleback, sculpin, and other. Two burrows at Mutiny Sands and one at Pratt's Bluff showed preference for a particular species of prey. This is a topic that could be further studied in the future.

Volunteer data showed that the number of adults and burrow activity has continued to remain stable. The peak times for prey delivery have been between July 12<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Gunnel/prickleback were the most common prey type.

Bishop responded to several questions and discussion points:

- It is possible that a parent prefers a particular species of prey. This question has been explored primarily in Alaska and British Columbia, with findings showing that adults may prefer a particular species, making the decision between a more abundant fish, such as sculpin, or a less available fish with a higher lipid content, such as sand lance.
- Fledge rate is about 40% based on literature. Chick failure may be due to predators, the presence of a second chick in the burrow, or other issues.
- Bishop noted that one burrow was found in a log. While there is no specific evidence of this in literature, another volunteer also discovered a burrow on the ground.
- About 1/3 of the colonies were already showing prey deliveries when the surveys started this year, which may have been due to the warm summer. The plan for next year is to start the surveys earlier.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Funding Opportunities:** Toledo called for a discussion around the funding opportunities put forward by Joan Drinkwin from the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF). Rhodes recused herself from discussions around the NOAA grants.

NOAA Marine Debris Removal Grant: The NWSF intends to apply for this funding for derelict crab pot removal in Puget Sound/Northwest Straits. The plan would be for the NWSF to work with MRCs to identify specific locations for removal and then work together to build media coverage of the removal work.

Potential locations suggested included: Camano Island boat launches – there are 3 primary locations; small dock at Clinton ferry and marina in Langley, owned by the Port of South Whidbey.

NOAA Marine Debris Education and Outreach Grant: There is the opportunity for the NWSF to apply for this funding opportunity in close partnerships with MRCs to encourage proper fishing practices to avoid losing crab pots. MRCs would develop a plan for the outreach methods and venues (signage, media, workshops, etc), and the NWSF could help develop the materials and

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provide support. The NWSF currently has funding to develop a series of videos directed at recreational crabbers to educate them about how not to lose their pots. Interested MRCs can participate in developing and distributing these videos. Halloran noted that the two NOAA grants seem to complement each other well.

Puget Sound Partnership solicitation for Near-Term Actions: The NWSF has suggested a couple approaches:

1. Apply regionally within each appropriate LIO area for continued education to landowners to prevent and remove hard armoring. This would continue the outreach, site visits, and technical assistance that are currently underway with the SHARP project.
2. Pursue a landscape scale sea level rise vulnerability assessment with a focus on nearshore restoration viability and feasibility.

Commissioner Price Johnson noted that sea level rise is a topic the community often asks about, and is an important consideration looking forward. Rhodes noted that there is growing interest in resilient communities. There may be greater potential for funding when the element of economics and human impact is considered.

The MRC is interested in learning more about all three funding opportunities. Toledo will be participating in a conference call with the NWSF to learn more about the opportunities and gather more details on the MRC's potential role in each project.

**Coordinator's Update:** Toledo passed around a copy of the MRC annual report for October 2014-September 2015, also available online:

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org/uploads/pdf/Resources/2015%20Island%20MRC%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

Toledo reminded all interested MRC members to register for the MRC conference and reserve their hotel rooms. Any members who would like to receive hotel and lodging reimbursement must let Toledo know by October 7 to be placed on the pre-approval list.

Rhodes is gathering items for the basket that will be auctioned at the MRC conference. Proceeds will go to the NWSF. Donations can be large or small, and in the past have ranged from homemade jams to overnight B&B stays.

The Beach Watchers Change Committee contacted Toledo and Wood about the MRC's interest in continuing to be a co-sponsor of the Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year award along with the Beach Watcher's new organization, officially named Sound Waters Stewards of Island County. Wood responded that the MRC would still like to be involved. The Change Committee is working with WSU to determine their involvement in the award. Lawrence is in favor of a more inclusive award committee to represent the many organizations in Island County which work on marine resources, and to help get as many nominations as possible.

## **NWSC GRANT REPORTS:**

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** Richards reported that they are getting ready to start monitoring. They are working on getting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), completing county volunteer training, and finalizing the sampling

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schedule. Richards and others met with the NWSF this morning to discuss monitoring plans in Island County and get a sense of what's being monitored and by whom. There is increasing interest in monitoring at restoration sites, including 3 sites identified through the SHARP project: Waterman, Maylor's Point and a private community near Langley.

**Seining:** Toledo reported that the 2014 and 2015 reports have been completed. The reports will be posted to the MRC website and Jim Somers will be presenting on the results at the October 20 meeting.

**Cornet Bay Restoration:** Toledo reported that there is an RFP that has been distributed for the restoration work at Areas 1 and 3. The plan is for the work to be completed this fall.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:** Ginny Broadhurst reported that she and Wood met with Commissioner Price Johnson. Broadhurst has been meeting with local government officials to make a request for local contributions as part of the NWSC's sustainability plan. This would allow MRCs to focus more funding on project implementation. Broadhurst noted that it is helpful when MRCs have a long-term vision, as it is easier to look for funds that align with the MRC's goals.

The NWSC is undergoing some staffing changes. Nicole Jordan is the new Program Coordinator. Caroline Gibson will be transitioning to her new role as the Executive Director of the NWSF at the end of October. A job offer has been extended to Lucas Hart to replace Gibson's position at the NWSC in November.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Rhodes reported that the kelp team just held a meeting to debrief on the efforts over the summer. 3 teams surveyed 3 sites and were able to obtain quality data. The next step will be to look at the protocol and any adjustments that need to be made. Proper training will also be an important aspect of the overall plan. Representatives from several MRCs will be presenting at the MRC conference on lessons learned from the initial kelp surveys this year. Dickson noted that Rhodes has done a great job leading the team and paving the way to refine the protocol moving forward.

**Salmon TAG:** Toledo passed along a report from Matlock on the five Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) project proposals. Kristoferson Creek Passage Improvements, Iverson Preserve Stakeholder Integration, and Greenbank Marsh Restoration Issues were all cleared to go forward for approval in December. The Camano Island State Park Lagoon Reconnection Assessment project was classified as "needs more information" as the review panel would like clarification on how the assessment of design success probability will affect the decision to move forward with the project is made. The Island County Culvert Prioritization Area 2 project was identified as a "project of concern," which means the SRFB has some questions that the sponsor (IC Public Works) needs to address. Dawn Pucci is working with the project sponsors to address these requests.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

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**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson reported that she met with Wood and Broadhurst to discuss sustainability for the MRC. In considering the work of the ILIO and the MRC, there is a great opportunity to align projects and plans across Island County to make solid connections and leverage each group's efforts.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Broadhurst noted that the NWSC is considering owning a regional NTA on oil spill preparedness, prevention, and response. There may be opportunities to partner with interested MRCs. Clark noted that oil spills were identified by the ILIO as a high pressure, and that there is a need for regional assistance to address the pressure.

Barbara Bennet reported that the current Beach Watchers program is getting ready for the transition. A new board was elected 2 weeks ago. Bennett is focused on BW training. They have 22 trainees on Whidbey and 6 on Camano. They are also working to update the marine display area at the Coupeville Wharf.

Rhodes announced that Representatives Denny Heck and Derek Kilmer have introduced the Puget SOS (Save Our Sound) Act. The bill would improve the federal government's role and investment in Puget Sound.

Commissioner Price Johnson announced that the SMP with the net pen ban will be the subject of a public hearing on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# October 20, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Ed Halloran, Tim Lawrence, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz (via WebEx), Stan Walsh, Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting), Lori Clark County Lead – Island County Department of Natural Resources Manager (non-voting), Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff)  
**ABSENT:** John Carr, Lenny Corin (travel), Leal Dickson, Linda Rhodes (work conflict), Todd Zackey  
**VISITORS:** Mike Hartley, Steve Robert, Lisa Kaufman, John Lovie, Jim Somers, Tom Vos, Barbara Bennett, Sarah Schmidt, Dawn Pucci

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Matlock moved to approve the agenda. Adams seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Richards requested minor edits to the October 6<sup>th</sup> minutes. Walsh moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on October 6, 2015 with the suggested edits. Halloran seconded. The minutes with edits were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### CORNET BAY UPDATE

Wood introduced Lisa Kaufman with the Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF). Kaufman explained that the NWSF hired PND Engineers to conduct a feasibility assessment for opportunities to redesign the beginning section of the marine maintenance pier in Area 5 at Cornet Bay.

Kaufman introduced Mike Hartley and Steve Robert from PND Engineers. Harley and Robert presented on the Cornet Bay Pier Retrofit and available options. They presented 3 options for the abutment, and 3 options for the superstructure, with cost estimates for each option. The presentation is available [online](#).

The MRC discussed benefits and difficulties with each of the options. Habitat benefits include improved access and light penetration for fish so they do not have to navigate around dark spaces. The light penetration could make the area more suitable for eelgrass, but it is unclear how much benefit it would have, as the area is by the edge of the eelgrass zone. It was suggested to talk to Parks about narrowing the structure to 12 feet from the current 20 feet to allow for greater light penetration.

Redesigning the abutment would restore sediment transport and keep wood from getting caught and stuck on the dock. The riprap on the shore would be removed and restored with fishmix.

Kaufman requested feedback from the MRC on whether they would like to see the project move forward with a design. The first step would be to conduct a geotechnical investigation. If the

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project were to move forward, construction would most likely begin in Fall 2016-2017 depending on funding. Wood noted that this project is a high priority for the MRC.

Kaufman also updated that they held the bid opening for the fill removal at Areas 1 & 3, and are about ready to offer a contract. They are aiming to start construction within a month, with an end date of Dec 10<sup>th</sup>.

## 2015 CORNET BAY SEINING REPORT

Wood introduced Jim Somers, Project Lead for the MRC Seining Project. Somers provided a handout of charts and graphs from the 2014 and 2015 seining reports, available [online](#).

In 2015, the team missed the early part of the season for juvenile chinook. They plan on starting earlier in 2016 to be sure to capture the start of the bell curve.

The plan has been to conduct seining at Cornet Bay through 2016. Somers participated in a meeting with Toledo, Pucci, NWSF, and MRC forage fish leads to discuss holistic monitoring efforts. The goal will be to create an overall monitoring plan to include recommendations on the number of years to conduct pre- and post-restoration monitoring. They are also determining which sites they should be monitoring in addition to Cornet Bay, taking into account their capacity limits.

Commissioner Price Johnson noted that it would be helpful to continue sampling at Cornet Bay if the pier replacement goes forward, to demonstrate the changes achieved from the investment. Pucci noted that with all the variables, biological indicators are not the best method to show effectiveness of a restoration project. Pucci is also coordinating with a NWSF volunteer to populate a database with exact fish lengths from previous years of seining to be able to conduct a more rigorous statistically-based analysis.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Letter of Support:** Toledo reported that the NWSF is asking for a letter of support from each MRC for their proposal for the NOAA Marine Debris Removal Grant. The letter of support also includes a commitment from the MRC to help build media awareness around the removal work. The MRC approved to have Wood sign the letter of support.

**MRC Conference:** Toledo reminded members to continue gathering items to add to the conference basket. Items can be dropped off at Toledo's office or brought to the retreat.

Toledo solicited ideas from the group to update the MRC's educational trifold to bring to the conference. Panels on the forage fish project and phytoremediation work were suggested.

**Funding Opportunities:** Toledo reported that she and Wood participated in a conference call with the NWSF regarding the funding opportunities put forward by Joan Drinkwin at the NWSF and discussed at the October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

NOAA Marine Debris Removal Grant: Covered under "Letter of Support"

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NOAA Marine Debris Education and Outreach Grant: This grant would provide the opportunity for MRCs to engage in education and outreach around marine debris. MRCs would take leadership in identifying the avenues for outreach. Currently the NWSF has funding to develop messaging and a series of videos directed at recreational crabbers to educate them about how not to lose their pots. The NWSF is not inclined to apply for this grant because they are already working on the videos, and will be working with MRCs to distribute the message, but if an MRC is interested in this grant opportunity, they can help support.

Adams noted that this could be a good way to collaborate with other MRCs, and if we would like to seek funding for education and outreach, better to get started now. Toledo will follow-up with Drinkwin to get information on the required letter of intent and more details about the grant.

Puget Sound Partnership solicitation for Near-Term Actions (NTAs): The NWSF is looking into NTA proposals to provide climate change vulnerability analysis focused on prioritizing restoration opportunities, and also to continue the SHARP work, including landowner workshops, site visits, and design and permitting assistance. There is also some interest in oil spill prevention. The NWSF would own the NTA, and MRCs could be involved in implementation.

ECO Network NTA: Toledo reported that the Whidbey ECO Network is working on developing an NTA for education and outreach on the effects of climate change. The ECO Network is an umbrella organization sponsored by the Puget Sound Partnership, which brings together several environmentally-focused entities. This NTA would involve several organizations collaborating to ensure the messaging around the effects of climate change is consistent, and encourage a focus on preparation and resiliency. It was suggested that the MRC could participate by hosting forums on ocean acidification and sea level rise.

Toledo will develop a draft budget for the MRC to host 3-4 forums to include with the ECO Network's NTA proposal.

**Coordinator's Update:** No further updates.

## **NWSC GRANT REPORTS:**

**Eelgrass Monitoring:** No update.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey:** No update.

**Phytoremediation:** No update.

## **OTHER REPORTS:**

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:** No further updates.

**Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:** Barbara Bennett reported that Beach Watchers will be updating the display at the Coupeville Wharf and provided a handout of the concept sketches. The theme is "What Makes Penn Cove So Special?"



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**Shoreline Armoring Reduction:** Toledo reported that a shoreline workshop is being offered for contractors and consultants on Camano on October 29, and in Langley on November 12 from 2-5pm. There is a SHARP shoreline landowner workshop planned for Camano on Thursday, October 29 from 6-8:30pm, directly following the contractor workshop.

**Port Susan MSA:** No update.

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** Wood announced that the MRC will be advertising for four positions on the MRC and encouraged members to reach out to potential candidates. The Executive Committee has been discussing holding an MRC retreat in late February or early March. More details to follow.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson reported that she attended the Leadership Council meeting and Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting. The take-away from the meetings was the importance of motivating people to be aware of their actions so they can make positive changes. In general, people in this area are willing to modify their behavior if they understand why, so messaging must be clear so people receive the information they need to make those behavior changes.

Commissioner Price Johnson also reported that there will be a public hearing this evening on the Shoreline Master Program.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# November 17, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes, Vice-Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Leal Dickson, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff)  
**ABSENT:** John Carr, Ed Halloran (conflicting meeting), Tim Lawrence (conflicting meeting), Stan Walsh, Frances Wood (travel), Todd Zackey, Lori Clark (travel), Helen Price Johnson (conflicting meeting) **VISITORS:** Lois Farrington, Dawn Pucci

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Corin requested that a 10-minute slot be added after Coordinator's Update for John Githens to present on a drone-based kelp survey project. Schwartz moved to approve the agenda with the addition. Corin seconded. The agenda as revised was approved. **MINUTES:** Dickson moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on October 20, 2015 and the minutes of the joint Island and Snohomish County MRCs meeting held on September 16, 2015. Richards seconded. The minutes from both meetings were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### BUSINESS ITEMS

**Conference Debrief:** Rhodes asked members who attended the MRC conference to share something they learned or ideas the MRC could pursue. Highlights included:

- Kelp project panel session: It was interesting to hear about one project that all MRCs are working on. All MRCs dealt with safety issues. Differences among the MRCs included weather, tides, currents, and the size and definition of the kelp beds.
- Northwest Straits 101: This was a valuable session to learn how all the Northwest Straits components and funding fit together.
- Outreach: Social media can be leveraged to promote MRC accomplishments and events. Pictures and MRC announcements should be sent to Toledo who can pass them along to the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) for distribution on social media. The MRC might also think about writing occasional press releases, including photos, on projects and accomplishments.
- Field trip: The field trip was very educational and a great highlight of MRC work.

MRC members found the conference to be inspirational and energizing. The facilities and staff were high quality. The featured speaker on Friday evening, Dr. Graner, gave a great presentation with beautiful videos. Overall, the conference was well organized and executed.

**MRC Retreat:** Rhodes reported that the Executive Committee has been discussing an MRC retreat, and opened the discussion to the group on location, date and time, and expectations and goals.

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- Location: Meeting on Camano Island was suggested and met with approval. Cama Beach State Park and Camano Island State Park both have meeting room facilities. It would be nice to incorporate a trip to see an MRC project.
- Date and time: The preference was to hold the retreat on an existing MRC meeting date, and extend the usual 2-hour meeting timeframe. February 16, March 1, and March 15 were put forward as potential dates.
- Expectations and goals: Take stock of current work and how to move forward: Are there projects which should be brought to a close or ones that can be monitored intermittently? Conduct strategic planning and long-term visioning. Initiate a foundation for the FY17 workplan and grant. Learn about all the current projects, especially for new members. Get to know all members better.

Toledo will send out surveys to gauge availability for dates, and for further input on goals and expectations. Schwartz offered to help with planning for the retreat.

**Meeting Logistics:** Toledo reported that the Executive Committee has been discussing trying out a new format for project updates. Project leads would send Toledo a brief written update in advance of the meeting. Toledo would compile the updates and send them out with the meeting agenda. The goal would be to help guide productive conversation and collaboration by allowing members to review project updates prior to the meeting, and allowing time for discussion of specific questions or topics during the meeting. Concerns about the new format included enjoying hearing the reports versus reading, and capturing the latest updates on actively developing projects. The consensus was to try this format for a few months and evaluate if it is effective.

**Funding Opportunities:** Toledo reported that she spoke with Joan Drinkwin regarding the NOAA Marine Debris Education and Outreach grant that was discussed at the previous meeting. The Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF) currently has a grant to develop outreach messaging around crab pot loss, and to develop videos with that messaging. As the messaging is developed, Drinkwin will work with MRCs to determine what types of materials each MRC would like and how to distribute the message. Since plans are already in place for developing outreach materials and messaging in a cohesive manner across all MRCs, Drinkwin thought it best not to pursue this additional grant.

Toledo reported that she drafted a proposal for the MRC's participation in the ECO Network's Near-Term Action (NTA) to address effects of climate change, as discussed at the last meeting. The MRC's role would be to host 4 forums on ocean acidification and sea level rise, in collaboration with other partner organizations and Whidbey high schools. The Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO) suggested that the NTA proposal's heavy focus on K-12 education would not provide measurable impact on the effects of climate change within 2 years, as requested within the parameters of the NTA. While acknowledging that education is important, the ILIO recommended that the ECO Net revise the NTA to provide more direct impact on the effects of climate change. Toledo will participate in follow-up conversations with the other organizations participating in the ECO Net NTA, and will update the MRC with any suggested change in direction, and how the MRC could be involved.

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Toledo reported that Washington Sea Grant is planning to submit a regional NTA to develop maps and projections of sea level rise by looking at the interactions of sea level rise, vertical land movement, and wave modeling. The models would be a tool for jurisdictions to incorporate the information into emergency management plans, environmental planning, and code considerations. The MRC may have the opportunity to participate in the outreach component. Rhodes suggested that the MRC's role, as an advisory committee, could be to make sure the relevant modeling information gets into county code.

**Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award:** Rhodes provided background on the creation of the Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year award. The award was established with the MRC and WSU Extension named as co-sponsors, with the award to be presented annually at Sound Waters University. Nominations could come from any organization or individual.

The MRC has since moved out from under WSU Extension, and the Beach Watchers will be moving on as an independent organization called Sound Water Stewards (SWS) at the start of 2016. SWS has expressed a desire to co-sponsor the award with the MRC. WSU Extension has expressed a desire to continue to co-sponsor the award, and would like to be inclusive of additional organizations focused on protecting marine resources.

As discussed at the October 6<sup>th</sup> MRC meeting, the MRC is interested in continuing to be a co-sponsor of the award. Since this award was established as a co-sponsorship between WSU Extension and the MRC, and the MRC is supportive of including SWS in the co-sponsorship of the award, Rhodes suggested that for this year the award could come from the three organizations – WSU Extension, MRC, and SWS. This could be revisited next year with sufficient time for discussion and adjustment well before the nomination process. This year's nomination process should be starting now, and to ensure the process moves forward, Rhodes suggested it would be helpful for a letter to come from the MRC acknowledging the MRC's desire to include SWS in the co-sponsorship of the award.

Corin stated his desire that the award not change focus. The award should be open to nominees who have contributed significantly toward the marine or coastal environment in Island County.

Rhodes proposed a motion, which Adams accepted that Rhodes draft a brief letter addressed to WSU Extension and SWS stating that the MRC expects SWS to be a co-sponsor of the Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year award. Schwartz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Coordinator's Update:** Toledo reported that she has received 2 applications for MRC membership, and are expecting to receive a 3<sup>rd</sup>. Members are encouraged to continue to reach out to potential applicants. Applications are due by 4:30pm on Monday, November 30.

Toledo will not be at the December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting due to a conflict with the Shore Friendly program. She will ensure technical support is provided to run WebEx and setup any presentations.

**Presentation from John Githens on drone-based kelp survey:** Githens was not able to attend, and the presentation will be rescheduled for the December 1 meeting.

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## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** Richards reported that she has recruited a great group of volunteers. She will be leading the surveys at Ala Spit, Cornet Bay, and Camano Island State Park. Dan will lead the surveys at Waterman. Richards would like to take samples in the afternoon and process them the following morning. She will consult with Dan Penttila to ensure that timeframe is adequate.

**Seining:** Cornet Bay: Jim Somers will meet with Dawn Pucci to develop the 2016 schedule for Cornet Bay seining. Tentative plans are to conduct training & a complete sampling on January 22<sup>nd</sup> with Anna Kagley (NOAA Fisheries). The earlier start date is prompted by the 2015 results for Chinook salmon.

Glendale & Waterman properties (Whidbey-Camano Land Trust): Somers & Pucci are considering attempts to collect fish & eelgrass data at these 2 properties prior to bulkhead removal in the summer of 2016. An important consideration is the added workload on the seining team, & one option is to bring in Jason Morgan at the NWSF to coordinate & supervise monitoring at those sites.

Ala Spit: Due to the current 2016 workload, seine monitoring will be postponed until 2017.

**Cornet Bay Restoration:** Corin circulated a fact sheet on Cornet Bay. Construction at Areas 1 & 3 began yesterday. Strider Construction is the contractor doing the work. They are anticipating about 10 days to get the project completed, depending on weather. They will not be working Thursday and Friday of Thanksgiving, so anticipated completion is in the first week of December.

The NWSF received an extension to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant through June 30, 2017 to have more time to get the planting completed, monitored, and maintained. The NWSF also requested an additional \$40,000 to support more planting over the whole area.

Area 5 (Marine maintenance pier): Following the MRC meeting where PND Engineers presented the findings of the feasibility study, the MRC supported moving forward with Option 2 (the least expensive and also the recommended alternative). There was a request to see if Parks would consider a more narrow landing area to allow for more light penetration and possibly reduce costs. Parks prefers not to go this route due to the issues with rerouting utilities on the pier and the costs associated with that. Therefore Lisa Kaufman asked PND to complete the feasibility report and bring the design to permit level.

Kaufman is working through the budget to determine if there will be sufficient funds for a geotechnical survey. This will add \$24,000+ to the cost and was not included in the original scope since it can be done later if needed. The NWSF hoped to use geotechnical information from the adjacent recreation dock replacement, but the holes there were not drilled deep enough to provide useable information for this project.

The funds for this phase expire at the end of December so if the survey is to be done, it will need to occur soon. Kaufman will make a determination this week. Likely they will hold off and include this task in funding for the final design and construction.

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## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:** Adams reported that there will be a NWSC WebEx on December 4, which he will be attending. Corin reported that the NWSF received \$39,000 in donations in support of the conference.

**Kelp Monitoring:** Rhodes reported that there will be a workshop to follow-up on the conference kelp presentations on December 5<sup>th</sup> in Port Townsend. Lucas Hart took over Caroline Gibson's former position as the NWSC Marine Program Manager, and will be coordinating work on the kelp projects across the MRCs.

Tomorrow night, Whidbey Watershed Stewards (WWS) will be meeting, and will be hearing a report on the kelp harvest study completed this summer. Rhodes will present the MRC's bull kelp monitoring results. Dickson noted that the WWS's and the MRC's kelp projects interact closely, as 2 of the 3 areas that the MRC identified for kelp monitoring are the same as the ones WWS identified for the harvest study. The MRC also has money in this year's budget to help with outreach materials based on the findings of the kelp monitoring and harvest study.

Schwartz noted that she encountered a kelp bed off of Maple Grove on North Camano. Corin passed around a picture of an educational poster taken from his trip to southern Africa. The posters provided information on kelp beds and the importance of protecting kelp, and Corin found the outreach impressive and effective.

**Salmon TAG:** Pucci reported that they are working on their recovery chapter update. The direction from the Puget Sound Partnership is that the recovery chapters be similar in their required elements.

There is some Lead Entity capacity funding available, which is planned to be used to work with Ian Miller from Washington Sea Grant on coastal resiliency monitoring. The monitoring will look at vertical land movement and sea level rise to develop probability modeling for 4-6 sites in Island County. The MRC can be involved by collaborating with the Salmon TAG to proof the maps that will be developed. The results will help inform the planning and selection of restoration projects.

The culvert list project proposal for SRFB funding got pulled. It was listed as a project of concern, and the SRFB did not want to cover video scoping of culverts. They will be trying to find another sponsor for the project.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

**Chair:** No report.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:22 pm.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# December 1, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Linda Rhodes, Vice-Chair, presiding, Lenny Corin, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Stan Walsh, Tim Lawrence WSU Extension Director (non-voting), Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner (non-voting) **ABSENT:** Ed Adams, Leal Dickson, Frances Wood (travel), Todd Zackey, Anna Toledo (conflicting meeting) Lori Clark (conflicting meeting)

**VISITORS:** Matt Zupich (Island County DNR), John Lovie (Water Resources Advisory Committee), Stephanie Croan (Island County DNR), Barbara Bennett (WSU IC Beach Watchers), Linda Ridder (Sound Water Stewards of Island County), Gregg Ridder (IC MRC Eelgrass/Kelp), Debra Paros (MRC volunteer), Linda Meehan, Don Meehan (WSU IC Extension Director 1982-2008), Paul Bigelow (IC Beach Watchers/Sound Water Stewards)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Rhodes called the meeting to order at 3:36 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Schwartz moved to approve the agenda. Halloran seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Schwartz requested 2 edits to the November 17 minutes: 1. Minutes should reflect that the 10 minutes added for John Githens were not fulfilled because Githens did not make the meeting. 2. At the end of the "MRC Retreat" section, the word "conference" should be changed to "retreat." Walsh moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on November 17, 2015 as amended. Richards seconded. The minutes as amended were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION: USING DRONES TO MONITOR CHANGES IN FLOATING KELP

PowerPoint presentation is available on the MRC website:

<http://www.islandcountymrc.org/uploads/pdf/Resources/2015-1201%20Overview%20of%20proposed%20drone%20Kelp%20Monitoring%20for%20ICMRC.pdf>

Rhodes introduced John Githens, owner of Dronespeak LLC. Githens presented on a project proposal to monitor bull kelp with a low-altitude drone which he hopes to propose as a Near Term Action (NTA) to the Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO). The drone would be programmed to fly a specific flight pattern over a kelp bed. The drone would record visible and infrared images. Infrared imaging would allow for assessment of biomass in the kelp bed. MRC volunteers could participate in the kelp studies by deploying the drone and as monitors on the beach while the drone is flying.

# ISLAND COUNTY MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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Questions from the MRC included concerns about weather conditions that limit flying, actual test flights over kelp, and concerns about permission from public jurisdictions for flying. Githens addressed several uncertainties and risks, including obtaining a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Exemption to ensure compliance with regulations, and building in some contingency funding for damaged equipment from test flights.

Rhodes suggested that if the NTA does not make it for this round, it would be worthwhile to continue developing the project for a future round or an alternate funding source. Walsh noted that NTA's are primarily focused on recovery projects, so it may be difficult to fit a monitoring project into the guidelines. John Lovie noted that the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) has 10% of funding set aside for monitoring, but it is unclear whether that will be distributed through local LIO's or regionally. Schwartz suggested having a corporate sponsor run a pilot project, and have it serve as a model for organizations around the country who study kelp.

## BUSINESS ITEMS

**Jan Holmes Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award:** Rhodes reported that, as discussed at the previous meeting, a letter was drafted to be sent to WSU Extension and Sound Water Stewards (SWS) to affirm that MRC in partnership with those 2 organizations will be sponsoring the 2016 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award. The letter was drafted and approved by the MRC, and Toledo will be sending the letter.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

Rhodes distributed copies of written project updates, and invited additional comments or discussion.

**Eelgrass Monitoring:** Spreadsheets and video files from the 2015 summer data collection have been processed for all 124 transects and are ready for analysis. The analyst's data for 2014 were submitted to WADNR in September and the eelgrass team is waiting for their calculations of eelgrass bed area. The team expects to have final analysis of the 2015 data done by March and will present it to the MRC in April 2016.

**Pigeon Guillemot Survey:** Wood met via conference call last week with members of the Puget Sound Partnership seabird working group, fish and wildlife seabird scientists and representatives of the pigeon guillemot surveys in South sound and in Tacoma. This group meets occasionally to discuss ways to support guillemot surveys throughout Puget Sound and ways to support the work of the Puget Sound Partnership. The topic of this meeting was where and how we will house the guillemot survey data from the various organizations.

Here on Whidbey the pigeon guillemot group is continuing to make monthly surveys of guillemot activities during the winter season.

**Phytoremediation:** From Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD): As an example, the WICD are working with National Parks Service (NPS) to design and construct a system that will collect stormwater from a farm owned by NPS and pump it to a lagoon, where it will be stored for use as irrigation water during the dry season. WICD has received commitments to fund this project from NPS, the Washington State Conservation Commission, and Island County with funding through the Island Local Integrating Organization process. WICD is also working with



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Ecolotree, Inc. to design a bioswale system along the east side of Engle Road, just south of Coupeville town limits. Outreach efforts continue as well, including newsletter articles and website updates. More information is available at <http://www.whidbeycd.org/ebeys-prairie-watershed-2.html>

## OTHER REPORTS:

### **Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:**

Commission: The next meeting is December 4 via WebEx. Adams will have an update at the following MRC meeting.

Foundation: End of year fund raising letters will be going out the week of November 30 to those that contributed last year. All others are welcome to contribute to the Foundation. Check the Foundation webpage (<http://www.nwstraitsfoundation.org/>) for directions on how you can donate to this amazing non-profit!

Corin added that that donors can designate a specific MRC as a recipient for donations, and the Foundation will hold that money to go towards that MRC's activities.

### **Beach Watchers / WSU Extension:**

WSU Extension: Lawrence reported that the Beach Watchers (BW) transition is underway, and will be formally separated from WSU on December 31<sup>st</sup>. The WSU Master Naturalist project is scheduled to launch in fall 2016. It will be an environmental training and certification program modeled after the Master Gardener training.

Beach Watchers: Bennett reported that Beach Watchers, which will soon be transitioning to Sound Water Stewards, along with the MRC and other partners are part of the Whidbey ECO Network's NTA proposal addressing the effects of climate change through the Stormwater Strategic Initiative.

Phase 1 of the display sponsored by BW at the Coupeville Wharf has been installed, which includes mounting of images on the upper wall with the cetacean skeletons. Josephine Peters, Swinomish Tribal participant, was involved. They are fundraising for Phase 2, which is the lower wall display.

Linda Ade Ridder reported that SWS has a Board in place, and are finalizing the legal documents to take over the transition from BW as of January 1, 2016. The focus of the organization will remain the same, and projects will be continuing. They have 330 volunteers who are active across 72 projects. Sound Waters University is scheduled for February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

**Shoreline Armoring Reduction:** Toledo is holding two Shore Friendly realtor workshops on December 1<sup>st</sup> in Freeland and December 2<sup>nd</sup> in Oak Harbor to give realtors information and resources to help their clients understand, protect, and enjoy their shoreline properties.

**Port Susan MSA:** No update.

## LEADERSHIP REPORTS:

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**Chair:** Rhodes passed along a report from Wood that the MRC has received 5 applications for membership. Wood will be contacting the applicants, and will forward her recommendations to the Board of Island County Commissioners, who make the decision on appointments.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** Commissioner Price Johnson reported that on the advice of the Island County Prosecuting Attorney's office, the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC) withdrew their support of the adoption of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update, due to edits in language around shoreline stabilization. There will be an open public hearing on December 15<sup>th</sup> for the shoreline stabilization code change.

The BICC will be adopting the 2016 Island County budget on December 7<sup>th</sup>, and the budget will continue the status quo for funding Island County DNR.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Don Meehan applauded the contributions of Bennett to the success of BW and Ade Ridder for her leadership in launching SWS.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

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## Minutes

Prepared by Anna Toledo

# December 15, 2015

COMMISSIONERS' HEARING ROOM B-102, COUNTY ANNEX, COUPEVILLE

**PRESENT:** Frances Wood, Chair, presiding, Ed Adams, Lenny Corin, Ed Halloran, Dan Matlock, Linda Rhodes, Ruth Richards, Elsa Schwartz, Anna Toledo MRC Coordinator (staff) **ABSENT:** Helen Price Johnson, Leal Dickson, Tim Lawrence, Stan Walsh, Todd Zackey, Lori Clark

**VISITORS:** Lucas Hart (Northwest Straits Commission), Derek Pritchard (Sound Water Stewards), Joe Hillers (former MRC member), Ken Urstad (former MRC member), Rick Baker (Whidbey Watershed Stewards), John Githens (Dronespeak)

**CALL TO ORDER:** Wood called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Introductions were done. **QUORUM:** A quorum was declared. **AGENDA:** Schwartz moved to approve the agenda. Adams seconded. The agenda was approved. **MINUTES:** Adams moved to approve the minutes of the Island County MRC meeting held on December 1, 2015. Halloran seconded. The minutes were approved. **CORRESPONDENCE:** No correspondence.

### INTRODUCTION TO LUCAS HART

Rhodes introduced Lucas Hart, the new Marine Program Manager at the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC).

Hart was previously a member of the Jefferson MRC, where he was involved with kelp monitoring among other MRC projects. He is interested in helping facilitate connections with MRCs and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in their plans for a Sound-wide forage fish survey.

Hart reported that the NWSC will also be coordinating ocean acidification outreach by conducting workshops geared specifically towards businesses and local legislators. The workshops will be focused on what these leaders can do to mitigate ocean acidification.

### BUSINESS ITEMS

**New Membership:** Wood reported that five candidates submitted applications for membership, and all five were appointed to the MRC by the Board of Island County Commissioners (BICC).

John Carr, who served on the MRC representing the Port of Coupeville, is no longer with the Port, and has also stepped down from the MRC. With the amendment of the MRC's Operations and Procedures resolution in 2014, there are no longer seats specifically designated for the Ports. Toledo and Wood reached out to the Port of Coupeville to inquire if they would like to submit an application to fill Carr's position on the MRC. The Port did not submit an application at that

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time, but expressed interest in remaining connected to the MRC and submitting an application at a future date when a position opens.

In addition to the five applications, Florian Graner, underwater videographer and owner of Sealife Productions, expressed interest in joining the MRC, however felt he could not commit to attending meetings regularly due to his busy schedule which often has him traveling for significant lengths of time.

Graner presented at the MRC Conference, including showing clips from his film “Beneath the Salish Sea.” Wood felt his experience and expertise would be a valuable addition to the MRC. Wood spoke with Graner, and recommended that the MRC appoint him as a non-voting technical advisor.

**ACTION: Halloran moved to appoint Florian Graner as a non-voting technical advisor to the MRC. Schwartz seconded.** Halloran added that Graner would bring extraordinary expertise in PR. Corin suggested that films could be used as an outreach mechanism. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Wood announced that the election of officers for 2016 will occur during the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Wood has offered to continue as Chair. Rhodes will be stepping down as Vice-Chair, and Schwartz has offered to assume that role. Anyone else interested in serving in either of those capacities should contact Toledo before January 5 to be included as candidates in the election on January 5.

**Project Coordination Needs:** Wood reported that with some members leaving and new members joining, there are a number of areas where current or new members could become involved:

- Salmon Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – Matlock has participated in these meetings, and this position will need to be filled as he leaves the MRC.
- Island Local Integrating Organization (ILIO) – Toledo has been participating in these meetings. It would be helpful to have an MRC member serve as the liaison.
- Eelgrass – Wood has been coordinating this connection, but is open to having someone else serve as the MRC lead.
- Seining – Rhodes has been coordinating this connection, but is open to having someone else serve as the MRC lead.
- Restoration projects (Cornet Bay and others) – Corin has maintained the connection to Cornet Bay and other restoration projects, and this role will need to be filled as he leaves the MRC.
- Signage – Wood has been in conversation with Dan Pedersen who noted that some of the MRC signs are 10 years old, and it would be helpful to have someone check on their condition.
- Education and outreach – Currently there is no designated member coordinating education and outreach.
- Climate change adaptation and shoreline armoring reduction – Rhodes and Toledo have been coordinating the work around these topics, including the Northwest Straits Foundation’s (NWSF) Shoreline Armoring Reduction Program (SHARP) grant, and the County’s Shore Friendly grant.

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- Sound Water Stewards – The MRC would like to foster a solid connection with the newly formed Sound Water Stewards.
- Executive Committee – There will be one at-large position open on the Executive Committee.
- Creosote removal – Corin noted that this is an important topic which Ken Urstad was deeply involved in, and which Corin has stayed the point of contact on.
- Emerging topics – Rhodes noted that it would be helpful to be more connected to emerging topics, such as coal trains and oil spills.

**Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award:** Toledo announced that nominations are now being accepted through January 5<sup>th</sup> for the 2016 Jan Holmes Island County Coastal Volunteer of the Year Award.

Derek Pritchard, Sound Water Stewards (SWS) board member, expressed concern that the deadline would not allow enough time for submissions. Toledo acknowledged that the time frame had been truncated this year. Adams suggested that timelines could be revisited after presenting the 2016 award to aid with planning in future years.

Wood announced that the award selection committee will be made of two representatives from each of the three sponsors: MRC, SWS, and WSU Extension. Wood asked for two volunteers to serve on the selection committee. Halloran and Schwartz volunteered.

Pritchard asked for more specificity on the criteria for selecting the awardee. Toledo noted that that would be discussed among the selection committee members.

**Coordinator's Update:** Halloran requested an update on the Shore Friendly realtor workshops. Toledo reported that the Shore Friendly workshops went well, and the realtors provided positive feedback.

The Shore Friendly grant includes several components: working with the Planning Department to streamline the permitting process for soft shore projects, providing workshops to contractors and realtors who work directly shoreline homeowners, and implementing a social marketing campaign to promote alternatives to hard armoring. The grant also includes financial incentives: free permitting for qualifying soft shore projects, free site visits to provide site-specific recommendations, and through partnership with the NWSF, the potential for design services and additional permitting assistance.

## NWSC GRANT REPORTS:

**Forage Fish Monitoring:** The forage fish crews started surveys in November at Ala Spit, Cornet Bay and Waterman on Whidbey, and at Camano Island State Park, after receiving a MOU from WDFW to cover permitting. All locations have restoration projects either completed, underway, or in feasibility phase. Volunteers, primarily from Beach Watchers/Sound Water Stewards, have lent time, effort and enthusiastic support. Richards delivered the first round of samples just after Thanksgiving to Dan Penttila, Salish Sea Biological, for analysis of presence/absence and staging.

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Matlock is overseeing the Waterman survey, and will continue after his MRC term ends this December. Access to the beach is difficult, so sampling will occur at only one site, more or less in the middle of the preserve and just north of the bulkhead. Since the sediment transport in that area is from South to North, this sampling site should reflect any changes in spawning activity resulting from the bulkhead removal next summer.

Richards is overseeing the Ala Spit, Cornet Bay and Camano surveys. Samples will be taken from three locations at each beach. Ala is a dynamic place! One of the sites changed from suitable spawning substrate to large cobbles in the two weeks between surveys, after the storms and high winds in November moved the post-restoration materials around. There is now a sampling site near the north end of the spit where Dan P has found *Ammodytes* eggs in prior years.

Photo of Ala Spit site #4, near the north end of the spit:



**Seining:** Cornet Bay: The 2016 sampling schedule is set, starting with a January 22<sup>nd</sup> training session with Anna Kagley (NOAA Fisheries).

Waterman site: Work is continuing on the 2016 schedule, due to access & site complexities. Equipment must be brought in by boat, & launching at the Langley Marina has limitations due to sand. Ken Urstad is working with the Harbor Master to schedule launchings. There is also possible sinking sand at the beach, so it is likely the more experienced crew will conduct the initial sampling.

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**Cornet Bay Restoration:** Sections 1 and 3 were completed last week. Reports are that it looks great. Please do stop by and check it out as well as the recently completed restoration project at Bowman's Bay. If money is available, the hope is to move forward early next year with the geotechnical report for the last component of the project, improving the State Maintenance Dock. The cost would be around \$24,000. PND Engineers is finalizing the preliminary design report for the State Dock, based on comments received this past week from Lisa Kaufman.

Corin added that Joan Drinkwin (NWSF) is developing a Near-Term Action (NTA) for the retrofit of the marine maintenance pier.

## OTHER REPORTS:

**Northwest Straits Commission/Foundation:** Commission: Adams reported that he will forward the draft minutes from the December 4 NWSC meeting. The NWSC will be drafting a letter of support for the Puget SOS bill (HR 3630), available online: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/3630>. The bill is an authorizing legislation that would elevate Puget Sound to the same level as Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes.

Foundation: The Board met Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> in Padilla Bay. This was Corin's first Board meeting as President and Caroline Gibson's first Board meeting as the Executive Director. The Board reviewed the financial health of the organization and the work plan.

Corin offered to continue to provide a connection between the MRC and the NWSF by submitting written updates and attending MRC meetings quarterly to report in-person.

**Kelp Monitoring:** A bull kelp survey workshop organized by Lucas Hart (NWSC) was held on Saturday, Dec 5 in Port Townsend. Attendees included iconic kelp researchers from the region (Ron Thom, Tom Mumford, Helen Berry, Betty Buckheim), representatives from Puget Sound Restoration Fund, GIS expert Suzanne Shull, & kelp survey participants & prospective participants from the MRCs. There were extensive discussions to identify research/survey objectives & crucial needs (such as uniform safety standards & training). Important progress was made in those areas, & it was an excellent opportunity for everyone to get to know each other, too. Hart will be issuing a written summary shortly.

**Salmon TAG:** The Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) approved the cost increase for the Cornet plantings.

The WRAC also approved a cost adjustment for the Pocket Estuary Census Project. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Monitoring Review Panel recommended that the Census be expanded from the Whidbey Basin to the whole of Whidbey and Camano Islands. The project sponsor, the Skagit River System Cooperative, is able to do this with increased funding. WRIA 6 Lead Entity has the funds able to do this. The increase amount was unknown at the time of the WRAC meeting due to the timing of the request from the Monitoring Panel. So the WRAC approved to fund "up to \$45,000" which would be twice the current cost.

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2016 Grant Round – Dawn Pucci will be in contact with all the sponsors of projects identified on the workplan to confirm which projects they are intending to apply for grant funding for this coming year.

Letters of Intent – TAG agreed to not make Letters of Intent a requirement in the 2016 grant round. The conversations with the sponsors will take place of this requirement. The template will remain available for projects that have not been discussed.

Next meeting: December 16 – Coupeville. 1-3pm. WebEx available. Agenda: RFP approval, Monitoring project potentials for 2016 grant round, Potential project type - Areas of Interest for shoreline armoring and acquisitions

## **LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Chair:** Wood passed around the certificate presented at the MRC Conference recognizing the work of the MRC, and especially highlighting the eelgrass monitoring project.

**County Lead:** No report.

**County Commissioners:** No report.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT FORUM AND Q&A FROM THE PUBLIC:** Rhodes announced that the deadline to submit abstracts for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference is December 18.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business and no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 pm.